



THE CITY OF  
**HOBART**  
PARKS AND RECREATION  
MASTER PLAN  
2017 - 2021





**PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
MASTER PLAN 2017 - 2021

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**Prepared for:** City of Hobart Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners  
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414 Main Street  
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City of Hobart Park and Recreation Department  
Hobart Community Center and Parks Department  
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Hobart, IN 46342

Prepared in compliance with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources requirements for the eligibility for Land and Water Conservation Fund: 2017– 2021

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PARKS AND RECREATION  
MASTER PLAN 2017 - 2021

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**John Mitchell, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation**

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, which 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 development of all participants is strongly influenced by the recreational facilities and the program's 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**

At the request of the Parks and Recreation Superintendent and the Hobart Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, the Hobart Parks and Recreation Master Plan 5-year update was completed for the purpose of setting forth guidelines, and to provide a framework or outline the priorities, objectives, standards, and assessments on the following matters:

- Community desires
- Funding opportunities
- Facilities
- Programs
- Services
- Budget

## **OBJECTIVE**

The Parks and Recreation Superintendent and the Hobart Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, have identified the need to review, refine, and work towards the following objectives as resources become available over the next five years:

- Coordinate with other Local, Regional, State, and Federal Park and Recreation Plans.
- Maintain flexibility in amending the Hobart Parks and Recreation Plan to meet plan priorities and recommendations or incorporate new plan priorities and recommendations.
- Create programs that encourage partnerships and facility sharing with the School City of Hobart, private sport leagues, and organizations.
- Natural resources.
- Support park and recreation trends through training and education opportunities with conferences, workshops, presentations, and related field membership(s), including Indiana Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA) or the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).
- Encourage grant funding opportunities for qualified parks and recreation priority projects.
- Be fiscally responsible to priority projects outlined in the Hobart Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

1. Gather information on your parks and recreation system (scoping); and analyze how it affects your community as a whole, and your parks in particular.
2. Gather input on issues and needs (public participation) via:
  - Surveys, public meetings, interviews, focus groups, etc.
  - Meetings or interviews with interested parties (such as neighborhood associations, elected officials, civic groups, park stakeholders and community leaders).
  - Recording and documenting the number of people surveyed or interviewed, all discussions, and a synopsis of the results.

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.

3. Perform a needs analysis and determine the park board priorities and action plan based on all collected data, data analysis, needs analysis and public input.
4. Assemble your draft master plan.

## **SURVEY**

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.

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-8th 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.

## **PLAN USE AND CHANGES**

The City of Hobart Parks and Recreation Master Plan allows you to review your present recreation situation with an eye towards Hobart's future recreation opportunities through the following steps:

- STEP 1** Identifying important local issues and needs.
- STEP 2** Evaluating available alternatives.
- STEP 3** Setting priorities for courses of action to meet your identified needs.

To be responsive to changing needs, planning must be flexible. Keeping the plan simple will help make it flexible. All information, analysis, assumptions and justifications behind the plan's priorities and recommendations should be clearly stated. As change occurs, it will be easier to determine which recommendations remain valid and which do not.

**By continuing to incorporate and analyze new information, the plan will always remain current.**

## **Updating the Plan**

Sometimes circumstances change the priorities for your five-year planning period. Significant budget changes, for example, may cause you to re-evaluate your priorities and make an amendment to your plan. When this happens, plan amendments incorporating the revised priorities may be submitted to the Division of Outdoor Recreation at any time.

**NOTE: Please keep in mind that amendments alone will not extend the five-year LWCF eligibility of your recreation master plan.**

Formal amendments to your plan are required if they involve projects proposed in grant applications requiring a five-year master plan. The competitiveness and eligibility of a grant application depends in part on the project being included as a priority in the park board's master plan. If a project is not originally in the plan, it is important that the project be added by a plan amendment. In general, master plan amendments may be submitted at any time.

**Amendments must be approved in writing by IDNR-OR planning staff.**

**NOTE: Master plan amendments submitted to IDNR-OR for the purpose of a adding or modifying a community's future grant project within the existing approved master plan must be submitted and approved by IDNR-OR planning staff prior to the grant program's application deadline.**

To amend the master plan, several items need to be submitted to the Division of Outdoor Recreation:

1. A brief explanation of the reason(s) for the amendment.
2. Documentation of the public input which went into the amendment process.
3. The new plan pages, containing any changes or additions.
4. A resolution passed by the park board adopting the plan as amended. This will make the revised plan an official document of the park board.

## LOCATION

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).

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 1/2 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 1/2 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.



## **PHYSICAL AND NATURAL SETTING**

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 broomrape, 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. 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.

## **Beginnings**

The City of Hobart is one of Lake County's oldest communities, once home to the Pottawatomie Indians. Englishman George Earle, who had invested heavily in Lake County land, was attempting to establish the town of Liverpool at the junction of the Calumet and Deep Rivers. Liverpool did not prove viable and in 1845, Earle moved five miles up Deep River and constructed a dam to power sawmills and gristmills. The resulting millpond became known as Lake George. Earle moved the post office from Liverpool in 1847 and recorded the plat for the new town in 1849, naming it for his brother, Frederick Hobart Earle, of England.

## **The Gristmill**

George Earle's gristmill was constructed near the dam in 1846 and continued to operate until it burned down in 1953. The mill was 5 stories high and the top of the current Lake George Dam Bridge replicates the top of the original mill.

## **Brickmaking**

Brickmaking was Hobart's most important industry in the nineteenth century. Small brickyards appeared in the 1850's. In 1863, Joseph Nash established the first large brickyard and in 1886, the W.B. Owen brickworks converted from bricks to terra cotta building tile. Used for fireproof building construction, terra cotta found a good market in Chicago and beyond. The Owen works was taken over by National Fireproofing Company in 1902 and operated until 1964. The Kulage Brick Works, which flourished from 1893 to the early 1920's was another important brick maker.

## **From a Town to a City**

Hobart incorporated as a town in 1889 and reincorporated as a city in 1921. Hobart has continued to grow through the years and major annexations in Hobart Township to the north in 1988 and Ross Township in 1992, including the Southlake Mall area along U.S. 30 to the south, have strengthened the city's potential for continued residential, commercial and light industrial development.

## **Today**

Hobart's population according to the 2010 Census was 29,059. Located 38 miles from Chicago and 150 miles north of Indianapolis, the 26 square miles of Hobart continues to thrive with retail corridors, light industry, great schools, a downtown district on the banks of Lake George and residents, and visitors enjoying a quality of life surely envisioned by George Earle.



## **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 reestablished the Hobart Park Board after the Indiana General Assembly remodified 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.

## **ENABLING LEGISLATIONS AND LOCAL ACTIONS**

At the request of the Parks and Recreation Superintendent and approval from the Hobart Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, the Hobart Parks and Recreation Department administers the funds, acquisition, development, and maintenance of park properties, recreation programs, and sets department policies. Authority is granted through the following Local Ordinance and State Statute:

### **PREVIOUS LEGISLATIONS AND LOCAL ACTIONS**

ORD. 30 - Passed by the Hobart Common Council on April 25, 1923 to create a Board of Trustees to control and manage public parks of the City of Hobart.

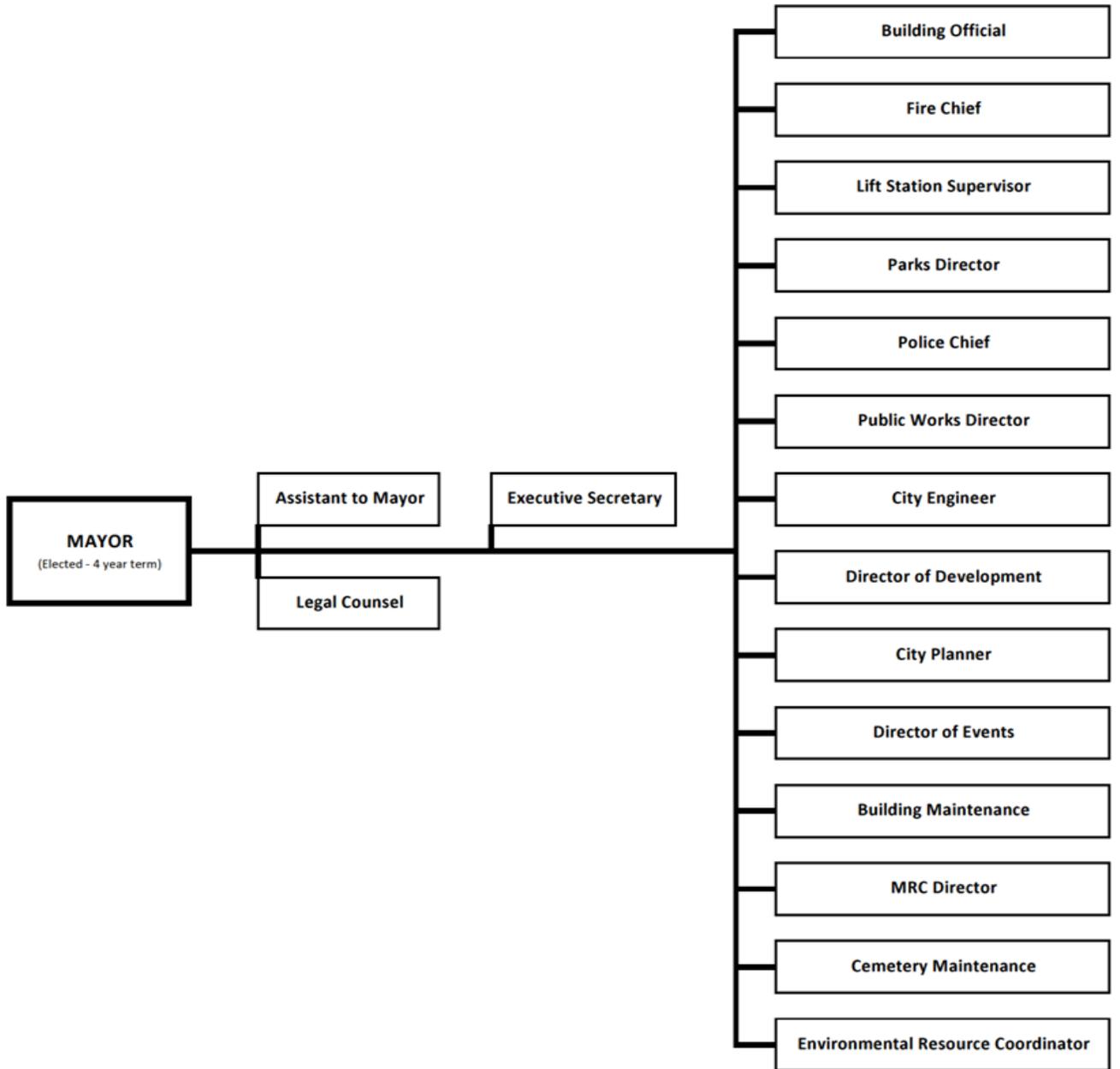
ORD. 620 - Passed by the Hobart Common Council on August 3, 1960 under the Acts of 1925 as expressed in Burns Statutes 48-5901—5907 which provides acquisition of real property for recreation centers and a tax levy for recreation funds.

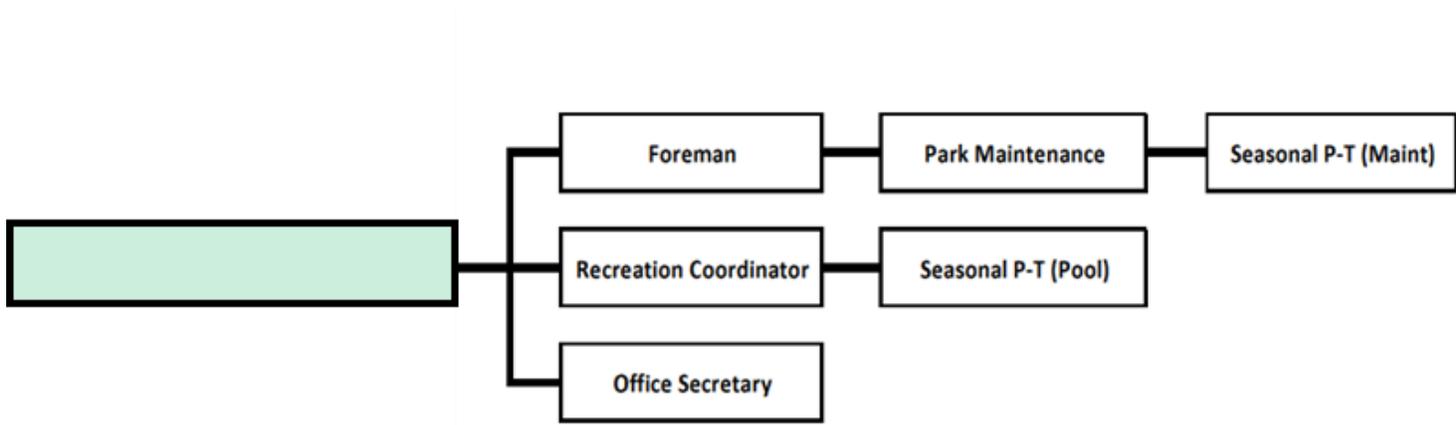
ORD. 687 - Passed by the Hobart Common Council on April 3, 1963 repealing ORD. 30 and empowered the Mayor to create a Parks and Recreation Department and appoint a four member Park Board to administer recreation funds in accordance with the 1955 Acts of the Indiana General Assembly, Chapter 311.

ORD. 704 - Passed by the Hobart Common Council on August 17, 1963 reestablishing The Hobart Park Board after the Indiana General Assembly remodified and revised laws governing city government under Indiana Code 36-10-3, and granted the Mayor to appoint a Superintendent of Parks and Recreation.

ORD. 96-02 – Passed by the Hobart Common Council on February 21, 1996 to establish the board of Park Commissioners under Indiana Code 36-10-4

All park boards will deal with site planning as parks and facilities are developed, but many function without operation and maintenance plans. We strongly recommend all three levels of planning for park boards.





