

KOKOMO

PARKS+RECREATION MASTER PLAN 2024-2029



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PREPARED FOR:

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Department

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Torrey Roe, Parks & Recreation Superintendent

1402 W. Defenbaugh St.

Kokomo, Indiana 46902

p. 765. 456. 7275

e. park@cityofkokomo.org

PARK BOARD:

Donald Spall, President

Cathy Stover, Vice President

Shirley Dubois, Member

Cathy Kern, Member

Isaac White, Member

PREPARED BY:



HWC
ENGINEERING

HWC Engineering

135 N. Pennsylvania Street, Suite 2800

Indianapolis, IN 46204

p. 317. 347. 3663

ADOPTION RESOLUTION

CITY OF KOKOMO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Board Resolution Adopting Plan

WHEREAS, the City of Kokomo Board of Park Commissioners is aware of the parks and recreation needs of the residents of Kokomo, Indiana, and

WHEREAS, the City of Kokomo Board of Park Commissioners realizes the importance of sound planning in order to meet the needs of its citizens,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Kokomo Board of Park Commissioners has approved the adoption of the 2024-2029 City of Kokomo Five-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan as its official plan for the next five years, for the growth and development of the parks and recreation opportunities in Kokomo, Indiana.

Passed and signed this 9th day of April, 2024.

SIGNATURE:



PRESIDENT

Donald Spill

(President's printed name)

SIGNATURE:



VICE PRESIDENT

Cathy Stover

(Vice President's printed name)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

XS executive summary6

Purpose of the Plan
Plan Methodology & Development
Public Engagement
Kokomo's Park System
Recommendations Summary

01 introduction14

Overview
Mission & Purpose
Goals of this Plan
Plan Methodology & Development
Location of Kokomo
Definition of Planning Area
Management & Organization

02 the community22

Overview
Social & Economic Factors
Man-made, Historical & Cultural Features
Natural Resources

03 plan development46

Public Input Summaries
Key Takeaways

04 park system inventory62

Recreation Programming
Park System Inventory
Other Community Resources
Trails & Linear Park System
Current Park System Amenity Snapshot
Park Inventory Sheets
Accessibility & Universal Design

05 needs analysis122

Overview
Current Trends
Key Analysis Takeaways

06 recommendations136

Overview
System-Wide Goals
Action Plan

07 appendix152

Public Meeting
Public Survey
Teen Survey
Public Presentation
Accessibility Resources



Championship Park
Image Source: Visit Kokomo Website



Championship Park
Image Source: Visit Kokomo Website

XS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department (KPRD) manages an exciting and diverse parks system encompassing over 547 acres of land within 37 city parks and 16.3 miles of trails. In addition to the physical facilities and amenities, the parks and recreation department also offers a wide variety of programs and facilities geared to a range of ages and user groups.

The purpose of this plan is to establish a decision-making framework for future parks and recreation improvements that will guide KPRD over the next five years.

PLAN METHODOLOGY & DEVELOPMENT

This plan was developed through an extensive process of inventory, data collection, research, public survey, teen survey, park staff interviews, stakeholder meetings and a public event. The results of this process informed and shaped the outcomes and recommendations. The information collected during this process is summarized within the content of the plan.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public input and feedback is an important component of the data collection and analysis phase. Information collected during this phase identified the amenities and services that are most used and enjoyed by residents and visitors and what amenities and services are most desired in the parks system.

Public input was sought in the following way:

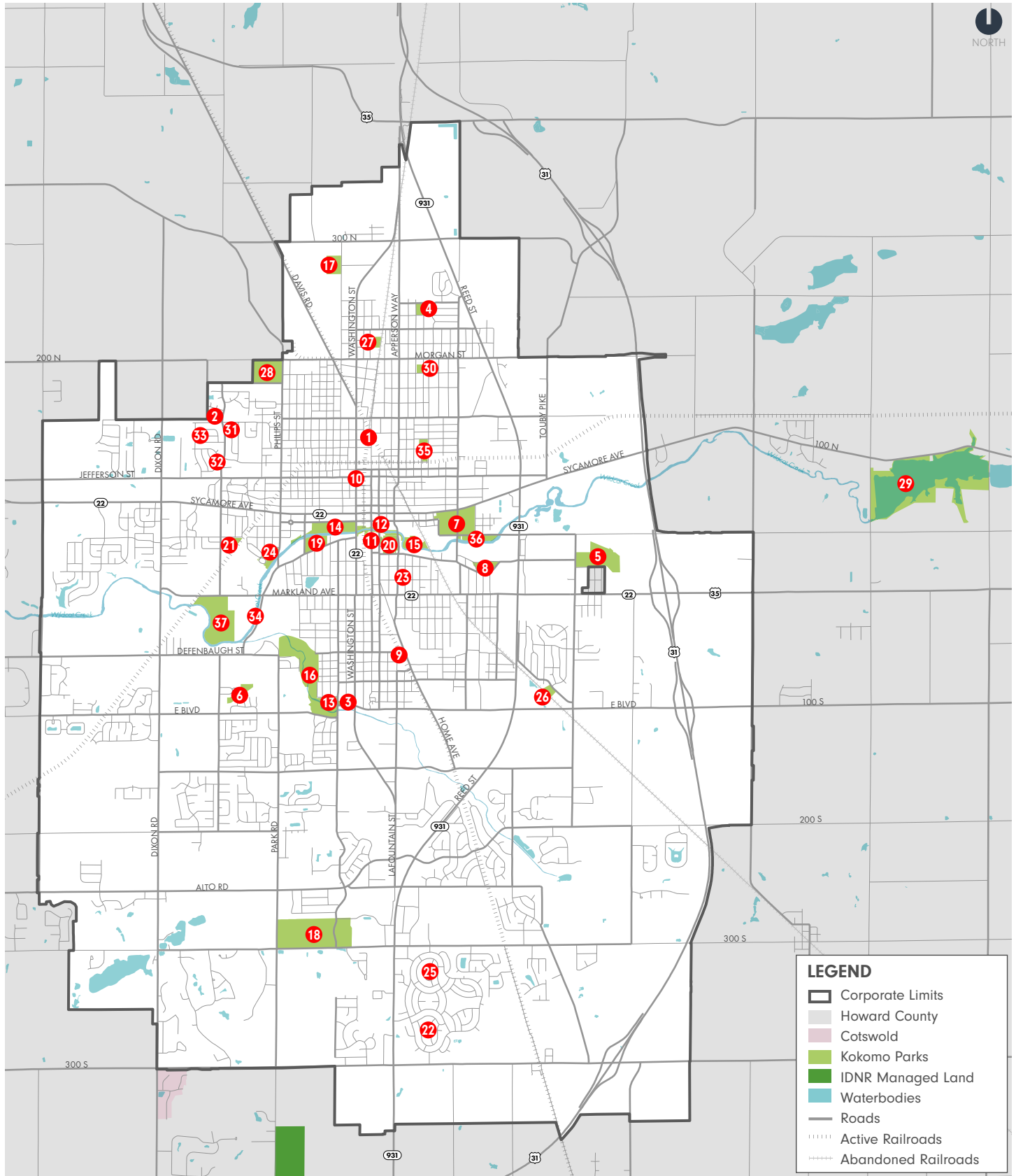
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Public Survey
- Teen Survey
- Public Outreach Event
- Public Meeting
- Public Presentation

KOKOMO'S PARK SYSTEM

The Kokomo's Park System is comprised of 37 parks facilities under the KPRD jurisdiction (see Figure XS.1).

- 1 Al Berryman Memorial Park
- 2 Berkley Park
- 3 Bicentennial Park
- 4 Bon Air Park
- 5 Championship Park
- 6 Country Club Hills Park
- 7 Crown Point Cemetery
- 8 Cutler Park
- 9 Depot Trailhead
- 10 Downtown Depot Park
- 11 Downtown Dog Park
- 12 Downtown River Walk
- 13 Elwood Haynes Museum
- 14 Foster Park
- 15 Future Park
- 16 Highland Park
- 17 Huston Park
- 18 Jackson Morrow Park
- 19 Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center
- 20 Kokomo Municipal Stadium
- 21 Mehlig Park
- 22 Mendota Park
- 23 Meridian Park
- 24 Miller-Highland Park (UCT)
- 25 Mohawk Park
- 26 Mohr Park
- 27 Northside Park
- 28 Northwest Park
- 29 Wildcat Creek Reservoir Park
- 30 Riley Park
- 31 Robbins "A" Park
- 32 Robbins "B" Park
- 33 Robbins "C" Park
- 34 Steel Mill Public Access Site
- 35 Studebaker Park
- 36 Waterworks Park
- 37 Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex

FIGURE XS.1: KOKOMO'S PARK SYSTEM



RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

System-wide goals and objectives identified through the planning process are outlined on the following pages. These will guide KPRD for the next five years. A detailed action plan for the next five years was also developed for this plans and can be found in Chapter 06 Recommendations.

GOAL 1:

FOCUS ON IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY IN THE PARKS

OBJECTIVES

- Add inclusive playground to main park such as Foster Park.
- Designated accessible parking.
- Add accessible routes from accessible parking to park amenities.
- Update playground surfacing to be accessible.
- Conduct an ADA evaluation of parks and programming.

GOAL 2:

INVEST IN THE PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF

OBJECTIVES

- Add 10 full-time staff to the KPRD team
- Assess organizational chart to establish more management positions as department grows.
- Increase pay for salaried positions to attract and retain talent.
- Encourage staff to stay/be rewarded as they increase responsibilities/experience.
- Hire specialty positions such as a horticulturalist or arborist to increase quality, efficiency, beautification of parks and landscape.

GOAL 3:

PRIORITIZE IMPROVEMENTS IN LESS PROMINENT PARKS

OBJECTIVES

- Bon Air Park, Culter Park, Huston Park, Mehlig Park, Mendota Park, Reservoir Park.

GOAL 4: **CATER NEW FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING TO TEENS**

OBJECTIVES

- Develop teen social spaces
- Expand free WIFI from downtown to park spaces.
- Involve teens in the popular Easter Egg Hunt event.
- Add E/Sports and/or E/Gaming programming.
- Incentivize a private business to establish zip-lining/kayak/SUP/paddleboats rentals within an existing park or the riverwalk.
- Rent a portable mini-golf course for a weekend and program a teen night.
- Develop teen positions on staff year-round (tree tenders/nature camp counselors)
- Evaluate the need for an indoor teen center.

GOAL 5: **PLAN FOR FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH**

OBJECTIVES

- Evaluate properties for future expansion of parks system acreage in areas that lack service. Look for large plots of land 40+ acres in size if possible.
- Evaluate current park properties, specifically small parks such as the Robbins parks, and determine if properties could be relinquished or repurposed so KPRD can better allocate resources.
- Develop a plan to increase parks staff and budget proportionally to facilities increase.
- Continue development of existing trail system.

GOAL 6: **EXTEND “LOVED” FACILITIES TO ALL QUADRANTS OF THE CITY**

OBJECTIVES

- Splash pads/updated playgrounds/toddler areas/trails/dog parks/net games

GOAL 7: **RE-IMAGINE OLD BASEBALL/SOFTBALL PARKS**

OBJECTIVES

- Develop a vision for Cutler Park and Highland Park old diamond fields and buildings such as concessions.

GOAL 8: **IMPROVE AND EXPAND “NET GAMES” FACILITIES**

OBJECTIVES

- Renovate existing sports courts at parks such as Cutler Park, Highland Park, and Studebaker Park.
- Add new facilities to Jackson Morrow Park and Future Park
- Northwest Park: Use art project to screen old tennis courts turned storage facility.

GOAL 9: **EXPERIMENT WITH NEW WAYS TO COMBAT VANDALISM**

OBJECTIVES

- Try a “vandal proof” restroom facility in one location.
- Continue partnership with Kokomo Police Department and provide more direct patrols of the park with capacity allows.
- Expand security cameras system to high vandal areas where infrastructure allows.
- Continue to increase lighting along trails and in parks.

GOAL 10: **“AMENITIZE” EXISTING TRAILS AND PARKS TO INCREASE USAGE/IMPROVE SAFETY**

OBJECTIVES

- Add restrooms in parks and along trails
- Add nodes for exercise/rest/rotating artwork along trails and walking paths in parks.
- Add shade shelters and shade trees to parks
- Add drinking fountains to targeted areas in parks such as near sports courts and playgrounds.
- Add doggie fountains and accessible seating areas for owners in dog parks
- Add lighting/security cameras to parks and along the trail

GOAL 11:

EMPHASIZE NATURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN FACILITIES/PROGRAMMING

OBJECTIVES

- As new acreage is added to the park system, make acreage natural parkland.
 - Restore environments such as forests, prairie and wetlands
 - Add amenities such as nature trails, overlooks, shelters, disc golf, etc.
 - Offer outdoor recreation programming such as hiking, fishing, etc.
- Develop a “playcosystem” as a part of the nature center improvements in Jackson Morrow Park or a new park.
- Increase environmental education programming.



Al Berryman Splash Pad
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page





Water Spray at Bon Air Park
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page

01

INTRODUCTION



Summer Explorers
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page

OVERVIEW

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department (KPRD) manages an exciting and diverse parks system encompassing over 547 acres of land within 37 city parks and 16.3 miles of trails. In addition to the physical facilities and amenities, the parks and recreation department also offers a wide variety of programs and facilities geared to a range of ages and user groups. All KPRD parks and events are tobacco-free.

MISSION & PLAN PURPOSE

The mission of the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is to:

"Enhance the quality of life for the Kokomo and regional community through well maintained parks, recreation facilities, programs and services while protecting our environment, personal and social benefits, and economic opportunities."

The purpose of this plan is to provide a decision-making framework for recreation programs, municipal parks and facilities that are accessible to the entire community, considering both residents and regional visitors. The framework is established to meet the needs of a growing population and to promote the use and appreciation of the facilities and programs over the next five-years.

As visible in the many projects over the last decade, Kokomo recognizes the positive impact of investing in quality of life improvements. Park facilities, open space, and recreational offerings not only allow residents opportunities to grow and thrive, but also provide economic vitality by attracting and retaining talent.

The ideas and opportunities outlined in this plan will help the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department continue to offer, improve upon, and expand these types of opportunities.

GOALS OF THIS PLAN

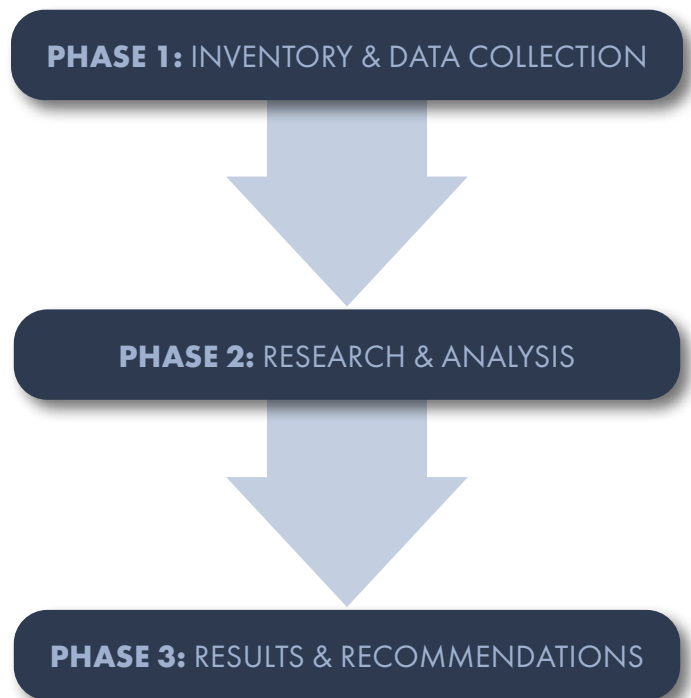
The goals of this plan are:

- To update the previous parks and recreation master plan.
- To gather public input from Kokomo Parks and Recreation users, both in the city limits and in the surrounding areas, to ensure the priorities established in this plan are what the community desires for future development.
- Identify needed park facilities and programming in the community and to set priorities that will meet those needs.
- Identify Kokomo Parks and Recreation Departments role in achieving the identified goals for park facilities and programming in the community.
- To keep the public informed and involved in Kokomo Parks and Recreation planning.
- Receive approval from Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for eligibility for Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant programs and other applicable grants.
- For the plan to be a guide for the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department for the next five years.

PLAN METHODOLOGY & DEVELOPMENT

This plan was developed through an extensive process of inventory, data collection, research, public survey, teen survey, park staff interviews, stakeholder meetings and a public event. The results of this process informed and shaped the outcomes and recommendations. The information collected during this process is summarized within the content of the plan.

Input from the community and its leaders is the basis for this plan. As such, future implementation will have maximum benefit for both residents and visitors through continued support, cooperation, and guidance from the community. The diagram below depicts the three main phases conducted during the completion of the plan.





The Kokomo Reservoir Park (left) and Peshewa Nature Trail (right) are included in the planning area even though they are located outside of the city limits.

LOCATION OF KOKOMO

The City of Kokomo is located 50 miles north of Indianapolis in the north central part of the state and is easily accessible by US-31, which splits the county generally in half. The seat of Howard County and notably the only city within the county, Kokomo encompasses approximately 36.68 square miles. The surrounding regional communities are primarily based on agricultural economies making Kokomo an important regional commercial and social activity center within the county.

DEFINITION OF PLANNING AREA

A map of the planning area is shown on the following page. For the purposes of this plan the limits are generally considered to be the corporate limits of the City of Kokomo with one exception—the Peshewa Nature Trail and Kokomo Reservoir Park.

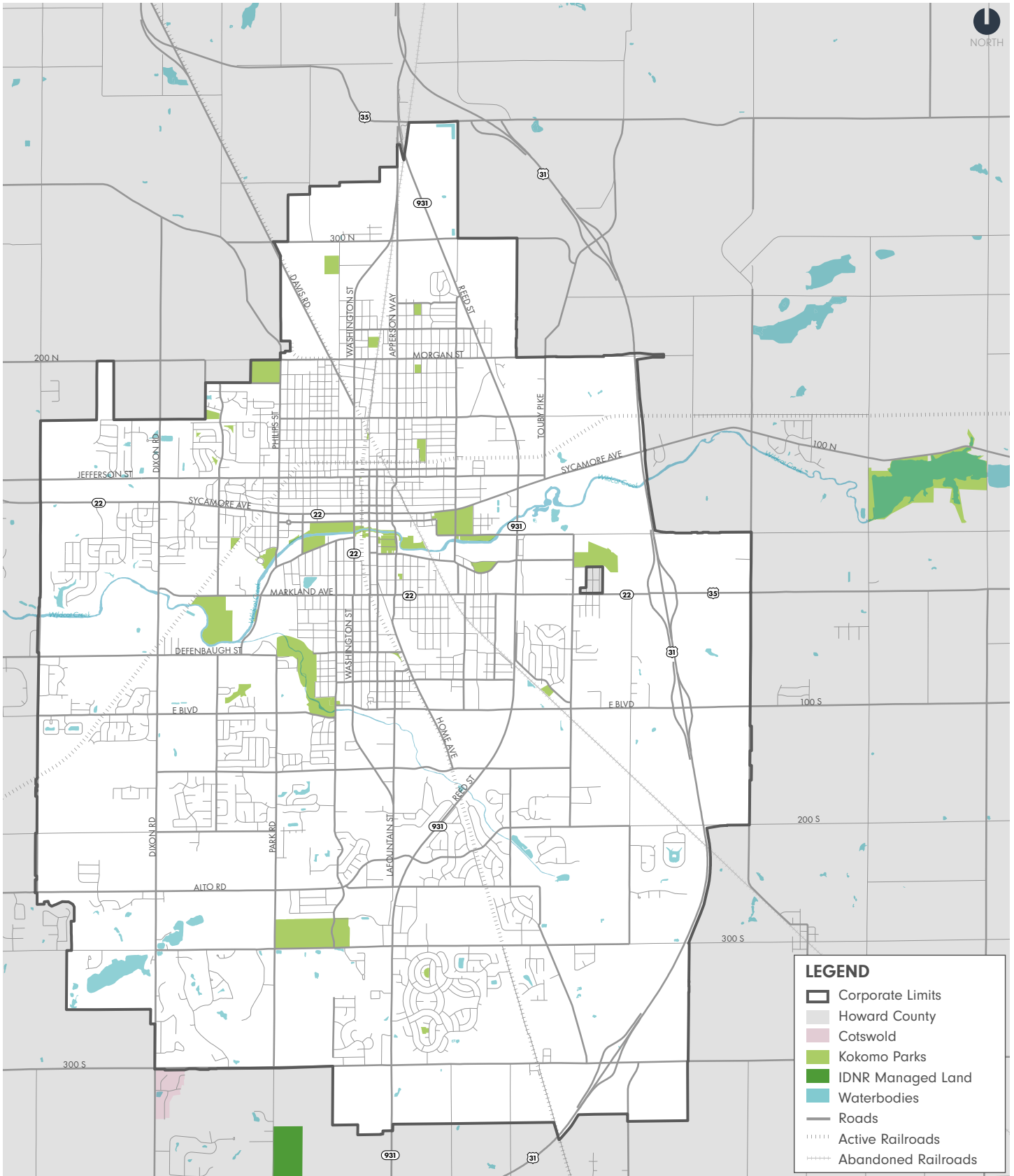
Shown within Howard County but northeast of the city, the 30-acre Reservoir Park is owned by Indiana American Water; however, the City of Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department is contracted to maintain the grounds. Therefore, the reservoir and trail are considered a part of the parks system and included in the plan inventory, analysis, and recommendations.

The figure on the following page provides an overview of the physical location of the community as well as many of the major features which help shape and impact parks and recreational uses regionally including the major parks, waterways (both Kokomo Creek and Wildcat Creek watersheds), and major vehicular circulation.

As identified in the survey, the majority of respondents reside in the city limits of Kokomo (68.4%), but the remaining respondents (31.6%) identified as being from Howard County or from one of the surrounding counties.

Kokomo Parks and Recreation not only serves its residents but attracts users from well beyond their corporate limits. This is due to their extensive park system and recreational programming opportunities. Larger events such as weekend baseball games at Championship Park, community festivals, and seasonal festivities are big attractions to many of the surrounding communities within the North Central Indiana region. While these increased number of visitors don't have a major impact on the departments daily operations, they do require the need for additional resources that are provided by the parks. These include additional trash receptacles and other such amenities as well as varying mechanisms for crowd control to ensure that both residents and visitors alike remain comfortable and safe during these programmed events.

FIGURE 1.1: PLANNING AREA



MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATION

LOCATION

1402 W. Defenbaugh St.
Kokomo, IN 46902

p. 765.456.7275

e: park@cityofkokomo.org

STAFF

The Parks and Recreation Department staff has the responsibility of providing recreational programming to the residents of Kokomo and maintaining municipal parks and facilities throughout the community. The Department is also responsible for the operations of the Crown Point Cemetery. The present Parks and Recreation Department is made up of the following personnel:

PARKS SUPERINTENDENT

Torrey Roe

RECREATION MANAGER

Allison Barkman

OFFICE STAFF

- Susan Stewart - Office Manager
- Debbie Roberson - Office Clerk
- Charity Buck - Office Clerk
- Tim Cain - Foreman
- Josh Winchester - Foreman
- Monica Reed - Crown Point Cemetery

FACILITY STAFF

- Mindy Snow, Senior Center Director
- Allison Barkman (Interim) - Nature Center Director
- Jill Fortner, Museum Director

PARKS FULL-TIME STAFF

- 1 - Heavy Equipment Operator
- 2 - Maintenance Men
- 2 - Recreation Laborers
- 6 - Laborers

CROWN POINT CEMETERY FULL-TIME STAFF

- 1 - Heavy Equipment Operator
- 1 - Truck Driver
- 1 - Laborer

PARK BOARD

The Board of Park Commissioners for the City of Kokomo oversees the operations of the Parks and Recreation Department. The board is made up of 6 appointed members who set policy for the department. Four of the members are appointed by the Mayor, one is appointed by the Kokomo Center Township School Board, and one is appointed by the Howard County Library Board. The city administration works with the superintendent of the parks and recreation department while the Park Board has a policy relationship. The Board of Park Commissioners meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 am. The meetings are held at the Parks Department office unless otherwise noted. The current Board is listed below:

PRESIDENT

Donald Spall

VICE PRESIDENT

Cathy Stover

MEMBERS

- Shirley Dubois
- Cathy Kern
- Isaac White

REVENUE & FEES

Kokomo Parks and Recreation provide both free and fee-based programs and facilities. Facility fees include admission to the Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center and shelter/building rentals. The Aquatic Center offers daily admission fees at a rate of \$6 (ages 12+) and \$5 (ages 2-11 and 55+). Season passes are also available at a rate of \$60 (ages 12+) and \$50 (ages 2-11 and 55+). Large shelters can be rented out for \$30 and small shelters for \$20 per day. The Department also provides opportunities to rent out the Highland Outdoor Stage, Kokomo Arts Pavilion,

as well as the Kokomo Pipeline Skatepark. Specific program fees vary depending on the activity being provided. Some free programs include Water Sprays, Pumpkin Painting, Kite Flying Workshop, Haunted Trail Walk, Creature Features, as well as an annual Easter Egg Hunt.

While the Department is primarily funded from property taxes, the Department does collect program and facility fees, but intentionally keeps the fees low to increase access for its residents. Social equity should continue to be considered as current offerings are evaluated and new programs are added. Efforts should be made to accommodate those who are considered economically disadvantaged.

OPERATING BUDGET

KPRD current operating budgets are outlined below:

- Parks - \$4,762,291
- Recreation - \$867,891
- Pool - \$823,488
- Municipal Stadium - \$320,700
- Cemetery - \$739,582

These budgets cover all operating expenses, salaries of employees and all capital improvements. As KPRD continues to grow and offer additional park acreage, amenities, and programming to the park system, the operating budget will need to be considered. See Chapter 05 Needs Analysis for a comparison of operating budgets to national trends.



'Play on Kokomo' Photo Contest: "Biking on the Nickel Plate Trail"
Image Source: Elizabeth Camp



02

THE COMMUNITY



Industrial Heritage Trail
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page

OVERVIEW

Insights drawn from the collection and analysis of broad demographic trends, man-made resources, historical and cultural resources and natural resources can indicate specific needs or opportunities in the community. This analysis will also serve to inform proposed recommendations for the plan.

SOCIAL + ECONOMIC FACTORS

The demographics examined in this section include population, age, disability, ethnicity and race, income, households, unemployment, and poverty. Statistics used for this analysis were gleaned from the United States Census Bureau, censusreporter.org, bestplaces.net and the Indiana Workforce Development website hoosierdata.in.gov

POPULATION

Kokomo's population grew an impressive 31% between 2010 and 2020 and population is expected to continue growing over the next planning period. Kokomo's well established automotive industry is expected to be the reason for future population growth with planned investments in existing and new manufacturers, adding approximately 1,500 new jobs, perhaps by the end of 2025, potentially luring new residents to the city. With this expected future population growth it is anticipated that the demand for recreation opportunities will increase requiring expansion and investment in the parks system.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended for the City of Kokomo to conduct their own population survey after these new businesses establish themselves in the community to fully understand the impacts it will have on parks and recreation. This will prepare KPRD for the next planning period and better inform what expansion and investment is needed in the parks system. The Industries & Employers section of this chapter provides details of the anticipated industrial and employment growth and the implications and recommendations for KPRD.

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT



POPULATION

2010: 45,468

2020: 59,604



population
increase
since 2010

31%

MEDIAN AGE

Indiana: 38.2 years

Kokomo: 40.0 years



Kokomo

89.2%

High School Diploma
or Higher



Indiana

90.6%

High School Diploma
or Higher

18.0%

Bachelor's Degree
or Higher

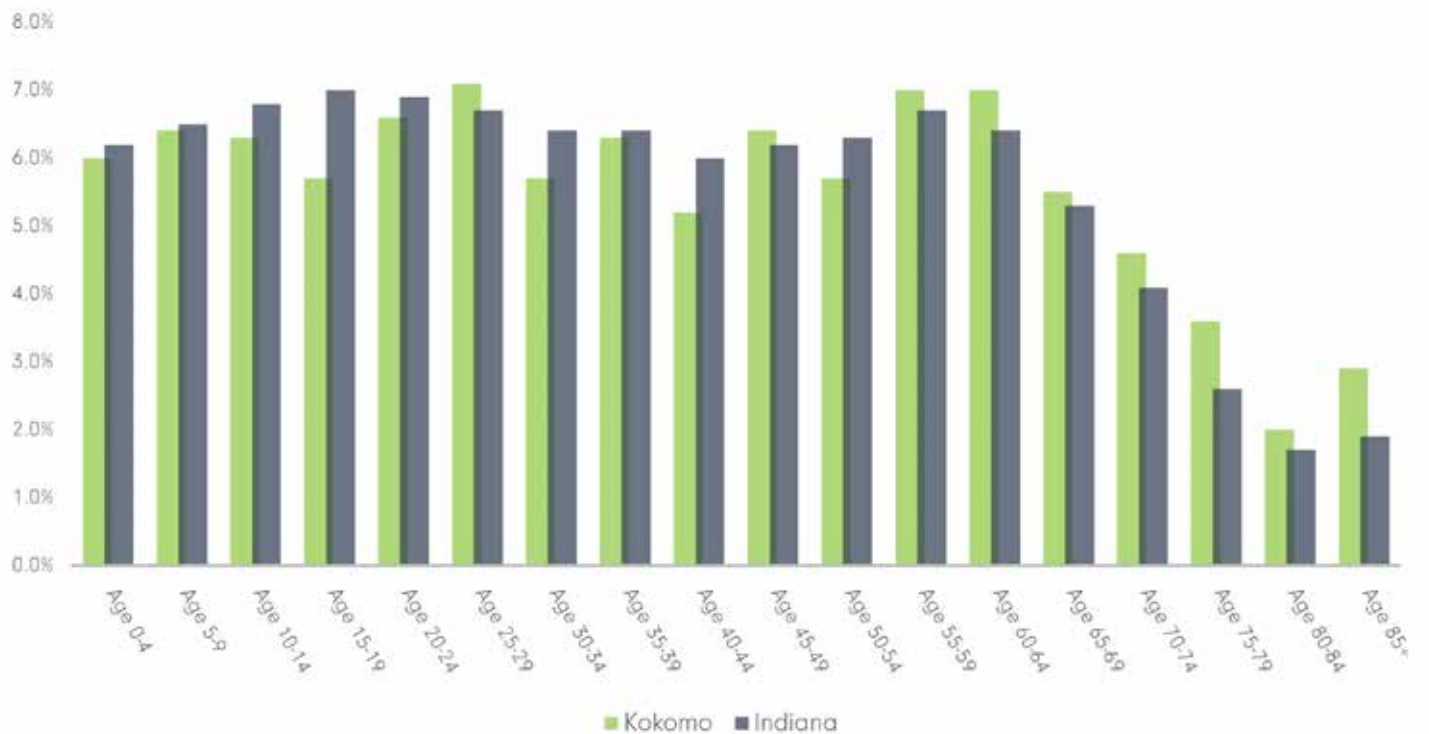
28.9%

Bachelor's Degree
or Higher



35.7% of households
have one or more people
under 18 years old

FIGURE 2.1: KOKOMO'S AGE COMPARED TO INDIANA



Data Source: United States Census Bureau

AGE

Statistics from the 2020 U.S. Census break down the approximate size of each age group living in Kokomo. Approximately 24% of the population is under the age of 19, about 14% of the current population is between the ages of 19 to 30 years old and about 36% of the population is between the ages of 30 and 60. The age group 60 and above represents approximately 26% of the population. Kokomo's current median age of 40.0 years is slightly higher than the State of Indiana's median age of 38.2 years.

For youth populations, the under 5-years old to 9-years old represents 12.4% of the population and pre-teens and teenagers, the 10 to 19-years old, represents 12.0%. On the opposite end of the scale, a high percentage of the population, 26%, is over 60 years old and of the 26,029 households, 15.9% are over 65 years old and living alone. There is a large percent of the population in the young adult to middle age demographic at 50%.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

KPRD has identified teens as a priority focus for the department and recognizes the need to provide new infrastructure, programming, and activities specific to teens. A teen survey was conducted during the public input process to better understand what teens desire. In summary, it was discovered that teens like to hang out with friends and want spaces and activities that allow for that. It is recommended that new facilities and programming offerings respond to what teens said they wanted in the survey results. More information can be found in Chapter 03 Plan Development.

A future focus area for the KPRD will be to balance the needs of each age group by providing a variety of recreational facilities and programming. KPRD is already offering a good variety of opportunities for each age group. Below are some recommended amenities for each age group. This list is not expansive and a lot of these amenities and/or programming ideas are multi-generational.

YOUNG CHILDREN:

- Playgrounds (6 months to 2 years)
- Playgrounds (2-5 years old)
- Playgrounds (5-12 years old)
- Splash pads
- Pool/aquatic center facilities and programming
- Youth sports facilities and programming such as T-ball, baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, etc.
- Other youth programming such as summer youth day camps, crafts, nature based programs, etc.
- Seasonal events like Easter Egg Hunts, Trunk or Treat and Gingerbread Hunt
- Other fun events like the water spray events, nerf battle fights, kid fun runs, etc.

PRE-TEENS + TEENS

- Dedicated teen hangout spaces within the parks
- WiFi access
- Game tables such as ping pong, pool, foosball, air hockey, etc.
- Mini golf course
- Open space for pick-up games
- Exercise equipment such as ninja warrior courses or fitness courses
- Trails for cycling/riding bikes and for walking/jogging/running
- Programming that allows teens to gather and hang out with each other and make new friends such as teen movie night, teen game night, star gazing at Jackson Morrow Park, water fights, etc.
- Other programming that interest teens such as sports, nature, and outdoor recreational programming. See Chapter 03 Plan Development for more programming opportunities.

YOUNG ADULTS TO MIDDLE AGE

- Trails for cycling/riding bikes and for walking/jogging/running
- Exercise equipment in parks and along trails

- Walking paths around playgrounds for parents to exercise on while their children parks
- Seating and shade for parents watching their children at parks
- Adult sports facilities and programming such as pickleball, tennis, basketball, volleyball, softball, disc golf, golf, etc.
- Programming that allows for social interaction and fun such as trivia nights, concerts, food truck festivals, clubs, etc.
- Educational classes that are geared to adult interests such as financial planning, fitness/nutrition, home improvement, plant identification or gardening, etc.
- Arts and culture programming such as dance classes, music classes, crafts classes such as quilting, art classes such as painting, etc.

SENIORS

- Paved walking path and trails that are level and free of obstruction with resting areas that have seating, shade or/and drinking fountains.
- Site furnishing equipment that is factors in senior mobility. For example, chairs with taller seats and arm rests to aid in lifting out of the seat.
- Wellness programming for both physical and mental health such as pickleball, fitness classes, personal training, physical education classes, nutrition classes, meditation classes, etc.
- Programming that allows for social interaction such as games nights, movie nights, dance nights, walking clubs, etc.
- Economic well being programming such as financial planning classes, retirement classes, medicare/social security classes, etc.
- Arts and culture programming such as dance classes, music classes, crafts classes such as quilting, art classes such as painting, etc.

DISABILITY

According to the 2020 U.S. Census data, approximately 18.7% of Kokomo's population is disabled with 10.5% having ambulatory difficulty, 7.7% having cognitive difficulty, 7.5% having independent living difficulty and 6.5% having hearing difficulty. Kokomo's percentage of disabled population is higher than the state of Indiana by 5.0%. Of the 5,736 individuals (about 10.5% of the population) with ambulatory difficulties, 2,756 are between the ages of 35 and 64, and 1,518 over the age of 75.

These statistics align with data that was drawn from the public survey. Over 14% of respondents answered "yes" to the question asking if any members of their family had a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. While KPRD rarely receives complaints from the public in regards to accessibility within the parks, the community does have an open communication line with the Parks Department to make them aware of any issues that they see within the parks. A follow up to above question allowed individuals to share their opinions on what improvements are needed within the parks to better serve their needs. Many of these comments related to ensuring there were accessible routes to features within the parks including playground equipment, drinking fountains, and seating areas. Additionally, respondents noted that they would like to see more accessible play equipment and sensory activities. More information on survey responses regarding accessibility can be found in Chapter 03 Plan Development. Other accessibility issues observed in the parks can be found in the Accessibility section of Chapter 04 Park System Inventory.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

With Kokomo's higher percentage of disabled populations, it is recommended that KPRD and the City of Kokomo conduct an ADA evaluation of park facilities and programming in the parks to assess what is needed in the parks and programs to make them accessible. After this evaluation is complete it is recommended that KPRD develop an action

plan to address those issues identified. Specific recommendations for this evaluation and other improvements KPRD can make in the next five years can be found in the Accessibility section of Chapter 04 Park System Inventory.

It is also recommended KPRD address the specific issues to accessibility that were given by the public survey respondents. A comprehensive summary can be found in Chapter 03 Plan Development.

Accessibility not only includes wheelchair accessibility but also goes beyond wheelchair accessibility and looks at a variety of disabilities including cognitive, hearing, sight and more. KPRD should focus not only on wheelchair accessibility but also providing for the needs of other who experience other disabilities. Below is a list of other recommendations for other disabilities. This list is not expansive.

- Incorporating American Sign Language (ASL) signs into designed elements of a playground or art.
- Making ASL interpreters available at major events or concerts
- Adding communication walls (chalk board or dry erase) to parks or playground for those with hearing disabilities to communicate with others
- Ensuring signage has braille for those who are blind.
- Ensuring ADA ramps at street intersections have truncated domes for those who are blind.
- Installing chirping or sound signals at crosswalks for busy intersections or those who are blind.
- Providing fencing around some playgrounds in the parks for children who are on the autism spectrum
- Adding sensory components to playgrounds that engage the tactile, auditory, visual, vestibular and proprioceptive sensory systems.
- Adding areas in playgrounds for children with autism to retreat from play and/or a safe place to observe play.

ETHNICITY & RACE

The racial characteristic of Kokomo is predominately white at about 79.1% of the population, followed by black or African American population at about 10.6%, those of two or more races at about 6.9% and Hispanic or Latino at about 4.2%.

The majority of Kokomo's ethnic and racially diverse population can be found in neighborhoods located on the north side of the city. These neighborhoods are located near Studebaker Park, Al Berryman Splash Pad, Riley Park, and Bon Air Park. Sidewalks throughout these neighborhoods provide residents with accessible routes to the parks.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATION

Ethnic distribution in Kokomo relates closely to State of Indiana averages and does not indicate a specific need for specialized cultural facilities. KPRD should help celebrate the ethnic and racial diversity around these parks by offering programming and events for these groups so they feel they are included and that parks are for them too. KPRD should work with these communities to help identify what those needs or opportunities are. With Hispanic and Latino populations in Kokomo, KPRD should start to include Spanish on new signage added in the park system and also add some Hispanic and Latino events to programming.

INCOME + UNEMPLOYMENT + POVERTY

According to the U.S. Census data, median household income in 2022 for Kokomo was \$53,397, well below the state median income of \$66,785

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Kokomo is estimated to have a current average unemployment rate of 6.7%, which is higher than the state of Indiana average at 3.7%.

