



## Maplewood Parks and Recreation

### Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update Community Study

### Final Report

December 11, 2013

#### 1. Purpose

On January 25, 2010 the City Council adopted the City of Maplewood Comprehensive Plan. In February of 2013, City Council authorized the beginning of an update of the Maplewood Parks and Recreation Master Plan that is based on the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The first phase of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update involves the engagement of Maplewood residents, businesses, and the users of the Parks and Recreation system. Through this process, comments and concerns regarding issues, needs, updates, trends and improvements are documented that will influence the update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

#### 2. Process

##### a. Task Force

The Council appointed a citizen task force comprised of 16 members that began meeting monthly in April 2013. Bob Bierscheid, of Bierscheid Consulting, was selected to guide this process along with DuWayne Konewko, Parks and Recreation Director, and James Taylor, Parks Manager. The Maplewood Parks System Task Force met 11 times from 4:00pm-6:00pm.

##### • Task Force Members

- |   |                  |   |                     |
|---|------------------|---|---------------------|
| ○ | Roy Adams        | ○ | Ron Cockrie         |
| ○ | Paul Arbuckle    | ○ | Mark Jenkins        |
| ○ | Margaret Behrens | ○ | Marv Koppen         |
| ○ | Al Bierbaum      | ○ | Jason Lamers        |
| ○ | Peter Boulay     | ○ | Alysyn Morris       |
| ○ | Bob Cardinal     | ○ | Mark Nichols        |
| ○ | Don Christianson | ○ | Scott Schaller      |
|   |                  | ○ | Dale Trippler       |
|   |                  | ○ | Nikki Villavicencio |

##### • Task Force Goals and Objectives

- Align our Park Systems Plan with the city's 2030 Comprehensive Plan relying on a strong public input process that involves both residents and stakeholders.
- Identify the needs and desires of our community, and create opportunities for active lifestyles based on current and future demographic trends.

- Develop a better understanding of current City parks, green spaces, and recreational components in order to better address existing limitations as they compare to local, regional and national standards and trends.
- Establish a vision for our parks, greenways, and recreation facilities with an eye towards sustainable maintenance practices.
- Identify sustainable funding sources and strive to match available resources with prioritized park system needs.
- Seek opportunities to promote connectivity within our parks system
- Foster and promote a sense of community pride and stewardship in regards to our parks system.
- Establish policies and priorities for preserving and restoring existing natural features and amenities for the benefit of the community as a whole.

b. Staff Involvement

Meetings were held with staff to request their input in the planning process. The key staff involved has been, DuWayne Konewko, Parks and Recreation Director, Jim Taylor, Parks Manager, Audra Robbins, Recreation Manager, Shann Finwall, Environmental Planner, Ginny Gaynor, Natural Resources Coordinator, and Steve Love, Assistant City Engineer.

c. Community Meetings

The following community meetings were held:

June 12, 7:00pm, Maplewood Community Center

July 10, 7:00pm, Carver Community Gym

July 11, (business outreach), 7:30am, Maplewood Community Center

July 24, 7:00pm, Gladstone Fire Station

August 7, 7:00pm, Gladstone Fire Station

August 15, 5:00pm, Hmong Outreach meeting, Hmong American Alliance Church

September 5, 5:00pm, Hmong Outreach meeting, Maplewood Community Center



Additional outreach has been made to representatives of the handicapped community. A joint meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Task Force was held to further discuss accessibility issues. A tour of parks and recreation facilities and amenities was held on August 22. Additionally, DuWayne Konewko, Parks and Recreation Director and Jim Taylor, Parks Manager have visited local parks and have interviewed the individuals at the parks about potential parks and recreation issues.

d. Community Surveys

A City-Wide Parks Needs Assessment Survey is a critical piece in the development of the parks master plan. The statically valid survey will provide the task force, commissions, and council with meaningful data regarding Maplewood's parks, trail, and open spaces. Survey questions will address a full range of strategically important issues to the city including funding. The survey will gauge the resident's attitude on whether or not they support paying for these improvements with tax dollars.

Other general surveys will be conducted on the Internet to assess additional public input.

- e. Benchmark Surveys (attachment E)
- f. Trends Analysis (attachment G)
- g. Planning Consultants and process



The final phase of the project will be the selection and involvement of a park planning consulting firm to complete the Draft 2013-2033 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The selection process is expected to begin in early 2014.

**3. Study Questions Posed (Data in Attachments)**

- Who lives here?
- Who works here?
- Who plays here?
- What is there?
- What are the standards?
- What do others have?
- What are trends?
- What is missing?
- What is underutilized?
- What is un-accessible?
- What is outdated?
  - Specifics
  - Categories
- What is not maintained?
- What are priorities?
- What other information would be helpful?