**Parks Dept. Chart**

## **2012-2016 PRIORITIES**

### **Hobart Park Board Priorities**

- Replace the Festival Park Community Center which was damaged in the 2008 flood event. **Completed in 2012**
- Review usage and fees of parks/and 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 informs standards & 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.
- Acquire additional park and 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 unitized 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 National Recreation and Parks Association. (NRPA)

### **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.

## **2017-2021 PRIORITIES**

### **Hobart Park Board Priorities**

- Evaluation of policies, practices and procedures

### **Recreation Program Priorities**

- Implement equipment and creative programming to provide a range of recreational opportunities for all people.
- Explore grant opportunities
- Explore alternative communication and signage efforts to accommodate all people.
- Apply new technologies, innovations, or inventions which may reduce recreational barriers.

### **Maintenance Priorities**

- Create operational/maintenance plans for all city park properties.

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

YEAR	POPULATION	DIFFERENCE
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
2015 ACS	28,943	-116

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

## Population

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 : Forecasted Population

Year	Population
2000	25,363
2008	27,981
2010	29,059
2020	32,550

Source: City Master Plan using Geometric Progression; 2008 – American Factfinder Population Estimate, and 2010 Census

## 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>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>
<u>Persons over 25 years of age</u>	<u>14,401</u>	<u>19,722</u>	<u>19,771</u>	<u>20,571</u>
<u>Total high school graduates</u>	<u>11,330</u>	<u>17,592</u>	<u>17,636</u>	<u>18,192</u>
<u>Percent of total high school graduates</u>	<u>78.7%</u>	<u>89.2%</u>	<u>89.2%</u>	<u>88.4 %</u>
<u>Total with at least some college no degree</u>	<u>4,816</u>	<u>5,128</u>	<u>4,983</u>	<u>4,660</u>
<u>Percent of total with some college no degree</u>	<u>33.4%</u>	<u>26.0%</u>	<u>25.2%</u>	<u>22.7%</u>
<u>Total with bachelor's degree or higher</u>	<u>1,685</u>	<u>1,381</u>	<u>3,203</u>	<u>3,716</u>
<u>Percent with bachelor's degree or higher</u>	<u>11.7%</u>	<u>7.0%</u>	<u>16.2%</u>	<u>18%</u>

Source: 2000 and 2008 U.S. Census

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 resident's remains middle class in most cases means that residents have the ability to pay for programming which is requested.

# INCOME

	1989	2008	2010	2015
Households:	8,344	11,000	<b>11194</b>	11,590
Less than \$9,999	722	451	<b>496 (4 %)</b>	
\$10,000-\$14,999	577	374	<b>408 (4 %)</b>	391
\$15,000-\$24,999	1436	1,078	<b>1274 (11 %)</b>	1102
\$25,000-\$34,999	1,369	1,111	<b>1200 (11 %)</b>	1113
\$35,000-\$49,999	1,882	1,518	<b>1450 (13 %)</b>	1655
\$50,000-\$74,999	1,628	2,530	<b>2968 (27%)</b>	2780
\$75,000-\$99,999	322	2,178	<b>1817 (16 %)</b>	1999
\$100,000-\$150,000	408	1,441	<b>1322 (12 %)</b>	1475
\$150,000 or more	55	319	<b>259 (2 %)</b>	617
Median Household income			<b>\$54,301</b>	\$58,246
Mean Household Income			<b>\$60,772</b>	\$66,477

Source: 1989 U. S. Census and 2008 Estimate

Table 2: Households by Type

Households by Type				
	2000	2008	2010	2015
Households:	9,855	11,000	<b>11,194</b>	11,590
Family Households	70.8%	65%	<b>66.8%</b>	64.8%
Married-couple family:	56.3%	52.8%	<b>52.8%</b>	48.7%
Female Householder, no husbands present	10.3%	6.6%	<b>8.3%</b>	9.4%
Non-family households	29.2%	34.9%	<b>33.2%</b>	35.2%
Householder living alone	24.1%	29.2%	<b>28.9%</b>	30%
Householder 65 years and over	10.4%	10.1%	<b>10%</b>	10.3%
Households with individuals under 18 years	33.5%	27.8%	<b>29.6%</b>	29%

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

# 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

Jurisdictional responsibility	Park Classification
Federal and State	National Parks
	State Parks & Recreation Areas State Parks
	State Recreation Areas
	State Réservoirs
	Urban/Regional Parks
	State Natural Resource Areas State Forest
	State Fish & Wildlife Areas State Natural Preserves
County and Township	County District Parks
	Forest Preserves Nature Preserves
	Special Facilities County
	Community Parks
Municipal	Community Parks
	Community-wide facilities specialized facilities Neighborhood Parks
	Large Neighborhood Parks Small Neighborhood Parks Sub-Neighborhood Parks Block Parks
	Tot-Lots

## PARKS AND GREENWAYS CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASSIFICATION	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	SIZE AND SERVICE AREA CRITERIA
Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood parks are the basic units of the park system and serve a recreational and social purpose. Focus is on informal recreation.	Typically 5 acres or more; 8 to 10 acres preferred, with 3 acres the desired minimum size. Service area is one-fourth to one-half mile uninterrupted by major roads and other physical barriers.
Community Park	Serves a broader purpose than neighborhood parks. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Varies, depending on function. A minimum of 20 acres is preferred, with 40 or more acres optimal. Service area can be communitywide or several neighborhoods in given area of the community.
Large Urban Park	Large urban parks are generally associated with larger urban centers with large populations. Focus is on meeting wide-ranging community needs and preserving unique and sometimes extensive landscapes and open spaces.	Varies depending on circumstances. A typical minimum size is 50 acres (20.2 hectares), with hundreds of acres not uncommon, such as Central Park in New York City.
Youth Athletic Complex/Facility	Consolidates programmed youth athletic fields and associated facilities to fewer strategically located sites throughout the community. Also can provide some neighborhood use functions.	Varies, with 20 acres or more desirable, but not absolute. Optimal size is 40 to 80 acres (16.2 to 32.4 hectares).
Community Athletic Complex/Facility	Consolidates programmed adult and youth athletic fields and associated facilities to a limited number of sites. Tournament-level facilities are appropriate.	Varies, with 20 acres (8.1 hectares) or more desirable, but not absolute. Optimal size is 40 to 80 acres (16.2 to 32.4 hectares).
Greenway	Lands set aside for preserving natural resources, remnant landscapes, and open space, and providing visual aesthetics/buffering. Also provides passive-use opportunities. Ecological resource stewardship and wildlife protection are high priorities. Suitable for ecologically sensitive trail corridors.	Varies, depending on opportunity and general character of natural systems within the community.
Parkway	Linear parklike transportation corridors between public parks, monuments, institutions, and sometimes business centers. Can be maintained green space or natural in character.	Varies.
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose uses, such as a nature center, historic sites, plazas, urban squares, aquatic centers, campgrounds, and golf courses.	Varies, depending on need.
Park-School	School sites that are used in concert with, or in lieu of, other types of parks to meet community park and recreation needs. School sites often provide the majority of indoor recreational facilities within a community.	Varies, depending on specific site opportunities.
Private Park/Recreation Facility	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned, yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Varies.
Regional Parks and Park Reserves	Larger-scale, regionally based parks and open spaces that focus on natural resource preservation and stewardship.	Typically a minimum of 500 acres (202.3 hectares) and up to several thousand acres or several hundred hectares. Service area is regional, which generally encompasses several cities.

## **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.

Make their programs, services and activities accessible to people with disabilities. Included is information about requirements, pertinent legislation, guidelines and potential resources.

As required by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, federal government agencies and entities that receive federal funds had to make their facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities

In 1990, more than 25 years ago, Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which extended accessibility and non-discrimination requirements in five areas: employment, public services, public accommodations, telecommunications and miscellaneous provisions.

State and local governments, including counties, cities, towns and townships, are covered by Title II of the ADA (public services). Likewise, commercial and non-profit parks-and- recreation providers are covered by Title III (public accommodations) because they provide services to the public. These organizations include non-profit groups such as Friends of specific parks and trail groups, YMCAs, and Boys and Girls Clubs, as well as commercial entities that provide canoe rentals, fitness facilities, go-cart racing, amusement parks, ski resorts, rafting, bowling alleys, etc. If you are involved with the public, via government or private business, you have had to provide accessible facilities, programs and services for years.

The ADA is a comprehensive civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA requires that newly constructed and altered state and local government facilities, places of public accommodation, and commercial facilities be readily accessible to, and usable by, persons with disabilities.

The 2010 Standards for Accessible Design contains codified specifications for these recreational facilities:

- Amusement Rides
- Recreational Boating Facilities
- Exercise Machines and Equipment
- Fishing Piers and Platforms
- Golf Facilities
- Miniature Golf Facilities
- Play Areas
- Saunas and Steam Rooms
- Swimming Pools, Wading Pools and Spas
- Shooting Facilities with Firing Positions

The new provisions address access to:

- Trails
- Picnic and camping areas
- Viewing areas
- Beach access routes
- Other components of outdoor-developed areas on federal sites when newly built or altered.

They also provide exceptions for situations in which terrain and other factors make compliance impracticable. The new requirements are located in sections F201.4, F216.3, F244 to F248, and 1011 to 1019 of the ABA Standards.

Signs interpreting the natural and cultural history of the area are provided on a trail. Audio tours may be used to effectively communicate to a person with low or no vision the information in the interpretive displays.

In addition to purchasing products, investigate potential products rather than relying solely on a vendor's claim of accessibility parks-and-recreation practitioners also work with designers and consultants during capital projects. Requests for qualifications (RFQ) may be posted. If so, ask for information regarding accessibility compliance.

It is a common misconception of facility managers and building owners that facilities built before accessibility standards do not need to make accessibility modifications, or are "grandfathered." On the contrary, each state and local government entity is required by Title II to conduct a self-evaluation of the accessibility of programs and facilities, and create a corresponding Transition Plan to correct identified accessibility deficiencies. Because many facilities built before accessibility standards are mostly inaccessible, the Transition Plan must include ways to remove barriers from these facilities. And according to regulation accessibility standards, altering a facility triggers the need to use the current accessibility standards.

Find out more about the ADA or the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design

U.S. Department of Justice using the toll free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 (Voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY), or go to [ada.gov](http://ada.gov).

U.S. Access Board

United States Access Board 1331 F Street, NW, Suite 1000 Washington, DC 20004-1111  
Phone (voice): (202) 272-0080 Toll free: 800-872-2253 Phone (TTY): (202) 272-0082  
Toll free: 800-993-2822 Fax: (202) 272-0081 [access-board.gov](http://access-board.gov)  
Email: [info@access-board.gov](mailto:info@access-board.gov)

Great Lakes ADA Center

University of Illinois at Chicago Institute on Disability and Human Development (MC 728)  
1640 W. Roosevelt Road, Room 405 Chicago, IL 60608  
Phone: (312) 413-1407 (V/TTY)  
M-F 8 a.m.-5 p.m. CT  
Phone: 800-949-4232 (V/TTY)  
M-F 8 a.m.-5 p.m. CT Fax: (312) 413-1856  
[adagreatlakes.com](http://adagreatlakes.com)

National Center on Accessibility

National Center on Accessibility Indiana University Research Park 501 N. Morton Street,  
Suite 109 Bloomington, IN 47404  
Phone: (812) 856-4422 TTY: (812) 856-4421 Fax: (812) 856-4480  
[ncaonline.org](http://ncaonline.org)  
Email: [nca@indiana.edu](mailto:nca@indiana.edu)

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(183)
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.

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

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

# AMBER CREEK PARK



## **Address**

Northwest intersection of Amber Drive & Topaz Drive

## **Size**

3.42 acres, rectangular in shape

## **History**

This parcel is part of an 80 lot residential subdivision deeded to the city as an outlet for open space and storm water retention. In 2010 it was developed by the Hobart Parks and Recreation with recreational opportunity equipment.

## **Equipment**

- ADA Compliant Picnic Shelter with 2 picnic tables
- ADA Compliant Playground Equipment
- Swings
- Walk/jogging track

## **Facility Needs**

- Improvement of walk/jogging track
- Additional playground equipment
- Add grill
- ADA compliant sidewalk to playground equipment
- Adding trees for interest/shade
- Sidewalk from park to 61st Avenue for connectivity
- Park rules signage
- Additional seating
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Service Area**

This park is accessible by a local functional classification roadway and designed to serve the immediate recreational need of Amber Creek residents. This park is relatively flat with a slight depression for a retention pond, located within the walk/jog track.

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

To connect the park west to Deep River ROW and construct public access for water recreation.

# Arbor Lane Park



## **Address**

Northeast intersection of Cypress Lane and Barberry Drive

## **Size**

2 acres, square in shape

## **History**

This park was developed as a part of the 350 lot Arbor Lane Residential Subdivision and it was developed by the Hobart Parks Department with active recreational opportunity equipment.

## **Equipment**

- ADA Picnic Shelter with picnic tables
- ADA compliant Playground Equipment
- Swings
- Benches

## **Facility Needs**

- Update Playground Equipment
- ADA sidewalk to play equipment
- Add grill
- ADA parking space
- ADA sidewalk for connectivity
- Park rules signage
- Additional seating
- Maintenance and Management plan

## **Service Area**

This park is accessible by a local functional classification roadway and designed to serve the immediate recreational needs of Arbor Lane residents. This park is relatively flat with plenty of tree cover.

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 4,704
- Median Household Income: \$68,199
- Median House Value: \$139,000
- Minority: 779

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park

# Barrington Ridge Park



## **Address**

Southeast intersection of Bracken Parkway & Capitol Drive

## **Size**

1 acre, rectangular in shape

## **History**

This park was developed as a part of the 700 lot Barrington Ridge Subdivision and was installed by the developer.

## **Equipment**

- ADA Compliant Picnic Shelter
- ADA Compliant Playground Equipment
- Swings
- Benches

## **Facility Needs**

- Update Playground Equipment
- Add baseball and or basketball court
- Removal of fence around perimeter
- Add Grill
- Additional seating
- ADA walkway to play equipment
- ADA sidewalk on Bracken Parkway for connectivity
- Park rules signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

**Service Area**

This park is accessible by a local functional classification roadway and designed to serve the immediate recreational needs of Barrington Ridge residents. This park is relatively flat with mowed open space.