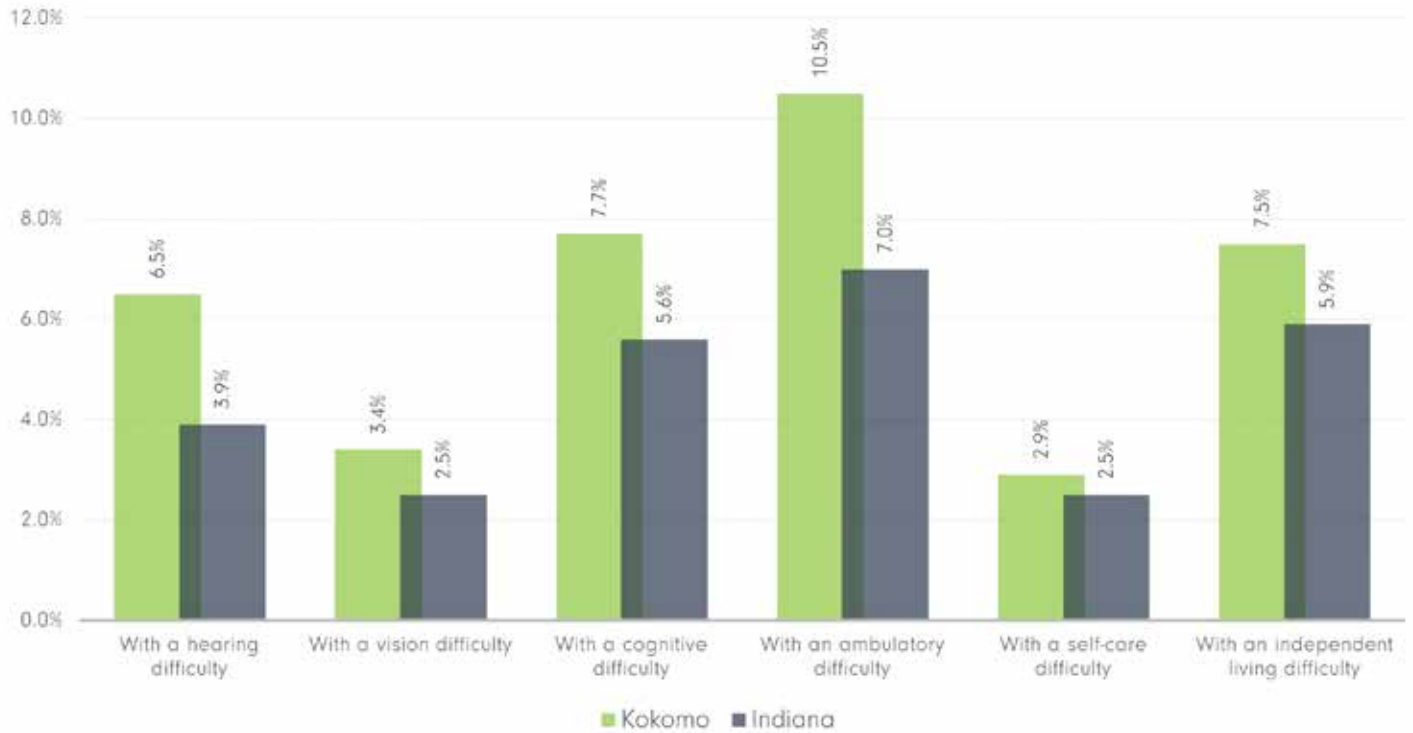
Additionally, according to the U.S. Census data, Kokomo is estimated to have 14.5% of the population living below the poverty level which is significantly higher than the state of Indiana at 12.2%.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

Low median household income, high poverty rates and higher unemployment rate create a greater need for free or minimal cost recreational opportunities. KPRD is already doing a great job at addressing this need in Kokomo by offering many free events and programs to the community and offering competitive rates on programming and fees to access facilities. This is made evident as school groups from Hamilton County and other surrounding communities travel to Kokomo to use their pool facility and rental facilities as they are a more cost effective option. Additionally, nearly 90% of all events hosted by the park are free to the community. Some of these events include National Night Out providing free admission to the pool, water spray events in collaboration with the fire department, annual Easter Egg Hunt, and the annual Haunted Trail Walk in Jackson Morrow Park. KPRD even partners with local organizations to sponsor individuals or families that can't afford fees. KPRD should continue providing free events and programming opportunities and could improve existing efforts by hosting more events and programs in parks near neighborhoods with lower socio-economic status. KPRD can also add new facilities such as playgrounds, splash pads, dog parks, etc. in the parks around these neighborhoods.

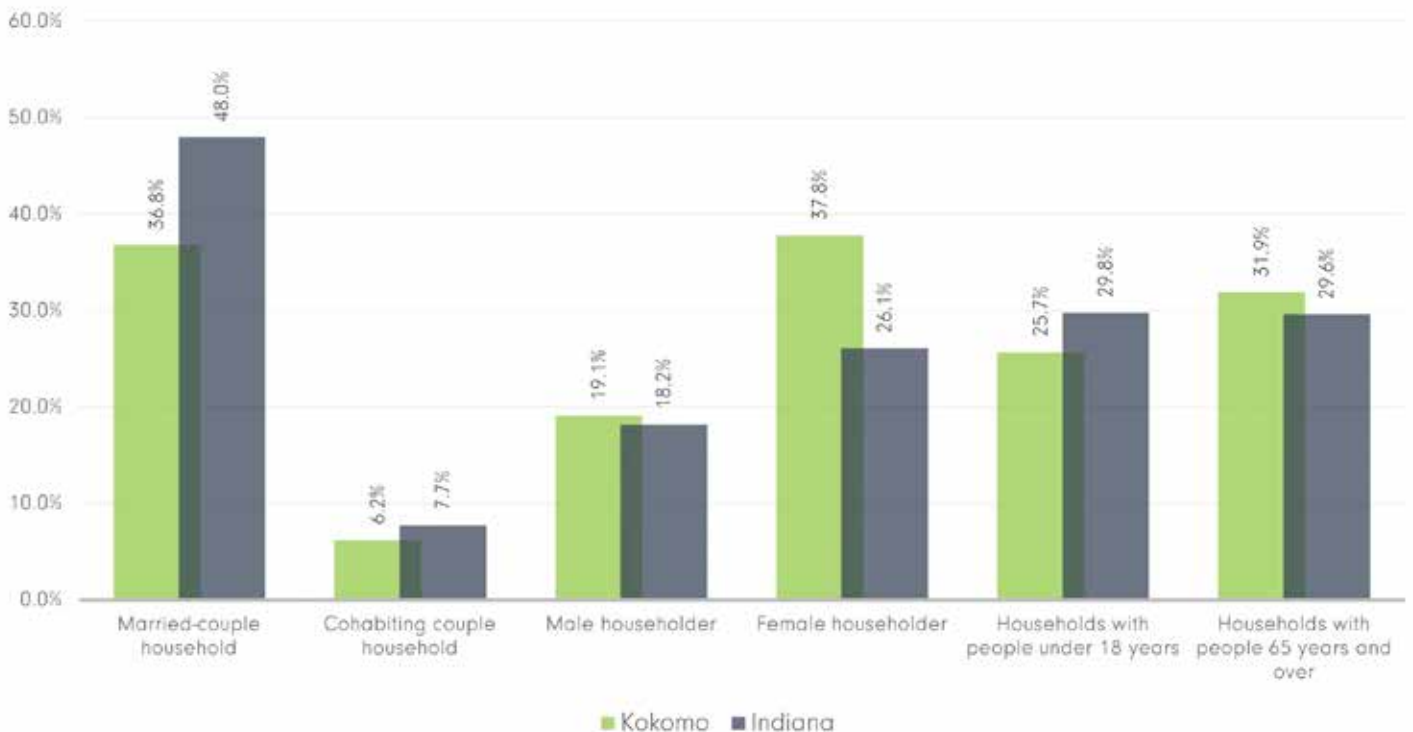
Another item to consider is that proximity to parks and transportation can be a barrier for those of a lower socio-economic status. The City of Kokomo already has a great public transportation option that is further expanded on later in this chapter. KPRD should work with the City to evaluate current bus stop locations and their proximity to parks to determine if new stops need or could be add to bus routes.

FIGURE 2.2: KOKOMO'S DISABILITY COMPARED TO INDIANA



Data Source: United States Census Bureau

FIGURE 2.3: KOKOMO'S HOUSEHOLDS COMPARED TO INDIANA



Data Source: United States Census Bureau

HOUSEHOLDS

According to the U.S. Census data, Kokomo has a slightly lower percentage of family households with children at 27.1% than the State of Indiana at 29.8%. Average family size is 2.94. Married or co-habiting couple household make up 42.6% of household. Single male or female households make up 57.4% of households. Single female households are much higher than the state of Indiana by 11.9% and single female parents were also higher than the state by 2.0%. Both single male or female householders made up 8.6% of the 27.1% of households with children, which is about a third. Households with one or more people over the age of 65 is 32.3%.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

One significant data point above is the percentage of single parent households. About one third of households with children are single parents. Single parents sometimes do not have support and have fewer opportunities to participate in parks and recreation opportunities. KPRD is already offering free based events and programs that reduce financial barriers for single parents.

The scheduling of events and programs could also impact single parents. If one event or program is only offered on weekends and that single parent works on the weekends, then schedule is a barrier to that particular single parent accessing that event or program. One way KPRD could help reduce scheduling barriers is to offer events and programs on different days of the week and at different times. Other considerations that could benefit single parents are offering after school programs, preschool, before-school programs and full daycare. Creating single parent parks clubs could also create community within parks for single parents and allow them to support one another.

The other data does not indicate that KPRD needs to focus on specific types of recreational facilities or programs based on households type but that KPRD should providing recreational facilities or programs for multiple types of households.

MAN-MADE, HISTORICAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

ROADS & PARKING LOTS

Kokomo's most influential thoroughfare is U.S. 31. This major corridor connects Kokomo to I-465 providing easy access for visitors traveling north from Indianapolis. This connection brings many outside users to Kokomo from the surrounding communities within North Central Indiana and beyond.

Generally within the parks, roads are in fair condition and there are no major issues. Some roads could use resurfacing but it does not prevent users from coming to the parks. Other roads within in the community are a higher priority. Crown Point Cemetery roadways are planned to be resurfaced in 2024.

Parking lots within parks are in fair condition with KPRD trying to space out improvements each year and also on an as needed basis. Northwest Park, Rodgers Pavilion and Reservoir Park are all planned to be resurfaced in 2024.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

U.S. 31 is a major thoroughfare in the community. With it brings so many people into Kokomo and through Kokomo, KPRD should consider adding wayfinding signage to parks from strategic location off of U.S. 31. KPRD could also advertise parks and recreation offerings along U.S. 31 to bring in more visitors.

As mentioned above, resurfacing of roadways at Crown Point Cemetery and the parking lots at Northwest Park, Rodgers Pavilion, and Reservoir Park are needed.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

City Line Trolley is Kokomo's fixed-route busing system with five routes providing coverage to most of the education, retail and medical areas and services with over 250 specific stops. All lines begin and end at the transit center in downtown Kokomo. This service is offered Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 7:00 PM and is free to ride.

Spirit of Kokomo is a para-transit service that provides curb to curb service to those 65 years of age or older along with those who have a qualifying disability. All Spirit of Kokomo vehicles are fully ADA accessible. This service is offered Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 7:00 PM.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the bus stops found within the City are located along the trail system as well as at the larger community parks. These include stops at Jackson Morrow Park as well as Foster Park. While there is a stop located within a mile of Highland Park, the City should consider adding a bus stop at Highland Park, as this park serves as one of the main community parks in Kokomo. Completing the stops at these three main parks would ensure that there is a strong connection from Jackson Morrow to the south up to Foster Park.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Kokomo has active transportation infrastructure that includes trails, bike routes, bike lanes and sidewalks. There are 16.3 miles of multi-use trails and according to the active transportation plan there are 8.24 miles of bike lanes currently. Most notable trails include the Industrial Heritage Trail, the Walk of Excellence, the Cloverleaf Trail, and the Nickel Plate Trail. Many of the parks that are connected to the trail system are centrally located in the city. Below are some of the major connections for each trail:

- Cloverleaf Trail
 - Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex
 - Mehlig Park

- Walk of Excellence
 - Miller-Highland Park UCT
 - Foster Park
 - Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center
 - Downtown Dog Park
 - Downtown River Walk
 - Kokomo Municipal Stadium
 - Future Park
 - Crown Point Cemetery
 - Waterworks Park
- Industrial Heritage Trail
 - Northside Park
 - Al Berryman Memorial Park
 - Depot Trailhead

More information on the trails and linear park system can be found in Chapter 04 Park System Inventory.

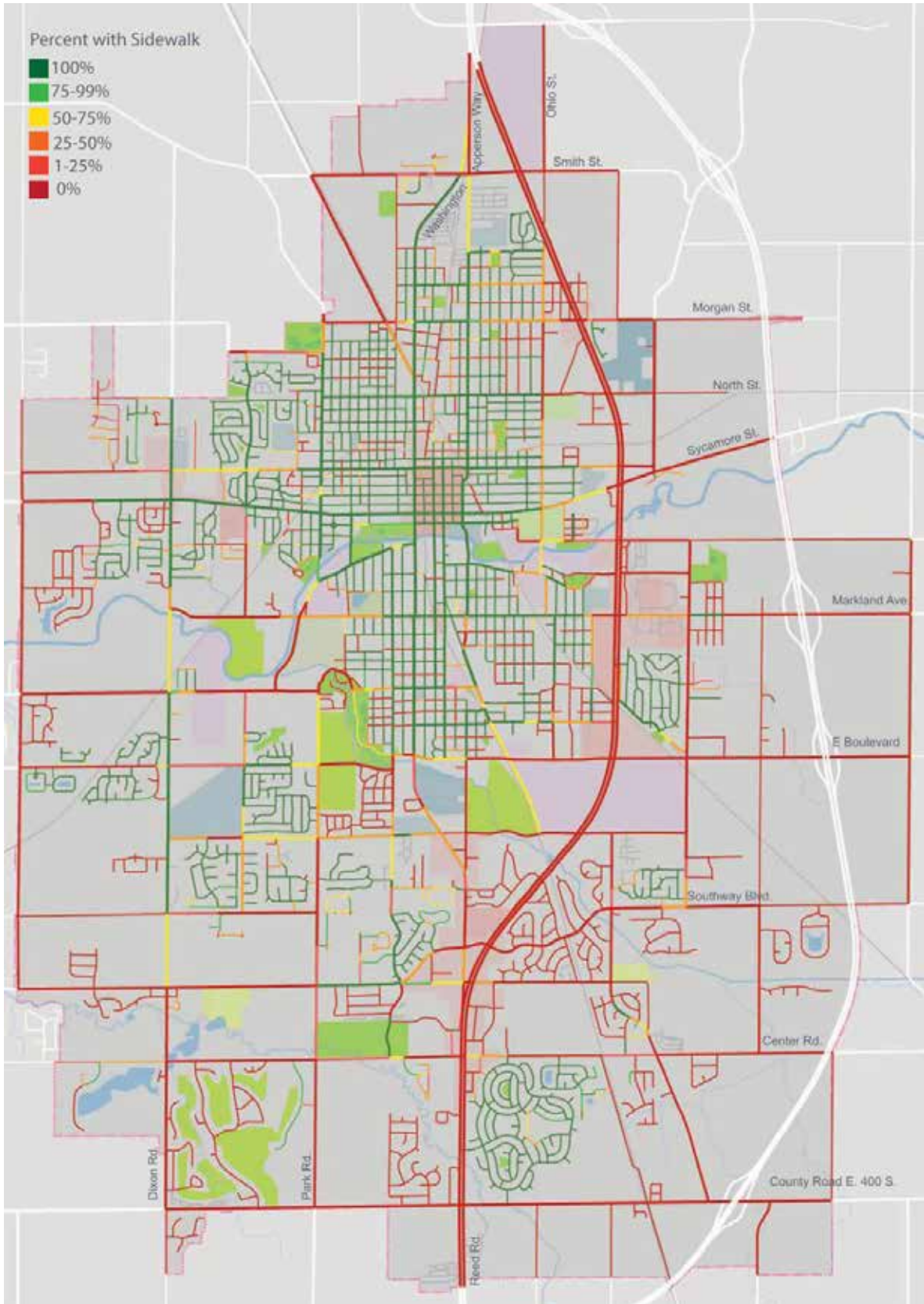
Since the last plan, a total of 4.8 miles of trails have been added to the trail system and a new pedestrian bridge has been added over 931 connecting the Nickel Plate Trail to the Industrial Heritage Trail. Future plans for the trail system include extending the Cloverleaf Trail to Frankfort and adding a pedestrian bridge over Wildcat Creek near Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex.

There are some pedestrian safety concerns where trails crosses major streets. These include:

- Cloverleaf Trail crossings at Washington Street, Phillip Street, North Street, Jefferson Street, Markland and Sycamore.
- Industrial Heritage Trail crossing at Morgan Street.

According to the 2017 Kokomo's Active Transportation Plan, several neighborhoods are without sidewalks, have missing segments, or are unsafe and needing repair. City Code specifies that maintenance and repairs are the responsibility of the property owner making a pedestrian network difficult to achieve. The City of Kokomo has implemented a few initiatives to improve sidewalk conditions and these include the Block Wide 50/50 Program and Individual Sidewalk 50/50 Program. More information on these initiatives can be found in the appendix.

FIGURE 2.4: SIDEWALK MAP



Generally, even with these initiatives, having residents pay for sidewalk improvements, even if it is only partially, is a barrier to connectivity in the community .

Kokomo's Active Transportation Plan also included a sidewalks map showing where sidewalk facilities within the City. See Figure 2.4 for this map. The map shows there is more sidewalk connectivity in the northern part of Kokomo but south within city limits are lacking facilities. Near the city limits are also lacking sidewalks.

Generally, the parks do not have many sidewalks except around restroom facilities. The sidewalks that are in the parks are well maintained and in good condition.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Kokomo update their Active Transportation Plan. The last plan was completed in 2017 and is now 7 years old. Updating the plan will give better guidance for future active transportation improvements.

Kokomo has been doing an incredible job with their trail system and it is recommended that Kokomo continue with their future plans. Long-term plans of extending the Cloverleaf Trail to Frankfort is also encouraged. Connecting the local trail system with regional trail systems will bring more people to the city and will subsequently bring people to parks and recreation facilities.

For sidewalks, it is recommended the city code related to sidewalk improvements is re-evaluated. Requiring property owners pay for sidewalk improvements within their community is a barrier to improving sidewalk accessibility within the community.

Sidewalks within the parks are few and it recommended to KPRD add accessible sidewalks/walking paths in the parks. More recommendations can be found in the Accessibility section of Chapter 04 Park System Inventory.

Areas to consider future trail and sidewalk connections include improving access to Jackson Morrow Park in

the southern part of the city as well as connections into some of the southern neighborhoods. These areas were identified in the active transportation plan as lacking sidewalk facilities.

Pedestrian safety improvements at the trail crossings listed above are recommended. Possible measures KPRD could be providing adequate signage alerting both pedestrians and vehicles of a trail crossing as well as consideration of other traffic control mechanisms such as flashing beacons and HAWK signals.

PARK STRUCTURES

KPRD offers a variety of built facilities throughout their parks including restrooms, concessions, and picnic shelters. These facilities are in generally good condition, though the department is making strides in updating and modernizing restrooms as well as transitioning the more heavily used restroom facilities along trails and within community parks to be year-round.

Vandalism remains the biggest factor for increased maintenance of these facilities. These issues include the removal of graffiti on sidewalks, murals, and playground equipment as well as replacement of restroom amenities such as sinks, toilets, doors, and signs. The department estimates that they spend anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 per month throughout the winter months and up to \$2,000 per month throughout the rest of the year with the summer months being the biggest time for vandalism to occur.

The department has taken some measures to try and mitigate some of these issues including:

- Increased security at Kokomo Beach
- Coordination with the Kokomo Police Department (KPD) to patrol the trails as well as observe the parks for general disturbances
 - KPD is also utilized to identify graffiti signs/ tags along the trails, in conjunction with the cameras, and have been successful in catching vandals using this method.

This was further emphasized in the public survey, as over 63% of respondents noted that increasing safety and security in the parks is a top issue to focus on.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

KPRD should continue to work with KPD to keep eyes on the parks and provide more direct patrols of the parks when capacity allows. KPRD could also look to expanding their camera system, where feasible, to other parts of the parks where vandalism occurs more frequently. Limitations are present due to Internet access as well as operational costs.

INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYERS

Kokomo has a rich history of innovation and ingenuity. Kokomo was the birthplace of one of America's first gasoline combustion-engine cars, stainless steel, signal seeking radios, satellite and more. This history spans over 150 years and has established a strong industry base in automotive, manufacturing and technology industries. Recent investment from Fiat Chrysler Automotives has made Kokomo the largest automotive transmission-producing community in the world.

Major employers include:

- Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (Automobile manufacturer)
- APTIV (Global tech company)
- GM Components Holdings, LLC - Kokomo Operations (Automotive manufacturer)
- Haynes International (Metal manufacturer)
- Kokomo School Corporation (K-12 Education)
- Community Howard Regional Health (Healthcare)
- St. Vincent Kokomo (Healthcare)
- Bona Vista Program, Inc. (Human services)
- Syndicate Sales, Inc. (Plastics manufacturing)
- Indiana University Kokomo (Higher education)

Additionally, StarPlus Energy LLC (a joint-venture company created by Stellantis and Samsung SDI) is building a 2.4 million square foot electric-vehicle battery manufacturing facility in the city's new industrial park. The development is expected to be completed in 2025 and will create 1,400 new jobs in Kokomo.

When the project was announced, the officials from both companies listed the local workforce, the city's infrastructure and the caliber of students graduating from the colleges as major reasons for choosing Kokomo for the project.

A supplier for the electric vehicle industry, Soulbrain MI, has announced plans to establish operations in Kokomo, creating 75 new, high-wage jobs by the end of 2025. The company plans to invest \$75 million to construct a 30,000 square foot manufacturing facility on 22 acres at the industrial park.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

This new economic development has a direct impact on local parks and recreation which is population growth. As news jobs are created and new residents and families establish homes in Kokomo, this will create a higher demand for expansion and investment in the parks system to meet the needs of these individuals. Growth in the park system will also be important for future economic development. According to a 2018 study prepared for the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Promoting Parks and Recreation's Role in Economic Development, investment in improving a community's quality-of-life can create a virtuous cycle. High quality places attract talent, talent attracts employers, which in turn attracts more investments and jobs.

Additionally, a survey from the 2022 NRPA Engagement with Parks Report found that 84% of U.S. adults seek high-quality parks and recreation when choosing a place to live. The survey further identified that 74% of parents and 65% of working adults consider proximity to a park or recreation opportunity when choosing where to live as extremely important or very important.

It is important to note that the new industrial park, which is 142 acres, is just the first phase of the development. The land was only acquired in 2021 and within a year of acquiring the land, there are already two major developments. How will new future developments in the industrial park, unknown at the time of this plan, impact local parks and recreation?



Kokomo's Industrial Park Development Plan
 Image Source: www.kokomotribune.com



Elwood Haynes, known as the Father of the Natural Gas Industry, conceived the idea of the "Horseless Carriage" and built the first automobile in 1894
 Image Source: www.visitkokomo.org



Nickel Plate Trail Pedestrian Bridge over SR 931
 Image Source: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofKokomo/>



Indiana University Kokomo
Image Source: www.iuk.edu



Vermont Covered Bridge
Image Source: www.visitkokomo.org



Howards County Museum (a.k.a. Seiberling Mansion)
Image Source: <http://howardcountymuseum.org/plan-your-visit>

As economic growth continues, the park system will need to grow too. This could include:

- Adding acres of park land, to the park system
- Capital investments in park facilities such as playgrounds, sports fields, indoor recreational facilities, trails, etc.
- Increased funding to the operating budget
- Increased programming offerings
- Additional staff to accommodate new growth

Further, in the next planning period, it is recommended that the public survey ask respondents about their work schedules to understand if there are a significant number of late-shift workers that might want access to the parks at non-traditional hours. Currently this is not an issue that KPRD receives feedback on. KPRD currently has no 24-hour facilities and parks close 11:00pm per the city ordinance. New development and jobs could change needs and should be evaluated once they are established.

UNIVERSITIES

Kokomo is home to four colleges and universities. These include:

- Indiana University Kokomo (IUK) - offers certificates, Bachelor's degrees, and Master's degrees
- Purdue Polytechnic Institute - offers Bachelor of Science Degrees, Associate Degrees, and Certificates
- Indiana Wesleyan University Kokomo - offers Certificates, Associate degrees, Bachelor's degrees, Master's degrees and Doctoral degrees
- Ivy Tech Community College - offers Certificates, Associate degrees, and Bachelor's degrees

IUK continues to grow and has an economic impact on the region. An economic impact study released by IU in 2020 revealed that the university delivered a \$130.2 million impact on north central Indiana for fiscal year 2018 to 2019. The impact was equal to approximately 0.4% of the total gross regional product of the IUK service area and is equivalent to supporting

2,325 regional jobs. The university also served 5,539 students, 1,792 of whom were dual credit high school students.

In 2020, Purdue Polytechnic Institute relocated from IUK's campus to its own location at Inventrek Technology Park in Kokomo. The move not only benefited students by providing more classroom space and equipment but also the community. Additional faculty were hired and local manufacturers often offer internships to students and employment to graduates. Students benefit from different industries and heavy manufacturers located in the region.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

For Kokomo, the local industries and universities have direct impact on each other. Growth in local industries will likely increase enrollment at the universities as it provides students with unique opportunities for internships and employment after graduation. This impact is also seen from new economic developments at the industrial park. StarPlus Energy LLC chose Kokomo for the electric-vehicle battery manufacturing facility in part because of the caliber of qualified students graduating from the colleges in Kokomo.

As these colleges continue to grow and expand, parks and recreation offerings need to support young adults looking to Kokomo as a place to live, work and play. With 84% of US adults seeking high-quality parks and recreation when choosing a place to live, Kokomo will need to provide high-quality park and recreation opportunities for young adults to retain the workforce that is being trained at the local universities. This will not only benefit the students but also local employers and the community as a whole.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

In the early 19th century a trading post for Native Americans and European-American settlers was established along the Wildcat Creek on land owned by David Foster. Several years later, Foster donated forty acres of his land to create a county seat, and built a log courthouse. This land became the City of

Kokomo, which was incorporated in 1865. The City was named after a legendary Miami Indian known as Ma-Ko-Ko-Mo.

The discovery of natural gas on October 6, 1886, was a key factor in Kokomo's subsequent growth and development. Lured by the cheap and plentiful natural gas, a number of new industries made their home in Kokomo, including the Haynes-Apperson Automobile Company and the Delco Radio Division of General Motors. The community's ties to the automotive industry remain strong.

During Kokomo's old boom years, many city leaders built new homes in what is now known as the Old Silk Stocking Neighborhood. This area is the only Howard County neighborhood included in the National Register for Historic Places. It is located near downtown and is contained by Washington Street to the east, Philips Street to the west, Wildcat Creek to the south and Taylor Street to the North. The neighborhood is an eclectic mix of architectural styles including Victorian, Neo-Jacobean, Queen Anne, Bungalow, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and Romanesque Revival.

HISTORIC FEATURES:

- Howard County Museum (a.k.a Seiberling Mansion)
- Chief Kokomo Burial Site
- Civil War Cannon
- Elwood Haynes Museum (maintained and operated by the Parks and Recreation Department)
- Old Ben (located at Highland Park)
- Sycamore Stump (located at Highland Park)
- Vermont Covered Bridge (located at Highland Park)
- Veterans Memorial (located at Championship Park)
- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial
- Historic Downtown Architecture Walking Tour

ART GROUPS AND GALLERIES

- Kokomo Art Center
- Kokomo Arts Pavilion (Located in Foster Park)
- Kokomo-Howard County Public Library Art Collection
- Kokomo Opalescent Glass



Artist Alley
Image Source: Visit Kokomo Website

- IU Kokomo Art Gallery
- Artworks Gallery
- Stain on Main
- The Palette Room at Solstice Art Gallery
- Fired Arts Studio
- Bohemian Tattoo Club & Art Gallery
- SHAK Makerspace
- All Alleys Lead to Art
- Artist Alley
- Art Walk
- Sycamore Lodge Studio
- Greentown Glass Museum

There are also public art displays along the trails in conjunction with the Greater Kokomo Downtown Association.



Kokomo Summer Concert Series
Image Source: www.kokomosummerseries.com

LOCAL PERFORMING ARTS

- Kokomo Civic Theatre
- Kokomo Park Band
- Kokomo Symphony Orchestra
- Curtain Call Children's Theatre
- Kokomo Summer Concert Series
- Rhum Academy of Music
- Kokomo Community Concerts
- Music at the Fountain
- Men of Note
- Black Wax Cafe

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

Parks serve as a great opportunity to educate and celebrate history and culture. Similar to their collaboration with the Greater Kokomo Downtown Association, KPRD should continue to establish partnerships with local art and historical groups. Other ways this could be accomplished would be to incorporate interpretive signage into the parks to provide new interest as well as educate the community on the history of the city. Additionally, local murals are done annually, providing a canvas to showcase and celebrate different cultures within the community.



Howard County Museum (a.k.a Seiberling Mansion)
Image Source: <http://howardcountymuseum.org/>

NATURAL RESOURCES

CLIMATE

Kokomo has a continental climate characterized by winter temperatures cold enough to support snow cover, with warm temperatures typical of tropical climates in the summer. Weather varies most in spring; least, late in summer and early in fall.

Precipitation is rather evenly distributed throughout the year. Generally, precipitation is greater in spring and early summer than in winter. Snowfall varies from year to year, with averages of about 5 inches of snow from January to February and 3 inches in March.

Temperatures are relatively mild throughout the year. The temperature may rise above 90 degrees Fahrenheit for a few days each summer and fall below 10 degrees Fahrenheit a few days in winter. Temperatures in spring and fall are mild, but spring has more rain and thunderstorms. In fall, air and soil temperatures are nearly the same.

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

KPRD is tasked with different maintenance challenges throughout the year due to changing weather conditions. Spring and summer require additional maintenance due to larger rain events that can cause issues such as washout of playground mulch and ponding water on court surfaces. This is seen at Highland Park and Jackson Morrow Park playgrounds as well as the pickleball/tennis courts located at Foster Park. Updates to these areas can be challenging due to their location within the floodplain as well as overall cost to repair. More detail can be found on flooding issues and recommendations in the following section on Hydrology.

Summer months also can bring seasonal drought periods that can cause issues such as dying turf, premature dropping of leaves, as well as an increase in the need for irrigation of flowers and newly planted trees. KPRD is responsible for the irrigation of nearly 1,150 hanging baskets, planting beds along streetscapes and alleyways, as well as other annual



Disc Golf Along Kokomo Creek at Highland Park
Image Source: HWC Engineering

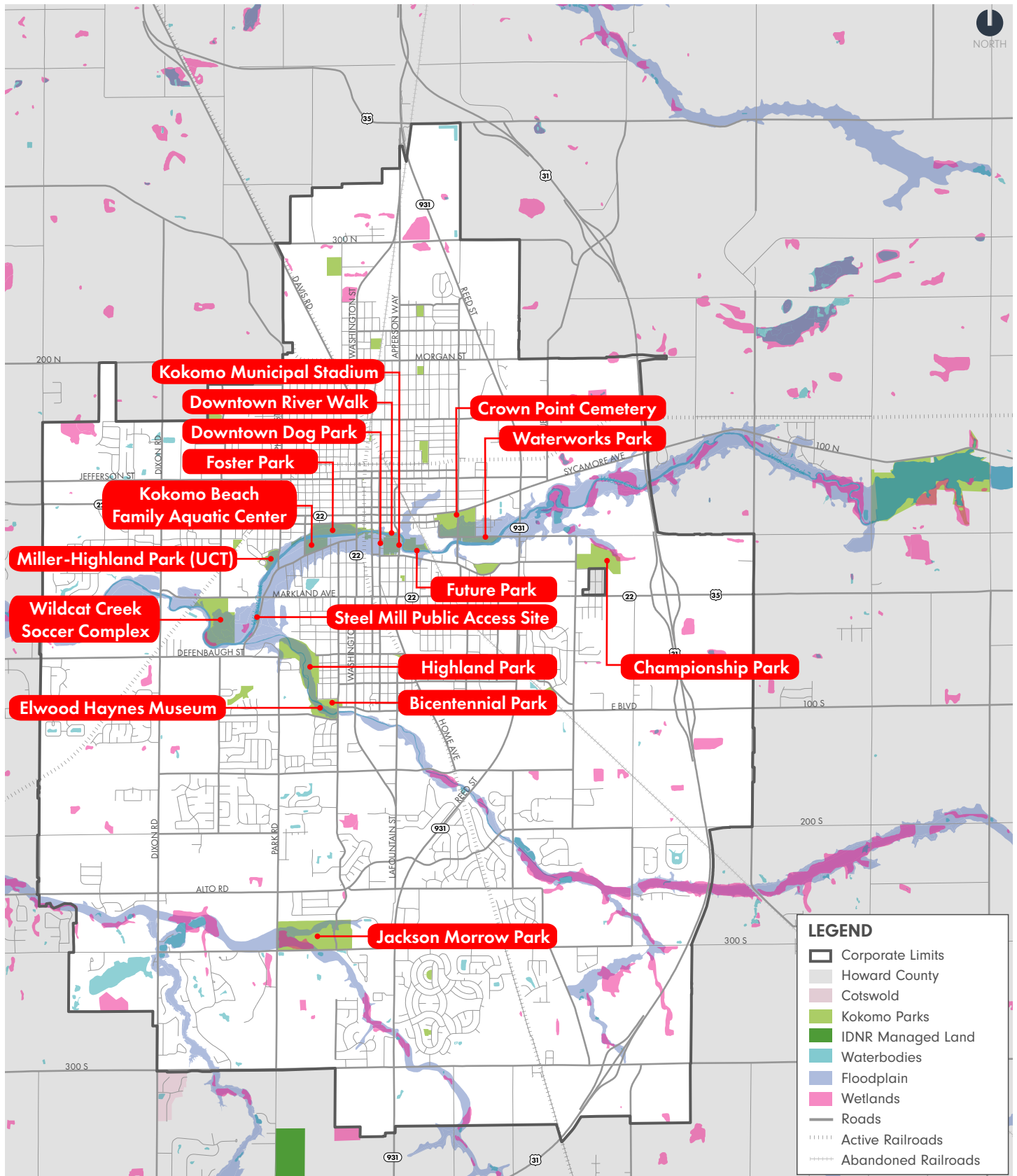


Walk of Excellence Above Wildcat Creek
Image Source: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofKokomo/>



Wildcat Creek Along Miller-Highland Part (UCT)
Image Source: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofKokomo/>

FIGURE 2.5: HYDROLOGY



plant beds throughout the parks and around signage. This becomes a challenge for the department both with cost and staffing throughout the dry summer months. The department has recently purchased and begun to implement new baskets that are designed to retain water longer, and therefore reduce the number of times watering is required throughout the year. It is also recommended that KPRD begin to select and replace some annual plantings with perennials and other plant material that are more drought tolerant, relinquishing some of the demand for irrigation. Likewise plant material that thrive in wet conditions and help to absorb water should be considered for areas within the parks that experience significant levels of flooding throughout the year.

Winter months have minimal impacts on maintenance demand, often requiring cleanup of broken limbs, snow/ice removal, as well as occasional repair of damaged power lines due to fallen limbs.

HYDROLOGY

The most significant hydrologic features of Kokomo include the Wildcat Creek and Kokomo Creek. These creeks and their tributaries drain the area flowing west as part of the Wabash River Drainage Basin. The creeks are major recreational features providing the only water based opportunities within the city limits. Wildcat Creek Reservoir Park, a man-made reservoir located just east of the city, is the main major water feature for recreational uses just outside the city limits.

The most recent floodplain study was completed in 2014 by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The hydrology report memo found that the reservoir had no effect on peak discharges as measured downstream at the Kokomo gauge. A comparison of summer and winter pool elevations revealed there was only a 2-foot difference and the surface area of the pool only varied slightly by approximately 10-acres. The storage difference was only 20.24 acre feet. The April 2013 storm showed that storage capacity was filled in less than 15 minutes.

A stream stability assessment for the Wildcat Creek was conducted in November 2017. Key findings for this assessment include:

- Increasing trend in observed rainfall and runoff
- Value of undisturbed reaches with attached floodplains (occurring in 3 distinct areas)
- Increase in flood and erosion risks by floodplain fill
- Impact of upstream channel modifications

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of the Kokomo parks border Wildcat and Kokomo Creeks. These waterways provide both opportunities and challenges to the park system. Opportunities include the preservation of natural habitat, and wildlife corridors, buffering of waterways from urban development, recreation opportunities such as fishing or boating, and the added beauty of a natural water source. However, many of the parks and trails located along the creeks are prone to some level of flooding throughout the year. Figure 2.5 shows Kokomo's park facilities that are located within the floodplain. Miller Highland Park (UCT) & Highland Park are the most problematic parks for flooding. There are efforts by KPRD currently to mitigate flooding in Highland Park.

While these flood events rarely have a significant impact on park usage and programming, they can necessitate significant park clean-up efforts requiring additional man power. Furthermore, the flooding can temporarily limit access to amenities. This is seen at Highland Park where flooding of Kokomo Creek limits access to users of the disc golf course located on the south side of the park.

Throughout the majority of the rainy seasons, park maintenance consists of cleaning up debris, and powerwashing equipment and amenities throughout the parks. These efforts were more significant in the flood of 2013 which caused significant damage to adjacent parks and residences. However, since then KPRD has not experience such a monumental flooding event,.

Multiple mitigation strategies were outlined in the stream stability assessment for Wildcat Creek that could be integrated into park facilities adjacent to the Wildcat Creek. These include the following:

- Implementing more stringent stormwater standards
- Institute riparian corridor and use restrictions
- Adopt and implement flood resilience strategies
- Adopt and implement a tree and large wood management program
- Update and expand hydrologic and hydraulic models
- Reach-specific mitigation fluvial and flooding risk
- Provide additional flood storage
- Reroute the stream along the former quarry to its original location
- Address the severe streambank erosion through the Kokomo reach

As new construction is developed along the Wildcat Creek, flood mitigation is one of the top priorities for KPRD. One example of this was the Kokomo Municipal Stadium construction and flood mitigation plan which assisted in mitigating flooding substantially. These efforts included the implementation of retention areas on the northeast and northwest sides of the stadium as well as swales located on the south side of Wildcat Creek across from Foster Park. Since efforts were made for that project, KPRD was able to construct the Downtown Riverwalk.

TOPOGRAPHY & SOILS

Kokomo is located within the Tipton Till Plain, a flat topographic area created from debris deposited by retreating glaciers of the Wisconsin Age which covered the region some 15,000 years ago. Major stream valleys of the Wildcat and Kokomo Creeks offer some variation to the flat terrain.

The soils formed throughout the area are characterized by their lack of permeability and the presence of a high water table. Three major land conditions related to soils are evident:

- Well drained lands border streams, are moderately permeable and depending on slope, provide medium to rapid surface run off.
- Poorly drained flat plains and lowest points along streams have a low permeability, run-off capabilities are slow, are subject to ponding, and typically require drainage facilities.
- Flood prone lands located along streams, have a high water table with seasonal ponds and bogs

IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS

KPRD does experience some erosion issues within the parks and trails located along Wildcat Creek. This is seen between Foster Park and Miller-Highland Park (UCT) along the Walk of Excellence Trail. While the erosion has not reached the trail yet, it continues to move closer to the trail system with potential to cause future issues. Additionally, Sycamore trees and other large shade trees have fallen due to erosion. The parks department has implemented some measures to slow down the erosion process along this corridor of the creek, including bringing in rip rap and concrete to help in stabilization.

KPRD does not currently experience significant issues with turf areas throughout the parks. Typical maintenance is done throughout the year including mowing and trimming as well as occasionally reseeding some small areas of turf. These maintenance practices can be affected by varying seasonal rainfall. While the department does not struggle to maintain the turf areas that they currently manage, they have begun to convert some turf to no-mow areas. This is not being done for the purpose of reducing maintenance but rather providing more natural spaces for park users to enjoy such as butterfly gardens.

Some of the areas the parks department has already begun to implement this include prairie plantings at Robins Park as well as at Highland Park on the hillside near Rodgers Pavilion.