**4. Master Plan Study Categories**

- a. Funding
- b. Programming
- c. Parks and Park Amenities
- d. Trails
- e. Environmental and Sustainability
- f. General Land Use
- g. Administrative

**5. Findings by Category**

- a. Funding
  - Study Options for funding park improvements/maintenance/programming
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Referendum</li> <li>○ Sales tax</li> <li>○ User fees</li> <li>○ Sponsorships</li> <li>○ Rental revenue</li> <li>○ Grants</li> <li>○ Partnerships with other organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and entities</li> <li>○ Infrastructure Replacement Reserve Fund</li> <li>○ Park Foundation</li> <li>○ PAC Funds</li> <li>○ Increase Parks and Recreation share of current levy</li> <li>○ Other such as (park districts etc.)</li> </ul>
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  - Review Funding Issues
    - Create fees and charges policy
    - Compare Maplewood to other cities
    - Create Asset Management System
    - Review fee scholarship program



Funding Summary: *Finding resources to insure the sustainability of the current system and being able to provide desired amenity upgrades is clearly the highest priority in the future for parks and recreation.*

b. Programming

- Study Program Attributes
  - Assess race and cultural – activities
  - Measure outreach to different demographics
  - Compare revenue vs. non-revenue programs
  - Determine program accessibility
  - Review volunteer program and externships
  - Consider more interpretive signage
  - Study program locations and where in city they are offered
  - Review partnering more with neighboring cities
- Review hosting more Maplewood celebrations/special events
- Research mobile recreation:
- Review status of Maplewood Nature Center
- Review programming status
  - Complete Programming Needs Assessment
  - Review need for more self directed activities that are organized and conducted by the participant (geocaching)



Review need for more general programs of education

**Programming Summary:** *Assessing program needs, improving activity affordability and increasing community outreach are keys to future recreation programs and services.*

c. Parks and Park Amenities

- Study park system issues
  - Provide amenity lists
  - Compare amenities to other cities
  - Bundling of facilities
- Review Current Park Amenities
- Review New Park Amenities and Accessories
- Review Maintenance Issues
- Review Need for Design Standard Consistency
- Consider Underutilized Park Amenities
- Park Accessibility Issues
  - ADA and Inclusion (add language) – status analysis
  - Include playgrounds and park areas for autism and sensory need



**Parks and Park Amenities Summary:** *Significantly upgrading CIP resources, asset management and determining maintenance standards are the significant future needs in parks and park amenities.*

d. Trails

- Update trail plan
  - Missing link analysis on trail system
- Review entire trail system connectivity
- Prioritize trail hierarchy
- Review trail maintenance
- Increase trail education and marketing
- Outreach to people with disabilities
- Consider linkage to future mass transit development
- Improve trail signage



**Trails Summary:** *Completing the Trail Plan analysis and projected trail maintenance needs are the significant issues for trails.*

e. Environmental and Sustainability

- Organizational issues
  - Need to prioritize sensitive areas
  - Clearly identify where and where not access to open space and wetlands
  - Review and update policy for use of parks for stormwater filtration/infiltration purposes
  - Review vision and guidelines of the preserves
  - Create management plans
  - Analyze parking in/near natural areas
- Review educating and marketing environmental spaces
- Review vegetation management
- Review greenway system
- Study community gardens
- Study the environmental impacts and best practices in park development.

**Environmental and Sustainability Summary:** *Sensitive area accessibility vs. non-intrusive preservation, best practices and park development, stormwater management in and near parks and greenway planning are future planning essentials.*

f. General Land Use

- Complete analysis of current and future park land needs
- Review Park Management Policies
- Review Park Classifications Categories
- Benefit Analysis of Parks and Open Spaces



**General Land Use Summary:** *Future acquisition needs and use transfers; land management policy development and overall land management are the future general land use demands.*

g. Administrative

- Policy and Procedure Issues
  - Update ADA plan- “Access is more than the facility”
  - Create marketing plan
  - Develop communications plan
  - Develop Parks and Recreation general security plan
  - Study community center usage (24 Hour Access)
  - Review school use (public and private) use agreements
  - Update demographic information
    - Update Risk Management Plan *administrative demands.*
    - Create park usage stats
- Review Community Partnerships
  - Data Information
    - GIS, GPS
    - Program surveys
    - Evaluation Plan
- Review Comprehensive Plan Language
  - Use of word acquire
  - People first language in goal statement
- Study the Sustainability of the Maplewood Community Center Funding
- Re-evaluate Parks plan every five years
- Achieve CAPRA Accreditation



**Administrative Summary:** *An analysis of current and potential partnerships, inclusive accessibility planning, management policies and procedures review and organization and development of an upgraded marketing plan are the top*