**Census Tract**

- Population: 6,437
- Median Household Income: \$62,904
- Median House Value: \$155,200
- Minority: 744

**Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park

## **Brickie Bowl**



### **Address**

705 East 4th Street

### **Size**

1.5 acres, rectangular in shape

### **History**

The Brickie Bowl was acquired from the School City of Hobart.

### **Equipment**

- Football Field
- Track
- Bleachers
- Concession Stand
- Bathroom Facilities
- Storage Rooms

### **Facility Needs**

- ADA walkways on lower level
- Utility upgrades
- Bathroom Upgrades
- Building upgrades
- Secure separation from the PCC complex
- Community rental facility out of flood plain areas in upper level
- Public space plaza
- Acquire "dust bowl" area for field space and necessary additional parking
- Maintenance and Management Plan

### **Service Area**

Relatively flat area with field space within track. Area prone to flooding.

### **Census Tract**

- Population: 4,704
- Median Household Income: \$68,199
- Median House Value: \$139,000
- Minority: 779

### **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a multipurpose open space used for community gatherings and events.

# Brookview Park



## **Address**

1715 Minnesota Street

## **Size**

1.5 acres, triangular in shape

## **History**

This park was developed as part of the 100 lot Brookview Terrance Residential Subdivision and has been upgraded and maintained by the Hobart Parks and Recreation Department since the development of this 1960s subdivision park.

## **Equipment**

- ADA Compliant Picnic Shelter
- Playground Equipment
- Swings
- Basketball Court

### **Facility Needs**

- ADA walkway to playground equipment and shelter
- Add grill
- Additional seating
- Maintenance and Management Plan
- ADA parking space
- Continuation of sidewalk along Minnesota Street
- Park rules signage

### **Service Area**

This park is accessible by a local functional classification roadway and designed to serve the immediate recreational needs of Brookview residents. This park is relatively flat with mowed open space.

### **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

### **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park

# Cardinal Court

## **Address**

Southwest corner of Cardinal Court (cul-de-sac), north of the Oak Savanna Trail along the eastern shoreline of Lake George

## **Size**

1 acre, square in shape

## **History**

Unclear. It could possibly be a remnant parcel of Ittle's Cardinal Cove 15 lot Residential Subdivision.

## **Equipment**

- None

## **Facility Needs**

- Acquire appraisal for sale
- Improve with kayak/canoe resting dock
- Improve with access to the Oak Savanna Trail
- Improve with land acquisition of the undeveloped lot 10

## **Service Area**

This parcel is undeveloped and steep, unstable sloped to Lake George.

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,437
- Median Household Income: \$62,904
- Median House Value: \$155,200
- Minority: 744

## **Long Term Vision**

If a decision is made by the Park Board and Park Department, it could be improved to provide public access to a waterway for a water trail. If the decision is made to sell the property, the Park Department and Park Board could use proceeds to enhance existing parks. Potential interested buyer could be a conservation organization with managed land practice or adjacent property owners.

# City Ball Park



## **Address**

400 East 8th Street

## **Size**

3.6 acres, trapezium in shape

## **History**

This park is maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department and utilized by league players as well as the School City of Hobart.

## **Equipment**

- ADA Compliant Picnic Shelter
- ADA Compliant Playground equipment
- Swings
- Baseball Diamond
- Bathroom Facilities
- Storage Facility
- Access to Oak Savanna Trail
- Large Parking Lot

### **Facility Needs**

- Update Bathroom Facilities
- Additional playground equipment
- Cameras to Curb Vandalism
- Maintenance and Management Plan
- Gateway Marker to Oak Savanna Trail
- Add Sports Lighting to the Field
- Fence around Playground
- Additional Parking off of the Alley
- Park Rules Signage

### **Service Area**

This park is accessible by a local functional classification roadway. The park is relatively flat with mowed open space and a baseball field.

### **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,437
- Median Household Income: \$62,904
- Median House Value: \$155,200
- Minority: 744

### **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park

# **DEEP RIVER PARKWAY**

## **Address**

South and West of Deep River and North and East of Deep River Drive

## **Size**

10 acres, irregular linear in shape

## **History**

Unclear, steep slopes terrain so it may possible be a remnant parcel of Deep River Estates 75 lot Residential Subdivision.

## **Equipment**

- None

## **Facility Needs**

- Acquire an appraisal for sale
- Improve with kayak/canoe stopping dock
- Improve with land acquisition of adjacent triangle residential lot along 61st avenue and West Deep River
- Maintenance and Management Plan if improved

## **Service Area**

Special use, limited accessibility and flood zone.

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

If decision is made by the Park Board and Parks Department, it could be improved to provide public access to a waterway for a water trail. A decision could be made to sell the property and use the proceeds to enhance existing parks. Potential interested buyers could be a conservation organization with managed land practice or adjacent property owners.

# **DOUGHBOY PLAZA**



## **Address**

South and West of Deep River and North and East of Deep River Drive North of 7th Street, West of Main Street, East of Lincoln Street

## **Size**

1/4 acres, triangle in shape Flat with lawn and memorial brick pavers

## **History**

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 in memory of those who lost their lives in World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. A major restoration occurred in the spring of 2001.

## **Equipment**

- Benches
- Monument
- Memorial Plaques
- Flag Poles

## **Facility Needs**

- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,437
- Median Household Income: \$62,904
- Median House Value: \$155,200
- Minority: 744

## **Long Term Vision**

To maintain as a war memorial.

# **EMILY SILICH PARK**



## **Address**

401 West 40th Avenue

## **Size**

1.81 acres, rectangular in shape

## **History**

This park was named after a popular City Council member who was a strong supporter of expanding park facilities. The park sits located East of Wisconsin Street adjacent to an apartment complex and the YMCA property. Located near a high density multifamily development, it provides necessary open space and recreation opportunities in close proximity.

## **Equipment**

- Picnic Shelter
- Playground Equipment
- Swing Set
- Basketball Court
- Nature Preserve access

### **Facility Needs**

- Updated ADA compliant playground equipment
- ADA compliant walkway to playground, shelter, and court
- Partnership program with YMCA/SHLT
- Add grill
- Park rules signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

### **Census Tract**

- Population: 5,610
- Median Household Income: \$42,297
- Median House Value: \$110,300
- Minority: 1,107

### **Long Term Vision**

To maintain as a neighborhood park but add/replace play equipment to better suit the usage.

Partnering with the YMCA and Shirley Heinz Land Trust on programming opportunities.

# ENGLEHART PARK



## **Address**

4101 Howard Street

## **Size**

1.59 acres, rectangular in shape. Limited and unimproved accessibility

## **History**

Unclear, % Laura Ash, undeveloped remnant lot of Chas M. Barney Gary Park Subdivision

## **Equipment**

- Playground Equipment
- Open Field Space

## **Facility Needs**

- Acquire an appraisal for sale
- ADA walkway to play equipment
- Update playground equipment
- Repurpose as Marsh outlook point

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

If a decision is made by the Park Board and Park Department to sell the property the Park Department and Park Board could use proceeds to enhance existing parks. Potential interested buyers could be a conservation organization with managed land practice or adjacent property owners including Evergreen Memorial Park.

# FESTIVAL PARK



## **Address**

111 East Old Ridge Road

## **Size**

14 acres, irregular concave quadrilateral shape. Relatively flat, mowed open space with slightly rolling topography and stabilized shoreline.

## **History**

The park was a former clay pit and fish hatchery, it was later filled with slurry and sediment from dredging of Lake George.

## **Equipment**

- Bandshell
- Fountain
- Community Center
- Bathroom Facilities
- ADA Compliant Playground Equipment
- Swings
- ADA Compliant Kayak/Canoe Launch
- Fishing Pier
- Large Parking Lot
- ADA Compliant walking path

## **Facility Needs**

- ADA compliant walkway to playground
- Upgrade or new Bandshell shelter
- Upgrade bathroom facilities
- Add ADA playground equipment
- Water Fountain
- Old remaining pavers removed and replaced with concrete ADA compliant walkway
- Park Rules Signage
- Additional seating
- Expand seawall in the Southeast section of park
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Service Area**

Community Park. This park is a multi-use park used by multiple neighborhoods with a variety of interests and community events.

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a community park.

# FESTIVAL PARK COMMUNITY CENTER



## **Address**

111 East Old Ridge Road

## **Size**

4,800 Square Foot Building

## **History**

During the September 2008 flood the Hobart Community Center was damaged beyond repair. Until May 2010, it was closed waiting on funding so that a new building could replace it. The City broke ground on a new \$950,000 facility with a 150 capacity banquet room, 25 capacity conference/classroom combination, 2 offices, full kitchen, buffet room, beverage area, and a 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 and recreation opportunity. Two nights a week aerobics 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 parties, 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.

## **Equipment**

- ADA Compliant Banquet Room
- Bathroom Facilities
- Full Kitchen
- Beverage Area
- Buffet Area
- Large Outdoor Patio
- ADA Compliant Ramp and Deck
- Park Department Offices

## **Facility Needs**

- Upgrade Kitchen
- Replace Flooring
- Fresh Paint
- Deck Repairs
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

To maintain as the Park Department offices and community rental space.

## FRED ROSE 8TH STREET



### **Address**

200 West 8th Street

### **Size**

26.08 combined with Fred Rose Lakeshore

### **History**

This park is located on the shores of Lake George. The park was connected to Fred Rose Lakeshore Park by a suspension bridge. This bridge was removed due to age of the bridge and unsafe conditions.

### **Equipment**

- Park Department Maintenance Garage
- Bathroom Facilities
- Playground Equipment
- Swings
- Basketball Court
- Tennis Court
- Picnic Shelter

### **Facility Needs**

- Updated Maintenance building with public restrooms
- ADA walkway to playground and shelter
- Additional ADA compliant playground equipment
- Update shelter
- Additional seating
- Repair/upgrade Tennis Courts
- Install ADA Compliant pedestrian bridge to re-connect to Fred Rose Lakeshore
- ADA Compliant Fishing pier
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

**Census Tract**

- Population: 6,437
- Median Household Income: \$62,904
- Median House Value: \$155,200
- Minority: 744

**Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

# **FRED ROSE LAKESHORE**



## **Address**

400 Lakeshore Drive

## **Size**

26.08 combined with Fred Rose Lakeshore

## **History**

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. 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.

## **Equipment**

- Playground Equipment
- ADA walking trail
- Benches
- Natural Landscape

## **Facility Needs**

- Removal of playground
- Picnic Shelter
- Install additional seating
- Install ADA compliant pedestrian bridge to re-connect to Fred Rose 8th Street
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

**Census Tract**

- Population: 6,437
- Median Household Income: \$62,904
- Median House Value: \$155,200
- Minority: 744

**Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

# **GLENWOOD PARK**



## **Address**

15 Place & Swift Street

## **Size**

6.8 acres, square in shape.

## **History**

This park is in the Southwest corner of the City. Although it contains 6.8 acres only 1 acre is developed for park use. The undeveloped area is heavy wooded and has unsuitable terrain for park development. Access to the park is limited to a narrow access between two houses.

## **Equipment**

- Playground Equipment
- Basketball Court
- Swings

## **Facility Needs**

- Upgrade playground equipment
- Enhance entrance signage
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

# TED HANSEN PARK



## **Address**

3860 Maxwell Street

## **Size**

1.36 acres, square in shape

## **History**

This park provides adequate neighborhood park facilities to a neighborhood which is somewhat remote from other parks.

## **Equipment**

- ADA Playground Equipment
- Swing set
- Picnic Shelter
- Parking Lot

## **Facility Needs**

- Park history signage
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

**Census Tract**

- Population: 5,610
- Median Household Income: \$42,297
- Median House Value: \$110,300
- Minority: 1,107

**Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park

# HILLMAN PARK



## **Address**

2555 West Old Ridge Road

## **Size**

37.92 acres, rectangular in shape

## **History**

Improvements since the previous masterplan include paving the access drive, rebuilt picnic shelters, drainage improvements, and a new handicap accessible walk path.

## **Equipment**

- 2 Softball fields
- Basketball Court
- Swing Set
- 2 Picnic Shelters
- Bathroom Facilities

## **Facility Needs**

- Improve Parking Lot
- Build new building and bathrooms facilities
- Expand/upgrade sports fields
- Land acquisition
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

**Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

**Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a community park with hopes of expanding the sports complex.

# HILLMAN HEIGHTS PARK



## **Address**

North Hansen Boulevard

## **Size**

3.41 acres, rectangular in shape

## **History**

This park is located in the Hillman Heights subdivision.

## **Equipment**

- Playground equipment
- Swings
- Basketball court
- Picnic shelter

## **Facility Needs**

- Update playground equipment
- ADA walkway to playground, shelter, and basketball court
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 5,610
- Median Household Income: \$42,297
- Median House Value: \$110,300
- Minority: 1,107

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

# HOBART POOL



## **Address**

825 West 10th Street

## **Size**

5.10 acres, rectangular in shape

## **History**

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 2005, the Hobart Industrial Economic Development Corporation purchased the pool and deeded it to the City of Hobart. 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 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 recreation opportunity. The usage of the pool is expected to grow, but no major improvements are expected during the 5-year study period.

## **Equipment**

- Pool
- Splash Pad
- Bathroom Facilities
- Volleyball Court
- Skate Park
- Picnic Shelter
- Concession Stand

## **Facility Needs**

- Update the building facility with new ADA compliant restrooms, gate house, and concession area
- ADA compliant Playground Equipment
- Update splash pad
- Resurface/update parking lot
- Update/Expand or move skate park to new site
- ADA walkway to each amenity
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,437
- Median Household Income: \$62,904
- Median House Value: \$155,200
- Minority: 744

## **Long Term Vision**

To maintain as a community pool facility by upgrading and expanding this location amenities.

# LAKEFRONT PARK



## **Address**

West of Main Street

## **Size**

2 acres, linear in shape

## **History**

Lakefront Park is located in downtown Hobart along Lake George. In 1996 Lakefront Park underwent major construction. It was developed with City funds, park bond, LWCF grant, 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 quiet passive time.

Phase III, which is located behind City Hall at 414 Main Street, was completed after the previous master plan. It continues the metamorphosis which has occurred also what use to be an un-developed, ill-maintained eyesore into an appealing popular recreational feature. Aesthetic improvements were the focus of this last phase, which include another fishing and boat dock, parking lot beautification and landscaping, and decorative wall bank stabilization. The lakefront 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.