FOREST & VEGETATION

Wooded areas within the community are primarily located along the major creeks or in scattered wood lots. Wooded natural areas are scarce and priority should be given to preservation and use as recreational areas wherever possible.

KPRD previously reforested Jackson Morrow Park to decrease mowing and maintenance and to help increase natural habitat for animals. The parks department researched different species that would best serve the needs of the park and selected the following tree species listed below:

- Burr Oak
- Pin Oak
- Red Maple
- Dogwood
- Tulip Poplar
- Bald Cypress (wet areas)
- Sycamore (wet areas)
- Pecan (wildlife foraging)

Since reforestation, the trees have been thriving and KPRD has been able to harvest some of those trees for reforestation throughout the park system. It has reduced mowing efforts by hours each week. KPRD is currently planning reforestation/natural habitat at the Robbins Parks.

The city does not have a city forester/arborist, therefore leaving the parks department to manage and maintain the trees within the parks. The department is actively engaging in workshops and classes to help increase education and knowledge to better train their staff in basic tree care. Most tree care and maintenance is performed by parks staff, but occasionally requires additional help from local companies due to limitations in equipment.

The Emerald Ash Borer is not as prevalent as it once was for KPRD. The majority of affected trees have been removed throughout the parks. This loss of trees did have a significant impact on the shade provided

in the parks but efforts have been made to plant new trees to provide more shade. Additionally, the parks also deal with the removal of Bradford Pears. Efforts have been made to remove these trees and replace with non-invasive species. KPRD still has a tree inventory through Davey Tree that was completed for the park system specifically, but does not use it extensively. This inventory has not been updated in the past 7 years.

While Kokomo is not a part of the West Central Indiana Cooperative Weed Management Area, it does have ongoing weed mitigation efforts. Beyond the standard maintenance of weed control within landscape beds, the department also manages the removal of poison ivy through spraying and cutting down the plants. These efforts have remained successful in minimizing its growth throughout the parks.

Due to the already high costs of chemicals and replacement of trees, KPRD believes it is more cost effective to maintain these efforts within the department as opposed to contracting work out. KPRD does not currently work with the IDNR Community and Urban Forestry (CUF) program, but is open to exploring opportunities through these programs.

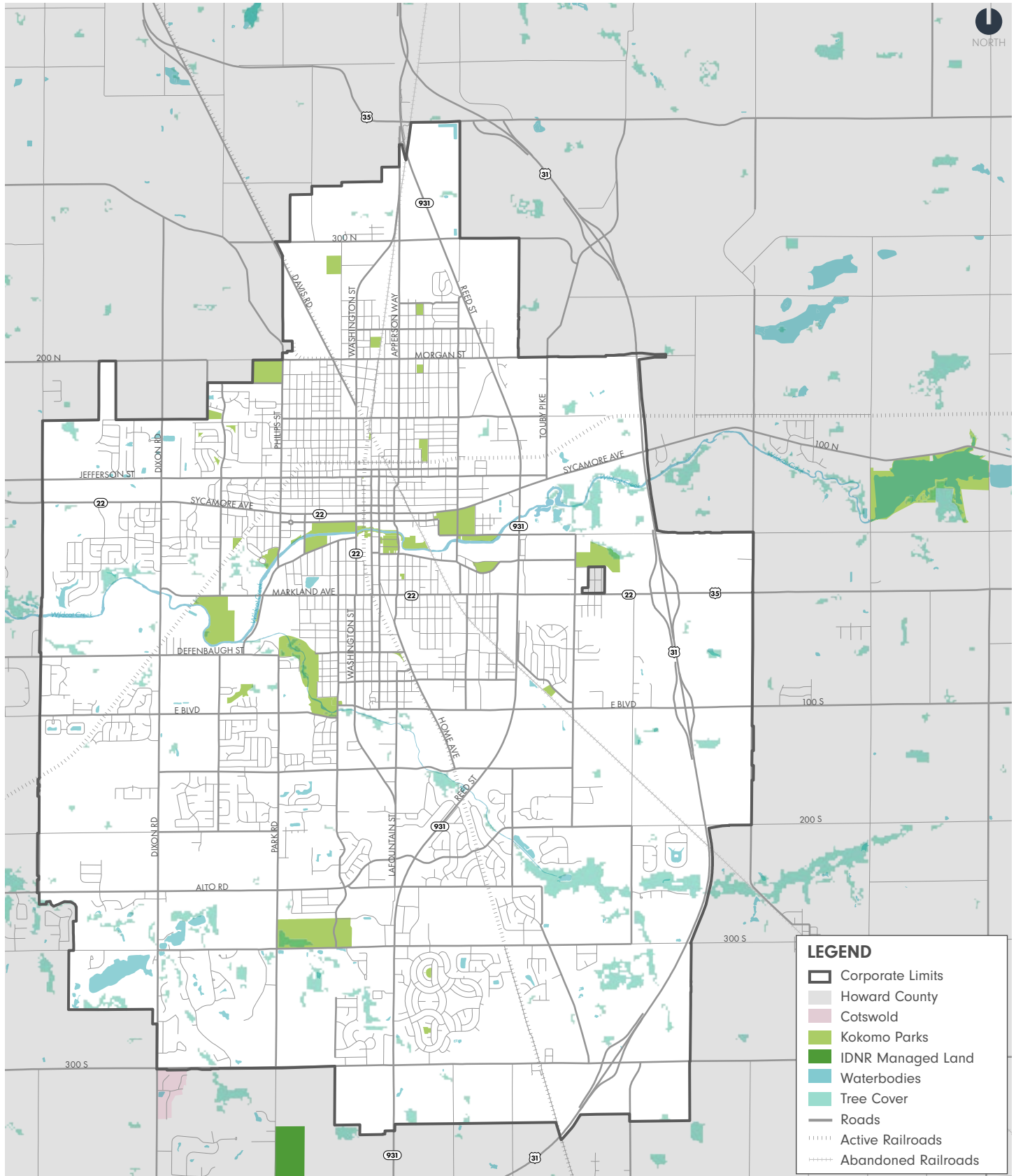
IMPLICATIONS + RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended the KPRD or the City of Kokomo hire an arborist and/or horticulturalist increase quality, efficiency, beautification of parks and landscape. It is also recommend the City update the tree inventory and maintain it each year.

With the loss of shade trees in parks due to emerald ash borer, it is recommended that KPRD plant new trees in parks lacking shade each year to help replace what was lost.

Continued efforts to remove and replace of invasive Bradford Pears is recommended and management of Poison Ivy.

FIGURE 2.6: TREE COVER



Page Left Intentionally Blank



Public Meeting on July 31st, 2023
Image Source: HWC Engineering



03

PLAN
DEVELOPMENT



Public Event at Youth Easter Egg Hunt on April 8th, 2023
Image Source: HWC Engineering

PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARIES

Public input and feedback is an important component of the research and analysis phase. Information collected during this phase identified the amenities and services that are most used and enjoyed by residents and visitors and what amenities and services are most desired in the parks system.

Public input was sought in the following way:

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Public Survey
- Teen Survey
- Public Outreach Event
- Public Meeting
- Public Presentation

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Four stakeholder interviews were held on May 17th, 19th, and 23rd of 2023 with the following individuals or groups: (1) a group of life-long residents, active seniors, and avid parks users, (2) a city council representative, (3) a local teen who also serves as a park liaison and (4) a long-time resident and past parks superintendent. Interviews were conducted via phone calls and virtual video conference calls. Key takeaways from these interviews are included on the following pages.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

"People are driving to other communities to play tennis. We want them to stay here."

Active seniors are using the parks and park facilities for a range of different types of activities—dog walking, social programming (concerts, dancing, card playing, etc.), and bicycling along the riverfront are popular. This dynamic age group also has a strong following and interest for pickleball and tennis, which was of their highest concerns.

The number of existing courts was noted as not adequate to meet the needs for the demand. Additionally, it was stressed that the courts that do exist

within the parks are in poor condition with cracked pavement. The concern is that outside of the school tennis facilities, which are not open to the public, there isn't a good place to play tennis within the community, which is forcing individuals to drive outside of the city to seek these facilities out elsewhere.

"We want our children to stay here."

Several of the stakeholders interviewed are grandparents who use the parks to entertain their grandchildren when visiting or who may be residents themselves. Generally, very pleased with the amenities, they have found plenty to do particularly with the updated aquatics facility, splash pad, and updated playgrounds that appeal to a variety of age groups. It was stressed that without high quality parks system amenities, they would find it difficult to persuade their grown children to establish a life in Kokomo.

"The parks department has kept the parks up to date and relevant."

From one teen's perspective, the parks system seems to be continually improving, is meeting current trends (updated playgrounds, splash pad, skate parks, recent pump track, etc.), and has plenty of amenities to offer residents. The introduction of WiFi along with places to sit was offered as a suggestion to encourage teenagers and college students to use the parks more for studying and socializing. The concept of WiFi in the parks was also mentioned by several other stakeholders interviewed who are professionals often working remotely and would appreciate outdoor spaces to sit with a laptop.

"We need to invest in people now, not more things."

Several long-time residents noted the parks system has invested in facilities over the years, which is supported and appreciated. They noted the larger parks seem to get a lot of attention and investment. They'd like to see some of the smaller parks be raised to that level. Additionally, they noted as the community grows, they'd like to see more investment made in the parks staff who are maintaining and programming these facilities. Simply mowing the lawn is not enough—it

was suggested more attention to detail be paid to the maintenance of the landscaping to ensure these parks are showcase places for the city. Hiring a horticulture specialist to oversee the landscape improvements and maintenance was discussed.

Generally, the stakeholders found the parks system to be succeeding in the following categories:

- Adequate, updated playgrounds accommodating a variety of age groups across the city.
- High quality pool facility.
- Excellent trails system and riverwalk.
- Well used skate park (Foster Park).
- Diverse programming and events (Petting Zoo, Easter Egg Hunts, Kite Flying Workshop, City of Lights, etc.)
- Parks seem to be safe and maintained.

Areas where the stakeholders felt the parks system could improve, included the following categories:

- More pickleball courts and tennis courts.
- Renovation of existing tennis courts.
- Even more programming.
- A higher level of maintenance beyond mowing and mulch replacement.
- More splash pads in closer proximity to other parts of the community.
- More teen-focused amenities (Ninja Warrior Course, social spaces with WiFi)
- More nodes along trails with exercise equipment or other amenities.

STAFF INTERVIEWS

A staff interview was held via a virtual video conference call on May 19th, 2023. Managers within the maintenance and programming departments were interviewed during this call. The general focus and needs for those two departments were discussed as well as desired park facility improvements, vandalism, and inclusivity were also discussed from a parks system staff perspective.

Staff Breakdown

(11) employees make up the full-time maintenance staff within the department. (3) employees make up the full-time recreation and programming staff within the department. (130) part-time employees support the full-time staff seasonally. Seasonal staff includes positions such as lifeguards, museum and nature center curators, bike share attendants, summer concert staff, and summer playground leaders.

Maintenance

Generally, the maintenance of the parks within the system is manageable, but it was acknowledged that with more people, more could be accomplished. Investment in equipment, specifically the fleet vehicles, was noted it may be past due. More space for equipment storage and staging is desired. Specifically, a covered dry storage area for stockpiled soil was recognized as adding value to the efficiency of the department. Currently if the dirt storage is wet from rain, it can't be used causing unpredictability in maintenance scheduling.

A key concern for maintenance staff is vandalism. Graffiti and restroom repairs are an on-going issue that are time-consuming to manage. Modifying the hours of restrooms has been used to try to lessen the amount of vandalism occurring overnight. The surveillance system could be expanded with more cameras as there are still some blind spots in places.

Programming

Programming offerings in Kokomo are broad reaching and well attended. From the hugely popular Adult Easter Egg Hunt in the spring to the Haunted Trail Walk in the fall, programs are offered with many different age groups and interests in mind. Although summer is by far the busiest season for programming, this department offers winter programming as well—the largest of which is the Gingerbread Hunt in Highland Park each December. The main goal of the department, however, is to get more people into the parks.

“Recreation is so much more than playing on a playground—it’s about art, relaxation, learning, being social, and enjoying the outdoors.”

– Allison Barkman, Recreational Manager

As the parks system continues to expand, there is a current focus on more programs for teens and nature programming associated with the nature center at Jackson Morrow Park. More and better storage for programming and staging would be welcome. Site specific storage (larger sheds at each park) would make accessing storage easier for certain events. As more programming requests continue to come in, an increase in staff may need to be considered as well.

Although attention has been paid to inclusivity in programming and accessibility within the parks, staff noted there is room for improvement in these areas.

Overall, the parks staff identified the following as long-term objectives for the department:

- If parks facilities expand to meet a growing population, the parks department staff and space will need to increase to meet maintenance and programming demands.
- If a focus is made on the organizational infrastructure of the department, existing staff will be set up for success, recruiting high quality staff will be easier, and the quality of programming and maintenance will improve.
- Investments have been focused on the “flagship” parks of the system. It is time to upgrade the quality of the smaller, neighborhood parks.

PUBLIC SURVEY

A survey with 22 questions was developed and distributed online. The survey was promoted on the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Facebook Page, the City of Kokomo Facebook Page, at the stakeholder meetings, at the public outreach event, and at the public meeting. The survey was made available to the public on April 6, 2023 and closed August 15, 2023.

A total of 1,515 responses were received. The previous parks and recreation master plan had 88 respondents. A full copy of the survey results can be found in the document appendix and a summary of the results are provided on the following pages.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The age group with the most respondents was 25-34 years old (27.5%), followed by 35-44 years old (23.8%) and 45-54 years old (16.2%). Age groups least represented in the survey were ages 19 years old or younger (1.7%), 20-24 years old (7.7%), 65 years or older (11.6%), and 55-64 years old (11.6%). Kokomo Parks and Recreation also developed and distributed a teen survey online to focus on teen parks and recreation needs. While the public survey had little input from the 19 years or younger age group, the teen survey produced a total 174 responses from teens. A summary of the teen survey input is included later in this chapter

The majority of respondents resided in Kokomo (68.4%) and a little less than a third of respondents identified as residing in Howard County (28.2%). Other respondents (3.4%) identified as residing in Cass County, Tipton County, Miami County, Carroll County, Hamilton County, Grant County, and Indianapolis.

About 60% of respondents have children under 18 years of age with 34.5% having children 0-5 years old, 25.5% having children 6-11 years old and 22.7% having children 12-18 years old.

Respondents were asked if any members of their family have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disability Act, about 14.1% said “yes”. Respondents were given an option to provide a response on how Parks and Recreation could better serve their needs. Out of 137 open-ended responses, key themes included:

- **Wheelchair Accessibility:**
 - Wheelchair accessible trails, playgrounds, restrooms and drinking fountains.

FIGURE 3.1: AGE OF RESPONDENTS

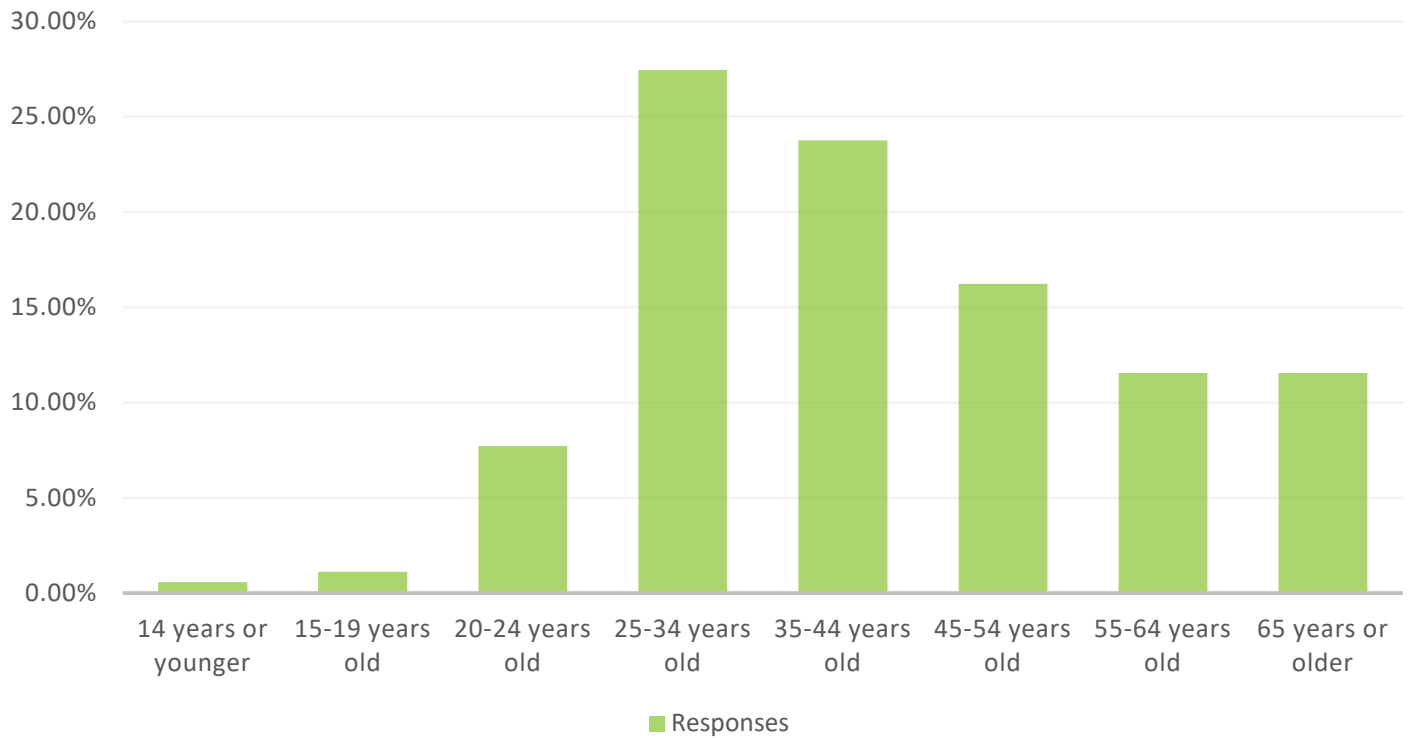
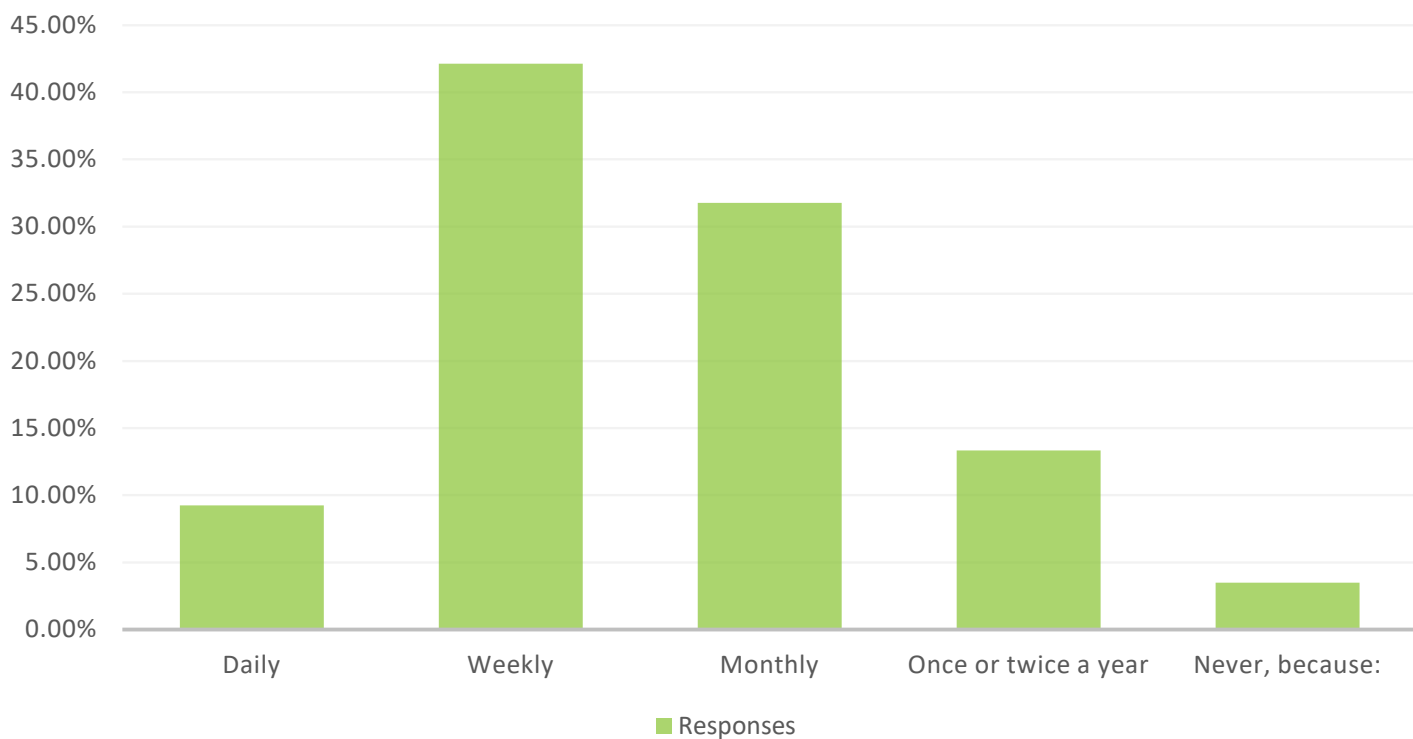


FIGURE 3.2: FREQUENCY OF PARK USE



- Maintenance of wheelchair accessible facilities and amenities.
- Making sure there are ramps and handrails in the parks and along trails where needed.
- Handrails on playground equipment.
- Accessible parking near the entrances of park buildings, such as the Nature Center.
- Wheelchair accessible paths to events and festivals.
- Better table seating options for those in wheelchairs. Movable tables and chairs.

➤ **Foster Park:** Foster Park was mentioned several times. Issues mentioned included:

- People in wheelchairs being unable to get down to vendors during events
- Walkways needing to be leveled on the north side of the park
- Additional restrooms on the east and west side of the park
- Many also said they were unable to attend events/concerts at Foster Park because of accessibility issues. Accessible paths are needed and a shorter distance of travel from parking to the event area.
- More handicap parking that is closer to the events.
- Wheelchair accessible viewing area by stage.

➤ **Amenities:**

- A park and/or playground specifically designed to be inclusive for all disabilities
- Sensory playgrounds/play equipment for autistic children
- Fenced in park areas/play areas/splash pads for deaf and autistic children
- Accessible play equipment for disabled children.
- Handicap swings for children and adults.
- More seating/benches in multiple areas and along paths
- Wheelchair viewing spots
- Exercise options for senior citizens
- Lighting along trails and in restrooms
- Clear wayfinding signage
- Shaded playgrounds

➤ **Programming:**

- Sensory activities
- Specific area for special needs children or adults to sit and enjoy events without disturbing others
- More programming for disabled persons

PARK PROXIMITY & USAGE

Approximately 58.2% of respondents live a 1/2 mile or more from the nearest park. This high percentage is likely due to the higher percentage of survey respondents living in Howard County or elsewhere. Of City respondents, 41.8% live within a 1/2 mile walk of a park.

There were 83.2% of survey respondents who indicated using park facilities daily (9.3%), weekly (42.1%) or monthly (31.8%) with only a few respondents saying they never use park facilities (3.5%) or only used park facilities once or twice a year (13.3%).

Top Five Most Used Park Facilities

1. Highland Park (79.2%)
2. Jackson Morrow Park (76.8%)
3. Foster Park (60.9%)
4. Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center (41.8%)
5. Kokomo Municipal Stadium (33.3%)

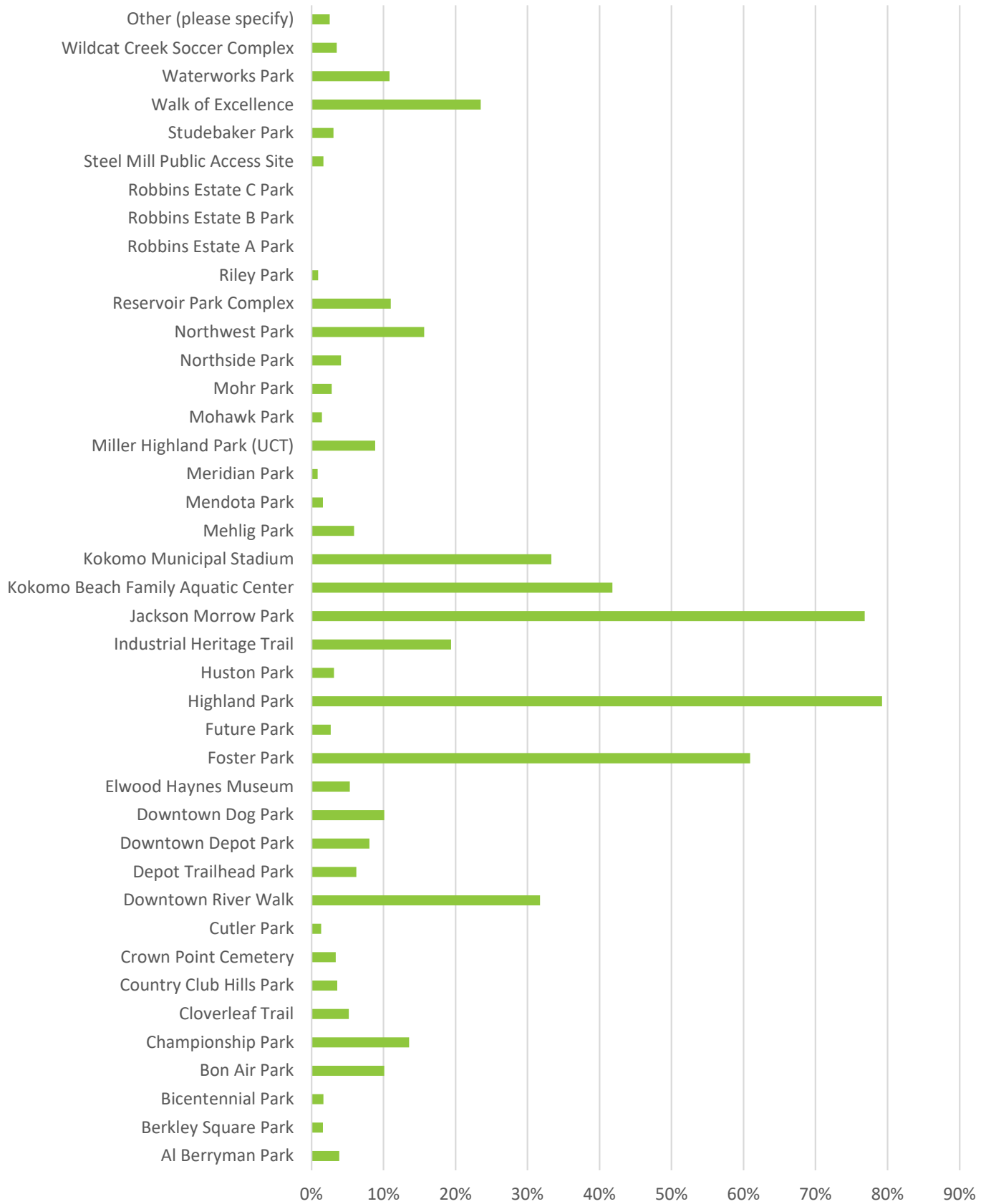
Least Used Park Facilities

1. Robbins Estate A Park (0.1%)
2. Robbins Estate B Park (0.1%)
3. Robbins Estate C Park (0.1%)
4. Meridian Park (0.9%)
5. Riley Park (0.9%)

Top Five Most Popular Activities & Amenities

1. Walking/Jogging/Exercise (84.0%)
2. Time with Family/Friends (61.7%)
3. Playgrounds (61.3%)
4. Picnicking (45.2%)
5. Special Events & Festivals (43.5%)

FIGURE 3.3: PARK FACILITIES USAGE



Top Reasons Respondents Did Not Use City Parks

1. Safety (46.0%)
2. Lack of restrooms (37.8%)
3. Outdated Amenities (33.7%)
4. Lack of Awareness (19.5%)
5. Too far from my home (15.6%)

FACILITY RATINGS

Play Equipment & Courts

The majority of respondents considered playgrounds and courts as being in fair condition (58.6%), with an additional 24.3% considering them to be in good condition. Top comments provided in this question included:

- Tennis courts and volleyball courts are in bad condition and need repair. Parks specifically mentioned included Foster Park and Highland Park.
- Generally, playgrounds are in good condition but equipment and surfacing needs to be updated. Poor playground conditions were mentioned in smaller neighborhood parks such as Northwest Park, Mendota Park and Mohawk Park.
- Desire for more and better pickleball courts. Specific parks mentioned to add pickleball courts included Jackson Morrow Park.
- Desire for more disc golf courses. Jackson Morrow Parks was listed as a desired location.
- More maintenance of existing playground and court facilities.

Sports Facilities

The majority of respondents considered sports facilities as being in fair condition (49.1%), with an additional 21.9% consider them to be in good conditions. Top comments provided in this question included:

- Maintenance of baseball fields at parks other than Championship Park such as Northwest Park.
- Tennis courts were also mentioned under this question. Some comments stated they were in poor condition.

- Pickleball courts were also mentioned under this question. Some comments stated courts not in Bon Air Park were in poor condition and generally respondents wanted more pickleball courts.
- Basketball courts need improvements and better maintenance.
- Lack of hockey or roller skating facilities
- Lack of soccer fields

Restrooms

The majority of respondents considered the restrooms to be either in poor (43.7%) or fair (39.2%) condition and the majority of respondents does not think there are adequate restroom facilities in Kokomo's parks (65.0%). Top comments provided in these questions included:

- Generally, respondents wanted more maintenance of existing facilities to keep them clean and well stocked.
- Generally, respondents believe more restrooms at parks are needed.
- Some respondents didn't feel safe using the restrooms.
- Highland Park's restrooms were identified as needing maintenance. Other respondents also think the park needs more facilities.
- Jackson Morrow Park's restrooms were identified as been located too far away from the play area for those with toddlers. Other respondents also think the park needs more facilities.
- Bon Air Park and Reservoir Park Complex were identified as needing restroom facilities.
- Restrooms being locked or closed too early in the evening was identified as an issue. Some respondents want the restrooms to be open year-round.
- Some mentioned that the restrooms at Foster Park were not enough to accommodate the events hosted there.
- Some respondents desired more restrooms along the trails.

PARKS AND RECREATION NEEDS & PRIORITIES

Top 3 Issues to Focus on Improving

1. Increasing safety and security (63.4%)
2. Improving quality of parks (60.3%)
3. Improving neighborhood parks (42.3%)

Most Needed Facilities/Improvements

1. Restrooms in parks and along trails (63.1%)
2. Natural areas for hiking/nature-viewing/picnicking (56.0%)
3. Additional drinking/doggie fountains (37.4%)
4. Internal loop trails within existing parks (34.7%)
5. Additional shade at parks (32.7%)
6. Additional greenway/bike trails (32.0%)

Top Programming Needs

1. Community Events (54.9%)
2. Hobby / Interest Classes (50.2%)
3. Outdoor Recreation (49.7%)
4. Nature Programs/Environmental Education (39.2%)
5. Fitness Classes (37.1%)
6. Youth Programs (31.2%)

Top Desired Capital Improvement Projects

1. Update/add playground equipment (38.0%)
2. Add splash pads/spray grounds (36.7%)
3. Add trails for walking/jogging/biking (35.9%)
4. Update/add lighting to parks (36.0%)
5. Add nature trails (31.3%)
6. Update park appearance (27.4%)

TEEN SURVEY

One priority of this plan was to focus on teen parks and recreation needs in the community. In effort to gain more input from teens, a separate teen survey was developed and distributed online. The survey had 14 questions and was promoted on the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Facebook Page, the City of Kokomo Facebook Page, at the local schools, at the public outreach event, and at the public meeting. The survey was made available to the public on April 6, 2023 and closed August 15, 2023.

A total of 174 responses were received. A full copy of the survey results can be found in the document appendix and a summary of the results are provided on the following pages.

DEMOGRAPHICS & RELATIONSHIP TO PARKS

The age with the most respondents were 14 years old (57.5%), followed by 13 years old (14.9%) and 15 years old (9.8%). About 14.4% of the respondents were 16-18 years old and the least represented age was 12 years old (3.5%).

Most students went home or to a friend's house after school (74.7%) or participated in team sports (48.3%) or after-school activities (33.3%). Others went to parks (16.1%), worked or volunteered (14.4%), or participated in private club activities (8.1%). In the comments, teens also participated in marching band activities, went bike riding or to the public library.

Over half of the respondents do not participate in any parks recreation programs (59.0%). Programs teens participated most in were community events (31.8%) such as Haunted Trail Walk, concerts and movie nights. Some respondents did identify as participating in Craft Fest (2.9%), Recreation Adventure Program (2.9%), Swim Lessons (2.9%) and Creature Features (2.3%). Others in the comments said they participated in programs at the local YMCA such as the Glo In the 'Mo, Camp Tycony, or sports, Kokomo Urban Outreach, or the summer camp at Jackson Morrow Park.

INTERESTS

The survey asked respondents a series of questions about activities they enjoyed doing, if they desire dedicated teen hangout spaces, amenities they would like to have in the parks and what activities they would like to see in the future and what would motivate them to participate in teen programs. A summary of those responses is provided below:

Top Activities Teens Enjoy

1. Hanging with friends (86.8%)
2. Sports such as basketball, volleyball, soccer, etc. (69.0%)
3. Being in nature (58.1%)
4. Cycling or riding bikes (57.5%)
5. Outdoor recreation such as hiking, fishing, archery, etc. (55.8%)
6. Walking, running, jogging (50.6%)
7. Activities such as scavenger hunts, stargazing, water fights, flying kites, etc. (42.5%)
8. Virtual gaming (39.7%)
9. Swimming (38.5%)
10. Board games (34.5%)

Dedicated Teen Hangout Spaces

- Approximately 75.4% of respondents said 'yes', they would use or go to a teen hangout space.

Top Desired Teen Amenities

1. Game tables such as ping pong, pool, foosball, air hockey, etc. (74.1%)
2. WiFi access (73.6%)
3. Teen hangout spaces (67.8%)
4. Mini golf course (60.9%)
5. Open space for pick-up games such as football, soccer, frisbee, etc. (60.3%)
6. Exercise equipment such as ninja warrior courses or fitness courses (54.6%)
7. Interactive water features (44.8%)
8. Driving range/golf target games (44.8%)
9. Mural wall, graffiti wall or inspirational chalkboard (39.1%)
10. Teen study spaces (37.9%)

Top Desired Teen Activities

1. Food trucks and cafés (71.3%)
2. Teen social events and activities such as roller skating night, game night, movie night, summer water fights, etc. (67.8%)
3. Outdoor recreational programs such as hiking, fishing, archery, etc. (56.9%)
4. Yard game tournaments such as cornhole, giant jenga, bucket ball, sand volleyball, etc. (55.8%)

5. Virtual gaming programs such as Esports, Madden, Super Smash Bros, Mario Kart, etc. (42.5%)

Top Motivating Opportunities for Teens to Participate in Programming

1. Hang out with friends (88.5%)
2. Meet new people (46.0%)
3. Learn new things (38.5%)

What Prevents Teens from Participating in Programming

1. Not aware of programs (64.7%)
2. Not interested in current program offerings (39.3%)
3. Cost (32.4%)

PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENT

Over 400 flyers were handed out to advertise the plan and online public survey at the Youth Easter Egg Hunts at Northwest Park on April 8th, 2023. Later that evening, a booth was set up at the Adult Easter Egg Hunt at Jackson Morrow Park. As residents and visitors registered for the hunt, they were invited to discuss the plan and offer recommendations for facilities, amenities, and programming they'd like to see in the future.

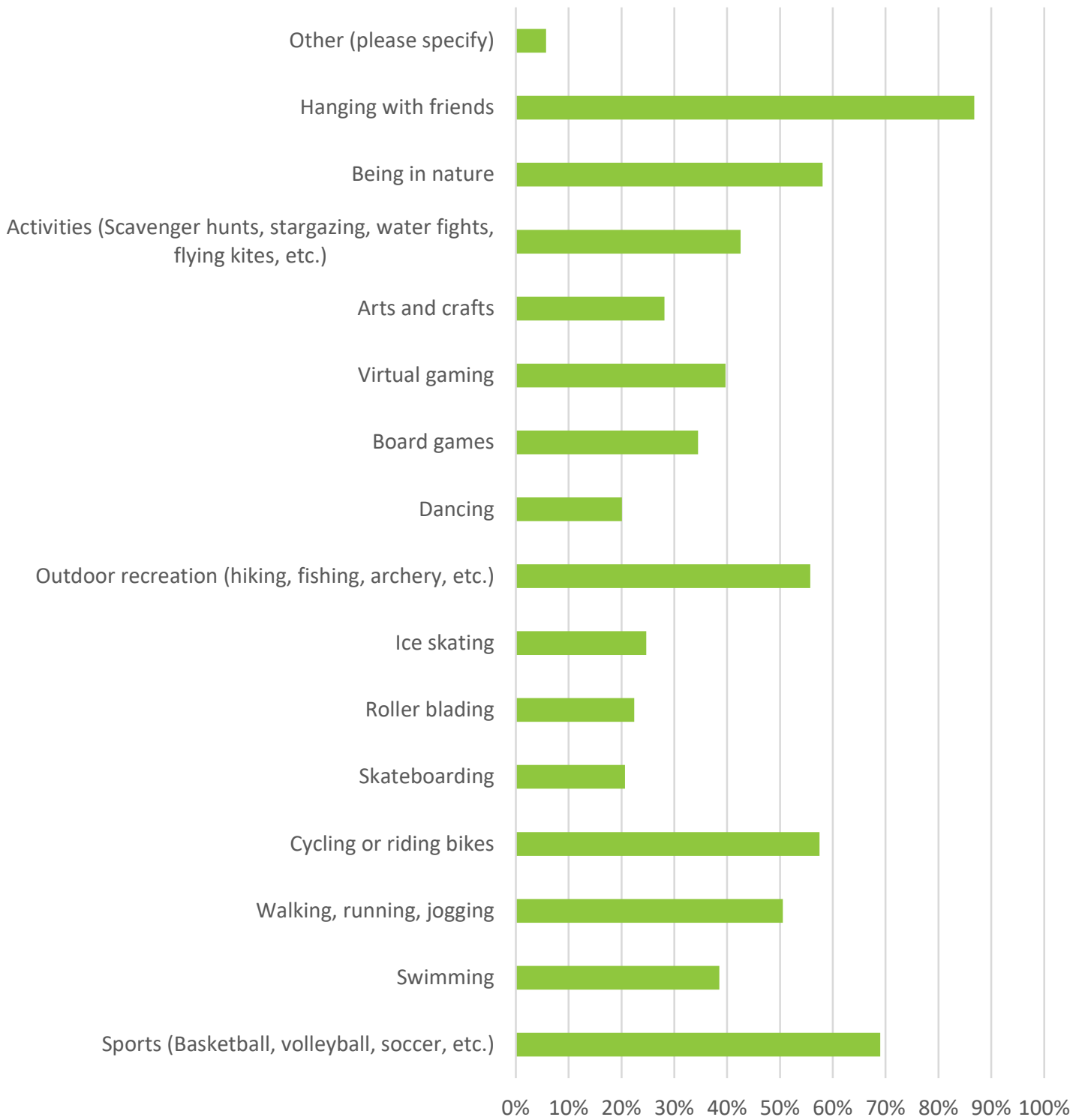
The public had the following compliments of the existing parks facilities and programming:

- Trails provide great connectivity and are clean
- Like the playgrounds and pickleball courts
- Enjoy the Adult Easter Egg Hunt

The following suggestions were gathered at the public input booth:

- Easter Egg Hunts geared towards children with disabilities or those on the Autism spectrum
- More places to fish
- Activities like paddleboats, mini-golf, and zip-lining
- More paved trails
- More toddler play areas across the community
- More dog parks

FIGURE 3.4: TOP ACTIVITIES TEENS ENJOY



- More programming
- More splash pads
- More nature trails and hiking trails
- Seating at the playgrounds

PUBLIC MEETING

A public meeting was held at 5:30 p.m. on July 31, 2023 at the Kokomo Municipal Stadium. The meeting was attended by 72 members of the public. At the meeting, a series of public participation boards were used to gain feedback from the community. The participation boards, presentation, comment cards and sign-in sheets can be found in the Appendix of this plan. Below is a summary of the top responses received from each question:

What do you love about Kokomo Parks and Recreation?

1. Trail system
2. Koko Go Bike Share
3. Pickleball courts at Bon Air Park
4. Band concerts
5. Good variety of parks and activities

What would you like to see in the future for Kokomo's parks system?

1. New and improved pickleball courts
2. Indoor recreation facility
3. Improved lighting/ security
4. Fishing opportunities
5. More splash pads
6. Winter recreation: ice rink, more sledding opportunities, cross country ski trail
7. More park amenities such as benches, picnic tables and trash receptacles

What issues have you experienced in Kokomo's parks?

1. Need for more pickleball courts
2. Need for more lighting and security
3. Lack of restrooms/ maintenance of restrooms
4. Park maintenance
5. Need for more drinking fountains

PLAN PRESENTATION

A public presentation was held on March 20, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at Kokomo City Hall. A total of 15 members of the public attended, not including city officials or parks staff. A copy of the draft was posted online for public review prior to the public meeting. A presentation was given to inform the public on the parks and recreation master planning process and to share the results of the planning efforts. The presentation, comment cards, and sign-in sheet can be found in the Appendix of this plan.

The public was given time at the end of the presentation to provide their comments on the plan. Below is a summary of the topics and comments given at the public presentation:

- Security cameras and lighting for the pickleball courts at Bon Air Park
- Nature play
- Sidewalks or trails connecting neighborhoods to the south branch library. Specific neighborhood mentioned was Highland Springs
- Adding restrooms or portable toilets at Waterworks Park.
- Regional connection of the Clover Leaf Trail to Frankfort
- Have developers include walkways and pocket parks in new developments
- Adding storywalk signs at multiple parks locations. Could collaborate with the library to change the stories out each month. Additional paper resources about storywalks was provided and is included in the appendix.
- Connect trail from UTC Parks to Highland Park. Suggested route of going around the solar field down to old railroad bridge over Kokomo Creek in Highland Park.
- Connect new trail at Markland Avenue to trail around soccer field to the east and Northwest Park.
- Pickleball courts at Mehlig Park and Northwest Park. These locations would provide shade for users. Jackson Morrow Park is in the sun and windy for pickleball.
- Adding a splash pad at Jackson Morrow Park or Highland Park.



Public Outreach Event at the Adult Easter Egg Hunt on April 8, 2023.



Public Meeting on July 31, 2023.



Public Presentation on March 20, 2024

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Community involvement is a fundamental component in parks and recreation planning. The information gathered through these methods aids in the development of recommendations that will guide Kokomo Parks and Recreation in future planning and development decisions.

Below are the key takeaways and themes from all public input methods:

- The trail system is actively used and a very important part of the Kokomo park system and should continue to be improved.
- New and improved pickleball courts are desired.
- Improve lighting and security throughout the park system.
- Teens enjoy hanging out with friends and would like to see dedicated teen hangout spaces within the parks.
- Improve awareness and outreach to promote the parks and recreational facilities and programs.
- Outdoor recreational programs are desired including more fishing opportunities.
- Restroom facility improvements should be a high priority.
- Improving accessibility throughout the parks is highly desired.

Page Left Intentionally Blank



Walk of Excellence
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page





04

PARK SYSTEM
INVENTORY



KOKOGO Bike Share
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page

RECREATION PROGRAMMING

KPRD offers a wide variety of programs and facilities geared towards a range of ages and user groups. KPRD also works with several local groups including: Kokomo Center schools, Caver Community Center, Special Olympics, church groups, and P.A.L. to offer additional programming.

KPRD is consistently looking to add new and additional programs to respond to changing community needs and interests. Yearly program evaluations are used to review current programs and revise/add services as needed.

Most of the programs offered by KPRD take place during the summer months. KPRD does offer some winter sport leagues and programming such as a winter basketball league that runs from November through February.

PROGRAMMING SNAPSHOT

ADULT PROGRAMS:

- Men's City Basketball League
- Women's 3 on 3 City Basketball League
- Adult Easter Egg Hunt
- Co-Ed/Men's/Women's Summer and Fall Softball Slow Pitch / Tournaments
- Tennis Lessons / Tournaments

YOUTH PROGRAMS:

- Eggcellent, Eggciting, Eggstra Fun Youth Easter Egg Hunt
- Recreation Adventure Program
- Super Explorer's Camp
- Pint-Size Chef
- Tennis Lessons / Tournaments

AQUATICS PROGRAMS:

- Swim Lessons
- Water Walking
- Water Sprays
- Pooches in the Pool

ARTS-N-CRAFTS PROGRAMS:

- Pumpkin Painting
- Craft Fest

ENVIRONMENTAL/OUTDOOR PROGRAMS:

- Creature Features

OTHER PROGRAMS:

- Fall Community Garage Sale
- Fun Runs/Walks
- Summer Concert Series
- Haunted Trail Walk
- High Sky: Kite Flying Workshop
- Movie Nights
- Trail Tours

PROGRAMMING IN DEPTH

FUN RUNS/WALKS

KPRD co-sponsors several fun runs/ walks every year with other local organizations such as IU Kokomo, The Kokomo Symphony, and the Kokomo Roadrunners Club. Most of the runs/walks are 5K in distance and family oriented. The run/walks take place at trails in Highland, Foster, and Jackson Morrow parks.

TRAIL TOURS

All tours start from the KokoGo bike share facility and are free to the public. Tours are offered at various times in the summer and are vary from 2 miles long to 7 miles long.

WINTER BASKETBALL LEAGUES

Each winter the Department hosts a men's and women's basketball league. The leagues are popular with the community and several hundred residents participate. Tournaments are associated with the league. The women's league is 3 on 3 style basketball.



Kirkendall Nature Center Pumpkin Painting
Image Source: Kokomo Parks & Recreation Facebook Page



Pint-Size Chef
Image Source: Kokomo Parks & Recreation Facebook Page



Creature Features
Image Source: Kokomo Parks & Recreation Facebook Page



Jackson Morrow Water Spray
Image Source: Kokomo Parks & Recreation Facebook Page

SUMMER SOFTBALL LEAGUES

Each summer the Department hosts a softball league that averages 50 Men's slow pitch teams, 25 Women's slow pitch teams, 15 co-ed teams. In addition to the leagues hosted by the Department there are various outside leagues and tournaments held at park facilities. A break down of leagues at various park facilities is listed below:

NORTHWEST PARK

- City League: Men's & Women's Slow Pitch
- City League: Co-Ed Slow Pitch
- Men's Church Leagues

CHAMPIONSHIP PARK

- Girl's Fast Pitch- Travel Ball & Tournament

ADDITIONAL TOURNAMENTS

- N.S.A State
- Haynes Apperson
- USSSA Baseball

FALL SOFTBALL LEAGUES

Each fall the Department hosts an average of 40 Men's Slow Pitch and 15 Women's teams. Over 500 individuals participate in over 225 games using the facilities at Northwest park. The league begins before labor day weekend and ends the second week of October.

TENNIS PROGRAMS

Tennis programs are held at Foster Park. The main program offered by the department is tennis lessons. The lessons on average draw 150 + participants.

RECREATION ADVENTURE PROGRAM

The recreation adventure program is an important summer recreational program for the local children. More than 3,000 children participate in the program each summer. The program operates daily for 8 weeks from June to July. Activities include: crafts, sports, games, and special events. The program is free to residents, except for a \$1 fee charged per craft. Each year the activities and facilities are adjusted to best meet the needs of the community. Currently the program is held at three park locations and provides

accessible activities. Each location has two full time supervisors.

The program also offers a one-day Craft Fest at Highland Park. The event offers children the opportunity to partake in different crafts. The crafts vary year to year, but have included candle dipping, basket weaving, splatter painting, sand art, and beading.

KOKOMO BEACH AQUATIC CENTER

The Aquatic Center offers various recreation and programming opportunities. A small fee is associated with each of the following activities:

- Swim lessons (infant through adult)
- Adult water walking
- Private park rental
- Birthday parties rentals

KIRKENDALL INTERPRETIVE CENTER

The Center is located at Jackson Morrow Park and is home to a number of interpretive nature exhibits and programs. The Center is open to the public during regular summer and winter hours. The Center has a full time director that oversees programming. The programs at the Center include:

- Super Explorer's Camp: A week long nature oriented day camp for children age groups 5-7 & 8-12
- Haunted Trail Walk
- Pumpkin painting

ELWOOD HAYNES MUSEUM

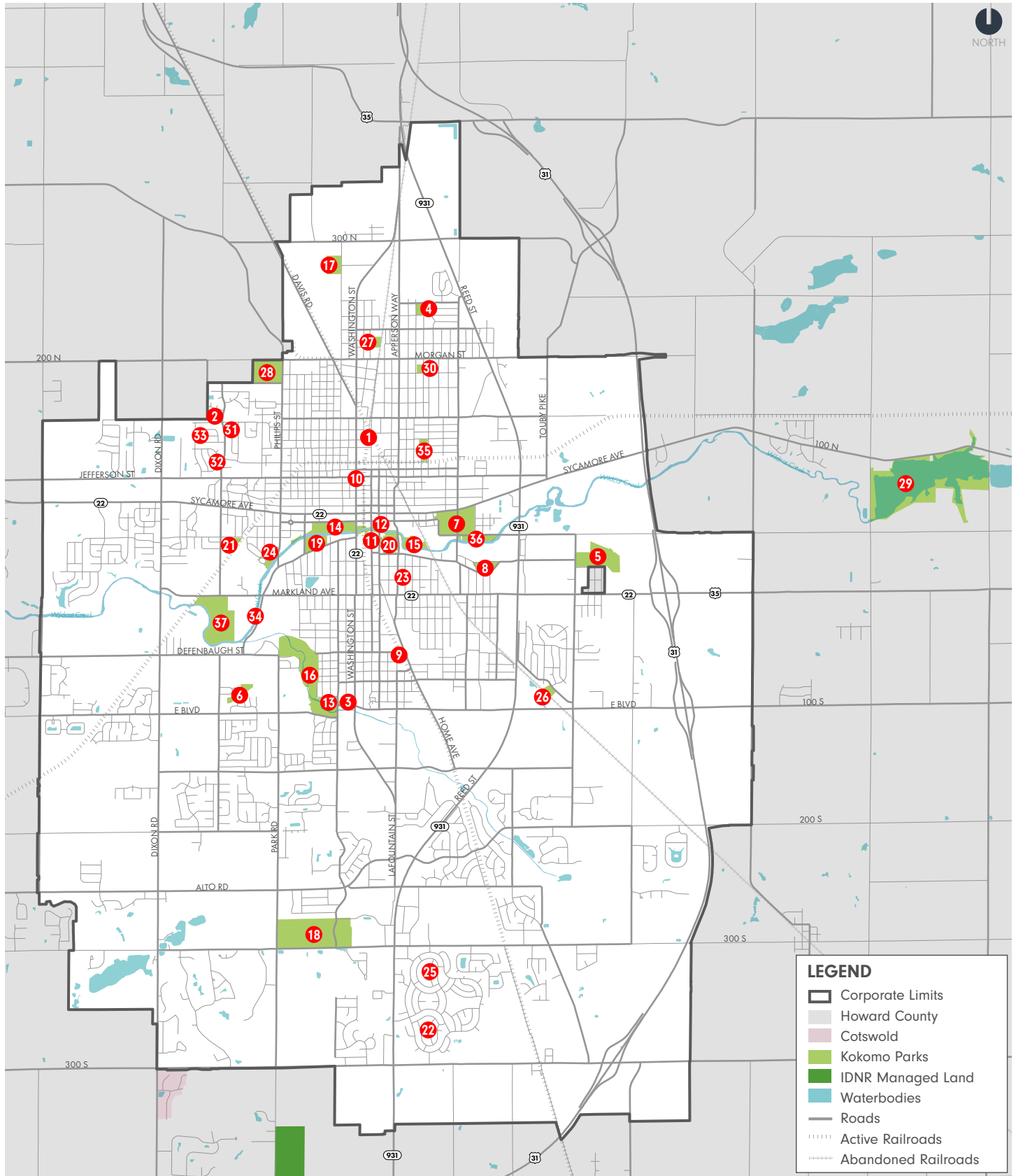
The Museum is located on the edge of Highland Park in the former residence of Elwood Haynes. Elwood Haynes is an important local figure who was an inventor. The Museum contains personal items from the Haynes family and experimental pieces from his laboratory. The Museum has a collection of pictures and a variety of items on display. The Museum is open to the public at no charge year-round and has rooms available for community meetings. The Museum also hosts various special events throughout the year including car displays and shows.

PARK SYSTEM INVENTORY

The Kokomo's Park System is comprised of 37 parks facilities under the KPRD jurisdiction (see Figure 4.1).

- 1 Al Berryman Memorial Park
- 2 Berkley Park
- 3 Bicentennial Park
- 4 Bon Air Park
- 5 Championship Park
- 6 Country Club Hills Park
- 7 Crown Point Cemetery
- 8 Cutler Park
- 9 Depot Trailhead
- 10 Downtown Depot Park
- 11 Downtown Dog Park
- 12 Downtown River Walk
- 13 Elwood Haynes Museum
- 14 Foster Park
- 15 Future Park
- 16 Highland Park
- 17 Huston Park
- 18 Jackson Morrow Park
- 19 Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center
- 20 Kokomo Municipal Stadium
- 21 Mehlig Park
- 22 Mendota Park
- 23 Meridian Park
- 24 Miller-Highland Park (UCT)
- 25 Mohawk Park
- 26 Mohr Park
- 27 Northside Park
- 28 Northwest Park
- 29 Wildcat Creek Reservoir Park
- 30 Riley Park
- 31 Robbins "A" Park
- 32 Robbins "B" Park
- 33 Robbins "C" Park
- 34 Steel Mill Public Access Site
- 35 Studebaker Park
- 36 Waterworks Park
- 37 Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex

FIGURE 4.1: KOKOMO'S PARK SYSTEM



OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In addition to the facilities owned and run by the City and KPRD, a number of other recreational facilities can be found throughout the community and region. Figure 4.2 illustrates additional community resources that were provided by respondents in the public survey.

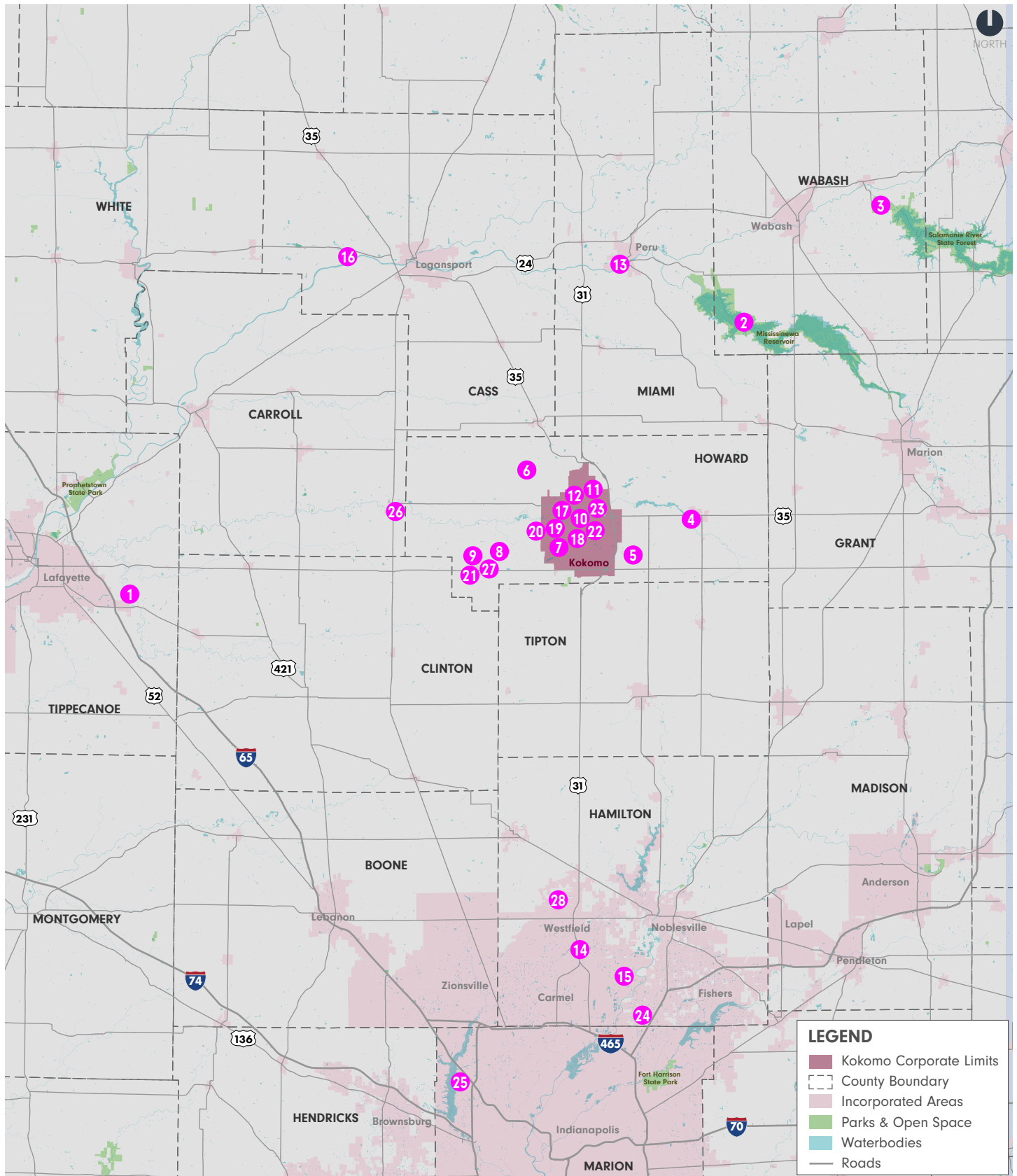
Other community resources not mapped but provided by respondents included:

- School playgrounds in the summer and/or school playgrounds that are open to the public such as Wallace Elementary School, Pettit Park Elementary, Boulevard STEM Elementary and Lafayette Park International Elementary School.
- Local golf courses such as Wildcat Creek Golf Course and Chippendale Golf Course
- Local churches that have outdoor and/or indoor playgrounds, disc golf courses, basketball courts, volleyball courts and trails such as Saint Joan of Arc, Crossroads Church, South Creek Church of God, Cross America, New Life Church and The Connection.
- Generally, respondents listed state parks all throughout Indiana. Respondents mentioned they would drive around 90 minutes to state parks such as Turkey Run State Park and Shades State Park. Others were even further away from Kokomo such as Hoosier National Forest and Lake Monroe.
- Wildcat Creek
- Nickel Plate Trail, Monon Trail and Greentown Comet Trail
- Splash pads in Carmel and Indianapolis
- Private gyms such as Planet Fitness and Workhorse Gym

Kokomo Parks Department currently has a reciprocal agreement with the school system where each can utilize facilities rent free. The public can access school playgrounds 8:00am to 11:00pm.

- 1 Fairfield Lakes
- 2 Mississinewa Reservoir
- 3 Salamonie River State Forest
- 4 Eastern High School
- 5 Taylor High School
- 6 Northwestern High School
- 7 Kokomo High School
- 8 Western High School
- 9 Jeff Stout Community Center
- 10 Kokomo Family YMCA
- 11 Carver Community Center
- 12 Very Early Childhood Education Center
- 13 River Walkway Park
- 14 Cool Creek Nature Park
- 15 Lawrence W. Inlow Park
- 16 France Park
- 17 Senior Citizens Center
- 18 Cole Fitness Center
- 19 Hachet Memorial Soccer Complex
- 20 Kokomo PAL Field
- 21 Brady Park
- 22 Sweet Peas Play Cafe
- 23 Somers Park
- 24 Ritchey Woods Nature Preserve
- 25 Eagle Creek Park
- 26 Burlington Park
- 27 Kokomo-Howard County Public Library
- 28 Grand Park

FIGURE 4.2: COMMUNITY RESOURCES



LEGEND

- Kokomo Corporate Limits
- County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- Parks & Open Space
- Waterbodies
- Roads

TRAILS & LINEAR PARK SYSTEM

The City of Kokomo has several existing trails and greenways. Kokomo has three main trails throughout its parks and recreation system including:

- Walk of Excellence - The total amount of trails in 4.8 miles.
- Industrial Heritage Trail - The total amount of trails is 5.88 miles.
- Clover Leaf Trail - The total amount of trails is 1.95 miles.

Other trails within the parks include 1.3 miles (loop trail) at Jackson Morrow Park, 0.6 miles at Highland Park, Highland Park Indiana Trails, and 1.0 miles (loop trail) at Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex. Figure 4.3 shows the existing trail network.

The Nickel Plate Trail currently connects to the City of Kokomo near the intersection U.S. 31 and State Road 931 (former U.S. 31). This trail connects Kokomo to other communities in northern Indiana and provides 40+ miles of contiguous trail for residents.

The City has made a priority to add more trail sections to the existing trails and views trails as linear parks. The City Engineering Department is responsible for the planning and implementation of the trails, but the Parks and Recreation Department partners with the Engineering Department to maintain the trails once they are built. The trails are in good condition and a majority of the trails are lit for safety. In addition, the trails connect several parks to each other and to other local destinations.

KPRD is currently planning to add an additional 2.0 miles of trails from Dixon Road to Cone Palace along County Road W 300 S to connect adjacent neighborhoods to Jackson Morrow Park. There are future plans for a trail on the other side of 931.

The newly added KokoGo bike share facility is an excellent addition to Kokomo's trail system. The facility is located in downtown Kokomo at the trailhead crossing between the Industrial Heritage Trail and the Walk of Excellence. The KokoGo bike share facility offers a free bike share program during the spring, summer and fall months. The facility also offers restrooms and is located just north of the Downtown Dog Park. KokoGo offers adult, children's, tagalong and tandem bikes as well as trikes, helmets and bike locks.



KokoGo Bike Share Facilities

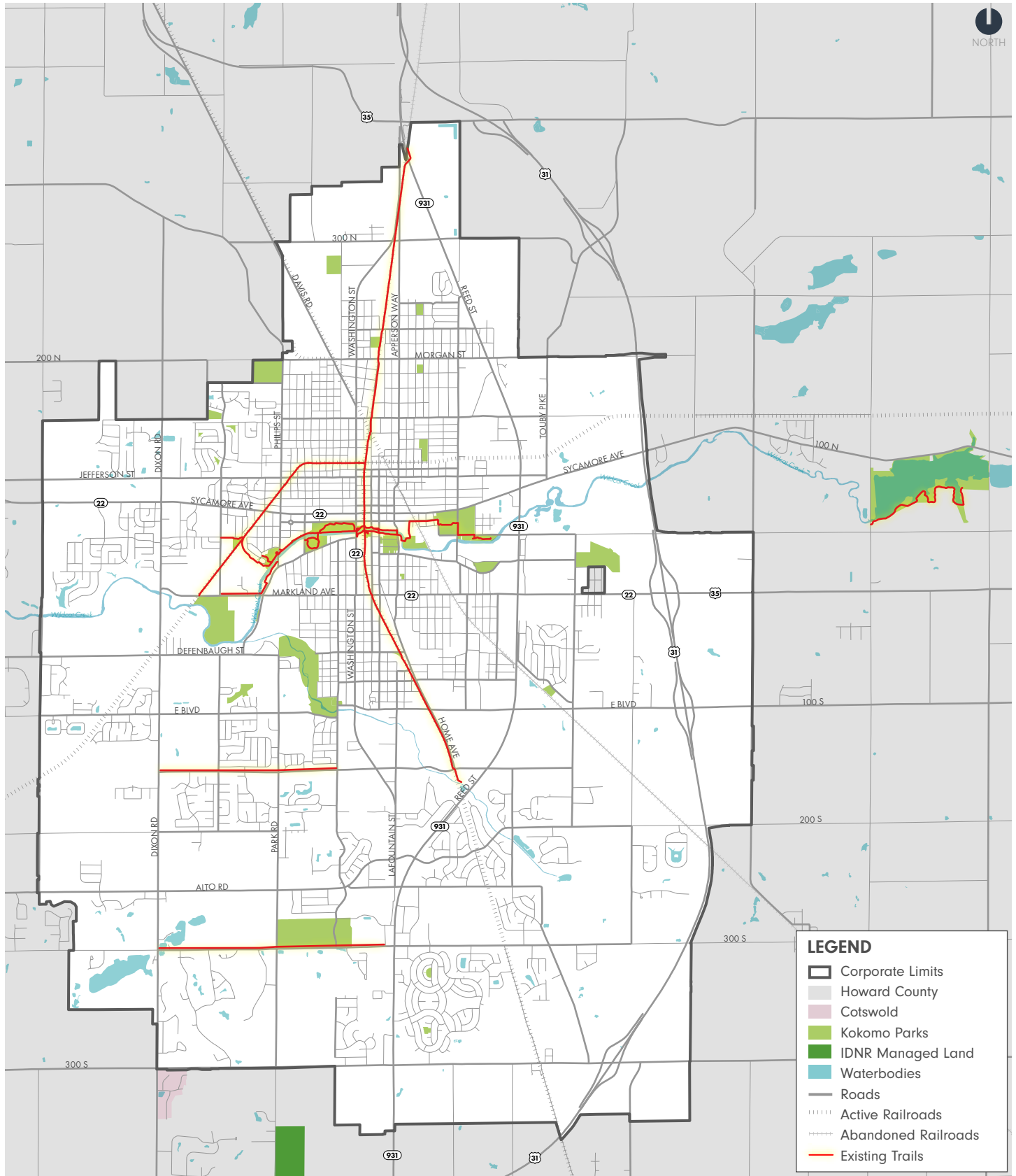
Image Source: Kokomo Parks & Recreation Facebook Page



Industrial Heritage Trail

Image Source: Kokomo Parks & Recreation Facebook Page

FIGURE 4.3: KOKOMO'S TRAILS SYSTEM







CURRENT PARK SYSTEM AMENITY SNAPSHOT



PARK INVENTORY SHEETS

The next several pages walk through current inventories for each park. The organization for each inventory is shown below.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;"> PARK INVENTORY PHOTOS </div>		<div style="color: green; font-weight: bold;"> NAME OF PARK OR TRAIL </div> <p>Address of Park Ownership of Park</p> <div style="display: inline-block; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="font-weight: bold;"> TYPE OF PARK FACILITY </div> <p>Park Size</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  1 </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  2 </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  3 </div> </div> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>← Park Amenities</p> <p>← Quantity</p> </div> </div>
		<div style="font-weight: bold;"> PARK DESCRIPTION </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 173px; width: 100%;"></div>

CONDITION

The condition of each park was evaluated on general observations. The condition is to give a general comparison between facilities. Facilities were observed on one day only and may not reflect recent maintenance or improvements. Features of good, fair and poor facilities are listed below.

Good- Amenities need no repairs and are fully operational. There may be some minor cosmetic improvements needed that can be easily made. Areas are clean and maintained well. Good conditions encourage active park use.

Fair- Amenities may need minor repairs, but are operational. Some deficiencies or safety concerns may be present.

Poor- Amenities may need major repairs or be completely unusable. Areas may present safety concerns and poor conditions discourage park use.

PARK FACILITY TYPES



MINI PARK

These parks are typically under half an acre in size. These parks typically serve the immediate local population and can offer a variety of functions such as small event space, play areas for children, space for passive recreation, etc.



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

These parks tend to be smaller and typically are between 3-15 acres. They usually serve people within a 0-15 minute walk of the park. Typical amenities include: walking paths, playgrounds, open space, and picnic tables. Some parks in the Kokomo Park system include ball fields.



COMMUNITY PARK

These parks tend to be larger than neighborhood parks, and serve a wider area due to the amenities they offer. They still cater to the nearby residents, but offer amenities that can draw people in from a further distance. These amenities often include: special programming, splash pads, dog parks, and centerpiece playgrounds.



LINEAR PARK

These parks include narrow green space or signature trails and greenways which serve city-wide or regional connectivity.



SPECIAL USE PARK

These parks serve a single purpose or to meet special use. These parks are likely to bring in users from a wider area due to their specialized nature. The size of these parks vary and there is no set standard from the NRPA.



AL BERRYMAN PARK

Address: 1105 N. Main St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

0.9 Acres



1



1

PARK DESCRIPTION

This park is located along the Industrial Heritage Trail and features a splash pad with shade, park benches, a bike repair station, art sculptures and murals, restrooms that are open year-round and parking.

CONDITION

➤ Good



BERKLEY PARK

Address: 1203 N. Berkley Rd.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

5.15 Acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Berkley Park is located in the northwest edge of the City. This park has two youth softball diamonds that have been converted to practice fields since the completion of Championship Park. The fields were previously maintained by the leagues and now are maintained by KPRD.

CONDITION

➤ Fair

- Gravel parking and paths are not accessible.





BICENTENNIAL ARBORETUM

Address: 1904 S. Webster St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

0.72 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

The park is located across from the Elwood Haynes Museum. There is a paved walkway throughout the park with benches. This park is known in the community for its hedges that are cut to spell "KOKOMO".

The west side of the park serves as the main entrance to the park. The park is set higher than the road and is accessed by stairs. There is an alley adjacent to the east side of the park that provides accessible access to the park.

CONDITION

➤ Fair

- Shrubs are extending into walking paths.
- Benches are in poor condition and need replacing.



BON AIR PARK

Address: 2500 N. Purdum St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

3.21 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

The park is located in the northern area of the city in a residential neighborhood. This park offers several amenities which include a playground, a mini dog park, a basketball court, pickle ball courts, an outdoor-roofed picnic shelter, an enclosed private rental building, an outdoor grill and parking. This park is also one of the sites for the department's Recreation Adventure Program during the summer.

CONDITION

► Fair

- Pickleball courts are in good condition, however the entrances are not accessible.
- The play equipment is outdated and needs updating.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to amenities.
- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.



CHAMPIONSHIP PARK

Address: 2600 Veterans Memorial Dr.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

33.55 acres



4



4



6



1



2



2

BASIC DESCRIPTION

Championship Park, formally known as Darrough Chapel Park, has expanded to the east and is a state of the art all turf facility located just west of US 31 and State Road 22 in Kokomo. Park improvements were completed in spring 2021. The park consists of four high school/college baseball fields and four junior/softball fields. There are also four senior batting cages, two junior batting cages, two concessions and two restrooms. Each field also has a brand new state of the art lighting system. All of the former baseball and softball leagues formed under Kokomo United Baseball/Softball and play at Championship Park.

This park is also home to the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial which is located at the entrance to the park. The memorial is taken care well by the parks department and community groups.

A new playground has been install at this park since the last plan.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- This is a new park facility and is in excellent condition.



CLOVER LEAF TRAIL

Address: Connects to the Industrial Heritage Trail at Madison Street and runs southwest through Kokomo
Ownership: City of Kokomo



LINEAR PARK

1.95 miles of trail



BASIC DESCRIPTION

This is a paved trail running from the Industrial Heritage Trailhead at Madison Street southwest through Kokomo and connecting to the Walk of Excellence at Mehlig Park. The trail has several benches along the path and is very scenic.

KPRD is planning to continue the trail southwest to connect to Frankfort.

CONDITION

➤ Good





COUNTRY CLUB HILLS PARK

Address: 1800 Gentilly Ct.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

7.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

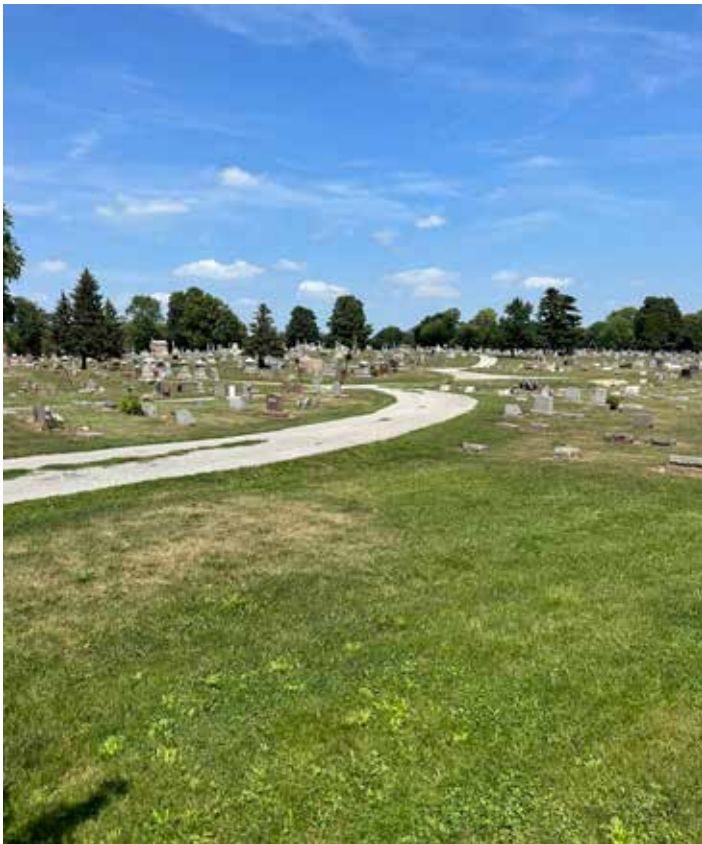
The park is located in the southwest region of the city. The park is in a residential neighborhood and is adjacent to a privately owned wooded area with informal trails. This park offers a playground, a backstop for a practice field, a basketball court, a private rental building and an outdoor grill as well as available parking.

CONDITION

► Fair

- Play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period. There is some very old equipment near the basketball courts that should be removed.
- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to amenities.





CROWN POINT CEMETERY

Address: 1101 E. Sycamore St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

41.54 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Crown Point Cemetery is located in the north side of the city. Crown Point includes three cemeteries: Crown Point, Pioneer, and Coleman. The Walk of Excellence Trail runs through the site.

CONDITION

► Good





CUTLER PARK

Address: 1600 E. Vaile Ave.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

9.56 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Cutler Park is located on the east side of the city in a mixed residential commercial neighborhood. The park offers two baseball diamonds that have been converted to practice fields since the completion of Championship Park. The fields were previously maintained by the leagues and now are maintained by KPRD. The park also has a playground, a basketball court, a tennis court, restrooms and parking.

CONDITION

► Poor

- The play equipment is outdated and needs updating.
- The tennis court is in poor condition with cracks in the surfacing and is missing the net.
- Youth baseball field is in poor condition with overgrown grasses and ivy. There are holes in the ground from fencing that has been removed that should be filled.
- Existing concession and restroom buildings could use updating and/or re-purposing.
- Mulch is not considered an accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to amenities.



DEPOT TRAILHEAD PARK

Address: 403 E. Defenbaugh St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

0.5 acres



1



1

BASIC DESCRIPTION

This park is located along the Industrial Heritage Trail and offers a playground, a bike repair station and restrooms that are open year-round.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- There are not accessible routes to all amenities.
- Edging around the playground is not accessible.
- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.





DOWNTOWN DEPOT PARK

Address: 500 N. Buckeye St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

0.13 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

This park is part of the original Downtown Train Depot. It is located on the north end of the facility and offers a concrete ping pong table, cornhole game, foosball table, and two checkers/chess table as well as outdoor lounge seating with umbrella covered tables. Equipment needed to play the games can be checked out at several of the businesses located adjacent to the park or you can bring your own. The Train Depot Building also offers a large, private rental room on the second floor.

CONDITION

➤ Good



DOWNTOWN DOG PARK

Address: 321 S. Main St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

0.35 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Downtown Dog Park is located along the Industrial Heritage Trail in downtown Kokomo and offers a fenced play area, doggie play equipment, water fountain and park benches.

CONDITION

➤ Good





DOWNTOWN RIVER WALK

Address: Located Downtown along Wildcat Creek

Ownership: City of Kokomo



LINEAR PARK

7.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Downtown River Walk is newly added to the park system. This park has many spots for viewing the Wildcat Creek and is also home to the Riverwalk Stage and Koko-Go Free Ride, which is Kokomo's bike share program. Both the Industrial Heritage Trail and the Walk of Excellence come through the park.

KPRD is planning space for food trucks to this park in the future.

CONDITION

- Good
 - This is a new park facility and is in excellent condition.



ELWOOD HAYNES MUSEUM

Address: 1915 S. Webster St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

3.0 acres

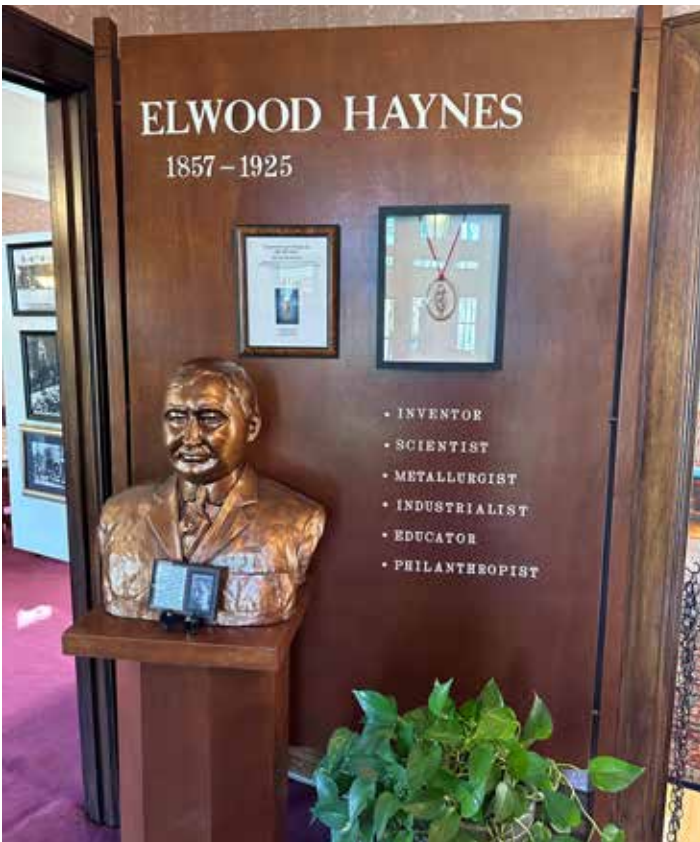


BASIC DESCRIPTION

The Haynes Museum is located in the southeast corner of Highland Park. The museum is the former home of Elwood Haynes. The museum houses a collection of his inventions and showcases his contribution to the development of Kokomo and the motor industry. Tours are free to the public.

CONDITION

➤ Good





FOSTER PARK

Address: 721 W. Superior St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



COMMUNITY PARK

30.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

This park is in downtown Kokomo and is the site for many festivals, concerts and community events. The Kokomo Arts Pavilion is located in this park along with a large playground, a gazebo, tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, parking and restrooms that are open year-round. This park also offers a softball diamond that has been converted to a practice field since the completion of Championship Park. The field was previously maintained by the leagues and now is maintained by KPRD. A new skatepark facility opened in December of 2019.

The Walk of Excellence Trail runs along the south side of the park and there is a loop path inside the park. Kokomo's Senior Citizen's Center is also in this park along with an historical jackrabbit tank from World War II and Willie the Whale.