## **Equipment**

- Lake Gazebo
- Fountains
- Benches
- Walking Path
- Fountain
- Fishing

### **Facility Needs**

- Water Fountain
- Improve Landscaping
- Replace/redesign lakefront railings
- Replace gazebo decking
- Repaint gazebo
- Replace paved walkway
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

### **Census Tract**

- Population: 4,704
- Median Household Income: \$68,199
- Median House Value: \$139,000
- Minority: 779

### **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a community park.

# MCAFEE PARK



## **Address**

2630 Drexel Drive

## **Size**

2.61 acres, square in shape

## **History**

This park is located in the middle of a large subdivision on Hobart's East side. Parking is available only on the streets outside the park. A significant amount of open space is available for activities and additional playground equipment.

## **Equipment**

- Playground
- Swings
- Basketball Court
- Field Space
- Picnic Tables

## **Facility Needs**

- ADA compliant updated playground
- ADA compliant paved entrance and parking lot in park
- Improved entrance signage
- Add baseball/softball field
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 4,704
- Median Household Income: \$68,199
- Median House Value: \$139,000
- Minority: 779

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

# **MERRILLVILLE HEIGHTS PARK**

## **Address**

61st Avenue & Minnesota Street

## **Size**

2.5 acres, triangular in shape

## **History**

This park has limited access and is not often used. Unfortunately, developers were allowed to dedicate property for park use, which was remote and not buildable due to so much of the park being in wetlands.

## **Equipment**

- None

## **Facility Needs**

- Appraisal for sale
- Improved access
- Transfer to Stormwater District

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,370
- Median Household Income: \$65,878
- Median House Value: \$186,700
- Minority: 2,040

## **Long Term Vision**

To get the property appraised for a possible sale to interested neighboring entities or transfer to Stormwater department.

# JERRY PAVESE PARK



## **Address**

500 South Lake Park Avenue

## **Size**

8 acres, linear in shape

## **History**

This park is located on the North shore of Lake George. There have been significant improvements since the previous master plan. A new boat dock, a boat ramp, a new playground area, new restroom and expanded parking is now in use and has a high rate of usage.

The Park Department received a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for 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 be needed to gain access and link the two parcels.

## **Equipment**

- Bathroom Facilities
- Playground Equipment
- Swings
- Picnic Shelter
- Boat Ramp
- Log Cabin
- Parking

## **Facility Needs**

- Bridge linking adding Pleak Park parcel
- Fish Shoot
- Upgrade Lighting
- Repurpose Tennis Court Slab
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a community park and establish future partnership programming with scout cabin.

# PENNSY PARK



## **Address**

925 Lillian Street

## **Size**

2.2 acres, linear in shape

## **History**

This park is located in a populated neighborhood and is widely used. The park 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 Parks Department.

## **Equipment**

- Bathroom Facilities
- Playground Equipment
- Basketball Court
- Tennis Court
- Picnic Shelter
- Softball Practice Field
- Pennsylvania Railroad Station Building

## **Facility Needs**

- Updated ADA Compliant Playground Equipment
- Repurpose Tennis/Basketball Court into Pickleball
- Repurpose Pennsy Building for future rental space
- Add shuffleboard behind restrooms
- ADA Compliant walkway to playground equipment
- Dog Park
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 4,704
- Median Household Income: \$68,199
- Median House Value: \$139,000
- Minority: 779

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

# **PLEAK PARK**

## **Address**

None. Undeveloped, West of Pavese Park

## **Size**

6.4 acres, linear in shape

## **History**

This park was acquired through a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant for Indiana Department of Natural Resources. It sits west of the existing portion of Pavese Park. A pedestrian bridge will be needed to gain access and link the two parcels. The park is heavily wooded and is to be preserved and maintained as a quality natural area.

## **Equipment**

- None

## **Facility Needs**

- Pedestrian Bridge Connection
- Create Passive walking Trails
- Stabilize Shoreline
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan
- Maintenance Service access road

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a natural area.

# **ROBINSON LAKE PARK**



## **Address**

5250 S Liverpool Road

## **Size**

32.68 acres, rectangle in shape

## **History**

This park is located on the West side of Hobart bordering I-65. 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 finding difficulties the supervised swim and boat activities were suspended in 2008. Since that time a painted mural has been provided by Friend of Robinson Lake on the wall of the old restroom building and increased attention to mowing and erosion control.

Robinson Lake is 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.

The facility is used by a large number of people during the summer. At the time of the last masterplan, the park has two large shelters, many picnic tables, two sand volleyball courts, playground equipment, walking trails, horseshoe pits. There were also handicapped accessible restrooms and a block building for storage and a lifeguard office. More than other parks, Robinson's deteriorated to a marginal facility with outdated playground equipment, washroom facilities which has fallen into disrepair, and walk trail with erosion and tripping hazards. Robinson Lake Park holds a great deal of potential because of the size and water feature not found in other parks. It will also serve 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.

## **Equipment**

- 2 Picnic Shelters
- Playground Equipment
- Bathroom Facilities
- Bike Trail Access
- Parking Lot
- Storage Building

## **Facility Needs**

- Updated ADA Compliant Playground Equipment
- Updated Bathroom Facilities
- Extended Parking Lot
- Sand for Beach area
- Fishing Deck
- Sand Volleyball Court
- Paved Walking Trail around Lake
- Erosion Control
- Culvert Repair
- Updated Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,526
- Median Household Income: \$69,828
- Median House Value: \$130,500
- Minority: 962

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

# **SOCCER & RUGBY FIELD**



## **Address**

112 East Old Ridge Road

## **Size**

8.26 acres, rectangle in shape

## **History**

This park is located across from Festival Park and close to the downtown area. It is bordered by Deep River on the east 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. The park has been home to the Northwest Indiana Rugby 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.

## **Equipment**

- Field Space
- Field Goals
- Walking Track
- Parking Lots

## **Facility Needs**

- Upgrade and pave parking lots
- Improve Walking Track
- Add Seating
- Add Lighting
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 5,610
- Median Household Income: \$42,297
- Median House Value: \$110,300
- Minority: 1,107

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a community park.

# **THIRD STREET PARKWAY**

## **Address**

3rd Street Median West of Main Street

## **Size**

2 acres, linear in shape

## **History**

This site contains the park islands on 3rd Street between Ash Street and Lake Park Avenue. It is one of the main roadways to 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 to fall. This area maintains as a green belt with some shrubbery and flowers planted at each end of the island. There are no active recreational uses on this parkway.

## **Equipment**

- Park signage for Jerry Pavese Park

## **Facility Needs**

- ADA Walkway down the middle
- Increased Landscaping

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 4,704
- Median Household Income: \$68,199
- Median House Value: \$139,000
- Minority: 779

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as park islands

# VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK



## **Address**

5899 East 73rd Avenue

## **Size**

19.75 acres, rectangular in shape

## **History**

The land for the park was initially donated by the Reese family. There were 2 picnic shelters installed and a Veteran Memorial was created in 1996. In 2007 a playground was installed on the property. The Parks Department developed a sledding hill area in 2014.

## **Equipment**

- Bathroom Facilities
- Playground Equipment
- Storage
- Soccer Fields
- Veterans Memorial Monument
- 2 Picnic Shelters
- Parking Lot

## **Facility Needs**

- Rental Facility
- ADA Walkway to Playground
- Add grills
- Dog Park
- Park Rules Signage
- Maintenance and Management Plan

## **Census Tract**

- Population: 6,370
- Median Household Income: \$65,878
- Median House Value: \$186,700
- Minority: 2,040

## **Long Term Vision**

To fulfill the facility needs and maintain as a neighborhood park.

## **CURRENT PROGRAMS**

### **Softball League**

All games are played at Hillman Park. In the summer, the Softball Director is on site to handle any issues 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 fall, the league is run in September and October with about 24-32 teams playing a 10 game schedule with a double elimination tournament.

### **Yoga**

This program is held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Hobart Community Center. The classes are taught by a trained instructor and are an hour long.

### **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 to the community.

### **Arts in the Park**

The summer program is held Monday through Friday for a few hours at five different park locations. Lessons and crafts are overseen by two instructors and the activities vary every day.

## **Long-Range Plan**

Consider purchasing additional property north of Robinson Lake for future development.

Purchase the "dust bowl" area adjacent to Brickie Bowl.

Provide a large destination playground for the community.

Address the erosion problems along the shores of Lake George.

Expansion of recreation programs and facilities according to the communities needs and wants.

Continue a cooperative relationship between the Parks and Recreation Board and the School City of Hobart.

Continue to update the playground equipment and other facilities throughout the park system in compliance with ADA requirements.

Provide an extensive trail system throughout the City of Hobart for walking, running, biking, rollerblading, etc.

## **Short-Range Plan**

### **2017**

- Appraise and consider the sale of Cardinal Court, Glenwood, Merrillville Heights, and Englehart Parks.
- Expand the use of the scout cabin.
- Add ADA compliant playground equipment at Festival Park.
- Replace playground equipment and swings ADA compliant at Brookview Park.
- Add ADA compliant playground equipment and modify shelter at Fred Rose/Lakeshore Park.

## **2018**

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

## **2019**

- Conduct shoreline restoration, and install boat dock for Robinson Lake Park.
- Add sledding hill at Veteran's Memorial Park.
- Improve walk trail at Amber Creek Park.
- Assuming Englehart Park is retained, replace the current playground equipment with ADA compliant model.
- Assuming Glenwood Park is retained, replace the current playground equipment with ADA compliant model.

## **2020**

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

## **2021**

- Add a second playground, swings, shelter in Arbor Lane Park.
- Add a second playground, swings, shelter and acquire more land in Barrington Ridge Park.
- 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.

Trails that will enhance tourism, promote healthy lifestyles, and help boost economic development along those corridors and in surrounding communities.

## 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, development, and improvement.

## 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 establishes.

## 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.

## 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.

### 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.

Cooperative planning are:

A city park department and a community development agency plan the renovation of an old park in the city's central business district. The park is an integral part of the redevelopment agency's downtown revitalization plan.

Several park boards plan the development of a contiguous greenways trail system linking their respective towns while protecting natural resources.

A town park board plans to develop a sports complex that is proposed in a regional/community economic development project.

A city parks department and a neighborhood non-profit community center cooperatively plan programs and facilities aimed at expanding recreational opportunities for youth, including sports competitions and playground activities

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

Since 1965, the LWCF program has been instrumental in land protection and outdoor recreation development. On the national level, it acquires land for the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the USDA Forest Service. It also benefits state and local governments by providing 50/50 matching reimbursement grants for outdoor recreation and park land acquisition and facility development. The minimum grant amount is \$10,000 with a maximum award of \$200,000. Indiana has benefited from LWCF more than any other grant program. Through the program's first 42 years in Indiana, more than 530 grant projects have been approved, with over 30,000 acres of park land acquired, totaling more than \$75 million dollars.

There are two eligibility requirements to receive LWCF assistance:

The applicant must be an established town, city, township or county park and recreation board legally established under Indiana Code, (typically under IC.36- 10-3).

The park board must have an IDNR-OR approved five-year park and recreation master plan on file.

### **Recreational Trails Program (RTP)**

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is federal transportation enhancements funding formerly known as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which superseded the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and had been the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) before that. No matter what name the law has currently, it provides funds through the Federal Highway Administration for motorized and non-motorized trails and trail-related projects. It represents a portion of the federal motor fuel excise tax paid by users of off-road recreational vehicles. The program provides 80/20 reimbursement/match grants for eligible projects. A minimum of 30 percent of the grant must be for motorized use, 30 percent for non-motorized use, and the remainder is discretionary funds. The minimum grant amount is \$10,000 with a maximum award of \$150,000.

Eligible land acquisition and/or development projects must provide public access to trails for user-groups, alone or in combination. These user groups are represented by the Indiana Trails Advisory Board (TAB). The TAB represents different interests including: hikers, OHV users, bicyclists, trail users with disabilities, equestrians, sport enthusiasts, snowmobile riders and environmentalists. Applicants can be either governmental agencies or 501(c)(3) not-for-profits. Representative projects include:

Trails development.

Land purchase.

Stream and river water trail access sites.

Bridges.

Boardwalks.

Signage.

Sanitary facilities associated with a trailhead.

### **President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust Fund**

Formerly called the Indiana Heritage Trust, the Indiana General Assembly created the program in 1992 for the sole purpose of buying land from willing sellers to protect Indiana's rich natural heritage. It is funded by the sale of Environmental license plates, general appropriations, and contributions from corporations, foundations, and individuals. Representative projects include the purchase of properties that have examples of outstanding natural or cultural features, and provide areas for conservation, recreation, and restoration of native biological diversity. Since the beginning of the program, the trust has acquired more than 50,000 acres.

**For additional information, contact:**

President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust Fund  
402 W. Washington St., Room W256  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 233-1002

**Hometown Indiana**

The Hometown Indiana Grant is **not currently funded**; funded monies are potentially allocated every two years by the state legislature. The Indiana General Assembly established the Hometown Indiana Grant Program in 1988. The program was established to assist local agencies in:

Meeting present and future recreation needs (administered by the Division of Outdoor Recreation).

Preserving historic sites and structures (administered by the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology).

Community forestry projects (administered by the Division of Forestry).

Hometown park and recreation funds are available to municipal corporations, and are a 50/50 reimbursement match. Municipalities with a legally established park board are strongly recommended to have an approved five year master plan on file with IDNR-OR.

Representative Hometown recreation projects include:

- Purchase of property for recreation.
- Development of recreational facilities.
- Construction of trails.
- Interpretation of natural and historic resources.