There is also a log cabin located in this park that was previously home to the Girl Scouts. KPRD is interested in using this facility for programming for the future.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- Due to flooding the tennis and pickleball courts are in need of repair
- Play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



FUTURE PARK

Address: 400 S. Apperson Way

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

10.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Future park is located next to Wildcat Creek. It is a mostly undeveloped park with open space. The Walk of Excellence runs through this park and at the entrance is a beautiful blue walking bridge that crosses the Wildcat Creek into the park that was donated by the Rotary Club.

Currently, the only vehicular access to this park is from Purdum Street which is very narrow like an alley. Future planning for this park should consider an alternative vehicular entrance.

There is also an electrical substation located adjacent to the park. Future planning should consider screening this area.

KPRD is currently considering locating tennis and pickleball courts at this park.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- Gravel parking is not accessible.
- There is not designated accessible parking for the park.





HIGHLAND PARK

Address: 900 W. Defenbaugh St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



COMMUNITY PARK

83.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Highland Park is one of the most popular parks in the system. This park offers a large main playground with specialty handicap accessible play equipment as well as two smaller playgrounds (one of those is a totlot), a private rental building, outdoor-roofed picnic shelters, open area picnic tables, many outdoor grills, basketball courts, multi-use tennis and pickleball courts, horseshoe courts and a disc golf course. There are also three restroom facilities, three concessions, many parking areas and historical sites such as the Vermont Covered Bridge, Old Ben, the Sycamore Stump, the Civil War Cannon and the Indian Trails.

This park has two youth baseball diamonds and one adult baseball diamond. The two youth baseball diamonds have been converted to practice fields since the completion of Championship Park. The fields were previously maintained by the leagues and now is maintained by KPRD. Th adult baseball diamond still functions as a game field and not just a practice field. KPRD has installed new play equipment at the large main playground since the last plan.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- The other smaller playgrounds are in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- The multi-use tennis and pickleball courts are cracking and could use repair.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



HUSTON PARK

Address: 2800 N. Webster St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

15.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Huston Park is located at the north edge of the city. This park has one youth baseball diamond that has been converted to a practice field since the completion of Championship Park. The fields were previously maintained by the leagues and now is maintained by KPRD. The park also offers a picnic shelter, outdoor grills, a large playground, a basketball court, restrooms, parking and a paved walk path through the park.

CONDITION

➤ Fair

- The play equipment is outdated and needs updating.
- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.
- Gravel parking is not accessible.
- There is not designated accessible parking for the park.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE TRAIL

Address: Running through Kokomo north/south and through downtown

Ownership: City of Kokomo



LINEAR PARK

5.88 miles of trail



BASIC DESCRIPTION

The Industrial Heritage Trail runs north and south going directly through Downtown Kokomo. The southern trailhead is just south of the intersection of Home Avenue and Lincoln Road. The trail runs through Kokomo to the northern edge of town connecting to the Nickle Plate Trail which runs to Rochester, Indiana. The Industrial Heritage Trail has connections with the Cloverleaf Trail at Madison Street and the Walk of Excellence where they cross in Downtown Kokomo at the KokoGo Bike Share as well as connecting Depot Trailhead Park, Downtown Dog Park and Al Berryman Park.

KPRD considers the trail to be a linear park that provides the community with open space and a place to promotes active lifestyles.

CONDITION

➤ Good



JACKSON MORROW PARK

Address: 4200 S. Park Rd.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



COMMUNITY PARK

100.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

The largest park in the system, the Kirkendall Interpretive Nature Center is located in this park. The Center is open to the public free of charge and has a large diorama of taxidermy animals native to Indiana on display as well as tanks with species of fish, turtles, snakes and frogs to view. The park also offers a large playground, picnic shelters, a collegiate-sized basketball court, sand volleyball courts, Kokomo Pipeline Skatepark, a large man-made sledding hill, parking, and restrooms that are open year-round.

There is a large 1.3 mile paved walking path that loops around the park that is very popular to the public as well as host to several 5K walkathons. The park also offers some paved and some natural walking/hiking trails that venture through the wooded part of the park.

KPRD is in the process of adding a splash pad with a shade shelter and restrooms near the volleyball and basketball courts. KPRD also plans to add lights/fitness equipment to the walking paths and to expand the playground by the end of 2023.

CONDITION

- Good
 - Edging around playground is not accessible.
 - Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.
 - There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



KOKOMO BEACH FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER

Address: 802 W. Park Ave.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

10.0 acres



1



1



1



1



1



0.32

BASIC DESCRIPTION

The Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center was opened in 2002 and was constructed on the site of the original Seashore Swimming Pool which operated from 1938-2000. This water park offers a main zero-depth entry leisure pool connected to a lap lane pool, a lazy river, a splash pad, the Cove splash zone pool, a body slide, a tube slide, two zoom flume slides, a concession stand and bathhouse.

The Walk of Excellence also crosses the Wildcat Creek and has a loop around the Beach. There is a small picnic gazebo as well as several picnic areas surrounding the parking lot. Kokomo Beach offers swim lessons, Water Walking exercise, birthday parties, and private rentals. The Beach also hosts a Family Movie Night, Pooches at the Pool and the department's Community Garage Sale on the parking lot after the pool closes in the fall.

KPRD plans to add a playground to this park.

CONDITION

➤ Good



KOKOMO MUNICIPAL STADIUM

Address: 400 S Union St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

13.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Kokomo Municipal Stadium is home to the IU Kokomo baseball team and soccer teams. The field is an all-turf surface which provides year-round practice and competition space. There is fixed seating for 3,000, grass berm seating for 1,000 and four spacious suites allows for a capacity of over 4,500. The home dugout, clubhouse and bullpens for the baseball team are along the third baseline and offer top of the line training space for the team.

Kokomo Municipal Stadium is newly added to the park system since the last plan. KPRD maintains the facility eight months of the year when baseball season is not active. In the next five years, KPRD anticipates the turf and outfield padding will need to be replaced.

CONDITION

- Good





MEHLIG PARK

Address: 1701 W. Carter St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

3.13 acres



1



1



1



1

BASIC DESCRIPTION

This park is a trailhead for the Walk of Excellence and the Cloverleaf Trail. It offers Kokomo's first dog park, a playground, a basketball court and parking. The park storage barn is also home to a carefully preserved live honey bee colony that can be viewed through a plexiglass window on the exterior of the building. There is also signage noting the great benefit these colonies provide to society.

The KPRD is currently in the process of updating the playground at this park.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- The play equipment is outdated and needs updating.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to amenities.
- Playground surfacing is not accessible.



MENDOTA PARK

Address: 5713 Mendota Dr.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

1.9 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Mendota Park is located in the Indian Heights neighborhood. The park is a small park and offers a playground, basketball court, baseball field backstop and parking. KPRD is planning to add a dog park and new basketball goals to this park in the future.

CONDITION

➤ Fair

- Play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- Mulch is not considered an accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There is not designated accessible parking for the park.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.





MERIDIAN PARK

Address: 500 E. Harrison St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

1.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

This park offers a playground, an outdoor-roofed picnic shelter, a basketball court and has paved walkways within the park.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There is not designated accessible parking for the park.



MILLER-HIGHLAND PARK (UCT)

Address: 1325 Kingston Rd.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

6.13 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Miller-Highland Park is located along the northern edge of the Wildcat Creek. This park has two youth baseball diamonds that have been converted to practice fields since the completion of Championship Park. The fields were previously maintained by the leagues and now is maintained by KPRD. This park also offers concessions, a playground, a bike repair station, parking and restrooms that are open year-round.

The northern side of the park has sloped hills that go up into a neighborhood making this part of the park also used for sledding during winter months. The Walk of Excellence also runs through this park.

KPRD just recently renovated the restroom.

CONDITION

► Good

- Play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



MOHAWK PARK

Address: Mohawk Drive

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

2.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Mohawk Park is a small park located in the Indian Heights Neighborhood. This park offers a playground, a basketball court and parking. Since the last plan, KPRD has added a dog park and added new basketball goals.

CONDITION

➤ Fair

- Play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- Edging around playground is not accessible.
- Mulch is not considered an accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There is not designated accessible parking for the park.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.





MOHR PARK

Address: 2302 Saratoga Ave.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

3.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Mohr Park is located in the southeast area of the city. The park sits in a mix of residential and commercial use areas. The park includes a dog park, playground, picnic shelter, basketball court, restroom and drinking fountain. In addition there is open lawn space and trees.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- Play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There is not designated accessible parking for the park.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.





NORTHSIDE PARK

Address: 2201 N. Main St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

4.5 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Northside Park is home to Kokomo's new pump track. The pump track was installed over an unused baseball diamond. One youth baseball diamond remains and has been converted to a practice field since the completion of Championship Park. The fields were previously maintained by the leagues and now is maintained by KPRD. The park also offers a playground, concessions and restrooms.

Does this park still offer concessions?

CONDITION

➤ Good

- Some of the play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- Mulch is not considered a accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



NORTHWEST PARK

Address: 1600 W. Judson Rd.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



COMMUNITY PARK

32.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Northwest Park hosts adult summer and fall adult softball leagues and offers five lighted regulation adult softball diamonds. The park also offers two outdoor-roofed picnic shelters, a basketball court, large playground, concessions, restrooms and a large parking lot to accommodate the fields. The park has some open lawn space and mature trees. This park hosts several softball tournaments through the summer and the Youth Easter Egg Hunt in the spring. The shelter near the playground has recently been re-roofed.

CONDITION

➤ Fair

- The tennis courts are currently being used for storage by KPRD.
- Mulch is not considered an accessible surface for playgrounds.
- The parking lot is in fair condition and could use updated in the next planning period.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



WILDCAT CREEK RESERVOIR PARK

Address: 500 East Park & 400 East Boat Launch
Ownership: Indiana American Water Co Inc



NATURE PARK

40.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

The City of Kokomo leases this park site from Indiana American Water Company which owns and operates the reservoir. The parks department oversees the landscape maintenance, playground, and picnic areas, which has two shelters. The park also offers a fishing pier and boat launch. The Peshewa Nature Trail is a nature trail that offers hiking for visitors and winds through a wooded area and along the reservoir.

CONDITION

► Good

- Playground is in poor condition and needs updating in the next planning period.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



RILEY PARK

Address: 700 E. Spraker St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

1.6 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Riley Park is a small park located on the north side of the city. The park has a playground, basketball court, and open lawn space.

CONDITION

➤ Good

- Play equipment is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- Mulch is not considered an accessible surface for playgrounds.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



ROBBINS "A" PARK

Address: Interior lot between Columbus, Wildwood, and Berkley Rd.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

1.4 acres



1



1

BASIC DESCRIPTION

Robbins "A" Park is located in a residential neighborhood. The park is on a piece of land that was undeveloped at the time the subdivision was constructed. The park has a playground, a basketball court and green space. The park is difficult to access for neighbors who do not live adjacent to the park. The park is not well used.

CONDITION

► Poor

- The play equipment is outdated and needs updating.
- The basketball court surface is deteriorated.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



ROBBINS "B" PARK

Address: Interior lot between Berkley Rd. & Madison

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

0.5 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Robbins "B" Park is located in a residential neighborhood. The park is on a piece of land that was undeveloped at the time the subdivision was constructed. The park has a basketball court and green space. The park is difficult to access for neighbors who do not live adjacent to the park. The park is not well used.



CONDITION

► Poor

- The play equipment is outdated and needs updating.
- The basketball court surface is deteriorated.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.



ROBBINS "C" PARK

Address: Interior lot corner of Lynwood & Witherspoon

Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

0.25 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Robbins "C" Park is located in a residential neighborhood. The park is on a piece of land that was undeveloped at the time the subdivision was constructed. Since the last plan, KPRD has naturalized this park with wildflowers. The residents did not respond well to the change.

CONDITION

➤ Good





STEEL MILL PUBLIC ACCESS SITE

Address: Across from Kokomo Solar on Park Ave.
Ownership: City of Kokomo



MINI PARK

0.85 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Steel Mill Public Access Site is located across from Kokomo Solar on Park Avenue. This site provides access to Wildcat Creek. There is a gravel parking area and a gravel path down to the water.

CONDITION

► Fair

- Gravel parking and paths are not accessible.





STUDEBAKER PARK

Address: 1030 N. Purdum St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

10.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Studebaker Park is located on the northeast side of the city in a residential neighborhood. The Carver Community Center is next to the park. The park features a basketball court, skate park, a tennis court, playground, open lawn space, picnic shelter, restrooms and parking. This park also has a youth baseball diamond that is used as a practice field. A new shelter and playground was added in 2022.

CONDITION

➤ Fair

- New playground is in excellent condition
- Basketball court is in good condition
- Tennis courts are in poor condition
- No accessible parking or accessible routes to park amenities





WALK OF EXCELLENCE TRAIL

Address: Running through Kokomo east/west and through downtown

Ownership: City of Kokomo



LINEAR PARK

4.8 miles of trail



BASIC DESCRIPTION

The Walk of Excellence Trail runs east/ west connecting parks, the Kokomo Beach Aquatic Center, as well as schools, historical and cultural amenities. The trail is treated as a linear park and has ADA access points and nodes along the trail. The trail also crosses the Wildcat creek and provides opportunities to connect with the creek.

CONDITION

- Good





WATERWORKS PARK

Address: 1227 E. Carter St.

Ownership: City of Kokomo



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

5.0 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Waterworks Park is the eastern trailhead for the Walk of Excellence and offers two playgrounds, an outdoor-roofed picnic shelter, two basketball courts, parking, a public access boat ramp into the Wildcat Creek and fishing. There is also a paved walking path within the park. The park is subject to some seasonal flooding from the creek.

CONDITION

► Good

- The main playground is in good condition but the other playground is in fair condition and could be updated in the next planning period.
- There are not accessible routes from parking to all amenities.





WILDCAT CREEK SOCCER COMPLEX

Address: W Markland Ave, Kokomo, IN 46901

Ownership: City of Kokomo



SPECIAL USE PARK

60.28 acres



BASIC DESCRIPTION

Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex is a new park added to the KPRD park system since the last plan. There are currently 4 soccer fields at the park (1 youth and 3 adult). There is also restrooms and walking paths.

CONDITION

► Good

- Parking is in fair condition
- Gravel parking is not accessible.



ACCESSIBILITY & UNIVERSAL DESIGN

CITY OF KOKOMO EXISTING POLICY

The Kokomo Board of Parks Commissioners and the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department support the American Disabilities Act by making reasonable accommodations in serving individuals with disabilities. Program and facilities are offered on a non-discriminatory basis. The designation "accessible" indicates access for wheelchair users in compliance with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard (ADA).

In 2014, an accessibility review of the Parks and Recreation Department operations and facilities was conducted. The City of Kokomo has dedicated the City Engineer to oversee all ADA facilities for the city.

In 2017, the City adopted an ADA Transition Plan for public right-of-way. This plan established an ADA coordinator and outlines the grievance procedure. The City of Kokomo's ADA Coordinator is responsible for monitoring and initiating actions to ensure compliance. This person is:

Jon Pyke, ADA Coordinator
100 S Union Street
Kokomo, IN 46901
p: 765. 456. 7400
e: DETIS@cityofkokomo.org

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Any individual who believes he/she has been subjected to discrimination may file a complaint with the Kokomo Human Rights Commission. The complaint form can be found on the City of Kokomo's website at http://www.cityofkokomo.org/departments/human_rights_commission.php or in the ADA Transition Plan. For the complaint to be considered, the complaint must comply with the following requirements:

- It must be filed with 90 days from the date of the alleged discriminatory practice;

- It must state the full name and address of the complainant; the full name and address of the person, employer, employment agency, labor organization, real estate broker, financial institution or educational institution (i.e. the respondent) against whom the complaint is made;
- It must state the alleged discriminatory practice and include a statement of particulars thereof;
- It must state the date or dates of the alleged discriminatory practice, or, if the alleged discriminatory practice is of a continuing nature, the dates between which said continuing acts of discrimination are alleged to have occurred;
- It must state whether the complainant has instituted any other action, civil or criminal, against the respondent in any other forum based upon the same grievance as is alleged in the complaint and include a statement as to the status or disposition of such other action.
- It must be signed and verified before a notary public or any other person duly authorized by law to administer oaths and take acknowledgments.
- It must be served upon the respondent within ten days of the filing of the complaint with the Commission.

The Commission will make a prompt and full investigation of each complaint that is properly filed with it in accordance with the procedures outlined in Kokomo Ordinance § 33.20.

If at the conclusion of the investigation, a complainant is dissatisfied with the final resolution of the complaint, he/she may appeal the decision under I.C. 4-21.5 or file a complaint with the following:

Department of Justice

Federal Coordination and Compliance Section - NWB
Civil Rights Division
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

PARK SYSTEM ACCESSIBILITY

No self-evaluation of parks facilities and programming was conducted in the 2017 ADA Transition Plan. It is recommended that the City of Kokomo conduct an evaluation in accordance with most current ADA standards.

Accessibility covers all sorts of disabilities including but not limited to:

- Visual impairments/blindness
- Hearing impairments/deafness
- Many varieties of mobility limitations
- Cognitive impairments

Below is a list of items KPRD could assess at each park during the evaluation. This list is not expansive.

- Pedestrian Entrances
 - Are there accessible pedestrian entrances into the parks?
- Parking Areas
 - Are there signed & marked, hard-surface, accessible parking?
- Accessible Routes
 - Are there accessible routes from the parking area(s) all park amenities such as restrooms, shelters, playgrounds, sports courts, etc.?
 - Are the width of accessible routes adequate?
- Play Equipment and Surfacing
 - Is the play equipment accessible or does it need updating?
 - Is the play surfacing accessible?
- Programming
 - Are KPRD programs and events accessible?
- Other items to consider:
 - Do some parks provide fencing around amenities, such as playground, for containment? (often a component of inclusive playgrounds)
 - Is there seating?
 - Is there shade?

Given the higher percentages of population with a disability in Kokomo, the City and KPRD should prioritize investing in infrastructure to make all parks and recreation facilities and programming accessible to all.

A list of accessibility ideas and tips are provided in the appendix. The appendix also contains additional information regarding ADA accessibility for parks systems.

ISSUES IN THE PARK SYSTEM

The following general issues were observed during review of the existing park system:

- There was not always an accessible entrance into the park. Sometimes entrance were steep, not an accessible surface, or not wide enough.
- Accessible parking was not always clearly designated or on an accessible surface.
- Accessible routes from accessible parking to park amenities were mostly not present at most parks.
- Most play surfacing appeared to be mulch, which is not an accessible surfacing.
- Some playgrounds had edging that was not flush, creating a barrier.

IMPROVEMENTS SINCE THE LAST PLAN

Some improvements to accessibility since the last plan include:

- Restroom renovations:
 - Earthen Stage in Highland Park
 - Miller Highland (UCT) Park
 - Northside Park.
- The new pump track at Northwest Park is ADA accessible
- Championship park is accessible and the newly installed playground is accessible.
- Play equipment was updated at Studebaker Park

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS FOR THIS PLANNING PERIOD

Some planned improvements to accessibility for the next planning period:

- Continued restroom renovations
- Playground improvements



Entrance at Mendota Park - Steep entrance with gravel.



Parking at Mohr Park - No designated accessible parking stalls. All parking is on the street and the street is curbed.



Gravel parking lot at Huston Park.



Playground surfacing and edging at Mohawk Park - Mulch is not considered an accessible safety surfacing, the edging is not flush with ground and there is no accessible path to the amenity.

ASSURANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE

**ASSURANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE WITH:
ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT OF 1968 (As Amended);
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (As
Amended); AND TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (As Amended)**

The **City of Kokomo Board of Park Commissioners** has read the guidelines for compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (As Amended); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (As Amended); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (As Amended) and will comply with the applicable requirements of these acts.

SIGNATURE: 
PRESIDENT


Donald Spill
(President's printed name)

SIGNATURE: 
BOARD MEMBER

Cathy Kern
(Board Member's printed name)

SIGNATURE: 
VICE PRESIDENT

Cathy Stover
(Vice President's printed name)

SIGNATURE: 
BOARD MEMBER

Isaac White
(Board Member's printed name)

SIGNATURE: 
BOARD MEMBER

Shirley Dubois
(Board Member's printed name)

DATE: 4/9/2024

Page Left Intentionally Blank



Highland Park
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page





05

NEEDS ANALYSIS



Walk of Excellence Across Wildcat Creek
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page

OVERVIEW

This chapter will identify the needs of KPRD by comparing industry standards to the current park system. A review of industry recognized parks and recreation benchmarks will help establish a baseline for the types of services and facilities which are currently in demand. This information is compared to the existing programs and facilities provided by KPRD to identify surpluses and deficits within the system. All this information is further influenced by the public input gathered throughout the planning process identified in Chapter 3 Plan Development.

It is important to note that the benchmarks reviewed in this chapter are just for comparison to KPRD. There is not a “one size fits all” approach to parks and recreation planning. Each community has unique needs, desires and challenges, and future planning should reflect this.

CURRENT TRENDS

SCORP AS A COUNTY COMPARISON

Indiana’s 2021-2025 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is an information resource that quantifies and analyzes the state’s outdoor recreation resources and is intended to support local, regional, and state-level recreation decision making. It is important to not only understand national recreational trends but also local recreational trends.

TRENDS

From the Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey results, the top-three reasons why respondents participate in outdoor recreation were:

1. To be with family and friends (38%)
2. Physical health (37%)
3. Mental health (34%)

The top-five outdoor recreation activities that respondents participated in more than once per week include:

1. Walking / hiking / jogging / running
2. Relaxation/spiritual renewal
3. Gardening / landscaping
4. Bird / wildlife watching
5. Health-related activities (Exercise, Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates etc.)

The top ten “favorite” outdoor recreation activities described by respondents were:

1. Walking, running, jogging
2. Camping / RV camping
3. Hiking/backpacking
4. Fishing
5. Boating, wake-boarding, sailing, tubing, jet skiing, water skiing
6. Picnicking, barbecuing / cookout
7. Gardening, landscaping, yard work, mowing
8. Swimming, snorkeling, diving, scuba, splash pad
9. Bicycling
10. Golf

LEVEL OF SERVICE GUIDELINES

Indiana’s SCORP Level of Service (LOS) Guidelines recommend 20 acres of public recreation area per every 1,000 residents within a local area such as a county, township, city, or town. Public local recreation areas are described as being owned by the township, municipality, county, or being privately owned but open for public use. SCORP excludes all schools as many schools do not allow public access to their outdoor facilities.

Kokomo is deficient in acreage outlined by Indiana’s SCORP. Based on the recommendation of 20 acres per 1,000 residents, Kokomo should be providing 1,193 acres of public recreation area for a population of 59,671 (U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates) and has current existing acreage of 547.2, leaving

FIGURE 5.1: INDIANA SCORP NEW & POTENTIAL TRAILS CORRIDORS



Image Source: 2021-2025 Indiana SCORP

a local deficiency of 645.8 acres. Howard County is identified as being deficient in local acreage with a deficit of approximately 3,371 acres.

TRAILS

Since the 1995 SCORP, walking/jogging/running has been the top most popular outdoor recreation activity for Hoosiers. It is no surprise that this fact proves to be true for Kokomo as well with approximately 84.0% of survey respondents identifying walking/jogging/exercise as the most popular activity and amenity in the public survey. Respondents also identified adding trails for walking/jogging/biking as one of the top three desired capital improvement projects.

FIGURE 5.2: 2016 INDIANA VISIONARY TRAILS SYSTEM

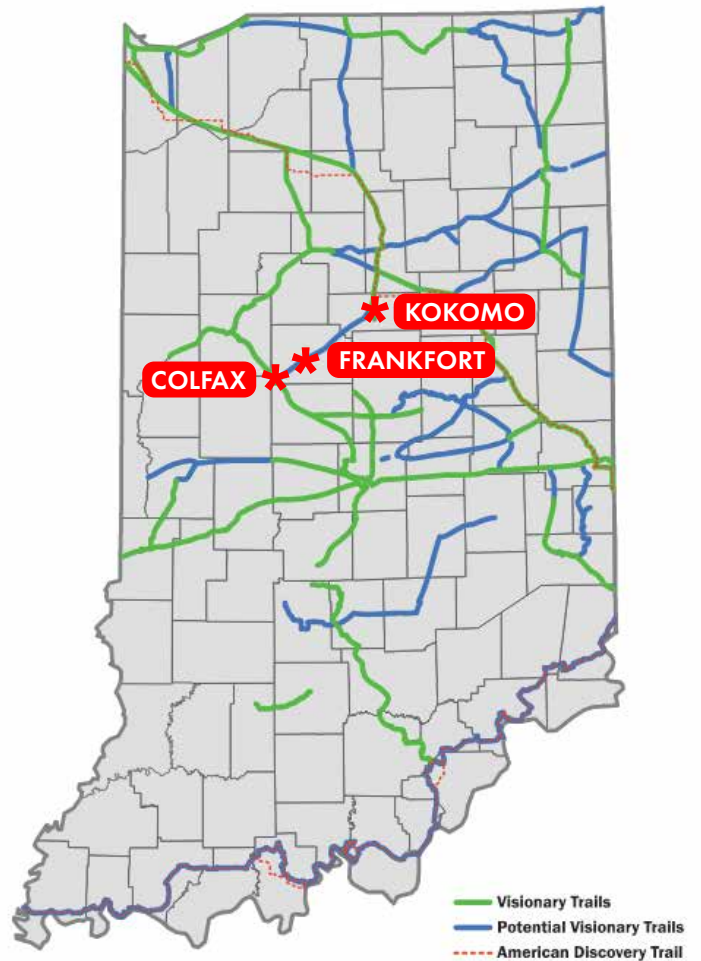
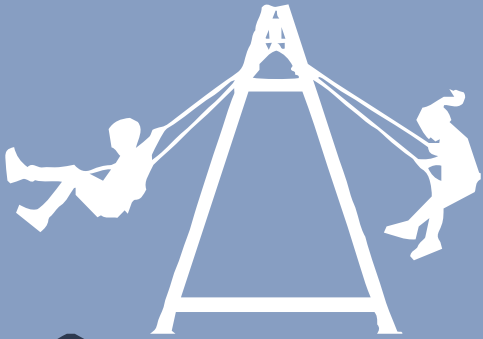


Image Source: 2021-2025 Indiana SCORP

The SCORP does not identify any long-distance corridors that run through Kokomo or Howard County. There is an adjacent long-distance corridor, identified as the Great American Rail Trail in the SCORP (see Figure 5.1), that if it came to fruition in the future could be an opportunity for Kokomo to connect to.

The SCORP has identified a potential visionary trail which connects the Industrial Heritage and Nickle Plate Trail to the visionary Big Four Trail in Colfax (see Figure 5.2). The potential visionary trail is along the same alignment as the Cloverleaf Trail. As mentioned in Chapter 2 The Community, Kokomo has expanded the Cloverleaf Trail since the last plan and has plans to continue extending the trail to Frankfort.

TOP RECREATION ACTIVITIES



SCORP: TOP 5 RATED OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

- Walking, Hiking, Jogging, and Running
- Relaxation and Spiritual Renewal
- Gardening and Landscaping
- Bird and Wildlife Watching
- Health-Related Activities (Exercise, Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, etc.)



NRPA: TOP OUTDOOR FACILITIES PROVIDED BY AGENCIES

- Playgrounds
- Basketball Courts
- Diamond Fields: Baseball Field - Youth
- Tennis Courts (Outdoor)
- Rectangular Fields: Multi-Purpose



NRPA: TOP INDOOR FACILITIES PROVIDED BY AGENCIES

- Recreation Centers (Including Gyms)
- Community Centers
- Senior Centers
- Performance Amphitheaters
- Nature Centers



TPL: TOP PARK AMENITIES

- Basketball Hoops
- Off-Leash Dog Parks
- Playgrounds
- Recreation and Senior Centers
- Restrooms
- Splash Pads and Spray Grounds

NRPA AS A CITY COMPARISON

The National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) is a non-profit advocacy organization dedicated to building strong, vibrant and resilient communities. The NRPA provides parks and recreation professionals with up-to-date data to help agencies make informed decisions and equip leaders with insights that help them make the case to key stakeholders and elected officials for greater and more sustainable funding. The reports reviewed for this plan include the 2022 NRPA Engagement With Parks Report and 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review.

2023 NRPA ENGAGEMENT WITH PARKS REPORT

Since 2016, the NRPA research team has conducted an annual survey to better understand how people connect with parks and recreation across the United States. This report provides parks and recreation professionals insight on how local parks and recreation facilities impact people's lives across the nation.

According to this report, the top four reasons why residents visit parks are to:

1. Be with family or friends (54%)
2. Exercise or be physically fit (53%)
3. To have a break from day-to-day stresses (52%)
4. To be closer to nature (50%)

Users also identified their favorite park and recreation activities in the 2022 Engagement With Parks Report which included:

1. Visiting local park, playground, dog park, or other open space (73%)
2. Hiking/biking/walking on a trail (53%)
3. Playing sports with family/friends/neighbors (32%)
4. Visiting local swimming pool/aquatic center (24%)
5. Visiting local recreation/senior center (22%)
6. Taking part in classes/lessons/activities at a local recreation center (17%)

7. Participating in an organized sports league (17%)
8. Children participate in an out-of-school time program (13%)

These results closely correlate with the Indiana SCORP findings. Knowing what motivates an individual or family to visit a local park and/or recreation facility can help agencies customize their offerings to specific needs, wants and desires.

2023 NRPA AGENCY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Combined, the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review and NRPA Park Metrics feature the most comprehensive collection of park and recreation-related benchmarks and insights informing the public on the state of the parks and recreation industry. Key benchmarks and insights are identified in the following sections. These benchmarks are then compared to the current park system in Kokomo.

The NRPA benchmarks identified on the following pages are for jurisdictions serving 50,000 to 99,999 in population which correlates to Kokomo's community size for a better comparison. It is important to note that benchmarks can change significantly between the jurisdiction's population size or from the median of all agencies. For instance, agencies serving 20,000 to 49,999 in population provided one outdoor ice rink facility per 13,247 residents. Agencies serving 50,000 to 99,999 in population provided one outdoor ice rink facility per 33,214 residents while the median of all agencies provided one outdoor ice rink facility per 17,741 residents.

PARK SYSTEM SIZE

For agencies serving jurisdictions 50,000 to 99,999 in population, there is one park for every 2,240 residents. This would equate to about 27 parks for the population of Kokomo at 59,671 (U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates). Kokomo currently has 39 parks in its park system that it oversees, which is a 12-park surplus according to NRPA data.

Parks and recreation agencies serving jurisdictions 50,000 to 99,999 in population, manage 11.2 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. This equates to about 668 acres of parkland for the City of Kokomo. Currently Kokomo has 547.2 acres of parkland in its system, which is a deficit of 120.8 acres.

INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

As identified by both NRPA reports and the Indiana SCORP, trails are a popular park amenity for exercising or to walk, bike, or hike. It is no surprise that 81.0% of park and recreation agencies have trails, greenways and/or blueways as part of their outdoor offerings. Agencies serving jurisdictions 50,000 to 99,999 in population manages or maintains a median of 19 miles of trail for walking, hiking, running and /or biking in its network. The lower quartile provides 8 miles and the upper quartile provides 33 miles. Kokomo currently has 16.3 miles, a deficit of 2.7 miles. This deficit is likely to dissipate over the next five years as KPRD already has trail expansion projects planned for the future.

The 2023 Performance Review also offers insight into facilities offered by other park and recreation agencies and provides facilities to persons ratios. This data is used to determine overall surpluses and deficiencies. Table 5.1 identifies target park land and facility inventories for Kokomo based on NRPA benchmarks. These target inventories are based strictly on NRPA data and Kokomo’s current population data. As previously stated, there is not a “one size fits all” approach to parks and recreation planning and the following analysis is to establish a baseline understanding of how Kokomo compares to other jurisdictions of similar size.

Kokomo’s current park system indicates both surpluses and deficiencies compared to agencies serving jurisdictions of similar size. Most notably, some surpluses identified were in basketball courts (+14.2) and playgrounds (+8.2). Deficiencies in outdoor facilities included youth soccer fields (-7.3), tennis courts (-4.7), multi-purpose fields (-4.5), and totlots (-4.5). The highest deficiency for indoor facilities is a recreation

center (-1.6), followed by a community center (-1.1), an indoor ice rink (-1.1), an indoor aquatic center (-1.0) and teen center (-1.0).

While this data shows deficits in both indoor and outdoor facilities, it is important to identify resources within the community that fills these gaps.

- ▶ Youth soccer facilities and programming is provided by Kokomo Soccer Club. KPRD partners with them and intentionally does not have many youth soccer facilities within the park system. Kokomo Soccer Club does utilize the fields at Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex.
- ▶ Dedicated tennis courts show a deficiency based on the data but there is a surplus in shared multi-use courts for tennis and pickleball (+4.4).
- ▶ There are multiple deficiencies in indoor facilities including a recreation center, community center and indoor aquatic center. However, there are resources in the community that fill these needs. These resources include the Carver Community Center and Kokomo Family YMCA.

TPL AS A CITY COMPARISON

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a charitable organization that works to create parks and protect land for people to ensure that communities are healthy and livable. The TPL’s Center for City Park Excellence works to make cities more successful by providing data for park professionals and planners on urban park and recreation systems. The 2023 City Park Facts and ParkScore generated by TPL analyzes and evaluates how large cities are meeting the need for parks and recreation.

According to this evaluation, the overall median of parkland per 1,000 residents is 13.1 acres. Additionally, the average percent of population that is within a walkable distance (1/2 mile radius) to access publicly owned parks is 74%. The 2023 City Park Facts also gives insight into balancing natural and built park environments. The average percentage of designed parkland is 47% and the average percentage of parkland that is natural is 53%.

TABLE 5.1: CURRENT AMENITIES AND TARGET RATIOS

Amenity	NRPA Target Ratio (1)	Current Inventory	Current Ratio	Unit	Target Inventory 2023 Data (2)	Surplus/Deficit
Park System Size						
Acres of Park Land	11.2 acres per 1,000 residents	547.2	0.8	Acres	670.0	-122.9
Miles of Trails	19 miles per 50,000 to 99,000 residents	16.3	0.9	Miles	19.0	-2.7
Outdoor Facilities						
Playgrounds	1 facility per 3,779 residents	25.0	1.6	Ea.	15.8	9.2
Totlots	1 facility per 11,641 residents	1.0	0.2	Ea.	5.1	-4.1
Basketball Courts	1 facility per 8,790 residents	21.0	3.1	Ea.	6.8	14.2
Tennis Courts	1 facility per 5,577 residents	6.0	0.6	Ea.	10.7	-4.7
Pickleball Courts	1 facility per 11,150 residents	5.0	0.9	Ea.	5.4	-0.4
Multi-Use Courts: Tennis, Pickleball	1 facility per 16,556 residents	8.0	2.2	Ea.	3.6	4.4
Multi-Use Courts: Basketball, Volleyball	1 facility per 22,960 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	2.6	-2.6
Diamond Fields: Baseball - Youth	1 facility per 7,237 residents	12.0	1.5	Ea.	8.2	3.8
Diamond Fields: Baseball - Adult	1 facility per 27,566 residents	6.0	2.8	Ea.	2.2	3.8
Diamond Fields: Softball - Youth	1 facility per 12,716 residents	8.0	1.7	Ea.	4.7	3.3
Diamond Fields: Softball - Adult	1 facility per 17,078 residents	5.0	1.4	Ea.	3.5	1.5
Rectangular Fields: Multi-purpose	1 facility per 13,244 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	4.5	-4.5
Rectangular Fields: Soccer Field - Youth	1 facility per 7,207 residents	1.0	0.1	Ea.	8.3	-7.3
Rectangular Fields: Soccer Field - Adult	1 facility per 17,741 residents	3.0	0.9	Ea.	3.4	-0.4
Rectangular Fields: Football Field	1 facility per 29,374 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	2.0	-2.0
Multipurpose Synthetic Field	1 facility per 34,814 residents	1.0	0.6	Ea.	1.7	-0.7
Swimming Pools (outdoor only)	1 facility per 43,100 residents	1.0	0.7	Ea.	1.4	-0.4
Ice Rink (outdoor only)	1 facility per 33,214 residents	1.0	0.6	Ea.	1.8	-0.8
Community Gardens	1 facility per 52,906 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	1.1	-1.1
Skate Park	1 facility per 62,927 residents	3.0	3.2	Ea.	0.9	2.1
Dog Park	1 facility per 54,119 residents	6.0	5.4	Ea.	1.1	4.9
Regulation 18-Hole Golf Course	1 facility per 69,374 residents	1.0	1.2	Ea.	0.9	0.1
Indoor Facilities						
Recreation Centers	1 facility per 38,018 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	1.6	-1.6
Community Centers	1 facility per 53,331 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	1.1	-1.1
Senior Centers	1 facility per 67,139 residents	1.0	1.1	Ea.	0.9	0.1
Teen Centers	1 facility per 58,174 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	1.0	-1.0
Nature Centers	1 facility per 71,360 residents	1.0	1.2	Ea.	0.8	0.2
Aquatic Centers	1 facility per 60,116 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	1.0	-1.0
Ice Rink	1 facility per 53,224 residents	0.0	0.0	Ea.	1.1	-1.1
Performance Amphitheater	1 facility per 60,495 residents	2.0	2.0	Ea.	1.0	1.0

(1) Target ratio standards are from the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review for agencies serving 50,000 to 99,999 residents. Population for one facility per XX residents.
 (2) Target inventory is calculated by dividing the 2022 population data by the target ratio. Population data sourced from U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates and was 59,671 for these calculations.

Based on the TPL standards of 13.1 acres per 1,000 residents, Kokomo should have about 782 acres of parkland. Kokomo currently has 547.2 acres of parkland which is a 234.8 acre deficiency.

TPL also reviews data to provide a walkability score. According to TPL ParkServe, only 50% of Kokomo residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park—less than the national average of 74% identified by TPL. However, TPL data is outdated as it is missing parks such as Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex, Downtown River Walk and Downtown Dog Park and does not factor in the trails which KPRD considers to be a linear trail.

The public survey results showed that 31.5% of respondents who live in Kokomo live within a 5-minute walk (0 -1/4 mile) and 23.0% of respondents live within a 10-minute walk (1/4 - 1/2 mile) for a total of 54.5% within a 10-minute walk. A walkability mapping analysis that included all KPRD park and trail facilities show that 32,290 people live within a 10-minute walk to a park or trail, which is approximately 54.0% of the population. This is lower than the national average.

Figure 5.3 depicts the walkability to current park and recreation facilities. All park facilities are shown with a 1/4 mile (5-minute walk), 1/2 mile (10-minute walk), 3/4 mile (15-minute walk) and 1 mile (20-minute walk). Figure 5.3 includes both parks and trail facilities.

This map illustrates three significant lack-of-service areas – one area in the west (Area 1), one in the southwest (Area 2) and another southeast (Area 3). All these areas have housing which indicates that residents in these areas are lacking park and recreation services. There is an area south of Area 2 that has housing, however it is located around Wildcat Creek Golf Course and near Kirkendall Gamebird Habitat Area, so it is assumed this area is in less need than the other areas identified.

Area 1 consists of mostly housing, farmland/open space and a large quarry south of Wildcat Creek. Continuing the Cloverleaf Trail will provide recreation services for the southern part of this area. It is recommended that property is acquired in the

northern area as it becomes available in the future to establish a new park.

Area 2 also consists of mostly housing and farmland/open space. One recommendation would be to add a trail connecting Highland Park to Jackson Morrow Park. This will fill the gap between Area 2 and Area 3. Webster Street has a large right-of-way and could be a good potential corridor for a trail placement. Again, it is recommended that property is acquired in the northern area as it becomes available in the future to establish a new park.

Area 3 also consists of mostly housing and farmland/open space. It is recommended that property is acquired in the northern area as it becomes available in the future to establish a new park. It is also recommended to extend the Industrial Heritage southeast through the area to connect it to the rest of the trail system.