## **Alphabetical Listing of Various Parks and Recreation Master Plan Assistance and Information Sources, and/or Consultants**

A.J. Dodzik, Consulting Engineers  
111 W. Columbia St. #9  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
(260) 483-9117

Adler Design Group, LLC  
6368 Hillview Circle  
Fishers, IN 46038  
(317) 603-0166

Administrative Resources Association  
3200 Sycamore court, Suite 1A  
Columbus, IN 47203  
(812) 376-9949

Anorlas Enterprises, Inc. Matthew L.  
Dickey  
5188 Woodside Court  
Carmel IN, 46033  
317-844-2289

Arsh Goup Inc.  
8396 Mississippi Street, Suite A  
Merrillville, IN 46410  
(219) 796-9050

Association of Indiana Convention and  
Visitors Bureaus  
1515 E. 80th, St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46240  
(317) 466-1250  
<http://www.aicvb.org/>

Ball State University – College of  
Architecture and Planning  
AB 104  
Ball State University  
Muncie, IN 47306  
(765) 285-5859

Banning Engineering, PC  
853 Columbia Road, Suite 101  
Plainfield, IN 46168  
(317) 707-3726

Bernardin, Lochmueller and Associates  
Inc.  
6125 South East Street/US 31 South  
Indianapolis, IN 46227-2128  
(888) 830-6977

Bonar Group  
1700 Magnavox Way,  
Suite110  
Fort Wayne, IN 46804  
(260) 969-8800

Browning, Day, Mullins, Dierdorf P.C.  
Landscape Architecture, Architecture,  
Planning  
626 N. Illinois Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 635-5030

Burnidge Cassell Associates, Inc.  
25 S. Grove Avenue, Ste. 500  
Elgin, IL 60120 (847) 695-5840

Butler, Fairman, and Seufert, Inc.  
8450 Westfield Boulevard #300  
Indianapolis, IN 46240  
(317) 713-4615

Center for Urban Policy and the  
Environment (IUPUI)  
334 N. Senate Ave., Suite 300  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 261-3000

Claire Bennett and Associates, Inc. (now  
CBA)  
277 E. 12th Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
(317) 951-0000

Commonwealth Engineers, Inc.  
7256 Company Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46237  
(317) 888-1177

Context, LLC  
12 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Fortville, IN 46040  
(317) 485-6900

Cornerstone Planning and Design Inc.  
Deb Schmucker  
P.O. Box 6095  
Fishers, IN 46038  
Bus: (317) 849-0600  
Bus Fax: (317) 596-9006

Cripe Architects and Engineers  
7172 Graham Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46250  
(317) 845-7086

Design Alliance Architects  
6915 Hohman Ave.  
Hammond, IN 46324  
(219) 931-1991

Design Perspectives, Inc.  
212 N. Center St.  
Naperville, IL 60540  
(630) 428-0223

DJ Case and Associates  
317 E. Jefferson Blvd.  
Mishawaka, IN 46545  
(574) 258-0100

DLZ. Associates Inc. Steve Ribble  
2211 East Jefferson Blvd.  
South Bend, IN 46615  
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Duke Energy – Indiana Partners in  
Economic Development  
1000 E. Main St.  
Plainfield, IN 46168  
(800) 688-0688  
<http://www.locationindiana.com/local/contacts/>

Earth Plan Associates, Inc. Robert C.  
Arnold, CEO Jerome Byanski, President  
808 Flint Pass  
Fort Wayne, IN 46845  
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Earth Source Inc. (Heartland Restoration  
Serv.)  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46818  
(260) 489-8511

Eastern Indiana Development District  
1201 Race Street, Room 109  
New Castle, IN 47362  
(765) 521-0931

Edwards and Kelcey  
Richard Twitchell, ASLA  
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Chicago, IL 60606  
(312) 384-6311

Eppley Institute for Parks and Public  
Lands Indiana University  
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GAI Consultants, Inc  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46814  
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Green 3 LLC.  
Historic Fountain Square  
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Indianapolis, IN 46203  
(317) 634-4110

Hannum, Waggle, and Cline Engineering  
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Indianapolis, IN 46278-1728  
(317) 347-3663

Historic Southern Indiana University of  
Southern Indiana  
8600 University Boulevard  
Evansville, IN 47712  
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HNTB Corporation  
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Bus: (317) 636-4682

Indiana Association of Cities and Towns  
200 S. Meridian, Suite 340  
Indianapolis, IN 46225  
(317) 237-6200

Indiana Economic Development Corp.  
One North Capitol, Suite 700  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2288  
(317) 232-8800

Indiana Grantmakers Alliance, Inc.  
32 E. Washington Street, Suite 1100  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 630-5200

Indiana Recreation Equipment and  
Design, Inc.  
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Gary, IN 46403  
(219) 938-4440

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Kendallville, IN 46755  
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Indiana Region 15 Planning Commission  
221 E. First Street  
Ferdinand, IN 47532  
(812) 367-8455

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Recreation and Sport Management  
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Indiana Rural Recreation Development  
Program  
Dr. Nathan Schaumleffel  
Arena B – Room 56B  
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(812) 237-2183

Jacobi, Toombs and Lanz, Inc.  
120 Bell Ave.  
Clarksville, IN 47172  
(812) 288-6646

J.F. New and Associates  
708 Roosevelt Road  
Walkerton, IN 46574  
(574) 586-3400

Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning  
Commission (KIRPC)  
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P.O. Box 127  
Monon, IN 47959  
(219) 253-6658

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Indianapolis, IN 46202  
(317) 955-9155

Keiser Consulting, LLC  
318 North Highland Avenue  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
(317) 624-1834

The LandPlan Group, LLC  
108 West Columbia Street  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
(260) 422-2522

Larry R. Long and Associates, Inc.  
611 S. Buffalo St.  
Warsaw, IN 46580  
(574) 269-6333

Lawson-Fisher Associates  
525 W. Washington Ave.  
South Bend, IN 46601  
(574) 234-3167

Lehman & Lehman, Inc.  
510 Lincolnway East, Suite C  
Mishawaka, IN 46544-2042  
(574) 257-0255

Longardner and Associates  
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Indianapolis, IN 46205  
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Lougheed Associates  
4605 Illinois Road  
Fort Wayne, IN 46804-1117  
(260) 432-3665

Mader Design LLC  
8880 S. Franklin Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46259  
(317) 750-8017

Madison County Council of Governments  
(MCCOG)  
16 East 9th Street, Room 100  
Anderson, IN 46016  
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Martin Riley Architects  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
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Michiana Area Council of Governments  
227 W. Jefferson Blvd., Room 1120  
South Bend, IN 46601  
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Midwestern Engineers, Inc.  
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MSKTD Architects, Engineers, Interiors  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46804  
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National Center on Accessibility Indiana  
University Research Park  
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Bloomington, IN 47404  
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Northeastern Indiana Regional  
Coordinating Council  
1 Main Street, Room 630  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802-1804  
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Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning  
Commission  
6100 Southport Road  
Portage, IN 46368  
(219) 763-6060

Odle, McGuire and Shook Corporation  
5875 Castle Creek Parkway, Suite 440  
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Polis Center  
IUPUI School of Liberal Arts  
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PROS Consulting LLC – (formerly Leon  
Younger & Pros)  
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Purdue Center for Regional  
Development Burton D. Morgan Center  
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West Lafayette, IN 47907-2057  
(765) 494-7279

R.P. Murphy and Associates  
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Ratio Architects  
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Remenschneider Associates, Inc.  
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Fort Wayne, IN 46808-1333  
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SEBREE Architects, Inc.  
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Short, Elliott, Hendrickson Inc.  
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3425  
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Woolpert Consultants  
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Indianapolis, IN 46268-2183  
(317) 299-7500

# **MASTER PLAN 2017 - 2021**

## **STRENGTHS**

- Budget increases and support from city government
- 500 acres of park lands
- Well maintained
- Appreciate playgrounds and natural areas for all ages
- Community Center
- Variety of sports fields and park uses from passive and active mix of land and water activities
- Lake George/Deep River opportunities
- Trails, trail spurs, and system connections
- Good progress on community events and programs
- Quantity and quality of park space and opportunities
- Diversity of parks, including water, passive, and active use for all ages
- Administration financial and personnel support
- Positive financial capacity
- Strong Friends and volunteer groups

## **WEAKNESSES**

- Community Center acoustics
- No environmental stewardship
- Lack of big picture vision
- No park foundation
- Lack of volunteers
- Lack of water use activities
- Lack of a maintenance plan for each park
- Lack of communication and compromise among interests
- No ecological and sustainable educational programs
- No in-house nursery
- No sub-area plan for each park
- Inadequate cooperation for a causes
- Insufficient ADA
- Park recycling program
- Limiting financial capacity, constraints, and cuts for implementation
- Disconnect and conflicts between elected officials, personnel, and citizens
- Aging facilities and infrastructure
- Professional development and training for staff
- Communication, inclusivity
- Staff ratio to park acreage

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Create a Management and Maintenance Plan for parks and environmentally sensitive areas
- Installation or upgrade of park facilities
- Expand park space and facilities to nearby land
- Develop water activity programs
- Stabilization of parks with shorelines
- Creating a nature park
- Diversifying park uses
- Creating park and environmental education stations
- Increasing ADA
- Creating or enlarging gathering spaces
- Partnerships with local organizations for park enhancement and use
- Actively seek and compete for grant opportunities
- Designate a dog park
- Connect trails to parks
- Form a park foundation
- Park acquisition and facilities
- Increase activities and programs

## **THREATS**

- Incompatible property development adjacent existing parks
- Inadequate and missing ADA facilities
- Lack of a Management and Maintenance Plan for parks and environmentally sensitive areas
- Limited improvements and upgrades to existing park facilities
- Lack of park gathering space
- Lack of park and trail way-finding signage
- Insufficient natural areas in park
- Excessive natural areas in park
- Lack of a diversified park programs to attract and retain residents
- Limited professional development of park staff and maintenance
- Vandalism to park facilities
- Community perception and comparison
- Adjacent community amenities
- Communication conflicts among organizational interests

All park boards will deal with site planning as parks and facilities are developed, but many function without operation and maintenance plans. We strongly recommend all three levels of planning for park board.

## **PLAN USE AND CHANGES**

The City of Hobart Parks and Recreation Master Plan allows you to review your present recreation situation with an eye towards Hobart's future recreation opportunities through the following steps:

- STEP 1** Identifying important local issues and needs.
- STEP 2** Evaluating available alternatives.
- STEP 3** Setting priorities for courses of action to meet your identified needs.

To be responsive to changing needs, planning must be flexible. Keeping the plan simple will help make it flexible. All information, analysis, assumptions and justifications behind the plan's priorities and recommendations should be clearly stated. As change occurs, it will be easier to determine which recommendations remain valid and which do not.

**By continuing to incorporate and analyze new information, the plan will always remain current.**

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.

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 : Forecasted Population

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

Year	Population
2000	25,363
2008	27,981
2010	29,059
2020	32,550

Households by Type

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>
Households:	9,855	11,000	11,194	11,590
Family Households	70.8%	65%	66.8%	64.8%
Married-couple family:	56.3%	52.8%	52.8%	48.7%
Female Householder, no husbands present	10.3%	6.6%	8.3%	9.4%
Non-family households	29.2%	34.9%	33.2%	35.2%
Householder living alone	24.1%	29.2%	28.9%	30%
Householder 65 years and over	10.4%	10.1%	10%	10.3%
Households with individuals under 18 years	33.5%	27.8%	29.6%	29%

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

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.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2008</b>
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 no degree	4,816	5,128
Percent of total with some college no 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

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.

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

YEAR	Table 1: Population of Hobart	
	POPULATION	DIFFERENCE
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
2015 ACS	28,943	-116

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.

	1989	2008	2010	2015
Households:	8,344	11,000	11,194	11,590
Less than \$9,999	722	451	496 (4 %)	
\$10,000-\$14,999	577	374	408 (4 %)	391
\$15,000-\$24,999	1,436	1,078	1,274 (11 %)	1,102
\$25,000-\$34,999	1,369	1,111	1,200 (11 %)	1,113
\$35,000-\$49,999	1,882	1,518	1,450 (13 %)	1,655
\$50,000-\$74,999	1,628	2,530	2,968 (27%)	2,780
\$75,000-\$99,999	322	2,178	1,817 (16 %)	1,999
\$100,000-\$150,000	408	1,441	1,322 (12 %)	1,475
\$150,000 or more	55	319	259 (2 %)	617
Median Household income			\$54,301	\$58,246
Mean Household Income			\$60,772	\$66,477

Source: 1989 U. S. Census and 2008 Estimate

2010

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19,771

17,636

89.2%

4,983

25.2%

3,203

16.2%

**2015**

---

20,571

18,192

88.4 %

4,660

22.7%

3,716

18%

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.

## Conceptual Parks Model

Jurisdictional responsibility	Park Classification
Federal and State	National Parks
	State Parks & Recreation Areas State Parks
	State Recreation Areas
	State Reservoirs
	Urban/Regional Parks
	State Natural Resource Areas State Forest
	State Fish & Wildlife Areas State Natural Preserves
County and Township	County District Parks
	Forest Preserves Nature Preserves
	Special Facilities
	County Community Parks
Municipal	Community Parks
	Community-wide facilities
	Specialized facilities
	Neighborhood Parks
	Large Neighborhood Parks
	Small Neighborhood Parks
	Sub-Neighborhood Parks Block Parks
	Tot-Lots

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.

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

### Standards and Summary

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: Recreational Facility Standards and summary

<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.

### 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.

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

Year

Table 10: Park  
Acreage Needs

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	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

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.

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

Brookview – ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled beyond 5 year plan period.

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

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

Englehart – ADA compliant playground scheduled beyond 5 year study plan.

Festival Park/Community Center – restrooms compliant; ADA compliant playground scheduled beyond 5 year plan.

Fred Rose/8<sup>th</sup> Street - ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled beyond 5 year plan.

Fred Rose/Lakeshore - ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled beyond 5 year plan.

Glenwood - ADA compliant picnic shelter and playground scheduled beyond 5 year plan.

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 Park – ADA compliant walkway in place.

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

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

Rugby Field – not ADA compliant, 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.

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

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	Picnic Tables	4
Spring Totter	1	Golf Courses	3
Spring Horses	20	Football Fields	3
Monkey Bars	2	Canoe Launch	11
Merry-go-rounds	7	Fishing Pier	1
Softball fields	8	Swimming Pools	4
Tennis Courts	8	Gyms	3
Basketball Courts	4	Boat Ramp	1
Baseball Fields	5	Horseshoe Pits	9
Running Tracks	3	Dugouts	8
Volleyball Goals	3	Restrooms	9
Rugby Field	1	Shelters	6

Level of Service (LOS) Standards for Parks and Open Space is a method developed by the National Recreation and Park Association. It guides communities to set local standards based on expressed public need, values and expectations, and is expressed in acres/1000 people. The method requires an assessment of existing facilities, public input and the ability to measure and prioritize needs. LOS allows communities to establish what is best for its citizens, what they can afford and how to strategically plan for the cost of needed facilities. The process is described in "Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines" by James D. Mertes and James R. Hall, and first published by the National Recreation and Parks Association in 1983.

The Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) was established by the USDA Forest Service to determine the types of recreational opportunities needed to achieve their recreational goals. It is based on six rating classes that range from urban to primitive, and on indicators such as access, social encounters and visitor impacts. ROS is best suited for large-scale, natural resource based recreation sites. A description of ROS is available on various web sites and in Charles I. Zinser's book "Outdoor Recreation: United States National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands" (published by John Wiley and Sons, 1995).

Issue Analysis uses the information collected for the master plan to identify and resolve needs, problems and conflicts (e.g. a park is not accessible, there are not enough soccer fields for a growing community, or residents want a summer camp program). Some issues may already be evident to the park board and the park administration, or they may appear in the public participation process. Briefly analyze each issue and discuss options and opportunities for resolving them.

SWOT Analysis" is commonly attributed to a business consultant named Albert S. Humphrey, during the 1960s. "SWOT" is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT analysis is an assessment tool that looks at both the internal and external environments and factors that face organizations, and allows users to analyze them strategically.

Park public workshop attendees were asked to list all the Strengths and Weaknesses that exist within the Parks (internal factors—mostly pre-existing and/or current). Then they were asked to list all the Opportunities and Threats that exist or come from outside the organization (external factors—mostly current and future potential). After all these internal and external factors are listed, it becomes fairly easy to cross-compare the two lists, and ways to minimize, fix or eliminate the weaknesses and threats, and expand and capitalize on the strengths and opportunities were outlined below.

From the following SWOT results:

Should implement Benchmarking to measure Hobart progress and infrastructure against peer communities that are roughly the same size, disposition and within proximity of Hobart which have at least one a positive example you would like to emulate: parks foundation, park type , or community amenity, and collect data and into a table for comparison.

Some basic benchmark criterion might include:

Population of community.

Median household income in community.

Percentage population growth in that community since the last census.

Number of parks in each community.

Total acres of public park land.

Number of full-time employees in the park system.

Total yearly budget of the park system.

Drs. James D. Mertes and James R. Hall coauthored (with Editor Roger A. Lancaster) the definitive book on recreation, park and open-space level of service guidelines in 1983. The book was published by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), and for decades was considered the gold standard for determining the minimum desired acreage of outdoor-recreation lands at the local and regional level. This book featured a relatively simple classification system for parks, and provided recommended acreages for parks on a population-ratio basis—so many acres of parks per 1,000 people residing in a community. Here are the most-basic-levels-of-service guidelines as they were published in 1983:

Mini-Park: Has a service area less than a quarter-mile radius, and approximately a quarter- to half-acre per 1,000 population.

Neighborhood Park: Has a service area between a quarter- and half-mile radius, with population up to 5,000, and is 15-plus acres, which equals 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 population

Community Park: Has a service area with a 1- to 2-mile radius (would normally include several neighborhoods), and is 25-plus acres, which equals 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 population.

Regional/Metropolitan Park: Has a service area of one hour's driving time (would normally include several communities), and is 200-plus acres, which equals 5.0 to 10.0 acres per 1,000 population.

Regional Park Preserve: Has a service area of one hour's driving time (would normally include several communities), and is 1,000-plus acres. 80% of this land would be reserved for natural-resource management and conservation, and 20% for recreational development. The acres-per-1,000 population for a regional park preserve would vary widely depending on the property available.

Linear Park, Special-Use Area, or Conservancy Area: No applicable guidelines were set in this document.

The NRPA itself noted that the guidelines were meant as a flexible benchmark, not an absolute number.

A more locally based and flexible means of determining a minimum amount of parks-and-recreation land or facilities began to emerge in the mid-1990s. Level of Service (LOS) is a process of strategic planning that takes into account the unique aspects of individual communities. LOS also measures demand for recreation opportunities, current park-and-recreation resources, and the needs and preferences of community residents.

To simplify processing of the facilities inventory data, Indiana divides the current supply of recreation acreage into three categories: Local, State/Fed (regional) and Total (statewide):

Local (County, Township, City or Town) recreation acres: Land owned by municipal, township and county governments, and land privately owned but open for public use.

State/Fed (Regional) recreation acres: Land owned by either State or Federal governments for public recreational use.

Total (Statewide) recreation acres: Total of all public recreation land statewide that is owned by all the entities in the other categories.

The State of Indiana took the above categories and created LOS guidelines for parks, recreation and open space for all Hoosiers. Indiana's guidelines for outdoor recreation for acres per 1,000 people are:

There are many previous examples of successful financing methods that have been used for virtually all aspects of parks and recreation.

The list below offers a few ideas and options for financing or funding of parks and recreation, or saving money to use elsewhere. Each option has a short description to give interested park professionals or stakeholders a head start toward researching more details.

An abbreviated list of fiscal management/ financing methods in parks and recreation:

Municipal General Funds and Revolving Funds: The most common taxpayer-funded budget source for many departments. Revolving funds that roll over each budget year help eliminate the spend-it-or-lose-it issue, and allow for better fiscal agility over time.

Taxes: Local Option Income Tax (LOIT), County Option Income Tax (COIT), County Adjusted Gross Income Tax (CAGIT), County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT), etc. The proceeds of all of these tax programs have been used for parks, recreation and trail-related projects with varying amounts of success.

Public-Private Partnerships: Cooperative efforts between businesses and communities with formal, written agreements. These can be short-term or long-term (single project or ongoing services).

**Intergovernmental Partnerships and Cooperative Agreements:** Cooperative efforts between levels of government to provide services for all, using formal, written agreements. One example is for a township to provide some funding to a nearby town's parks system in exchange for free public parks-and recreation access to township residents who live outside the town's boundaries.

**Public and Private Foundations and Endowments:** Examples are the Ball Brothers Foundation, Lilly Endowment and other "name" foundations, community foundations, etc. Many foundations and endowments offer the chance to apply for specialty grants or offer other kinds of assistance.

**Governmental and Non-Governmental Grants and Funds:** These include the usual parks, recreation and trails grant programs such as Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Recreational Trails Program (RTP), but also can include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), INDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ), and with creative thinking, probably a few others.

**Private Philanthropy:** Private giving from individuals or families is still a common method for people to give back to their community. Many find that paying for a park is a fulfilling way to have their name live on past their time.

**Recreation Impact Fees (RIF):** A local-level fee paid by developers intended to help the community cover the new costs of providing local government services to the added development.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** Uses the anticipated future improvements in an area's tax base to pay for current capital development.

**User Fees and Charges:** Memberships, dues, subscriptions, entry fees, program fees, events, event sales, etc., are used to place part or all costs of providing recreation directly on those who use it most. Best practices use sliding scales, scholarships, "free" days, library checkout park passes and other tactics to avoid being too expensive for low- or restricted-income residents.

**Concessions and Concessioners:** Vending, gift shops, event food sales, contracting, etc. For example, if Little League draws thousands of hungry kids, friends and parents, consider using the profit from feeding them to help maintain sports fields.

**Branding:** Nike effectively convinces people to pay to wear clothing that advertises the company and helps it sell more clothing, and parks departments can use a similar approach. Selling branded T-shirts and ball caps can not only help market parks but also may help them make a few dollars.

**Local Parks Foundations and "Friends" Groups:** Locally run park foundations are a way to fundraise specifically for a community parks system. They are targeted to local needs and don't depend on politics or government budgets. "Friends" groups gather human capital in much the same way. They band together interested people who work toward completing improvements and fulfilling needs in parks.

Donations, Memorials, Bequests and Gift Catalogs – “In-kind” donations are gifts of anything other than money. Examples include manpower, skilled labor, or materials. Memorials and bequests are a great way for people to honor family or friends in a lasting way, especially if the person honored loves or loved some aspect of the parks system. Gift catalogs can effectively spread the word about specific projects, wants and needs. Making such tools available is often necessary in order for someone to offer an in-kind gift.

Corporate Sponsorships and Naming Rights: For example, a business or corporation that just moved into town might like to put its name on new ball fields in exchange for funding a couple of years of maintenance. Or it might even sponsor the new leagues.

Volunteer Programs: Bring enthusiastic public helpers into parks and programs to assist the staff. Trained, passionate volunteers can free up paid staff to work elsewhere and accomplish more for less labor cost.

Zoning and Development Requirements and/or Fees: Similar to RIF, these require new commercial and/or residential developments to either build new parks-and -recreation features into their sites (such as a new bike/ pedestrian trail extension into the road/sidewalk network of a new senior assisted living center), or pay a set fee to help the community provide the facilities and services the new development will need. It is cheaper and simpler to build new recreation-based features during initial construction than to add them later. Many developers readily work with these requirements with an eye toward using these low-cost bonus recreation features to attract buyers/ residents. People and businesses often want to move next to parks and trails, and often will pay a premium to do so.

Municipal Loans, Bonds and Levies: Special Assessment, General Obligation, and other types of loans, bonds and levies have been used to successfully fund parks-and-recreation development for decades. Those interested should carefully research the various types, particularly for diverse tax advantages and beneficial interest rates.

Parks and Recreation Special Districts: Related to both zoning and tax methods, these districts are sometimes used to subdivide a larger community’s parks department into smaller portions that can concentrate in more detail on localized fees and financing options, as well as on programs and services that better benefit their unique neighborhoods and local residents.

Cooperation, Agreements and Site Sharing: For example, if a nearby county park has a lot of new mowers and the staff to run them, and a city park has a trained arborist who could help the county park improve the health of its trees, perhaps an agreement to share personnel and equipment for mutual benefit could be developed. Such an approach works especially well between parks and nearby schools. Schools might be willing to trade the non-school-day use of playgrounds and sports fields/courts for help with maintenance. Indiana State Code directly supports School/Park recreational “Joint Use Agreements.” (IC 20-26-8-1, 2)

**Special Events:** Consider using a popular event as a fundraiser. If a park hosts all or part of a community's biggest local festival, and 50 vendor booths each contribute a \$200 vendor fee, there is a \$10,000 revenue added to the park's budget in exchange for minimum opportunity cost—mowing and trash pickup will have to happen to some degree even if such an event were not held. The larger the event's scale, the greater the potential for fundraising.

**Economy of Scale/Bulk Purchasing:** If parks, the community's public works department, and the county's maintenance department need to buy grass seed or fertilizer, lawn mowers or trucks, consider banding together and making a bulk purchase of enough to supply everyone. That approach could save money on each side. Coordination is not easy but the savings can be considerable.

**Privatization/De-privatization of Services:** Do the real-world math to compare what some maintenance/services cost in terms of labor, materials, training, insurance, etc., with the costs of contracting such tasks to carefully researched, qualified private firms. Sometimes in-house workers may be cheaper in the long run than private contractors, sometimes not. Make sure to include all possible costs when making comparisons.

**Aggressive Preventive/Planned/Scheduled Maintenance:** Smart maintenance supervisors know the cost-effectiveness of taking care of equipment and facilities. New trucks are expensive compared with the cost of a few oil changes. Plan for equipment and facility maintenance and follow a carefully laid-out schedule. Train all levels of staff to habitually monitor and maintain all equipment, including taking it out of service when necessary. The same approach can be just as valuable in facilities. For example, air conditioning systems in buildings function longer and use less energy when filters are changed on time, coils are cleaned regularly, and the refrigerant and oil levels are kept full.

Another helpful website is that of the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA): <http://www.IN.gov/ocra/index.htm>. This website features a number of different state and federal grant programs sometimes used for parks and recreation, such as Planning Grants, Community Development Block Grants and Indiana Main Street. Contact the OCRA community liaison for any given area to get assistance directly targeted to a specific community's needs.

As mentioned earlier, local community foundations sometimes offer many kinds of specialized grants, or can help create a new donation account for a specific parks department. Start at: <http://www.cof.org/communityfoundation-locator> to find a nearby foundation.

The DNR's grant programs are listed at <http://www.IN.gov/dnr/3190.htm>. The grants cover nearly every aspect of natural and cultural resources, and include full details for each and contact information.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has a website specifically devoted to its competitive grants and fundraising: <http://www.nrpa.org/fundraising-resources/>. The site even offers a free online fundraising course

The 2015 Field Report published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) contains the insightful chart: "Where are We Going: Five Trends that will Impact the Future of Parks and Recreation." Several of these trends are visible now in Indiana. The following text lists the trends and some of the additional bullet-list items for each, and contains a few examples of how some of these trends are playing out in the Hoosier state.

**Trend 1:** Programs are key to great park attendance.

"The public is less likely to visit parks unless they are attending programs."

"Fewer programs in parks reduce usage rates for parks."

These first two bullets are fairly intuitive for most park professionals: the fewer activities offered in any park, the less interaction there is with the public, and therefore the park has reduced public attendance. Many Indiana small-town park systems do not offer recreation, or if recreation happens, it is facilitated by volunteers, external non-profit partners, or others who are not park staff. Most park and recreation experts agree that adding internally organized and staffed programs to a park system will draw more users, provided that the offerings include what users want and need to participate in those programs.

"Mandates for revenue cost recovery may lead to social inequity."

This bullet is an especially sensitive subject for many Indiana communities that are still experiencing the aftereffects of the recession: high unemployment, wage stagnation, business closures and business downsizing. In communities whose residents are struggling financially, avoiding the pricing out of low- or moderate-income users with fees becomes a careful balancing act between meeting their park department financial needs and their mandate to provide public recreation opportunities for all residents. Compromise tactics like sliding or income-based fee scales, park prescriptions, free park days, and similar ideas offer ways to avoid unintentional denial of service to community members who may be in the most need of low- or no-cost public recreation.

**Trend 2:** The perceived value of distributed services results in agency functions assigned to various departments.

"Organizationally, operations are most effective within a single department that carries out all park and recreation responsibilities."

In Indiana, where the majority of park departments are in smaller communities with limited staff and budgets, this saves the cost of needing several groups of support staff in different government departments to maintain multiple separate groups of vital field staff. Simply, one bigger staff is far more efficient than many smaller ones.