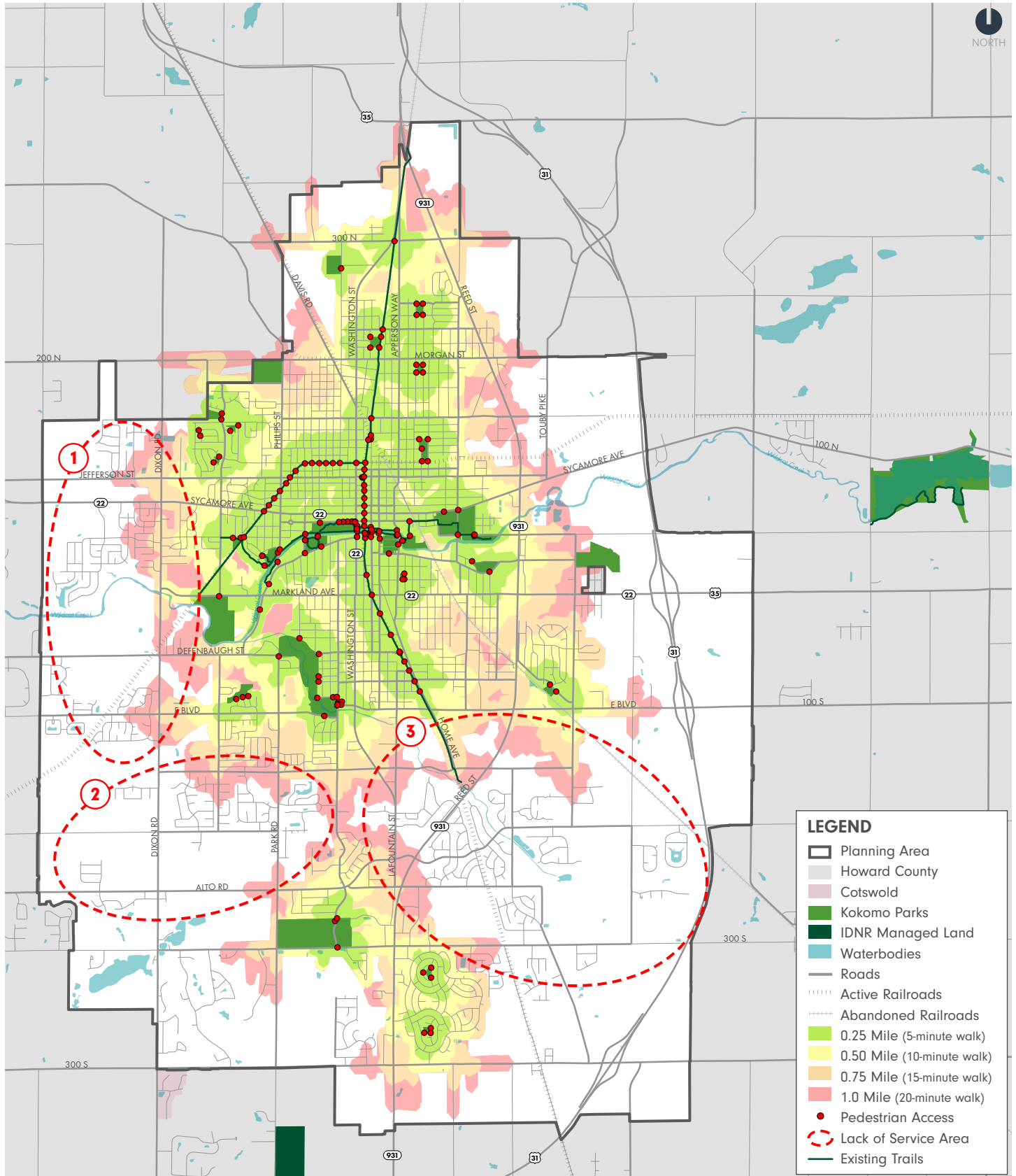
OPERATING EXPENDITURES & FULL-TIME STAFF

There are several ways in which the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review compares operating expenditures. These include annual operating expenditures, operating expenditures per capita, operating expenditures per acre of park and non-park sites and operating expenditures by the amount of parkland managed. The following statistics are for jurisdictions serving 50,000 to 99,999 in population:

- ▶ Annual operating expenditures range from \$5,338,200 (lower quartile) to \$13,413,924 (upper quartile) with a median of \$8,005,757.
- ▶ Operating expenditure per capita ranges from \$73.64 (lower quartile) to \$197.47 per person with a median of \$120.70 per person
- ▶ Operation expenditure per acre of park and non-park site has a median of \$9,108.

Kokomo’s annual operating budget is approximately \$7.5 million which is close to the median for jurisdictions of similar size. With expect population growth, KPRD and the City of Kokomo should evaluate the operating

FIGURE 5.3: WALKABILITY & LOS MAP



over the next five years and increase the budget as needed to meet the parks and recreation needs.

Just as park and recreation agencies differ by size and jurisdiction served, so too do staffing levels. The typical park and recreation agency has 8.9 Full Time Equivalent (FTE's) on staff for each 10,000 residents in the service area, which would equate to about 53 FTEs for Kokomo. KPRD currently has 21 FTEs which is significantly lower than what a typical park and recreation agency provides (53 FTEs) and even lower when we compare to jurisdictions of similar size. For jurisdictions serving 50,000 to 99,999 in population, FTEs range from 46.0 FTEs (lower quartile) to 127.5 FTEs (upper quartile) with a median of 75.8 FTEs.

A reason for this large gap could be because Kokomo's jurisdiction size category has change since 2010 with population growth. Even taking that into consideration, KPRD staffing levels are still below that of jurisdictions serving 20,000 to 49,999 in population (17 FTEs lower quartile, 67.8 FTEs upper quartile, and 32.3 FTEs median). It is recommended that KPRD add new staff to close this gap in staffing, especially if new acreage is added to the park system.

CURRENT PROGRAMMING TRENDS

According to the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review, programming is a key method of engagement that drives the use of park and recreation facilities, and when associated with registration fees, it is also the largest source of non-tax revenue for most agencies. The lack of programs can equate to reduced usage rates, less community support and reduced budgets.

The 2023 Performance Review identified key programming activities offered by at least seven out of ten parks and recreation agencies. These include:

- Themed special events (89%)
- Social recreation events (88%)
- Team sports (86%)
- Fitness enhancement classes (81%)
- Health and wellness education (80%)

- Individual Sports (77%)
- Safety Training (71%)
- Racquet sports (71%)
- Aquatics (69%)
- Performing arts (62%)
- Visual arts (61%)
- Natural and cultural history activities (63%)
- Cultural crafts (62%)
- Trips and tours (61%)
- Martial arts (57%)
- Running/cycling races (52%)
- Golf (48%)
- eSports/eGaming (23%)

KPRD offers most of the above through some form of it's programming except eSports/eGaming programs, which is a fairly new programming activity that is becoming more popular over the last five years. A list of programming can be found in Chapter 04 Park Inventory.

Agencies jurisdictions serving 50,000 to 99,999 in population typically offered the following programs targeted specifically for children, seniors, and people with disabilities:

- Summer camp (93%)
- Specific senior programs (87%)
- Specific teen programs (77%)
- Programs for people with disabilities (80%)
- Science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs (68%)
- After-school programs (53%)
- Preschool (44%)
- Before-school programs (21%)
- Full daycare (11%)

KPRD offers most of the above through some form of it's programming except before-school and full daycare programs.

KEY ANALYSIS TAKEAWAYS

SCORP guidelines as well as the NRPA and TPL benchmarks, in addition to public input help form a complete picture of the amenities and services KPRD should strive to provide to its residents. This analysis resulted in a number of observations and recommendations for the future direction of the park system. Below is a summary of the primary takeaways of this analysis.

PARK ACREAGE AND LOCATION

Depending on the metric used (NRPA, SCORP, or TPL), Kokomo faces a park acreage deficiency between 121 to 646 acres. Combined with the fact that the SCORP identifies a 3,371-acre deficit in parkland in Howard County overall, and the population of Kokomo is expected to grow over the next five years, this analysis suggests new park acreage should be added to the system.

There are three areas that lack services as identified in Figure 5.3. KPRD should acquire larger plots of land (40+ acres) in these areas as they become available in the future. This would serve a twofold purpose of adding needed acreage to the park system and also bringing park and recreation services to areas that currently lack service. Trail facilities should also be expanded to these areas in the future.

Even with a deficit in park acreage, Kokomo does have a surplus of 12 parks according to NRPA benchmarks. This is because there are many small parks within the system that do not provide much park acreage. If staff and resources are spread too thin, a strategy could be developed to relinquish or re-purpose strategic properties in order to better allocate KPRD resources. KPRD did re-purpose and naturalize Robbins "C" Park since the last plan, which previously had outdated play equipment. The changes were not received by the neighborhood well. This could partially be because the plantings were very tall and no other park amenities were installed in place.

It would be recommended that naturalization of future parks, in neighborhoods specifically, use shorter plantings not taller than 3 to 4 feet in height and site amenities also are added such as shade trees, benches, open mulch or unmown lawn areas for imaginative play, nature play elements (logs, log disks, rocks, hills, etc.), informative signage about the natural plantings, storybook walk, and other amenities that do not require much maintenance or resources.

STAFFING

NRPA benchmark comparisons suggest that KPRD is understaffed and should add new staff to the KPRD team. It is recommended that KPRD add at least 10 FTEs to bring numbers closer to the median FTEs provided by agencies serving jurisdictions 20,000 to 49,999 in population. As new park acreage is added to the park system, staffing should also increase appropriately. Ideally, when Kokomo's population is closer to 75,000, staffing will be closer to numbers for jurisdictions serving 50,000 to 99,000. Again, there is not a "one size fits all" approach to parks and recreation planning. KPRD and the City should work together to determine appropriate staffing levels.

NATURAL PARKLAND

Public survey results indicate that the community has interest in naturalized parkland.

- Protecting/restoring the environment/natural areas was one of the top four issues that respondents wanted KPRD to focus on improving.
- Respondents also identified natural areas for hiking/nature-viewing/picnicking (forest, wetland, prairie, etc.) as the second most needed facilities/improvements for the park system.
- Respondents identified outdoor recreation (hiking, fishing, etc.) and nature programs/environmental education as two of the top four needed programming for the park system.
- Adding nature trails was identified as one of the top five highest priorities for capital improvement projects.

Considering that reports from TPL noted that the average percentage of natural parkland is 52% (which is much higher than Kokomo's current offerings) and activities such as hiking and bird/wildlife watching ranked in the top-five rated outdoor activities in the SCORP, there is a need for continued emphasis on providing natural areas.

This could also balance two issues discovered throughout the analysis; needing to add new park acreage to the system and not having adequate resources such as staffing to maintain the new acreage. As properties are acquired in the lack of services identified in Figure 5.3, much of that new park acreage could be natural parkland with amenities and programming such as nature trails for hiking, walking and biking, shelters for picnicking or nature-viewing, nature play, restoration of forest, prairie, and wetlands (if applicable), nature scavenger hunts, educational signage of the plants and wildlife, etc.

PARK FACILITIES

The analysis of NRPA benchmarks show surpluses and deficiencies in the park system. Most notable surpluses include playgrounds and basketball courts. Even with the surplus in playgrounds, the public survey results indicated that the community still desires playground amenities and improvements.

- Updating/adding playground equipment was the identified as the top priority for capital improvement projects
- When asked to rate playgrounds in the public survey, respondents identified that equipment and surfacing needs updating and generally more maintenance of playgrounds is needed.

There was a deficiency of (-4.5) totlots identified also in the system. Based on the survey results and NRPA benchmark analysis, it is recommend that KPRD continues to update existing play equipment and play surfacing at existing parks. As playgrounds are updated, KPRD should also add totlots. Ideally five spread throughout the community and at major parks such as Foster Park and Jackson Morrow Park. KPRD should also add at least one fully inclusive playground

to the park system that is specifically design for those of all abilities.

Other outdoor facilities improvements include

- Adding splash pads was identified as the second top priority for capital improvement projects following playgrounds in the public survey. Kokomo currently only has one splash pad. Therefore it would be recommended to add additional splash pads to the park system. There are current plans to install a splash pad a Jackson Morrow Park.
- While there is not currently a deficiency in dedicated pickleball courts or shared pickleball courts, it is recommended that KPRD add pickleball facilities to the system and/or updated existing facilities as this was top requested item during the public input process, especially at the public meeting. Jackson Morrow Park was a desired location for new facilities.
- Likewise, tennis courts were mentioned throughout the public input process. Mostly what was identified was not a need for new facilities but that existing facilities are deteriorating and needs updating/fixing.
- Restrooms in parks and along trails was the top most needed facilities/improvements for the park system in the public survey.
- Public input also indicated a desire for easier-to-add amenities, such as drinking/doggie fountains, shade at parks, and lighting to parks.

For indoor facilities, most notable to consider would be a teen center and an indoor ice rink. With KPRD focus on teen park and recreation needs, adding this center to the park system should be considered for the future.

TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

KPRD and the City of Kokomo has done an excellent job with their trail system and should continue the expansion of trails and trail amenities. Even with the amazing work thus far, the community identified in the public input process that it still wants more trails and trail amenities. It is recommended that Kokomo update

their active transportation plan and/or conduct a bike and pedestrian master plan. These plans will take a deeper look into trail system and identify what is needed in the future.

PROGRAMMING

As previously mentioned, there is a desire for more outdoor recreation and nature-based/environmental education programs for both youth and adults. As new natural parks are added to the system, programming can also be developed to take advantage of these assets and fill this programming need identified in the public survey. Activities such as hiking hours, tree walks, nature play, fishing, outdoor skills, compass navigation, astronomy, pond visits, and more can compliment existing or planned natural areas.

Other top needed programming identified in the public survey included community events such as festivals, 5k races, and concerts, and hobby/interest classes such as crafts, gardening and cooking. KPRD is already providing this programming for the community and should work on expanding this type of programming in the future.

E/Sports or e/Gaming would be another program activity to consider adding. This program activity has been rising in popularity over the past five years and is also an inclusive program for those who are not able to participate in physical sports. E/Sports and E/Gaming also could draw interest from teens, which is a priority focus for KPRD.

Hosting teen focused programming and events at Downtown Depot Park is also recommended as this park has existing amenities that are a draw for teens. Teens might not realize that are allowed to be at the park as it is located next to Sun King Brewery. Hosting teen focused programming and events at the park may bring awareness to the fact they are permitted at the park.



KOKOGO Bike Share
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page





Industrial Heritage Trail - Kokomo Water Tower
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page

06

RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW

The following section provides a detailed listing of plan recommendations for the KPRD park system. These recommendations will assist KPRD in making decisions for operating, maintenance, facility and programming improvements over the next five years. These recommendations are the outcome of an extensive planning process that included inventory, data collection, research, public survey, teen survey, park staff interviews, stakeholder meetings, a public event and two public meetings. The information collected during this process is summarized within the content of the plan.

SYSTEM-WIDE GOALS

System-wide goals and objectives identified through the planning process are outlined on the following pages. These will guide KPRD for the next five years.

GOAL 1:

FOCUS ON IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY IN THE PARKS

OBJECTIVES

- Add inclusive playground to main park such as Foster Park.
- Designated accessible parking.
- Add accessible routes from accessible parking to park amenities
- Update playground surfacing to be accessible.
- Conduct an ADA evaluation of parks and programming.

GOAL 2:

INVEST IN THE PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF

OBJECTIVES

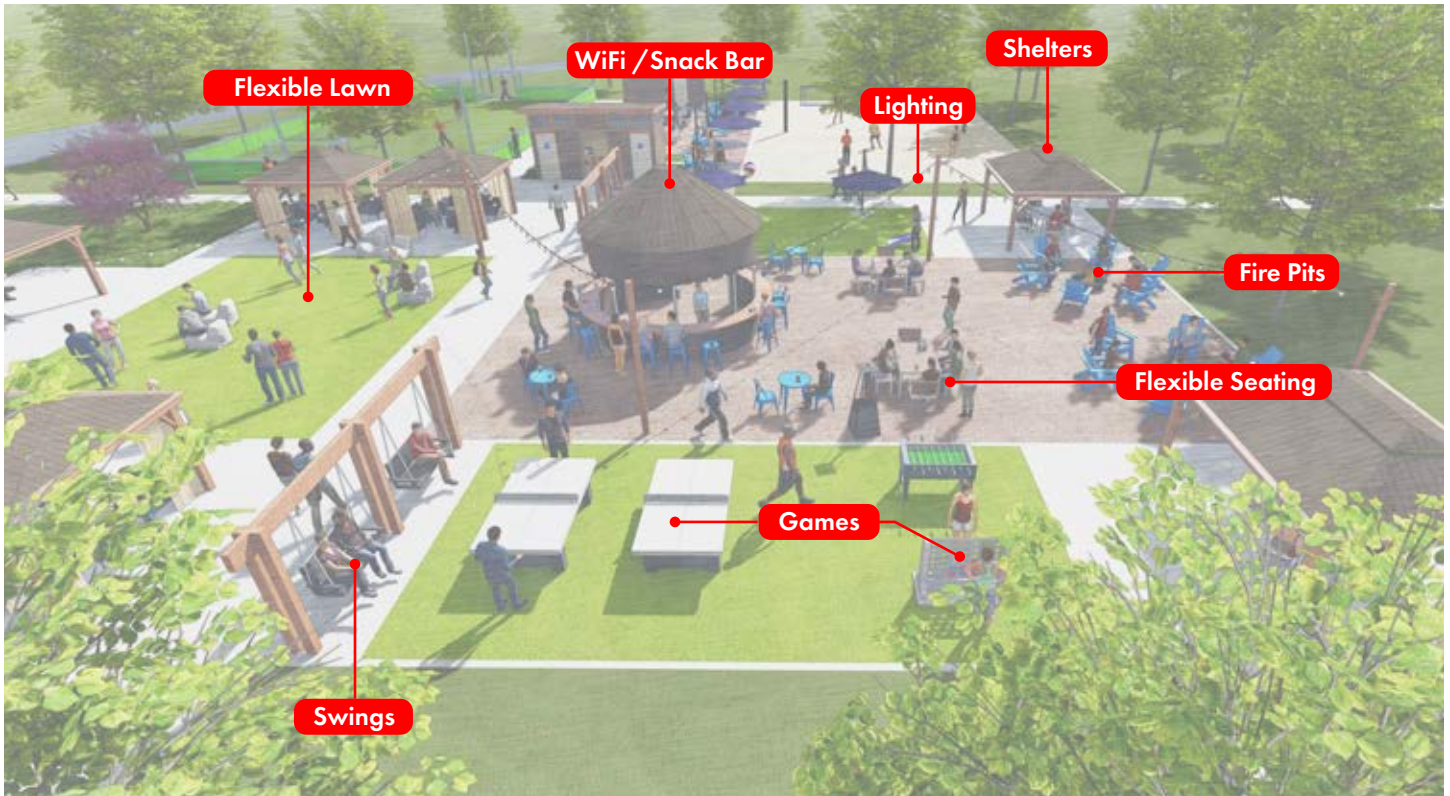
- Add 10 full-time staff to the KPRD team
- Assess organizational chart to establish more management positions as department grows.
- Increase pay for salaried positions to attract and retain talent.
- Encourage staff to stay/be rewarded as they increase responsibilities/experience.
- Hire specialty positions such as a horticulturalist or arborist to increase quality, efficiency, beautification of parks and landscape.

FIGURE 6.5: EXAMPLES OF INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUNDS COMPONENTS



Photos from Magical Bridge Playground in Palo Alto, California.

FIGURE 6.1: EXAMPLE COMPONENTS OF TEEN SOCIAL SPACES



Examples of teen social spaces

GOAL 3:

PRIORITIZE IMPROVEMENTS IN LESS PROMINENT PARKS

OBJECTIVES

- Bon Air Park, Culter Park, Huston Park, Mehlig Park, Mendota Park, Reservoir Park.

GOAL 4:

CATER NEW FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING TO TEENS

OBJECTIVES

- Develop teen social spaces
- Expand free WIFI from downtown to park spaces.
- Involve teens in the popular Easter Egg Hunt event.
- Add E/Sports and/or E/Gaming programming.
- Incentivize a private business to establish zip-lining/kayak/SUP/paddleboats rentals within an existing park or the riverwalk.
- Rent a portable mini-golf course for a weekend and program a teen night.
- Develop teen positions on staff year-round (tree tenders/nature camp counselors)
- Evaluate the need for an indoor teen center.

GOAL 5:

PLAN FOR FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH

OBJECTIVES

- Evaluate properties for future expansion of parks system acreage in areas that lack service. Look for large plots of land 40+ acres in size if possible.
- Evaluate current park properties, specifically small parks such as the Robbins parks, and determine if properties could be relinquished or re-purposed so KPRD can better allocate resources.
- Develop a plan to increase parks staff and budget proportionally to facilities increase.
- Continue development of existing trail system.

GOAL 6:

EXTEND “LOVED” FACILITIES TO ALL QUADRANTS OF THE CITY

OBJECTIVES

- Splash pads/updated playgrounds/toddler areas/trails/dog parks/net games

GOAL 7:

RE-IMAGINE OLD BASEBALL/SOFTBALL PARKS

OBJECTIVES

- Develop a vision for Cutler Park and Highland Park old diamond fields and buildings such as concessions.

GOAL 8:

IMPROVE AND EXPAND “NET GAMES” FACILITIES

OBJECTIVES

- Renovate existing sports courts at parks such as Cutler Park, Highland Park, and Studebaker Park.
- Add new facilities to Jackson Morrow Park and Future Park
- Northwest Park: Use art project to screen old tennis courts turned storage facility.

GOAL 9:

EXPERIMENT WITH NEW WAYS TO COMBAT VANDALISM

OBJECTIVES

- Try a “vandal proof” restroom facility in one location.
- Continue partnership with Kokomo Police Department and provide more direct patrols of the park with capacity allows.
- Expand security cameras system to high vandal areas where infrastructure allows.
- Continue to increase lighting along trails and in parks.

FIGURE 6.2: EXAMPLES OF SCREENING RE-PURPOSED TENNIS COURTS



Photos of Indianapolis Airport 3D mural. Image source: Kelly Lynn Photography, LLC via Indianapolis Airport Authority

FIGURE 6.3: EXAMPLES OF "VANDAL PROOF" RESTROOMS



Examples of screened enclosures for portable restrooms

FIGURE 6.4: EXAMPLE COMPONENTS OF "PLAYCOSYSTEMS"



Photos from Berheim Arboretum and Research Forest Playcosystem.

GOAL 10:

“AMENITIZE” EXISTING TRAILS AND PARKS TO INCREASE USAGE/IMPROVE SAFETY

OBJECTIVES

- Add restrooms in parks and along trails
- Add nodes for exercise/rest/rotating artwork along trails and walking paths in parks.
- Add shade shelters and shade trees to parks
- Add drinking fountains to targeted areas in parks such as near sports courts and playgrounds.
- Add doggie fountains and accessible seating areas for owners in dog parks
- Add lighting/security cameras to parks and along the trail

GOAL 11:

EMPHASIZE NATURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN FACILITIES/PROGRAMMING

OBJECTIVES

- As new acreage is added to the park system, make acreage natural parkland.
 - Restore environments such as forests, prairie and wetlands
 - Add amenities such as nature trails, overlooks, shelters, disc golf, etc.
 - Offer outdoor recreation programming such as hiking, fishing, etc.
- Develop a “playcosystem” as a part of the nature center improvements in Jackson Morrow Park or a new park.
- Increase environmental education programming.

ACTION PLAN

The following tables identifies actions that KPRD can take over the next five years to accomplish the goals establish for this planning period.

2024-2029

PARK	ACTION	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCES
System-Wide	Acquire 121+ acres of land, as it becomes available, to add to the park system in areas that lack service.	-	City of Kokomo, LWCF
System-Wide	Add 10 full-time staff to the KPRD team	-	Operating Budget
System-Wide	Conduct an ADA evaluation of parks and programming	-	City of Kokomo, Operating Budget

2024

PARK	ACTION	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCES
Bicentennial Arboretum	Replace benches and trim shrubs out of walkway.	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Operating Budget
Bon Air Park	Replace entrance walk to rental building to make it accessible.	\$2,500 - \$5,000	Operating Budget
Clover Leaf Trail	Add non-permanent social seating and yard games to lot owned by the City of Kokomo at the intersection of Jackson Street and Lindsay Street.	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Operating Budget, CreatINg Places
Country Club Hills Park	Remove outdated play equipment near basketball courts.	\$250,000 - \$300,000	Operating Budget, Playground-specific Grant Opportunities
Cutler Park	Replace existing tennis court with 1 tennis court and 2 pickleball courts.	\$150,000	Operating Budget
Cutler Park	Remove 1 diamond field and renovate the other diamond field.	\$250,000	Operating Budget
Downtown Depot Park	Replace broken foosball table pieces.	\$2,500 - \$10,000	Operating Budget
Future Park	Explore a partnership for the acquisition or shared-use of Kautz Field	-	-
Industrial Heritage Trail	Add "vandal proof" restroom along the trail.	\$15,000	Operating Budget
Jackson Marrow Park	Update playground equipment (include a totlot). Include accessible surfacing such as engineered wood fiber or poured in place surfacing and a shade structure to playground.	\$1,000,000 - \$1,500,000	Operating Budget, Playground-specific Grant Opportunities
Jackson Marrow Park	Add accessible path from accessible parking to basketball courts.	\$2,500 - \$5,000	Operating Budget
Jackson Marrow Park	Add a splash pad	\$1,500,000	Operating Budget, Land and Water Conservation Fund, CreatINg Places
Mendota Park	Add new basketball goals	\$7,500 - \$10,000	Operating Budget
Mohawk Park	Add dog park	\$25,000	Operating Budget
Northside Park	Add shelter with seating near pump track	\$75,000	Operative Budget
Walk of Excellence Trail	Add exercise nodes along trail in parks such as Foster Park	\$250,000	Operating Budget

2025

PARK	ACTION	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCES
Bon Air Park	Update playground equipment (include a totlot). Include accessible surfacing such as engineered wood fiber or poured in place surfacing and a shade structure to playground.	\$850,000 - \$1,500,000	Land and Water Conservation Fund, Operating Budget, Playground-specific Grant Opportunities (Safeway Foundation, KABOOM!, Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation)
Bon Air Park	Add accessible routes from parking to amenities.	\$15,000 - \$35,000	Operating Budget
Cutler Park	Update playground equipment (include a totlot). Include accessible surfacing such as engineered wood fiber or poured in place surfacing.	\$650,000 - \$1,000,000	Operating Budget, Playground Manufacturer Grant Programs, CreatINg Places
Cutler Park	Add splash pad (includes restroom building)	\$1,500,000	Operating Budget, Land and Water Conservation Fund, CreatINg Places
Depot Trailhead Park	Remove playground edging around playground. Replace with flush edging to contain surfacing such as a concrete barrier curb.	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Operating Budget
Depot Trailhead Park	Add accessible route to playground from existing sidewalk.	\$7,500 - \$10,000	Operating Budget
Highland Park	Add putt putt course to existing diamond field	Underway	Operating Budget, CreatINg Places
Kokomo Municipal Stadium	Replace turf and outfield padding	\$1,000,000	Operating Budget
Meridian Park	Designate accessible on-street parking along Bell Street or Harrison Street near park entrances (at least 2 spaces, 1 aisle).	\$25,000 - \$30,000	Operating Budget
Northwest Park	Use art project to screen old tennis courts turned storage facility.	\$15,000 - \$30,000	Indiana Arts Commission Grants
Robbins "C" Park	Remove tall native plantings and replace with shorter mix (3-4' tall max). Add nature play elements such as logs, wood discs, rocks, etc. in a mulched area. Add a bench. Add shade trees.	\$15,000 - \$50,000	Operating Budget

2026

PARK	ACTION	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCES
Foster Park	Remove tennis and pickleball courts due to flooding, regrade and reseed area	\$25,000 - \$40,000	Operating Budget
Foster Park	Update play equipment. Design playground to be fully inclusive (example: magical bridge playgrounds). Include a totlot. Include accessible poured in place surfacing and a shade structure to playground.	\$2,500,000 - 5,000,000	Land and Water Conservation Fund, Operating Budget, Fundraising/ Matching Grant (CreatiNg Places), Playground-specific Grant Opportunities (Safeway Foundation, KABOOM!, Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation)
Future Park	Add 3 tennis courts and 6 pickleball courts	\$450,000	Operating Budget
Future Park	Add ninja warrior course	\$250,000	Land and Water Conservation Fund, Operating Budget, Fundraising/ Matching Grant (CreatiNg Places), Playground-specific Grant Opportunities (Safeway Foundation, KABOOM!, Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation)
Future Park	Add loop walking trail	\$500,000 - \$750,000	Operating Budget, Indiana Trails Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund
Reservoir Park	Add prairie plantings to entrances to reduce mowing	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Operating Budget

2027

PARK	ACTION	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCES
Foster Park	Add a splash pad	\$1,500,000	Operating Budget, Land and Water Conservation Fund, CreatiNG Places
Foster Park	Renovate and updated existing Girl Scouts Cabin for future re-use. Add tech capabilities for future programming possibilities such as E-Sports/ Gaming.	\$250,000	Operating Budget, CreatiNG Places
Highland Park	Add "smart park" for teen social space/remote workspace.	\$500,000	Operating Budget, CreatiNG Places
Jackson Marrow Park	Remove skatepark, regrade and reseed area	\$60,000 - \$80,000	Operating Budget
Jackson Marrow Park	Add 2 tennis courts and 4 pickleball courts parking lot on east side of park.	\$300,000	Operating Budget
Mehlig Park	Update playground equipment. Include accessible surfacing such as engineered wood fiber or poured in place surfacing.	\$450,000 - \$750,000	Land and Water Conservation Fund, Operating Budget, Fundraising/ Matching Grant (CreatiNG Places), Playground-specific Grant Opportunities (Safeway Foundation, KABOOM!, Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation)
Mehlig Park	Designate on-street parking along Carter Street for accessible parking (at least 2 spaces, 1 aisle). Add accessible sidewalk from designated accessible parking to existing dog park and basketball courts.	\$15,000 - \$20,000	Operating Budget
Mendota Park	Renovate entrance and parking area to be accessible. Add designated accessible parking stalls.	\$15,000 - \$20,000	Operating Budget
Studebaker Park	Add site lighting and security cameras to improve safety and reduce vandalism.	\$20,000 - \$30,000	Operating Budget
Studebaker Park	Renovate existing tennis court to be 4 pickleball courts and 2 tennis courts.	\$300,000	Operating Budget

2028

PARK	ACTION	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCES
Future Park	Add prefabricated restroom facility	\$500,000	Operating Budget
Highland Park	Add a splash pad	\$1,500,000	Operating Budget, Land and Water Conservation Fund, CreatINg Places
Highland Park	Repair and redesign existing tennis and pickleball courts. Renovate to be 4 pickleball courts and 2 tennis courts.	\$150,000	Operating Budget
Huston Park	Update playground equipment. Include accessible surfacing such as engineered wood fiber or poured in place surfacing.	\$750,000	Matching Grant (CreatINg Places), Playground-specific Grant Opportunities (Safeway Foundation, KABOOM!, Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation)
Huston Park	Update parking to be accessible.	\$15,000 - \$20,000	Operating Budget
Mendota Park	Update playground equipment (include totlot). Include accessible surfacing such as engineered wood fiber or poured in place surfacing.	\$750,000	Matching Grant (CreatINg Places), Playground-specific Grant Opportunities (Safeway Foundation, KABOOM!, Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation)
Mohawk Park	Renovate entrance and parking area to be accessible. Add designated accessible parking stalls.	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Operating Budget
Mohawk Park	Add accessible routes from parking to basketball court.	\$5,000 - \$10,000	Operating Budget
Reservoir Park	Update playground equipment. Include accessible surfacing such as engineered wood fiber or poured in place surfacing.	\$750,000	Matching Grant (CreatINg Places), Playground-specific Grant Opportunities (Safeway Foundation, KABOOM!, Dana and Christopher Reeve Foundation)



Industrial Heritage Trail Mural
Image Source: KPRD Facebook Page



Flower Garden
Image Source: Visit Kokomo Website

07

APPENDIX

PUBLIC MEETING ADVERTISEMENTS: CITY OF KOKOMO



City of Kokomo - City Hall

July 14 at 12:58 PM · 🌐

Public meeting about the Park Master Plan -- and a free ticket to the Jackrabbits game!

PUBLIC MEETING City of Kokomo Park Master Plan

This is the public's opportunity to offer input on future park planning in the City of Kokomo.

A 15-20 minute presentation will be followed by public comment. Attendees will receive a free general admission ticket to that evening's Kokomo Jackrabbits game (7:05 p.m.)

When: Monday, July 31st at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Kokomo Municipal Stadium



   48

13  102 

 Like

 Comment



City of Kokomo - City Hall

July 31, 2023 · 🌐

This meeting is tonight. Come offer input on the future of our parks and then enjoy a Kokomo Jackrabbits game!

PUBLIC MEETING City of Kokomo Park Master Plan

This is the public's opportunity to offer input on future park planning in the City of Kokomo.

A 15-20 minute presentation will be followed by public comment. Attendees will receive a free general admission ticket to that evening's Kokomo Jackrabbits game (7:05 p.m.)

When: Monday, July 31st at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Kokomo Municipal Stadium



  16

13  22 

 Like

 Comment

PUBLIC MEETING ADVERTISEMENTS: KPRD



Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.

July 17 at 7:50 AM · 🌐



PUBLIC MEETING

City of Kokomo Park Master Plan

This is the public's opportunity to offer input on future park planning in the City of Kokomo.

A 15-20 minute presentation will be followed by public comment. Attendees will receive a free general admission ticket to that evening's Kokomo Jackrabbits game (7:05 p.m.)

When: Monday, July 31st at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Kokomo Municipal Stadium



City of Kokomo - City Hall

July 14 at 12:58 PM · 🌐

Public meeting about the Park Master Plan -- and a free ticket to the Jackrabbits game!

1

2



Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.

July 31, 2023 · 🌐



PUBLIC MEETING

City of Kokomo Park Master Plan

This is the public's opportunity to offer input on future park planning in the City of Kokomo.

A 15-20 minute presentation will be followed by public comment. Attendees will receive a free general admission ticket to that evening's Kokomo Jackrabbits game (7:05 p.m.)

When: Monday, July 31st at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Kokomo Municipal Stadium



City of Kokomo - City Hall

July 31, 2023 · 🌐

This meeting is tonight. Come offer input on the future of our parks and then enjoy a Kokomo Jackrabbits game!

3

1

PUBLIC MEETING SIGN-IN SHEETS



HWC
ENGINEERING

Confidence in the built environment.

135 N. Pennsylvania, Suite 2800
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

www.hwcengineering.com

Please Sign In!

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan – Public Meeting

Kokomo Municipal Stadium

July 31st, 2023 at 5:30pm

	Name	Email
1.	GD FRANCE	KOKOMOLANTERN@gmail.com
2.	Shirley	shirley.net.22@gmail.com
3.	Bill Shirley	
4.	Tom Frazer	psfrazee90@yahoo.com
5.	Ken KIRBY	KIRBY 60 @ AOL.COM
6.	STEVE GARRETT	Garrett.STEVE58@gmail.com
7.	Terri Brown	TERRIBROWN17@yahoo.com
8.	Walter Brown	WCBROWN22@gmail.com
9.	DAN LAWLYES	dalanwlyes22@aol.com
10.	Carol Kunkle	dlkckjka@yahoo.com
11.	Laura VanDyle	laural.vandyke@gmail.com
12.	SALLY PIPER	pipersa1946@gmail.com
13.	Karl Stoneking	KStone2229@gmail.com
14.	Sherry Stoneking	SStone2229@gmail.com
15.	Dennis Bentzler	dbentzler@juno.com
16.	Jody Bentzler	dbentzler@juno.com
17.	Matt Craig	mattcraig@att.net
18.	Mike Conner	macom16@gmail.com
19.	Carolyn Conner	carolynconner@crossroads.org
20.	PATRICK MUNSEY	kokomolantern@gmail.com
21.	mike Ward	m.ward2272@outlook.com
22.	BECKY WARD	BKWARD2272@COMCAST.NET
23.	Debbie MADEN	Debbie@maden.com
24.	Tom Peppaf	T5010@aol.com
25.	Crystal Sanburn	crystalsanburn@gmail.com

Indianapolis | Terre Haute | Lafayette | New Albany | Muncie

www.hwcengineering.com

PUBLIC MEETING SIGN-IN SHEETS



HWC
ENGINEERING

Confidence in the built environment.

135 N. Pennsylvania, Suite 2800
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

www.hwcengineering.com

Name	Email
26. <u>DICK SANBURN</u>	<u>DICKSANBURN@GMAIL.COM</u>
27. <u>Jensen Pickett</u>	<u>JPickett@CITYOFNOROMO.ORG</u>
28. <u>Miranda Pickett</u>	<u>mirandapickett@aol.com</u>
29. <u>Julie MOVROYDIS</u>	<u>julie.paulus9@gmail.com</u>
30. <u>RICK MOVROYDIS</u>	<u>rickmovroydis@gmail.com</u>
31. <u>Curt Welke</u>	<u>curt@curtwelkelaw.com</u>
32. <u>Harold + April Thurmond</u>	<u>ThurmondHR@AOL.COM</u>
33. <u>John Salmon</u>	<u>colfish6@comcast.net</u>
34. <u>Patricia Weitzel</u>	<u>PattyShops@gmail.com</u>
35. <u>Cathy Kern</u>	<u>Cathy.Kern@comcast.net</u>
36. <u>Pauline Eads</u>	<u>pauline.eads@gmail.com</u>
37. <u>PATTY PARRETT</u>	<u>expielady@yahoo.com</u>
38. <u>Lynn Young</u>	<u>lynnyounghome@comcast.net</u>
39. <u>Sally Masarik</u>	<u>sallymasarik@comcast.net</u>
40. <u>Sandy Comerford</u>	<u>sandycomerford@aol.com</u>
41. <u>Dick Comerford</u>	<u>nirist3@aol.com</u>
42. <u>Rebbie Dillman</u>	<u>dillmoed@aol.com</u>
43. <u>David Moody</u>	<u>xrracer@aol.com</u>
44. <u>Stephen Shue</u>	<u>Jeepuppy@comcast.net</u>
45. <u>Jeanie Shue</u>	<u>Knitwit116@comcast.net</u>
46. <u>KAE ALLSY</u>	<u>Chare512@gmail.com</u>
47. _____	<u>Margaret Ervington</u>
48. <u>Margaret Ervington</u>	<u>mom50cod2@aol.com</u>
49. <u>Carol Werhan</u>	<u>C.Werhan@gmail.com</u>
50. <u>Jeff Groothuis</u>	<u>jeffgroothuis@comcast.net</u>
51. <u>BRAD VOSSENG</u>	<u>thephundife@gmail.com</u>
52. <u>Jonya Stephenson</u>	<u>bobtonteam@gmail.com</u>
53. _____	_____
54. _____	_____
55. _____	_____
56. _____	_____

PUBLIC MEETING SIGN-IN SHEETS



HWC
ENGINEERING

Confidence in the built environment.

135 N. Pennsylvania, Suite 2800
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

www.hwcengineering.com

Please Sign In!