"Agencies that position themselves as providing valuable, essential services fare best."

"Example: Many departments provide all municipal grounds maintenance."

Local governments in Indiana are learning the wisdom of having the best-qualified, best-trained field staff do the same jobs for other departments besides the parks. An example is when park foresters care for street trees for the streets department instead of having a separate specialist staff for each department.

“Agencies are optimizing services by teaming with other recreation providers.”

A small town that can't currently afford adding professional programming staff to their park system can improve its level of service through cooperative agreements with outside sources of programming staff. YMCAs, fitness clubs, league sports non-profits, and other non-government recreation providers are examples.

**Trend 3:** Agencies are pioneering new funding methods.

“The lack of municipal funding does not equate to a lack of public support.”

In Indiana, many local park departments find that informing their users of the real-world costs of park operations leads to better public support of budget increases and capitol project fundraising.

“During the recession, special districts that had dedicated funding and agencies invested in revenue-producing facilities fared much better than others.”

When compared to the rest of the nation, Indiana has relatively few “special districts” that build in dedicated funding for their parks. In part, having special districts with this ability tends to be an attribute of larger, wealthier, high-population-density demographic areas. Comparatively, most of Indiana is too lightly populated, too moderate- or lower-income, and has too geographically small a government service area (many small towns versus large, urban cities). Indiana park departments have started investing in more revenue-producing facilities; however, as previously discussed in this section, this has to be applied judiciously in order to have a chance of working.

“Retaining revenues for agency operation is a key to the model's success.”

If all revenue generated by a park department simply vanishes back into the community's general fund (where it often never benefits the parks), it serves as a significant disincentive to the effort needed to create that revenue. Parks that take advantage of fiscal tactics like non-reverting, parks-only, dedicated revenue accrual accounts have obvious long-term funding advantages over those that do not.

“Other sources of funding for operations that can be targeted include: value-capture property taxes related to park proximate values and dedicated sales taxes on recreation-related goods and equipment.”

This is an area where Indiana is already striving; many communities are already exploring many alternative park funding strategies. These include specialty grants, County Option Income Taxes (COIT), Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Recreation Impact Fees (RIF), Wheel Taxes and many others.

**Trend 4:** The infrastructure deficit means parks will have to fight harder for public dollars.

“The Public Works Association is estimating that \$356 billion will be spent on the replacement, renewal, and renovation of our municipal and state roads, highways, bridges, dams, sewers, water, and other infrastructure.”

“These projects, delayed for years, now create public safety issues.”

“Park and recreation assets that deferred funding must now compete.”

Indiana is no different than any other state—we have billions of dollars in deferred long-term infrastructure maintenance/ renovation/replacement needs that have gone unfulfilled for decades. There are opportunities for parks to work themselves into existing projects at little or no additional cost if the project engineers simply add park infrastructure to their designs. One example is adding new sidewalk and bike lanes and a “road diet” into a previously scheduled street replacement. Under such a plan, valuable new alternative transportation is added at no additional cost to the taxpayer because the design includes a better blend of amenities.

**Trend 5:** Walkable cities draw millennials, fueling a suburban exodus.

“Millennials are drawn to walkable environments with cultural amenities.”

“Evidence indicates this will exacerbate the gentrification of cities.”

“The exodus of disadvantaged populations will be to the nearby suburbs.”

As a case in point, Indianapolis saw an exodus of many wealthier families to the surrounding suburbs in the 1970s and 1980s. They sought better schools, larger yards, and improved local public amenities, such as parks. This demographic trend is beginning to reverse. The City has recently been reinvesting in downtown. The new Cultural Trail network is one example. Walkability and improved infrastructure is driving a recent influx of moderate- to high-income professional millennials, empty-nesters, and others interested in the greater cultural amenities now available within walking

## 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.

Make their programs, services and activities accessible to people with disabilities. Included is information about requirements, pertinent legislation, guidelines and potential resources.

As required by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, federal government agencies and entities that receive federal funds had to make their facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities

In 1990, more than 25 years ago, Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which extended accessibility and non-discrimination requirements in five areas: employment, public services, public accommodations, telecommunications and miscellaneous provisions.

State and local governments, including counties, cities, towns and townships, are covered by Title II of the ADA (public services). Likewise, commercial and non-profit parks-and recreation providers are covered by Title III (public accommodations) because they provide services to the public. These organizations include non-profit groups such as Friends of specific parks and trail groups, YMCAs, and Boys and Girls Clubs, as well as commercial entities that provide canoe rentals, fitness facilities, go-cart racing, amusement parks, ski resorts, rafting, bowling alleys, etc. If you are involved with the public, via government or private business, you have had to provide accessible facilities, programs and services for years.

The ADA is a comprehensive civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA requires that newly constructed and altered state and local government facilities, places of public accommodation, and commercial facilities be readily accessible to, and usable by, persons with disabilities.

The 2010 Standards for Accessible Design contains codified specifications for these recreational facilities:

- Amusement Rides
- Recreational Boating Facilities
- Exercise Machines and Equipment
- Fishing Piers and Platforms
- Golf Facilities
- Miniature Golf Facilities
- Play Areas
- Saunas and Steam Rooms
- Swimming Pools, Wading Pools and Spas
- Shooting Facilities with Firing Position

The new provisions address access to:

- Trails
- Picnic and camping areas
- Viewing areas
- Beach access routes
- Other components of outdoor-developed areas on federal sites when newly built or altered.

They also provide exceptions for situations in which terrain and other factors make compliance impracticable. The new requirements are located in sections F201.4, F216.3, F244 to F248, and 1011 to 1019 of the ABA Standards.

Signs interpreting the natural and cultural history of the area are provided on a trail. Audio tours may be used to effectively communicate to a person with low or no vision the information in the interpretive displays.

In addition to purchasing products, investigate potential products rather than relying solely on a vendor's claim of accessibility parks-and recreation practitioners also work with designers and consultants during capital projects. Requests for qualifications (RFQ) may be posted. If so, ask for information regarding accessibility compliance.

It is a common misconception of facility managers and building owners that facilities built before accessibility standards do not need to make accessibility modifications, or are "grandfathered." On the contrary, each state and local government entity is required by Title II to conduct a self-evaluation of the accessibility of programs and facilities, and create a corresponding Transition Plan to correct identified accessibility deficiencies. Because many facilities built before accessibility standards are mostly inaccessible, the Transition Plan must include ways to remove barriers from these facilities. And according to regulation accessibility standards, altering a facility triggers the need to use the current accessibility standards.

Hoosiers on the Move set a statewide goal of having a trail within 5 miles or 15 minutes of all Hoosier residents by 2016.

As reported elsewhere in the SCORP, the respondents in the 2014 Trail User Survey said:

Walking was the most common trail activity.

Walking, as a trail use, was three to four times more likely to occur than most other activities.

More than 80% of survey respondents used trails for walking sometime each year.

The top three trail activities were:

Walking

Bicycle Touring (casual, tour or both)

Using trails for alternative transportation routes.

The top three reasons why respondents use trails were:

Pleasure, Relaxation, Recreation (53%)

Health/Physical Training (32%)

Family or Social Outing (35%)

Almost half of respondents said they would not spend more than \$100/year on their use of trails.

When planning and designing trails, did respondents try to connect community destinations such as schools, recreational facilities, commercial districts and cultural historic sites

The top five reported methods respondents use to address staffing issues were:

Increased use of volunteers

Friends of the trail groups

Partner with local non-profits

Partner with government agencies

Partner with local businesses and for-profit agencies

The top five reported methods respondents use to address trail land acquisition needs were:

Recreational Trail Program grants

Cooperation with private landowners

INDOT programs (all types)

DNR Heritage Trust or Bicentennial Nature Trust Programs

Utility corridors

### **Improve coordination of trail development, planning and design at local, state and federal levels.**

Action 1: Encourage interested and affected representatives, including urban and rural landowners, not-for-profits, foundations, the agriculture community, businesses, developers, utility companies, public transit and governmental entities to get involved in all phases of developing new trails.

Action 2: Secure the participation of representatives in the health and wellness profession and related businesses, such as insurance and pharmaceutical industries.

Action 3: Ensure that trails are included in utility right-of-way improvements, road right-of-ways, road abandonment and bridge development and expansion projects.

Action 4: Include engineers, architects and planners during all phases of trail development to ensure natural resource preservation and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Action 5: Foster a working statewide support network composed of agencies, legislators, planners/designers, businesses, foundations, organizations, trail managers and citizens interested in trail development.

Action 6: Review laws, policies, traditions, etc. that directly or indirectly impact trail development and seek revisions as deemed necessary.

Action 7: When planning for trails and shared road bicycle routes, encourage connectivity of all state and local destinations where people live, work, learn and play.

### **Increase trail funding to provide trails to meet present and future demand**

Action 1: Advocate for stable, long-term state and federal funding mechanisms for acquisition, development, maintenance and operations of trail facilities.

Action 2: Encourage local initiatives for trail funding.

Action 3: Encourage and provide incentives for private funding for trails from such entities as foundations and corporations.

Action 4: Include funding for long-term trail maintenance in operational budgets.

Action 5: Encourage and support public, private, and not-for-profit organization partnerships that work to acquire and develop sustainable trails and bikeways.

### **Acquire more land for trails.**

Action 1: Identify and extend opportunities for intra-state and inter-state trail connections.

Action 2: Improve the acquisition process of former railroad corridors for trail development.

Action 3: Advocate that trails be included in land-use planning, including re-negotiation of road right-of-ways and bridge developments.

Action 4: Advocate that developers be required to set aside land for trails and/or accommodate for development of proposed trails.

Action 5: Expand the number of areas available for the legal use of off-highway vehicles, off-road bicycles, equestrians, and water trail users.

Action 6: Encourage co-location of trail facilities within existing and future utility corridors and levee corridors.

### **Provide increased education about trails and trail benefits**

Action 1: Encourage and support research on Indiana trails and related issues.

Action 2: Inform the public about the health, economic and social benefits of trail use.

Action 3: Develop and distribute educational materials about appropriate trail use, environmental ethics and trail etiquette.

Action 4: Increase public awareness of trails, trail locations and trail access points via the Internet and other promotional/marketing media.

Action 5: Install signs that interpret natural, historical and cultural features of trails, and install multilingual signs where appropriate.

Action 6: Encourage the development of design guidelines that use standardized signs and symbols to designate trail activities and facilitate trail navigation statewide.

Action 7: Include health and wellness education information within trail maps and guides

Any trails plan would be incomplete without mentioning water trails. Water trails, also known as blueways, have been popular in Indiana for a long time. Using them is a healthy way to see the state from a different point of view. Until recently, canoeing was the chosen way to explore and recreate on streams and rivers, but kayaking has increased in popularity. Some liveries in the state rent only kayaks. Water trails are some of the least expensive trails that can be built per mile because the trail itself, the river, is already there. Legal public access sites are all that is needed for a minimalist water trail. The DNR defines a public access site as a legal way to get to the water that has: (1) a managing entity that maintains the site, (2) a parking area, and (3) proper signage. More-developed trails can have added amenities such as signs along the river, camping and restroom facilities. Water trails need at least two public access sites between 5 and 15 miles apart, with 10 miles apart being the optimum distance.

If Hobart wants to bring blueways to the forefront of recreation and make them a tourism draw in Lake County, Indiana needs a few things. The first and most important need is a single source for comprehensive paddling information, most likely a website. The Northwest Indiana Paddlers Association is working with several partners to improve paddling opportunities. An organization that becomes an umbrella group for all of the local groups would be the most effective, bringing all the individuals and resources together to form a single voice for recreational progress.

These projects involve the protection, restoration and enhancement of riparian and aquatic habitats and the species that use them, particularly threatened, endangered, migratory birds and waterfowl. The public and surrounding communities will benefit by providing flood protection to riparian landowners, increasing public access to recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, boating, and bird-watching, and leaving a legacy for future generations by providing a major conservation destination for tourists.

Eight key objectives identified:

- Design an effective model for sustainability of natural resources
- Connect fragmented parcels of public land on a broad scale to benefit wildlife diversity
- Restore and enhance riparian habitat, including wetlands and bottomland hardwood forests
- Protect essential habitat for threatened and endangered species
- Open public access for recreational opportunities (fishing, hunting, trapping, hiking, canoeing, bird-watching and boating)
- Preserve significant rest areas for migratory birds, especially waterfowl
- Create a regionally significant conservation destination
- Provide additional flood relief to current riparian landowners

Another facet of trail-related facilities that needs to be mentioned is road bikeways. A shared road bikeway can provide the missing link needed to make a car-free trip possible. Develop a system of on-road bikeways that include bike lanes, bicycle boulevards, and shared-road marked and signed routes. One of the ways that many communities nationwide are progressing toward a better overall blend of transportation types in their local street designs is through adoption of "complete streets" policies. "Complete streets" uses careful design and construction to give safe and easy access for all users, including: public transit, motor vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Public Law 219 (IC 14-19-10.3), establishing a Recreational Trail Maintenance Fund (RTMF) for the State of Indiana. No money was allocated in 2015, House Bill 1471, that would establish recreational trails guidelines. This law requires the DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation to develop recreational trails guidelines to address the following issues as they relate to recreational trails: (1) Clear statement of ownership and management of each trail. (2) Right-of-way inconsistencies. (3) The division of responsibility for maintenance of fences, for drainage, and for maintenance of drainage or drain tiles. (4) Tree, weed and brush removal between responsible parties and landowners adjacent to recreational trails. (5) Mowing responsibility. (6) Law enforcement jurisdiction. (7) Signage (8) Conflict resolution procedures. (9) Appeal procedures. (10) Use by public utility facilities.

Other methods of funding trails in Indiana include, but are not limited to:

- Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- Incorporating Trails into New Road Projects
- Indiana Greenways Foundation Grants
- Indiana Trails Fund (Hoosier Rails to Trails Council)
- Lilly Endowment Grants
- Indiana Bicentennial Nature Trust
- Indiana Heritage Trust
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Indiana Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Fund
- Sponsorships
- Donations
- Local Government Funding Sources, such as:
  - General Obligation Bonds
  - County Option Income Tax (COIT)
  - County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT)
  - Wheel Tax
  - Tax Increment Finance (TIF)
  - Trail Impact Fees or Recreation Impact Fees
  - Public/Private Partnerships

The American Planning Association's "City Parks Forum" website, <http://www.planning.org/cityparks/>, features not only interesting ideas, but also commentaries from some of the parks-and recreation field's experts; real-world case studies of parks development, design and collaboration; and a detailed bibliography that provides primary research information sources.

The NRPA has created a helpful, new and free benchmarking database for use by local government parks-and-recreation departments of all sizes. "Benchmarking" is an informational analysis/planning method that allows a community to directly compare relevant information gathered from other similar communities nationwide, such as data about a parks system. The database website is <https://www.nrpa.org/PRORAGIS/>. This database offers local government parks departments the chance to enter extensive data. The data are hosted for free on servers at NRPA for cross-comparing.

It is important for Hobart to conserve and restore shoreline whenever possible because of the significant set of financial, ecological and recreational benefits, including:

Flood control – Wetlands can store large amounts of storm runoff, such as the constructed wetlands and settling ponds at Miller-Showers Park in Bloomington.

Groundwater inlet and outlet – Aquifers can receive and expel water as needed through wetlands, such as the recharge taking place in Celery Bog Park in West Lafayette.

Improved water quality – Wetlands can act as a biological filter for pollutants such as fertilizers, animal wastes, road runoff, sediments, pesticides and more.

Fish and wildlife habitat – Wetlands are one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in many fish and wildlife species depend on wetlands for some or all of their food, shelter and water. Many species of plants also require the conditions found in wetlands to survive.

Fun – Wetland areas offer many popular forms of outdoor recreation, such as canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hiking, nature photography, bird-watching, swimming, boating and sightseeing  
Natural-resource-based recreation of many kinds is still a major need among Hoosiers.

Non-consumptive natural-resource-based recreation is a strongly growing area of use that includes bird watching, nature photography and observation, camping, swimming and more. Four out of five of the “most participated in” outdoor recreation activities from the Participation Survey were non-consumptive.

More traditional consumptive, resource-based recreation uses are still popular and in demand. Examples are hunting, fishing and wild-food gathering. A significant portion of “most likely to do in the near future” outdoor recreation activities from the Participation Survey were consumptive (two out of five).

Water-based recreation of all kinds is still extremely popular, and has expanded beyond traditional activities such as boating, canoeing and swimming in lakes, ponds and rivers to more-developed urban-water recreational activities such as splashpads and waterparks/ sprayparks.

Community and individual health and wellness needs are becoming a greater priority.

The surveys indicate that Hoosiers are choosing to recreate outdoors as part of a growing awareness of the positive effect on their health.

Health and wellness as motivators for outdoor recreation of all kinds appeared to cross all demographics. All types of people were recreating for health reasons.

At the state level, Indiana is creating programs and plans to fight the growing obesity epidemic

Use of, and demand for local parks and recreation appears to be growing.

Many reasons are driving an increase in use of local parks and recreation.

- The cost of living is outpacing wage growth.

- The struggling economy is affecting recreation use in households.

- Health-conscious visitors are using local and regional parks more.

- Local parks and recreation offer time- and opportunity-limited users better options to recreate.

Communities are responding to economic and social pressures.

Parks and recreation are being viewed as an economic engine in local communities. Strong parks and recreation programs encourage users to spend their recreation dollars close to home, and not just in parks, but in local businesses, such as restaurants and stores.

Tourism dollars are attractive to cash-strapped communities.

New businesses gravitate toward communities that offer a strong quality of life, health and wellness for their work force.

New residents who are attracted and move to a community bring new tax revenues. Residents leaving a community take away their tax money with them. Hoosiers indicate where they prefer to live by moving there.

Greater use of existing parks and recreation facilities, programs and services are driving up the costs of operation and maintenance of facilities for local providers.

Preventive maintenance is more important than ever—it's cheaper to carefully care for facilities and equipment than to replace them.

Use of life-cycle costing, in which the lifetime costs of operating and maintaining facilities and equipment are factored, has become a best management practice for parks and recreational professionals

#### 1. Protect and enhance Indiana's natural and outdoor recreation resources

Protect Indiana's natural heritage by identifying and preserving significant natural areas, including wildlife/fish habitats for endangered, rare, threatened or species of special concern.

Protect Indiana's outdoor recreation potential by identifying and preserving areas with existing or potential outdoor recreation opportunities or access

Provide for education of the citizens of Indiana in environmental stewardship and wise use of Indiana's natural resources

Consider the improvements possible in water and air quality, brownfields, tourism and commerce, and economic development created by enhancing outdoor recreation

Use the 2016 SCORP Participation Study top five favorite outdoor recreation activities when considering parks and recreation user preferences: walking/hiking/jogging/ running; camping; fishing; swimming; and canoeing/kayaking/paddle sports

#### 2. Develop more trails and bicycle/pedestrian facilities

Whenever possible, acquire rights-of-way, easements and railroad corridors for future trail development from willing sellers, donors or partners

Emphasize trails and bike/pedestrian facilities as means to connect and improve existing and future outdoor recreation facilities

Integrate bike/pedestrian facilities of all types into long-term planning of community infrastructure design and construction whenever possible

Encourage development of trail facilities of all kinds for bike/pedestrian use: urban, rural, long-distance, commuter, recreational, exercise/wellness, etc.

Require trail development using accessible, sustainable design and surfacing wherever possible

### 3. Continue emphasizing Indiana's aquatic resources, both natural and man-made

Preserve and protect rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands and riparian corridors when and wherever possible through acquisition, education, funding, restoration and development of new areas

Encourage actions that improve the quality of Indiana's waters as well as user access to all types of aquatic recreation resources

Whenever possible, provide or enhance access to man-made aquatic resources, such as splash pads, pools, water features, wetlands, ponds, lakes, access/launch sites, etc.

### 4. Encourage and promote outdoor recreation participation

Use outdoor recreation as a tool to fight the growing obesity epidemic by offering locations to participate in as many kinds of healthy exercise as possible and facilitating lifestyle change that encourages lifelong healthy living

Encourage continued development of new outdoor recreation facilities, especially in areas of expanding population growth, high user demand, or significant gaps in service provision

Encourage development of more neighborhood-level outdoor recreation facilities that meet local needs close to home, preferably within walking or biking distance of residential areas, schools, retail areas, etc.

Provide outdoor recreation opportunities for all user demographics, including all ages, abilities and skill levels

Provide funding for outdoor recreation development at the state and local level

Explore alternative funding methods such as public/private partnerships, tax increment financing (TIF), cooperative agreements, cost sharing, corporate sponsorships, volunteerism, philanthropy, etc.

Continue to administer state-level grant programs such as Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants, Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grants, Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund grants and Indiana Shooting Range grants.

Emphasize parks and recreation facilities that are cost-efficient and financially self-supporting while promoting financially affordable access to the greatest number of users possible

Consider the benefits of parks and recreation toward community economic development, tourism, job growth, urban and rural revitalization, reduction of health care costs and improving quality of life

Use existing financial resources as efficiently and effectively as possible; consider strategies such as detailed cost-benefit analysis for choosing public provision or privatization of services, maintenance or construction, multi-agency bulk purchases, interagency work-sharing agreements, and other means to control the costs of operations and maintenance.

### ***Needs Analysis***

One of the most important and difficult tasks in parks and recreation planning is to analyze the recreation needs of your community.

Needs analyses describe and project:

- Recreation behavior and need.

- Participation and user preference.

- Causes of nonuse.

- The needs of special populations.

Communities differ in their recreational needs and priorities; therefore, IDNR-OR does not endorse one needs assessment method or set of standards over another, but encourages communities to discover what best suits their interests, finances and decision making. Your master plan must include a description of the method (or methods) used to establish your recreation needs, and why a chosen method best applies to your community. From these needs (facilities, programs and administration), you will identify priorities and recommend actions to satisfy the need. The actions suggested should agree with the goals listed earlier in the park board information gathering section.

Measuring public need requires a combination of thorough analysis, a defined method and common sense. Analysis of public need, in part, should include consideration of the results of your previous public input processes.

Some examples of needs analysis methods are: Level of Service (LOS) Standards for Parks and Open Space.

**SURVEY A**

Some of the more ADDITIONAL USES AND PROGRAMS results included below in ranking order of most commonly identified:

Sport Complex/Fields for more organized sports and or enhanced sport complex/fields for baseball, basketball, disc golf, exercise/fitness area, pickle ball, rugby tennis, soccer, volleyball,

Playground Equipment/expansion including Skate Park and opportunity for indoor play.

Trails, for nature and educational walks including water trails for kayak and canoes.

Dog Park, dog waste centers, dog fountains

Outdoor gathering spaces to include, gazebo, shelters, picnic benches, restrooms, drinking fountains, grill areas, and fishing areas

Splash Pad

Ice Rink for hockey and skating

Rental facilities

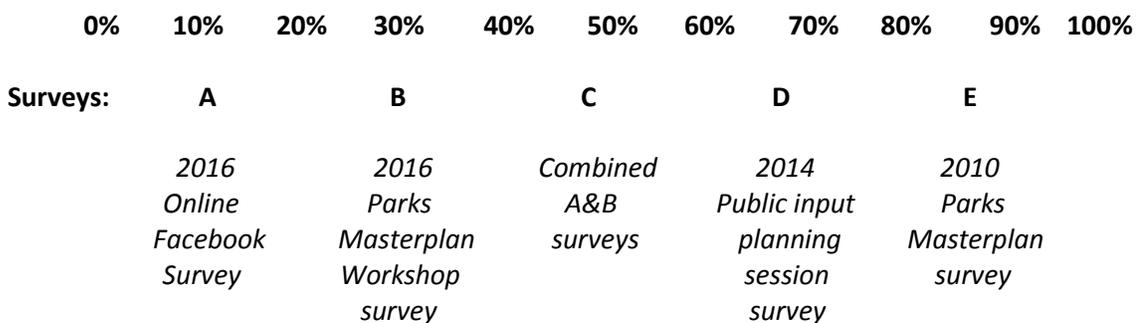
Programs for kids to include arts & crafts, 5K races, yoga, vendor and car shows.

**Which park facilities do you or members of your household use or visit?**

*Survey Sample A, B, C, D, E*

**Which park facilities do you or members of your household use or visit?**

*Survey Sample C*



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

**Survey: C** *combined survey results of: A, 2016 Online Facebook Survey  
B, 2016 Parks Masterplan Workshop Survey*

Veterans Park

Rugby/Soccer Fields Park

Robinson Lake Park

Penny Park

Pavese Park

Lakefront Park

Pool/ Splash and Skate Park

Hillman Park

Fred Rose Lakeshore Park

Fred Rose 8th Street Park

Festival Park Community Center

Festival Park

City Ball Park

Silich Park

Merrillville Heights

Hillman Heights Park

Glenwood Park

Brookview Park

Amber Creek Park

Englehart Park

McAfee Park

Hansen Park

Barring Ridge Park

Arbor Lane Park

Penny Park

Veterans Park  
Hillman Park  
Rugby Soccer Field  
Fred Rose 8th Street  
Pavese Park  
Pool and Skate Park  
Robinson Lake Park  
City Ball Park  
Fred Rose Lakeshore  
Community Center  
Lakefront Park  
Festival Park  
Skateboarding  
Tennis  
Volleyball  
Other  
Rollerblading/Ice Skating  
Soccer  
Football/Rugby  
Youth Arts & Crafts  
Golf  
Basketball  
Aerobics/Yoga  
Softball/Baseball  
Boating/Kayaking  
Swimming  
Fishing  
Jogging/Running

Playground Equipment

Biking/Cycling

Hiking/Walking

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

Survey : C combined survey results of: A, 2016 Online Facebook Survey  
B, 2016 Parks Masterplan Workshop Survey

Which recreational activities do you or members of your household participate in on a regular basis?

Survey Sample C

Which recreational activities do you or members of your household participate in on a regular basis?

Survey Sample A, B, C, E

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

Surveys:	A	B	C	E
	2016 Online Facebook Survey	2016 Parks Masterplan Workshop survey	Combined A&B surveys	2010 Parks Masterplan survey

Golf

Boating/Kayaking

Swimming

Fishing

Jogging/Running

Playground Equipment

Biking/Cycling

Hiking/Walking

## SURVEY

How satisfied are you with the quality of Parks and Recreational services in Hobart

*Survey Sample D*

Very Satisfied	18.5 %
Satisfied	48 %
Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied	21 %
Dissatisfied	11 %
Very Dissatisfied	1.5 %

What should be the top priority for improving the Parks and Recreational system in Hobart?

*Survey Sample D*

Build more/additional community rooms	0%
Acquire land for new parks	2%
Other	2%
Expand recreational opportunities	2%
Encourage local trail links to regional trail systems	2%
Improve current parks	3%

## What recreational activities do you participate in?

*Survey Sample D*

<b>Bicycling/Skateboarding</b>	<b>44 %</b>
<b>Kayaking/Canoeing/Rowing Sailing/Water Use</b>	<b>27 %</b>
<b>Organized Team Sport/ Recreational Park Use</b>	<b>35 %</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>13 %</b>
<b>Walking/Hiking/Jogging</b>	<b>84 %</b>

- Schedule parks improvements to complement nearby neighborhood demographics
- Fred Rose park as natural area 55% 13.4 acres
- Establish conservation easement for natural areas in parks

i.e. a dog park, ice rink, splash pad, playground equipment

### **LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS)**

County LOS (Local): 20 acres per 1,000 people (.02 acres per person) of public (local) recreation acres

State/Fed (Regional) LOS: 35 acres per 1,000 people (.035 acres per person) of public State and Federal (regional) recreation acres

Total (Statewide) LOS: 55 acres per 1,000 people (.055 acres per person) total (sum of) acres of public recreational acres from the first two categories

All acreages discussed in the SCORP are based on publicly owned or accessed lands.

The SCORP excludes all schools. The reason is that many schools do not allow public access to their outdoor facilities; therefore, the DNR has no means to verify true public access to all school properties statewide. Private lands not open for public use are also excluded.

Other Park Entities:

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS)

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)

LAKE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

SHIRLEY HEINZE LAND TRUST

WOODLAND SAVANNA LAND CONSERVANCY

THE HOBART MARSH PLAN