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan – Public Meeting

Kokomo Municipal Stadium

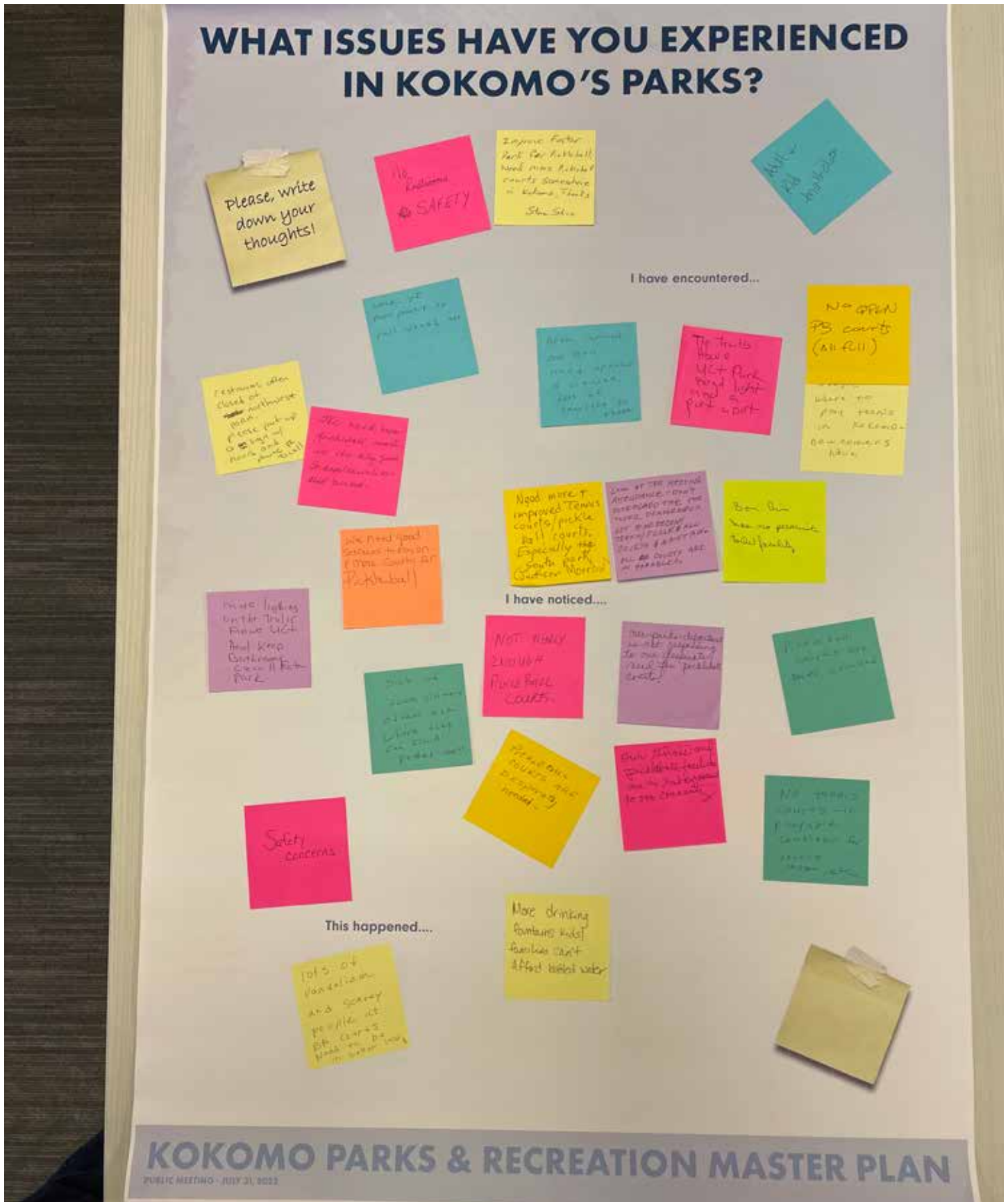
July 31st, 2023 at 5:30pm

	Name	Email
1.	Chris & Linda Herr	56ljherr@gmail.com
2.	Sue Shappell	SuzanneShappell@gmail.com
3.	Bob Shappell	BOB SHAPPELL@GMAIL.COM
4.	haurie Alexander	Ann103526@gmail.com
5.	Hannah Donnell	hdonnell195@gmail.com
6.	Jacob Donnell	jacobadonnel168@gmail.com
7.	ART LUTTRELL	luttrell8802@gmail.com
8.	Johnathon Grant	JEGRANT@MAC.COM
9.	MICHAEL MOHICAMKAR	MICHAEL.MOHICAMKAR@GMAIL.COM
10.	Buckie D'Amico	bdamico765@aol.com
11.	Mike & Tess Calloway	Tlcmk74@yahoo.com
12.	Terry & Nancy Feightner	TerryFeightner@Live.com
13.	Dave Kitchell	
14.	Linda Kitchell	
15.	Row BARSH	RPBARSH@GMAIL.COM
16.	Stacey momof4@gmail.com	→ Stacey Wilson oops! ☺
17.	Kate Rice	KokomoKate@gmail.com
18.	Pam Barsh	rpharsh@gmail.com
19.	Cathy Stover	CathyStover@yahoo.com
20.	Meg Moore	grandmamegi7@gmail.com
21.	Lee Chamberlain	reger.chamberlain@nw.k12.in.us
22.		
23.		
24.		
25.		

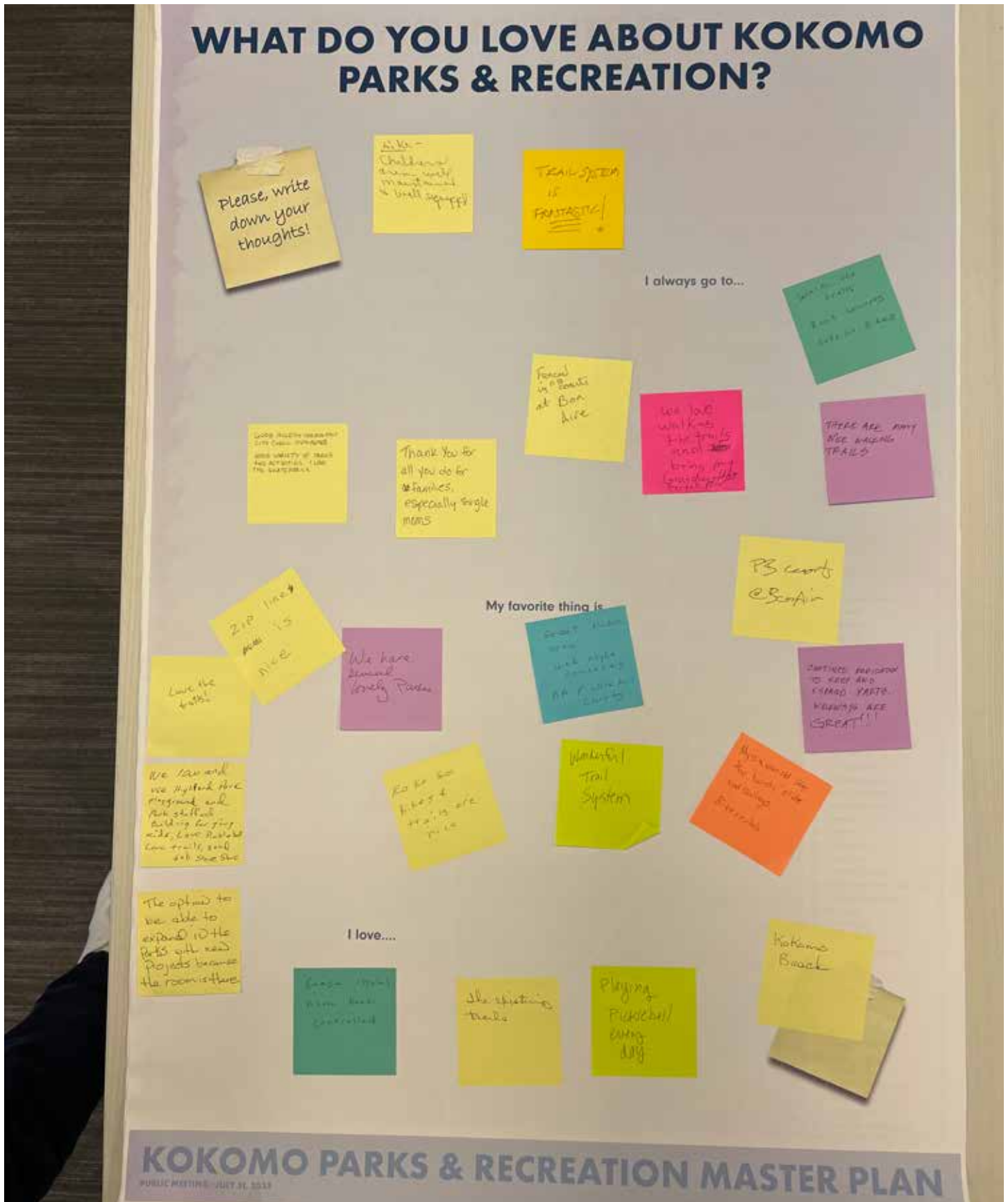
PUBLIC MEETING BOARDS



PUBLIC MEETING BOARDS



PUBLIC MEETING BOARDS



PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT CARDS

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

WE NEED MANY MORE
Pickle Ball Courts!

Thank you for your input!

2

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Pickle Ball courts, Please
It's the fastest growing sport in
the world.
Some located south - Jackson
Morrow would be awesome.

Thank you for your input!

1

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

More Pickleball Courts in
Side and Outside. you are
doing a great job providing for
playgrounds for kids. We need courts
for us pickleball player.

Thank you
Thank you for your input!

4

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

We need more pickleball
courts in our parks



Thank you for your input!

3

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

More Pickleball courts

Thank you for your input!

6

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Get NEW MANAGEMENT @ municipal
Stadium. They are unprofessional, derogatory,
rude to elderly and special needs.
Unacceptable.

Thank you for your input!

5

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

tip the ones you have and
not have them crack the
same year
need more courts inside
and out

Thank you for your input!

7

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Need Pickleball Courts
at Jackson-Morrow Park

Jeff A. Groff

Thank you for your input!

8

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT CARDS

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

We need more Pickle Ball courts

Margaret Swington

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

We need designated pickleball courts on south side

Thank you
Carol Wilson

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

We need better signs for the path and stairs along from the main roads to the water center where they are displaced

More water fountains in Highlans

More bike tracks or something like to replace the old beetle use base ball fields

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

At Foster Park you need to get someone full time at the rest rooms and keep them clean because they flood bad. They need a AC in the bathroom too

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

STOP YOUR TOTAL DISREGARD OF 50+ GENERATION. STATE PARKS ARE NICE BUT APPROPRIATE MONEY FOR TENNIS & PICKLEBALL. KOKOMO HAS A HUGE RETIRED POPULATION. SMALLER COMMUNITIES HAVE SPARKING FACILITIES. GET IT DONE

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Some of our tennis players come from Burlington to play at Taylor H.S. because Foster courts are so bad. If not feasible at Foster do something somewhere for tennis - maybe tennis/pickleball combo.

Thank you for your input!
Curt Welke

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

I really enjoy playing pickleball at Bon Ave with fenced courts. It is starting to get very crowded in the evening so we need more courts. Also Bon Ave needs lights b/c a lot of people can only play at night

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Partner with DNR to have a place for kids and people with disabilities to have place to fish around a pond; that is strictly catch and release.

Thank you for your input!

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT CARDS

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Absolutely need more pickleball
courts - Inside!! And outside

Thank you for your input!

19

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Please consider the
south group of tennis
courts at Foster Park
as a pickleball court -
including total resurface as
current surface is in very
bad shape

Thank you for your input!

- Chris Horn 17

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

COMMENT CARD

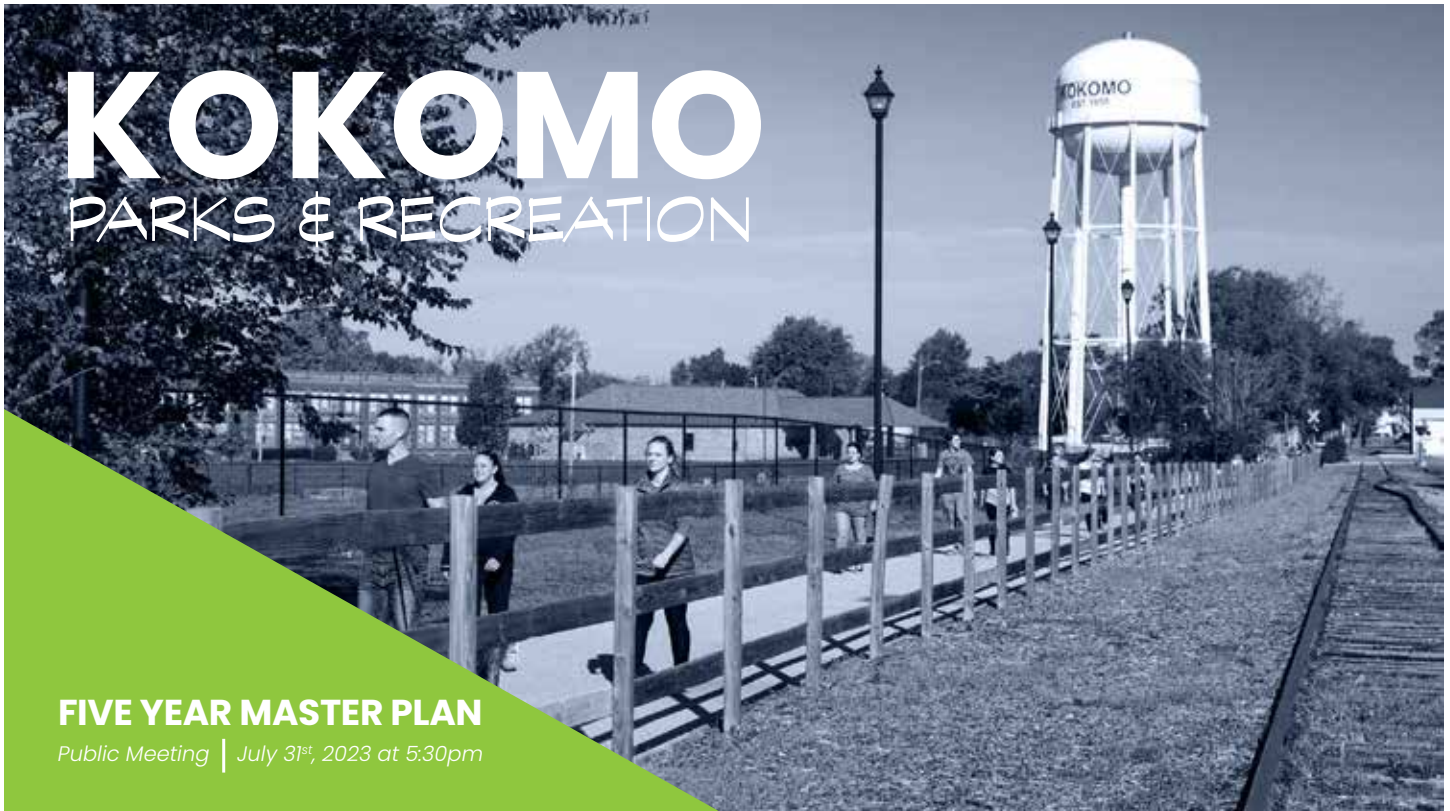
PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

I will say our parks are
lovely. I like the trails to
walk & bike, but please
please put in more pickle ball
courts.

Thank you for your input!

19

PUBLIC MEETING POWERPOINT



Introductions



Rebecca Mahoney
Landscape Architect



Catherine Puckett
Landscape Architect

**what is a parks &
recreation master plan?**

**a written framework for future
action, and acts as a guide for
sensible facility, program and
service development**

PUBLIC MEETING POWERPOINT

reasons for creating a master plan

- Improve funding opportunities
- Provide opportunities for the community to share feedback
- Ensure the public wants the facilities that are developed
- Share information about programming and facilities with the public
- Gives the parks and recreation department a clear direction for the future

plan methodology & development



Phase 1
Inventory & Data Collection



Phase 2
Research & Analysis



Phase 1
Results & Recommendations

PUBLIC MEETING POWERPOINT

planning progress: what have we done?

- Project kick-off this past December
- Launched public survey on **April 6th**
- Public event - youth & adult easter egg hunt on **April 8th**
- Held stakeholder interviews in **May**
- Started inventory & data collection



planning progress: what is left?

- Public & teen survey will close on **August 11th**
- Complete inventory & data collection
- Complete research & analysis
- Draft goals & recommendation

PUBLIC MEETING POWERPOINT

public input

Public input is gathered through a variety of methods including a public survey, stakeholder interviews, this public meeting and a future public meeting. All input is included in the plan document and inform the goals and recommendations of the plan



stakeholder interviews

- Stakeholder interviews were held May 17th, 19th, and 23rd via phone or virtual calls
- A total **4 individuals/groups** were interviewed
- Stakeholders represented life-long residents, active seniors, avid park users, city council representative, a local teen who serves as a park liaison, and past parks superintendent

PUBLIC MEETING POWERPOINT

public survey

- A public survey with 22 questions was developed and distributed online. Currently there have been **1,487** responses
- The next public meeting will include the results of the public survey after the survey is closed

Please take the public survey!



Scan the QR Code with the photo app on your mobile device to take you directly to the survey.

teen survey

- A teen survey with 14 questions was developed and distributed online. Currently there have been **171** responses
- The next public meeting will include the results of the teen survey after the survey is closed

Please take the teen survey!

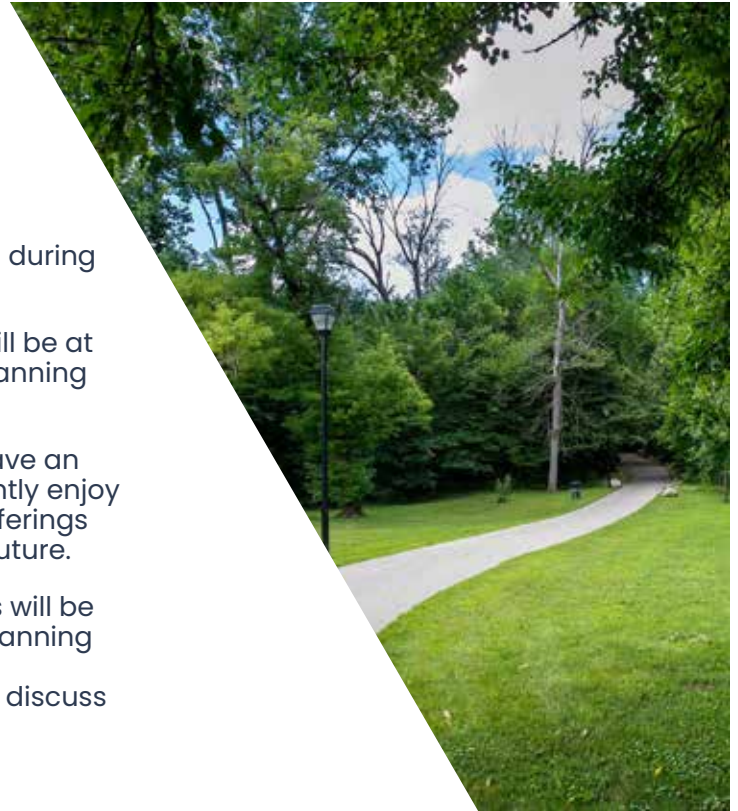


Scan the QR Code with the photo app on your mobile device to take you directly to the survey.

PUBLIC MEETING POWERPOINT

public meetings

- **Two** public meetings will be conducted during the planning process.
- This meeting is the first & the second will be at a future date towards the end of the planning process.
- During this meeting, participants will have an opportunity to discuss what they currently enjoy about Kokomo Parks and Recreation offerings and what they would like to see in the future.
- At the next public meeting, participants will be informed of the data collected in the planning process, goals, and recommendations. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss and comment on these items.



whats next?

- Participate in the **activity boards** or come talk to us!
- Fill out a **comment card**
- Take the **survey**
- Keep an eye for the next public meeting date on social media

PUBLIC MEETING POWERPOINT

thank you!

PUBLIC SURVEY ADVERTISEMENTS

 **City of Kokomo - City Hall**
April 10, 2023 · 🌐

Help us plan the future of our parks! We are developing our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan and would love to hear from you! Please take a moment to fill out our public survey so we can better serve you in the future:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/.../KokomoParksandRecreation...>



KOKOMO
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC SURVEY

125

126 241

Like Comment

 **City of Kokomo - City Hall**
April 10, 2023 · 🌐

Teens! We want to hear from you! We are developing our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan and would love to hear from you! Please take a moment to fill out our teen survey so we can better serve you in the future:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/.../KokomoParksandRecreation...>

TEENS!
WE WANT TO HEAR
FROM YOU!

HELP US PLAN THE
FUTURE OF OUR PARKS!

Please help the department by filling out our survey.

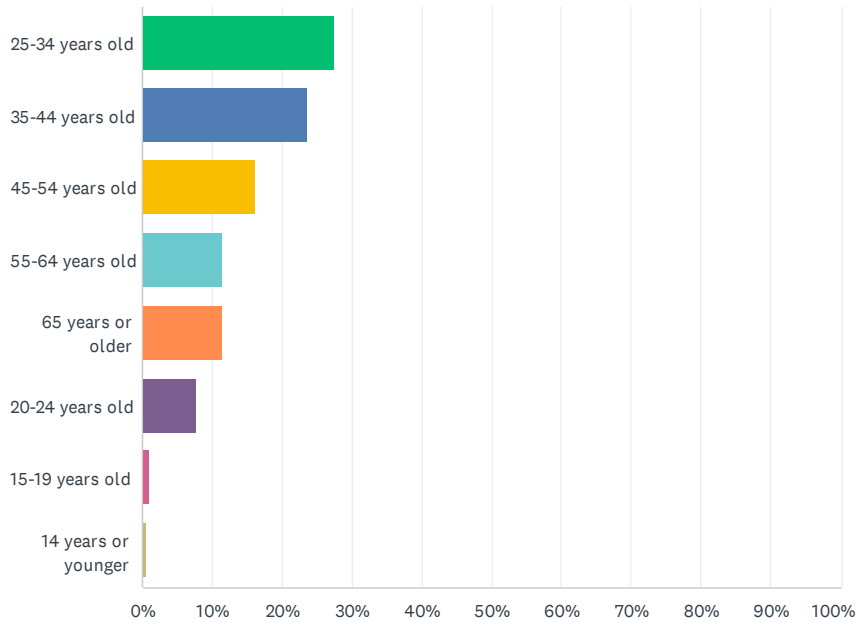


PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q1 Which category below includes your age?

Answered: 1,515 Skipped: 0



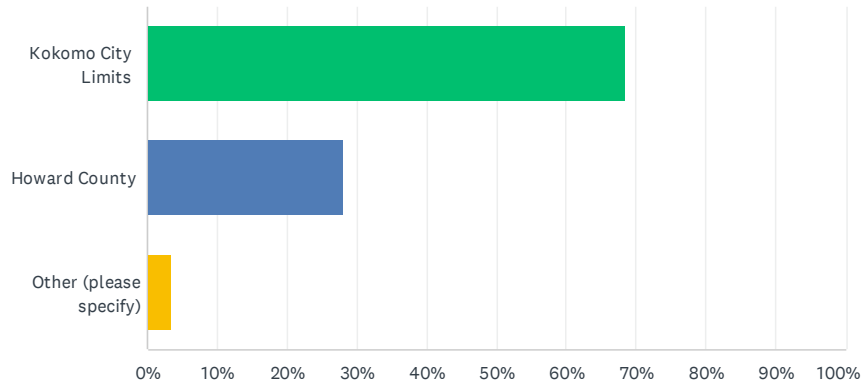
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
25-34 years old	27.46%	416
35-44 years old	23.76%	360
45-54 years old	16.24%	246
55-64 years old	11.55%	175
65 years or older	11.55%	175
20-24 years old	7.72%	117
15-19 years old	1.12%	17
14 years or younger	0.59%	9
TOTAL		1,515

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q2 Do you currently live in Kokomo or Howard County?

Answered: 1,513 Skipped: 2



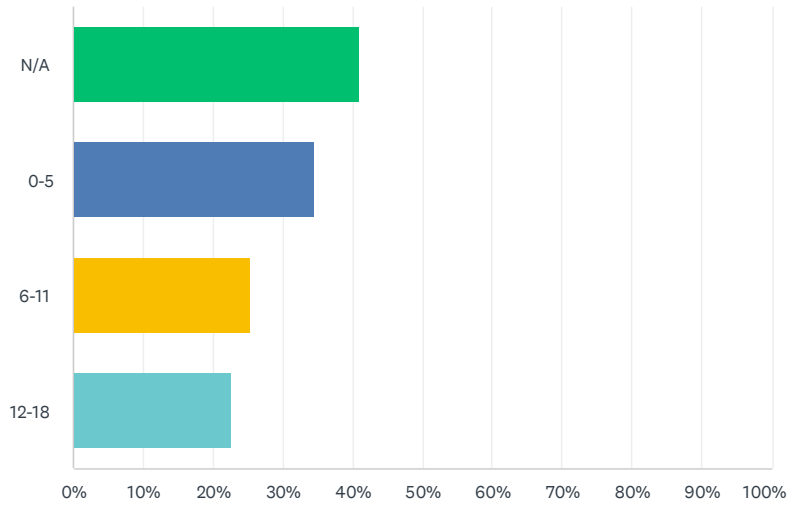
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Kokomo City Limits	68.41%	1,035
Howard County	28.22%	427
Other (please specify)	3.37%	51
TOTAL		1,513

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q3 If you have children, how old are they? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,501 Skipped: 14



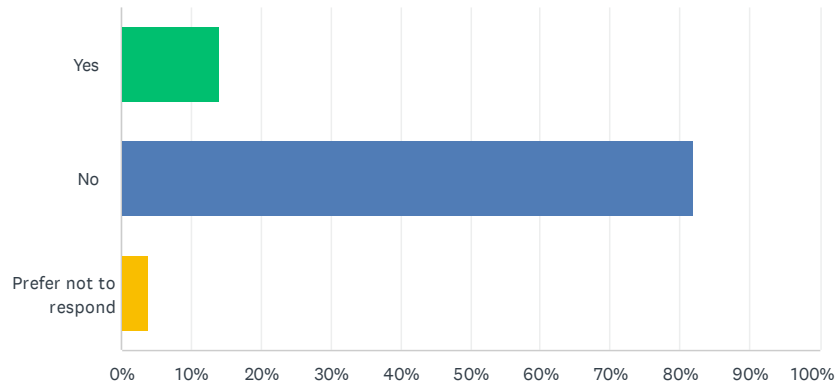
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
N/A	40.84%	613
0-5	34.51%	518
6-11	25.45%	382
12-18	22.65%	340
Total Respondents: 1,501		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q4 Do any members of your family have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act?

Answered: 1,508 Skipped: 7



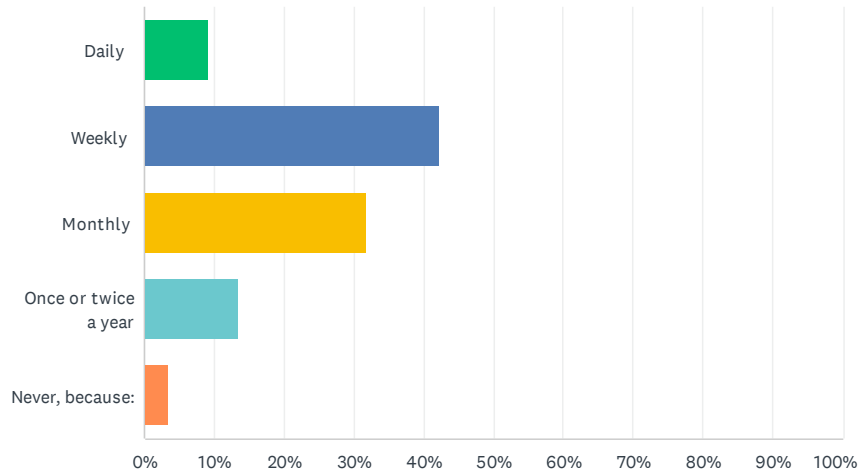
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	14.12% 213
No	81.96% 1,236
Prefer not to respond	3.91% 59
TOTAL	1,508

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q5 How often do you use the park facilities?

Answered: 1,514 Skipped: 1



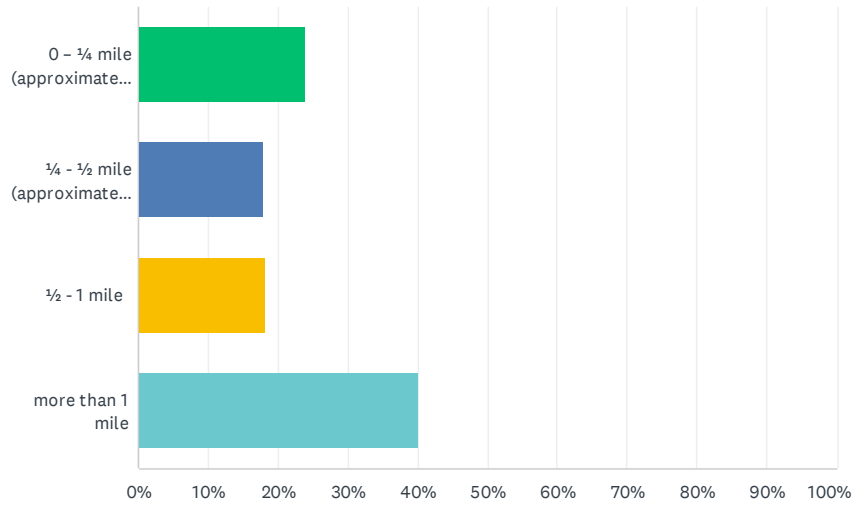
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	9.25%	140
Weekly	42.14%	638
Monthly	31.77%	481
Once or twice a year	13.34%	202
Never, because:	3.50%	53
TOTAL		1,514

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q6 How close do you live to the nearest park?

Answered: 1,510 Skipped: 5



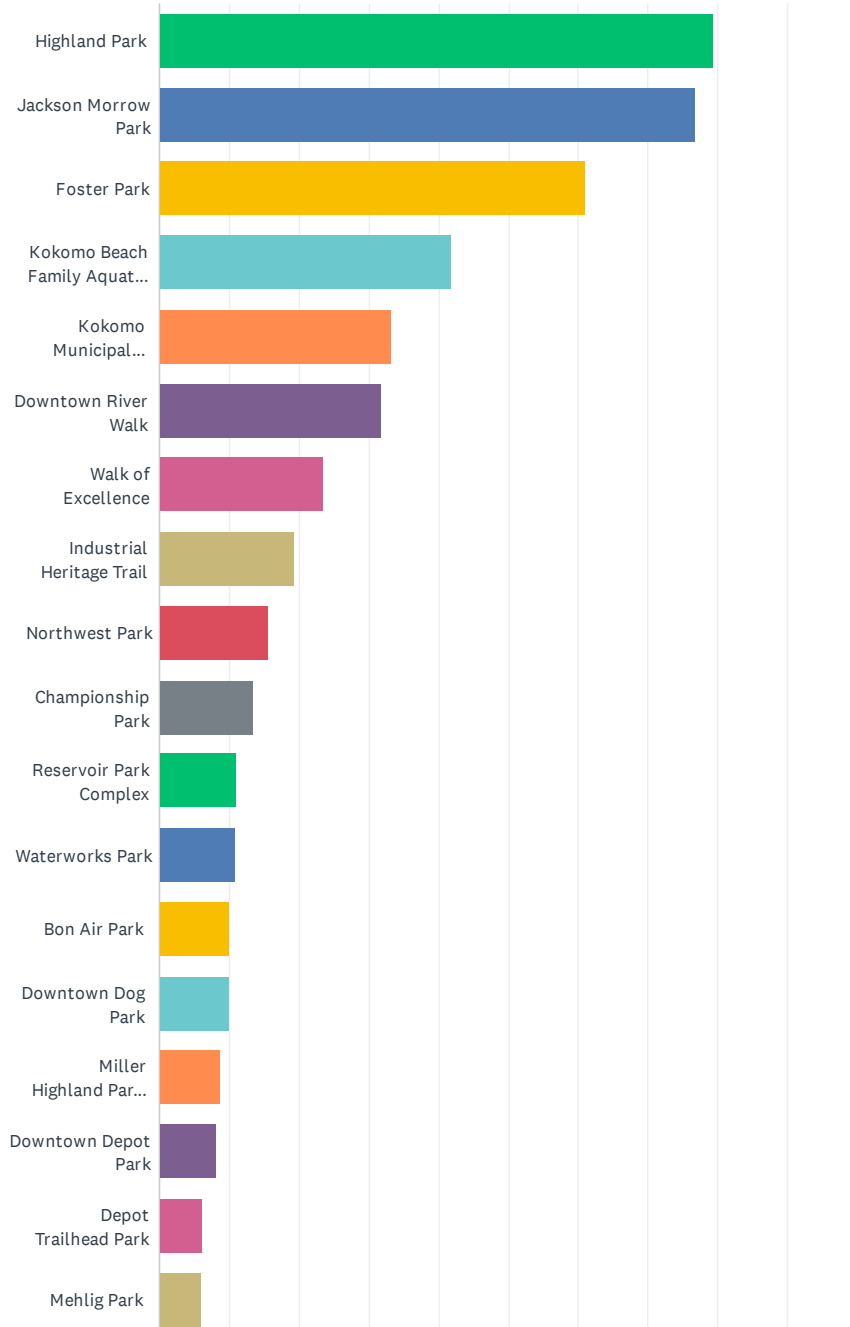
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 – ¼ mile (approximately 5 minute walk)	23.97%	362
¼ - ½ mile (approximately 10 minute walk)	17.81%	269
½ - 1 mile	18.15%	274
more than 1 mile	40.07%	605
TOTAL		1,510

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

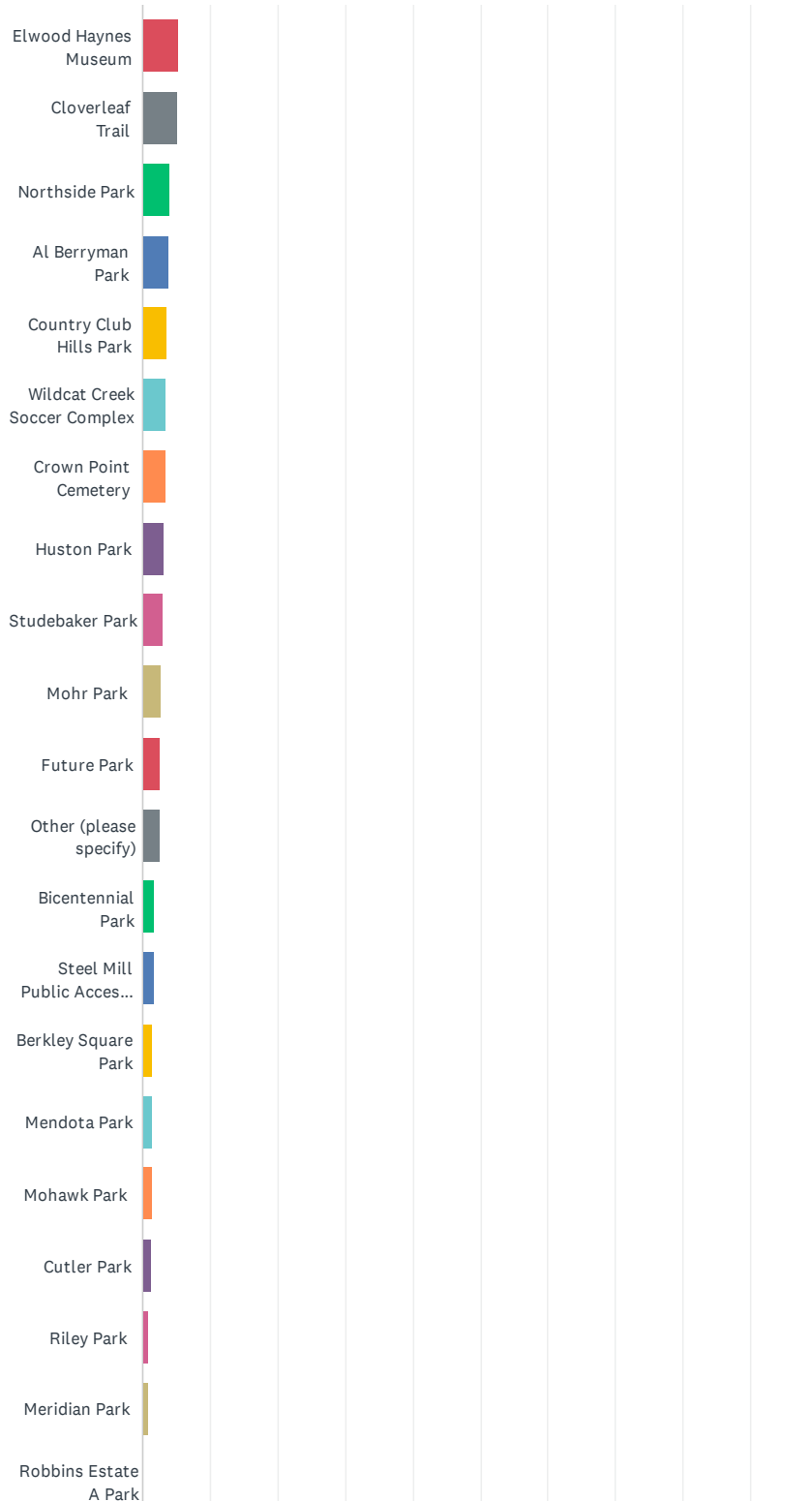
Q7 If you do use Kokomo park facilities, which facilities do you use? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,507 Skipped: 8



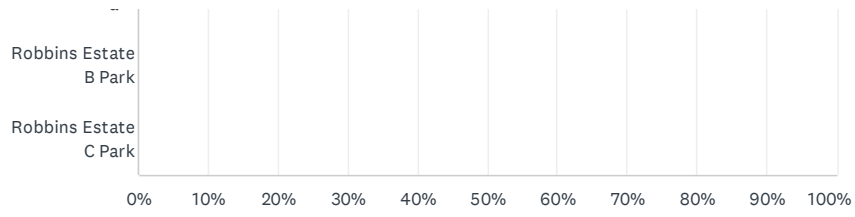
PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Highland Park	79.23%	1,194
Jackson Morrow Park	76.84%	1,158
Foster Park	60.92%	918
Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center	41.80%	630
Kokomo Municipal Stadium	33.31%	502
Downtown River Walk	31.72%	478
Walk of Excellence	23.49%	354
Industrial Heritage Trail	19.38%	292
Northwest Park	15.66%	236
Championship Park	13.54%	204
Reservoir Park Complex	11.02%	166
Waterworks Park	10.82%	163
Bon Air Park	10.09%	152
Downtown Dog Park	10.09%	152
Miller Highland Park (UCT)	8.83%	133
Downtown Depot Park	8.03%	121
Depot Trailhead Park	6.24%	94
Mehlig Park	5.91%	89
Elwood Haynes Museum	5.31%	80
Cloverleaf Trail	5.18%	78
Northside Park	4.11%	62
Al Berryman Park	3.85%	58
Country Club Hills Park	3.58%	54
Wildcat Creek Soccer Complex	3.52%	53
Crown Point Cemetery	3.38%	51
Huston Park	3.12%	47
Studebaker Park	3.05%	46
Mohr Park	2.79%	42
Future Park	2.65%	40
Other (please specify)	2.52%	38
Bicentennial Park	1.66%	25
Steel Mill Public Access Site	1.66%	25

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

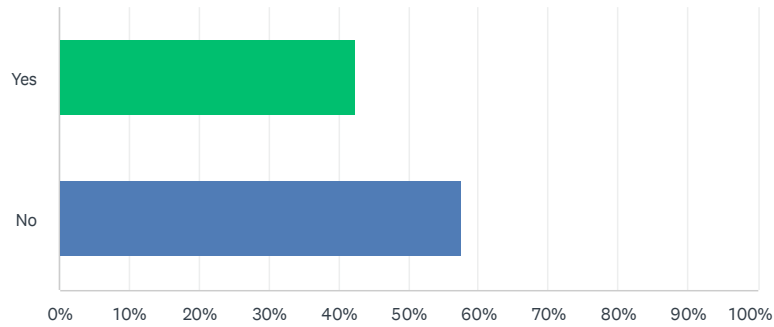
Berkley Square Park	1.59%	24
Mendota Park	1.59%	24
Mohawk Park	1.46%	22
Cutler Park	1.33%	20
Riley Park	0.93%	14
Meridian Park	0.86%	13
Robbins Estate A Park	0.07%	1
Robbins Estate B Park	0.07%	1
Robbins Estate C Park	0.07%	1
Total Respondents: 1,507		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q8 Are there community resources you use that are not owned and operated by the parks department? (Ex. Church playground, private gym, state parks, etc.)

Answered: 1,495 Skipped: 20



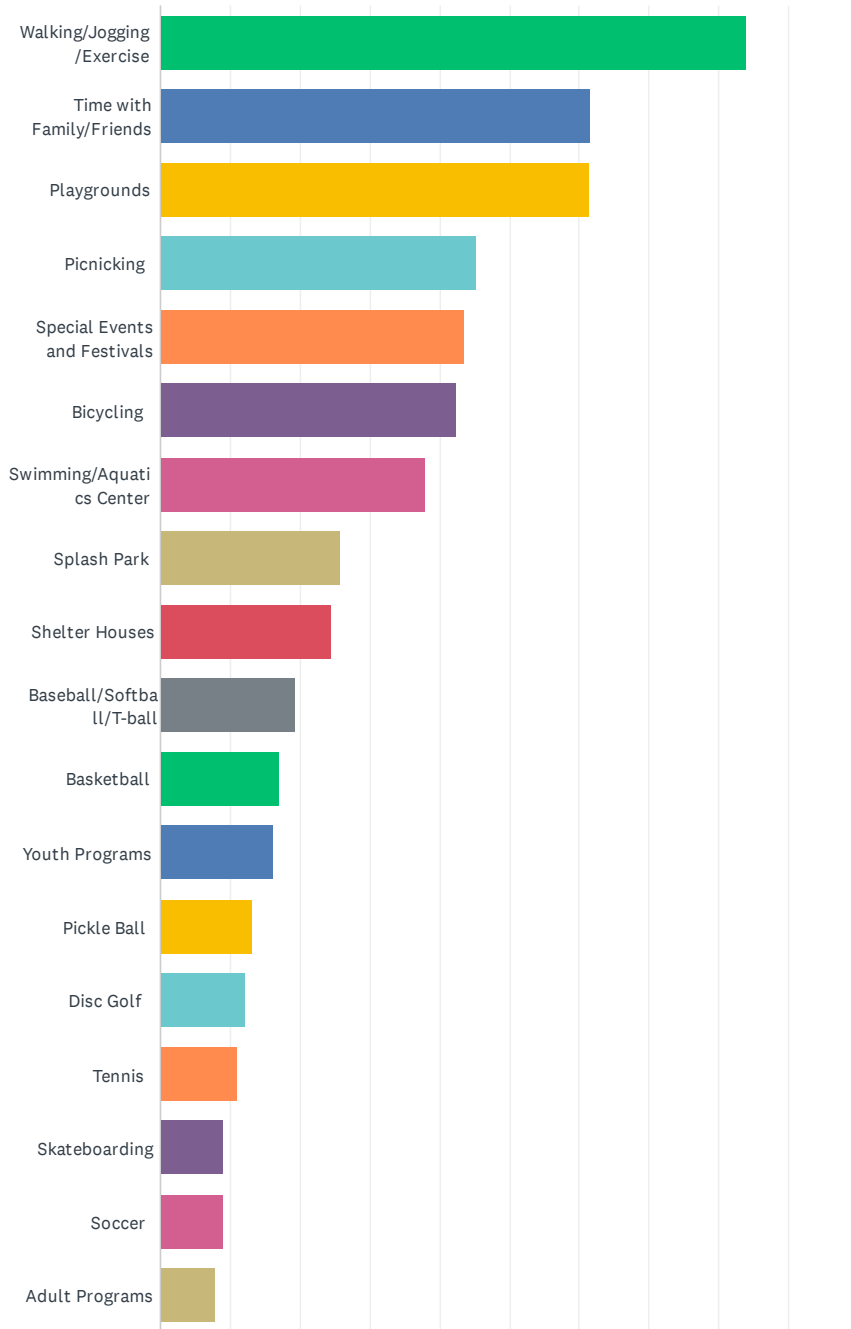
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	42.34%	633
No	57.66%	862
TOTAL		1,495

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

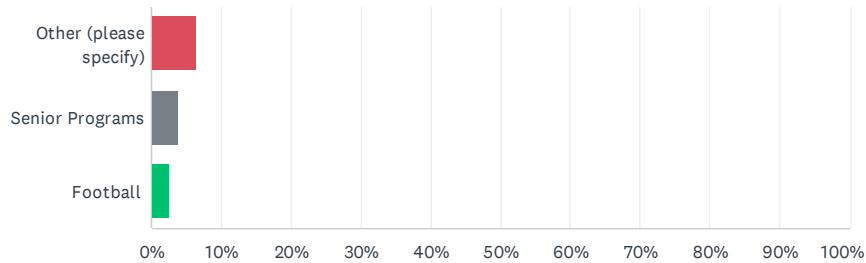
Q9 What activities or amenities do you participate in or use at the parks? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,510 Skipped: 5



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey



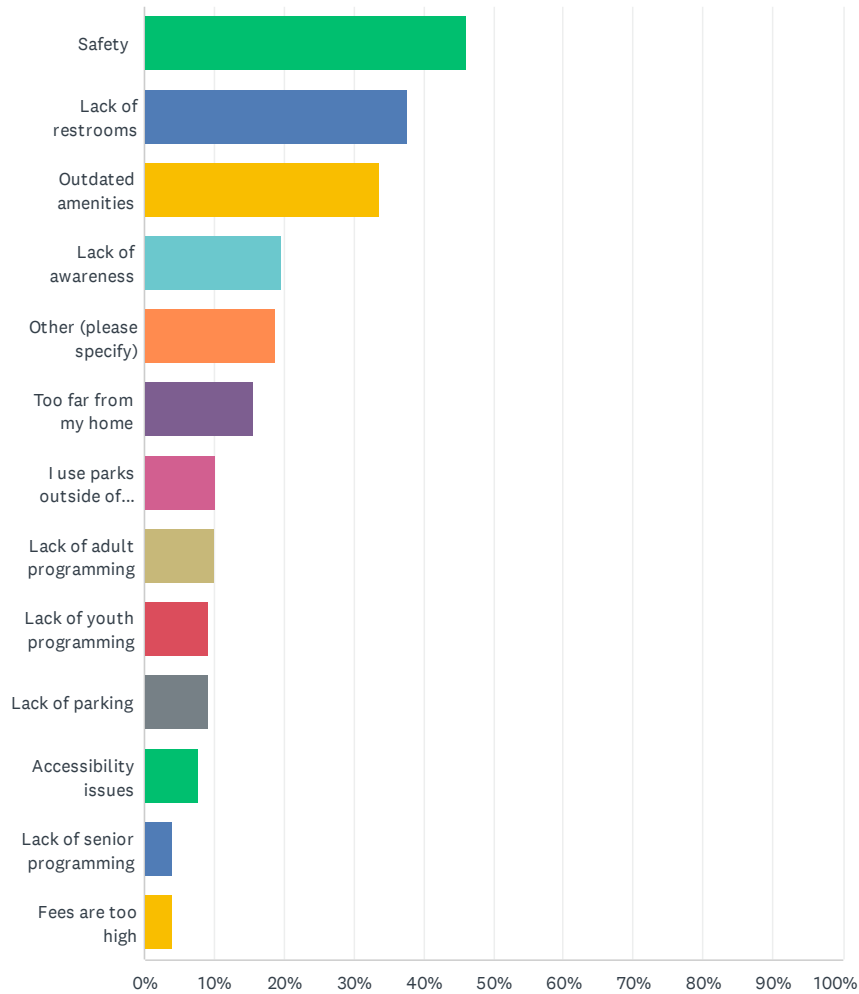
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walking/Jogging/Exercise	83.97%	1,268
Time with Family/Friends	61.66%	931
Playgrounds	61.32%	926
Picnicking	45.23%	683
Special Events and Festivals	43.51%	657
Bicycling	42.45%	641
Swimming/Aquatics Center	38.01%	574
Splash Park	25.76%	389
Shelter Houses	24.57%	371
Baseball/Softball/T-ball	19.34%	292
Basketball	17.02%	257
Youth Programs	16.29%	246
Pickle Ball	13.31%	201
Disc Golf	12.19%	184
Tennis	10.99%	166
Skateboarding	9.01%	136
Soccer	9.01%	136
Adult Programs	7.81%	118
Other (please specify)	6.29%	95
Senior Programs	3.91%	59
Football	2.65%	40
Total Respondents: 1,510		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q10 What keeps you from using city park facilities? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,388 Skipped: 127



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

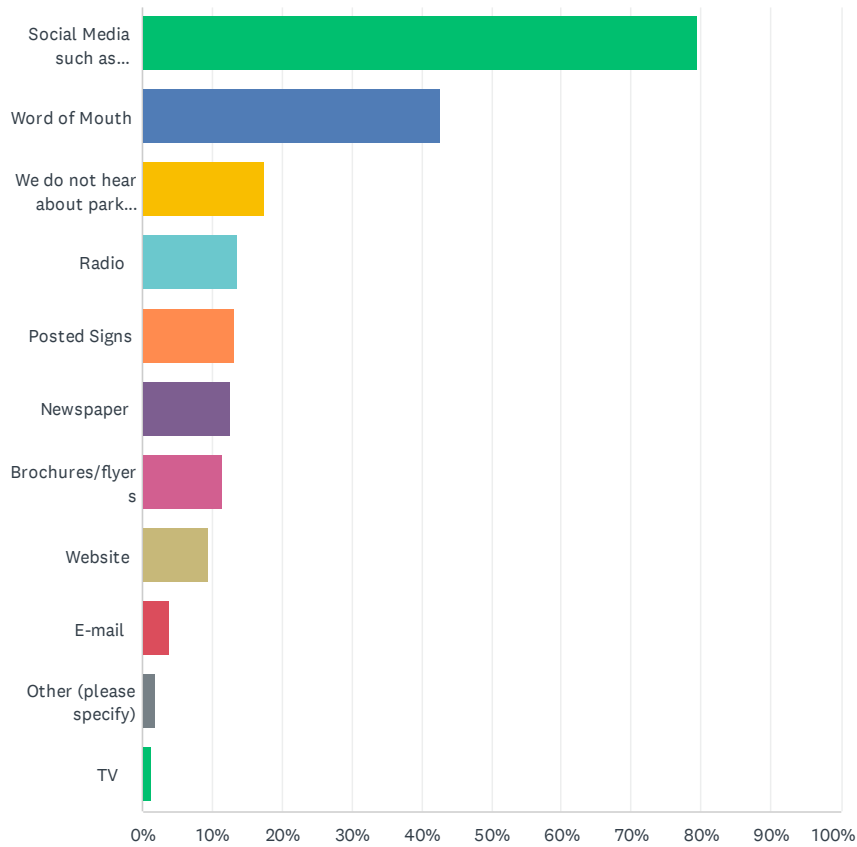
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Safety	46.04%	639
Lack of restrooms	37.75%	524
Outdated amenities	33.72%	468
Lack of awareness	19.52%	271
Other (please specify)	18.73%	260
Too far from my home	15.63%	217
I use parks outside of Kokomo instead	10.23%	142
Lack of adult programming	9.94%	138
Lack of youth programming	9.15%	127
Lack of parking	9.08%	126
Accessibility issues	7.64%	106
Lack of senior programming	4.03%	56
Fees are too high	3.96%	55
Total Respondents: 1,388		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q11 How do you or your family find out about park programs and events? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,506 Skipped: 9



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

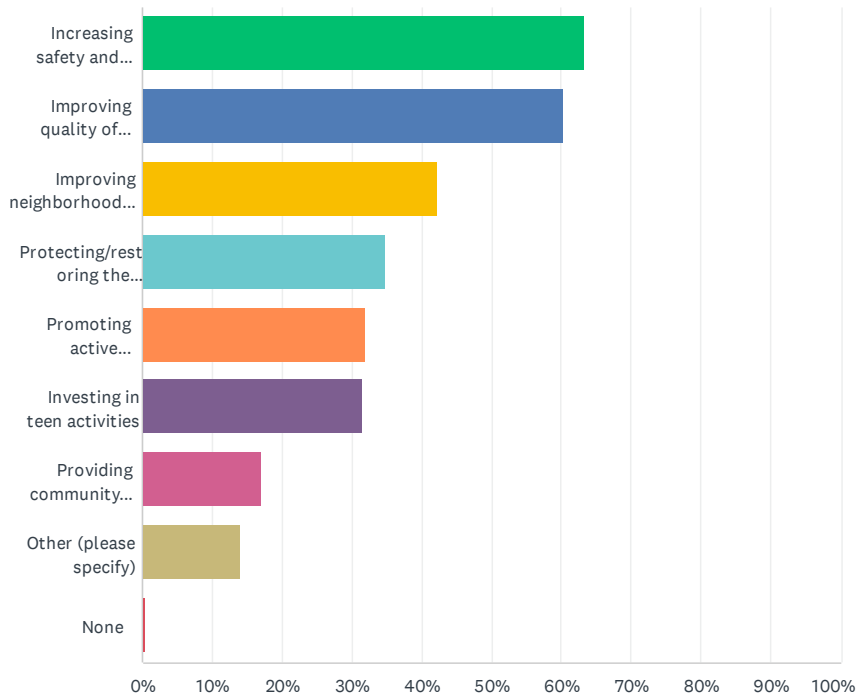
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube	79.55%	1,198
Word of Mouth	42.63%	642
We do not hear about park events	17.53%	264
Radio	13.75%	207
Posted Signs	13.21%	199
Newspaper	12.55%	189
Brochures/flyers	11.49%	173
Website	9.30%	140
E-mail	3.92%	59
Other (please specify)	1.93%	29
TV	1.26%	19
Total Respondents: 1,506		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q12 Identify three community issues that the Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department should focus on improving. (Please choose 3)

Answered: 1,505 Skipped: 10



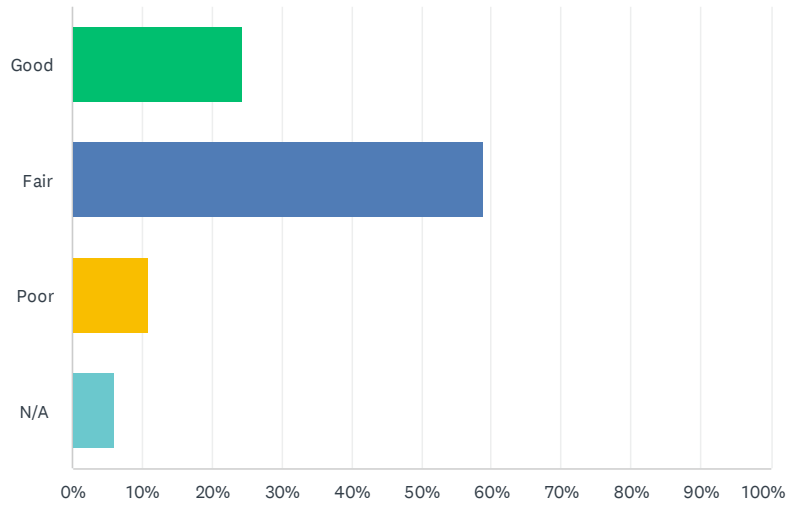
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increasing safety and security	63.39%	954
Improving quality of parks	60.27%	907
Improving neighborhood parks	42.26%	636
Protecting/restoring the environment/natural areas	34.68%	522
Promoting active lifestyles	32.03%	482
Investing in teen activities	31.56%	475
Providing community outreach and volunteer opportunities	17.14%	258
Other (please specify)	14.02%	211
None	0.53%	8
Total Respondents: 1,505		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q13 Please rate the condition of play equipment and courts in our parks:

Answered: 1,502 Skipped: 13



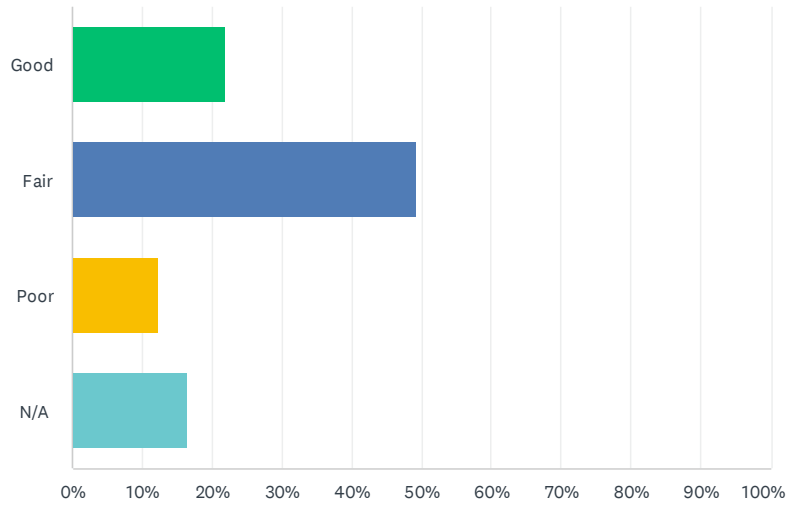
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Good	24.37%	366
Fair	58.85%	884
Poor	10.85%	163
N/A	5.93%	89
TOTAL		1,502

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q14 Please rate the condition of the sports facilities in our parks:

Answered: 1,501 Skipped: 14



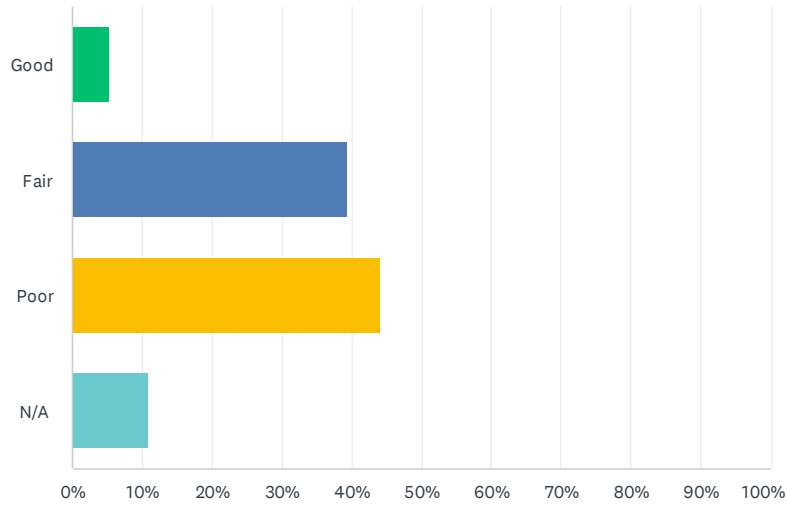
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Good	21.92%	329
Fair	49.23%	739
Poor	12.33%	185
N/A	16.52%	248
TOTAL		1,501

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q15 Please rate the condition of restroom facilities in our parks:

Answered: 1,494 Skipped: 21



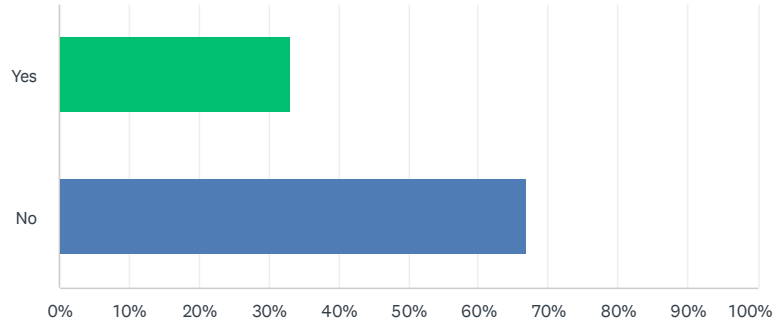
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Good	5.42%	81
Fair	39.49%	590
Poor	44.11%	659
N/A	10.98%	164
TOTAL		1,494

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q16 Are there adequate restroom facilities in Kokomo Parks?

Answered: 1,454 Skipped: 61



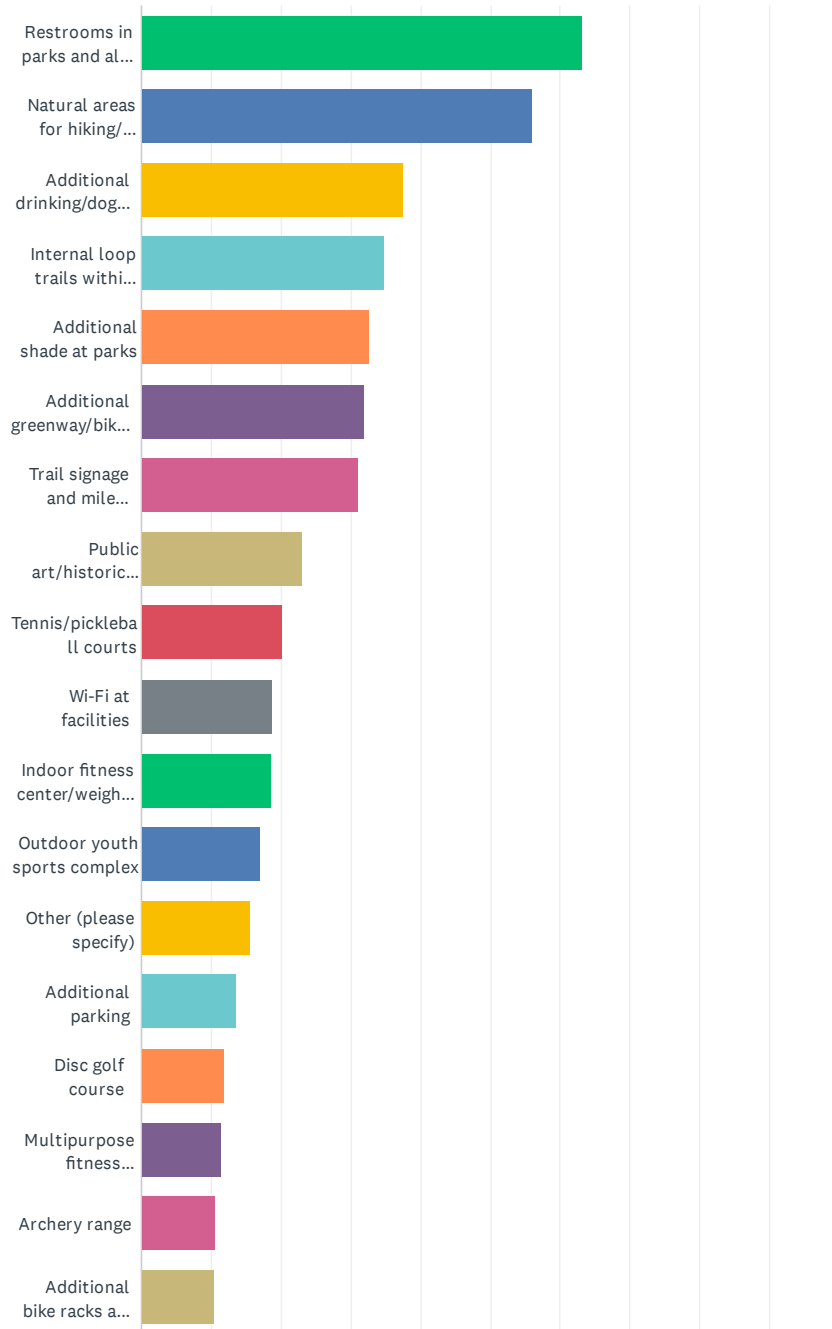
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	33.01%	480
No	66.99%	974
TOTAL		1,454

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

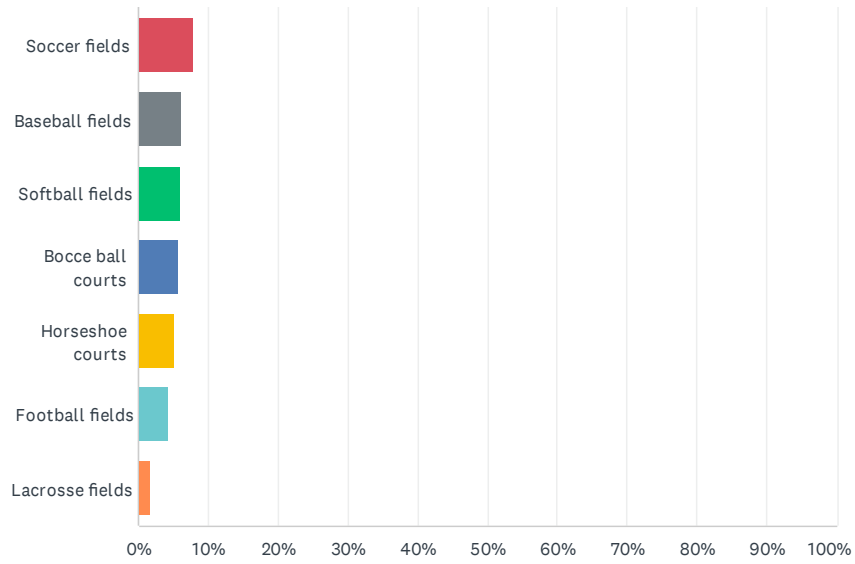
Q17 What facilities/improvements are needed in the Kokomo park system? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,496 Skipped: 19



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Restrooms in parks and along trails	63.10%	944
Natural areas for hiking/ nature-viewing/picnicking (forest, wetland, prairie, etc.)	56.02%	838
Additional drinking/doggie fountains	37.43%	560
Internal loop trails within existing parks	34.69%	519
Additional shade at parks	32.69%	489
Additional greenway/bike trails	31.95%	478
Trail signage and mile markers	31.15%	466
Public art/historical education along trails	22.99%	344
Tennis/pickleball courts	20.25%	303
Wi-Fi at facilities	18.72%	280
Indoor fitness center/weight room	18.58%	278
Outdoor youth sports complex	16.98%	254
Other (please specify)	15.57%	233
Additional parking	13.64%	204
Disc golf course	12.03%	180
Multipurpose fitness classrooms	11.56%	173
Archery range	10.63%	159
Additional bike racks at facilities	10.43%	156
Soccer fields	7.82%	117
Baseball fields	6.08%	91
Softball fields	6.02%	90
Bocce ball courts	5.75%	86
Horseshoe courts	5.01%	75
Football fields	4.34%	65
Lacrosse fields	1.67%	25
Total Respondents: 1,496		

PUBLIC SURVEY

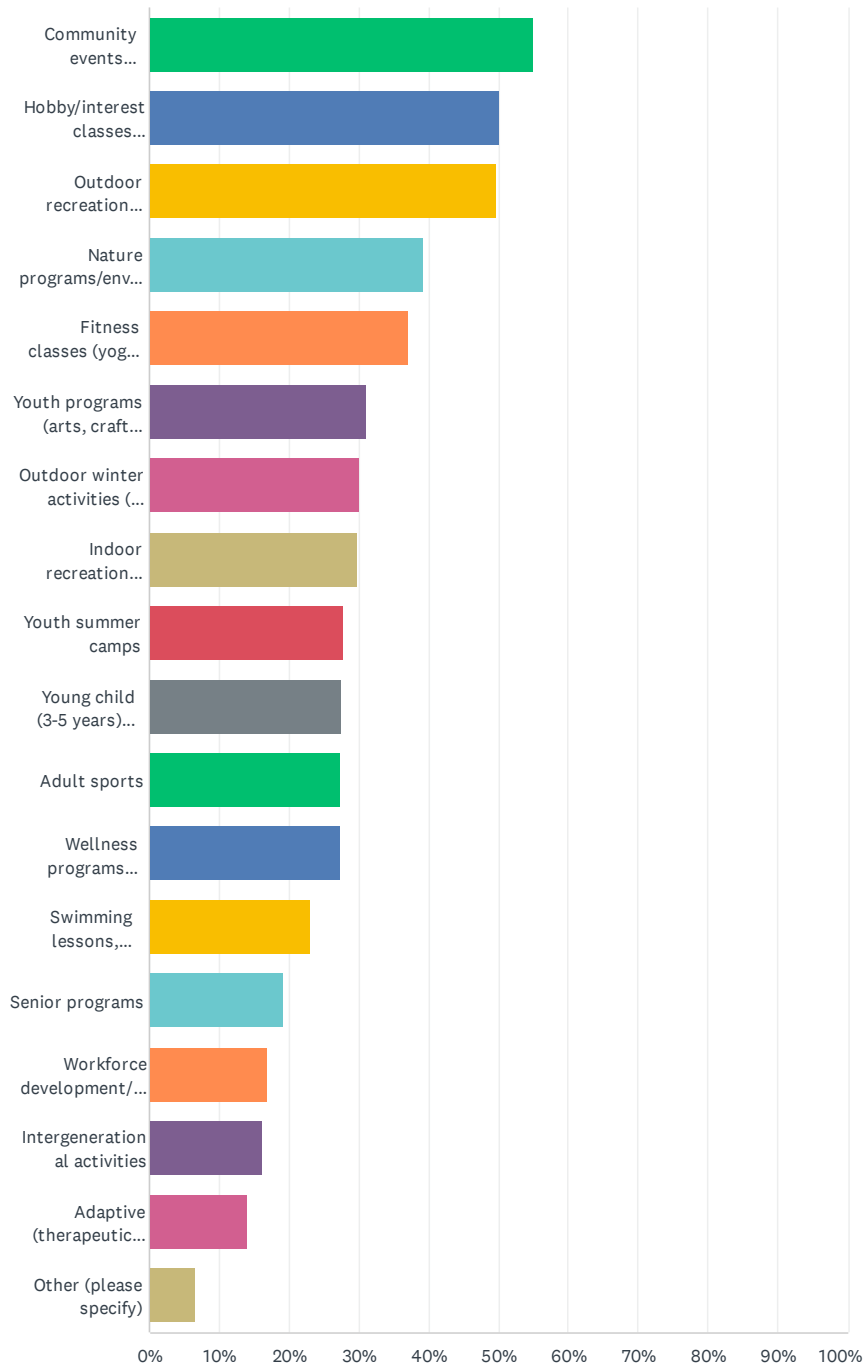
Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q18 What programming is needed in the Kokomo park system? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,460 Skipped: 55

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

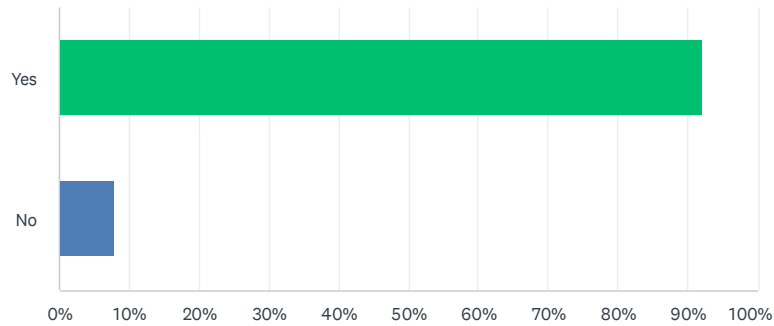
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Community events (festivals, 5k races, concerts, etc.)	54.93%	802
Hobby/interest classes (crafts, gardening, cooking, etc.)	50.21%	733
Outdoor recreation (hiking, fishing, etc.)	49.73%	726
Nature programs/environmental education	39.18%	572
Fitness classes (yoga, martial arts, zumba, etc.)	37.05%	541
Youth programs (arts, crafts, adventure, etc.)	31.16%	455
Outdoor winter activities (ice skating, skiing, etc.)	30.07%	439
Indoor recreation opportunities	29.79%	435
Youth summer camps	27.67%	404
Young child (3-5 years) programs	27.47%	401
Adult sports	27.33%	399
Wellness programs (nutrition, health counseling, etc.)	27.26%	398
Swimming lessons, aquatic programs	22.95%	335
Senior programs	19.18%	280
Workforce development/life skills classes	16.92%	247
Intergenerational activities	16.30%	238
Adaptive (therapeutic) recreation	13.97%	204
Other (please specify)	6.71%	98
Total Respondents: 1,460		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q19 Would you use an online platform to register for shelter rental, event registration and/or programming registration?

Answered: 1,501 Skipped: 14



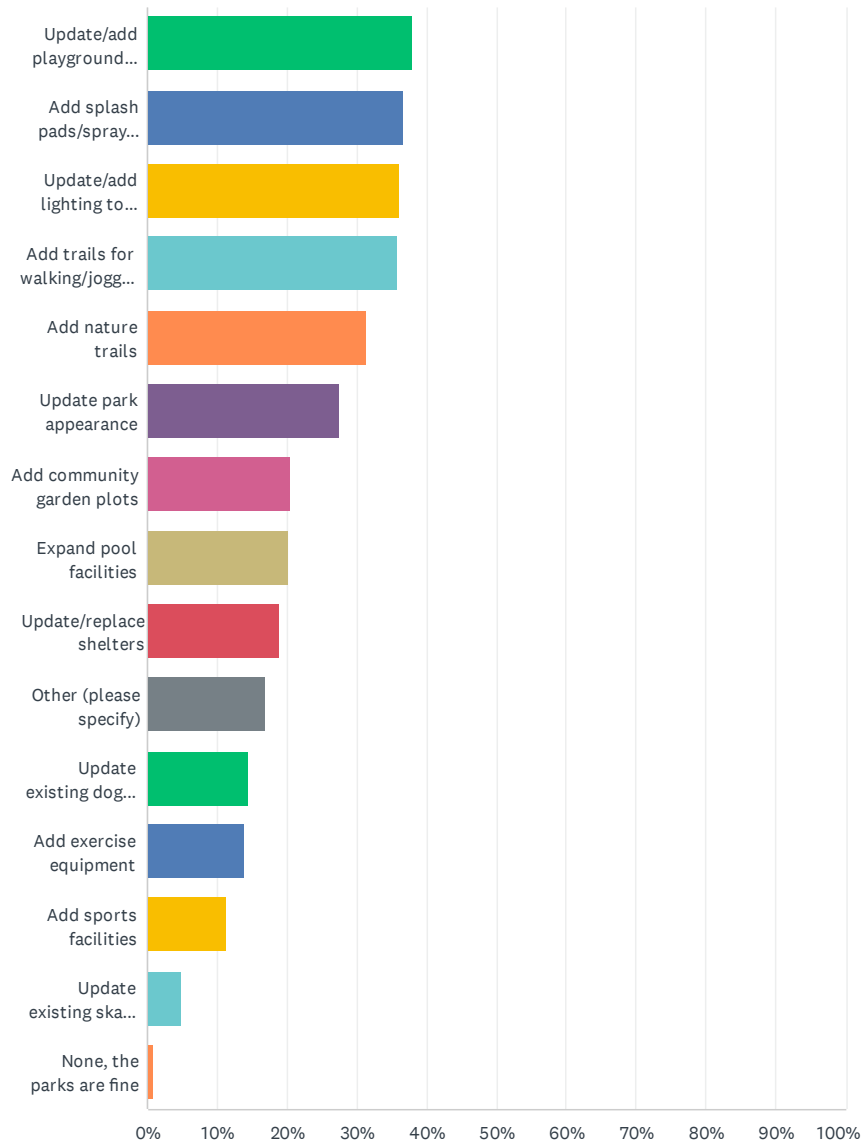
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	92.01% 1,381
No	7.99% 120
TOTAL	1,501

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q20 Of the following potential capital improvement projects, which is of the highest priority to you? (Please choose 3)

Answered: 1,500 Skipped: 15



PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

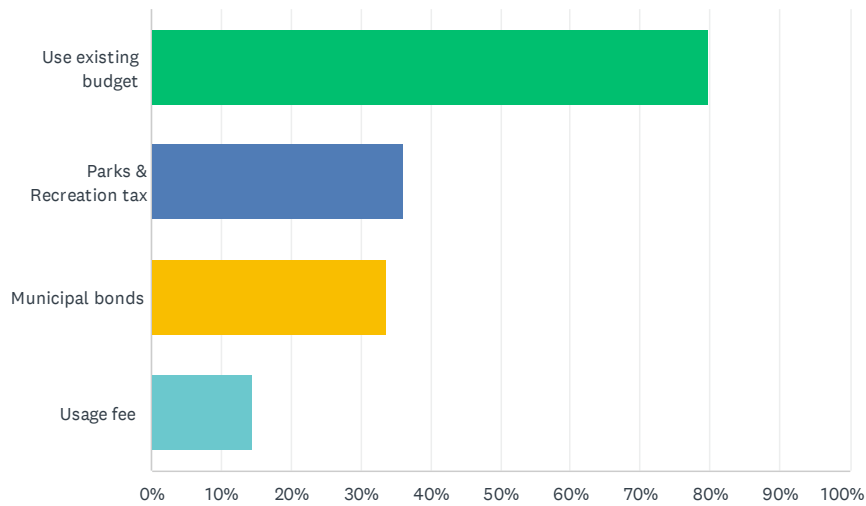
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Update/add playground equipment	38.00%	570
Add splash pads/spray grounds	36.67%	550
Update/add lighting to parks	36.00%	540
Add trails for walking/jogging/biking	35.87%	538
Add nature trails	31.27%	469
Update park appearance	27.40%	411
Add community garden plots	20.47%	307
Expand pool facilities	20.27%	304
Update/replace shelters	19.00%	285
Other (please specify)	16.93%	254
Update existing dog park	14.47%	217
Add exercise equipment	13.87%	208
Add sports facilities	11.27%	169
Update existing skate park	4.87%	73
None, the parks are fine	0.93%	14
Total Respondents: 1,500		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q21 After first applying for all available grants and donations, how would you like the city to pay for new amenities in the parks? (Check all that apply.)

Answered: 1,466 Skipped: 49



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Use existing budget	79.67%	1,168
Parks & Recreation tax	35.95%	527
Municipal bonds	33.70%	494
Usage fee	14.46%	212
Total Respondents: 1,466		

PUBLIC SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Public Survey

Q22 What could Kokomo Parks and Recreation do to better serve you and your family?

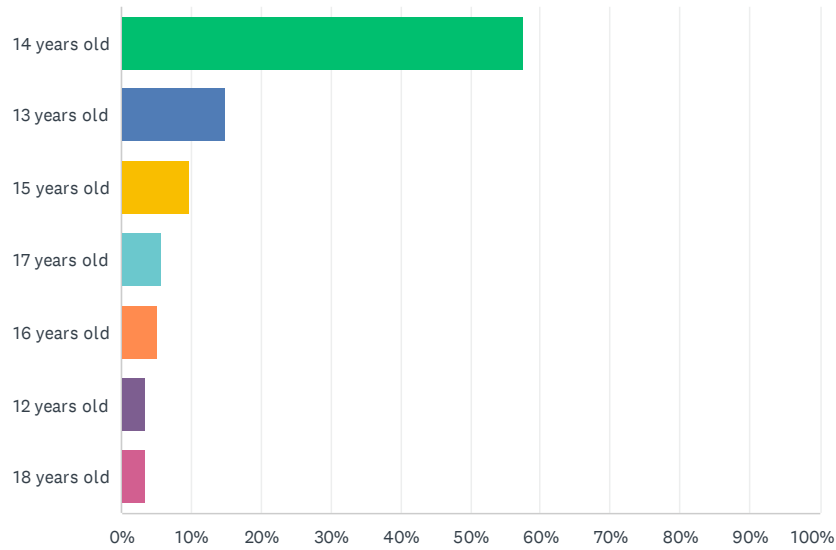
Answered: 845 Skipped: 670

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q1 How old are you?

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



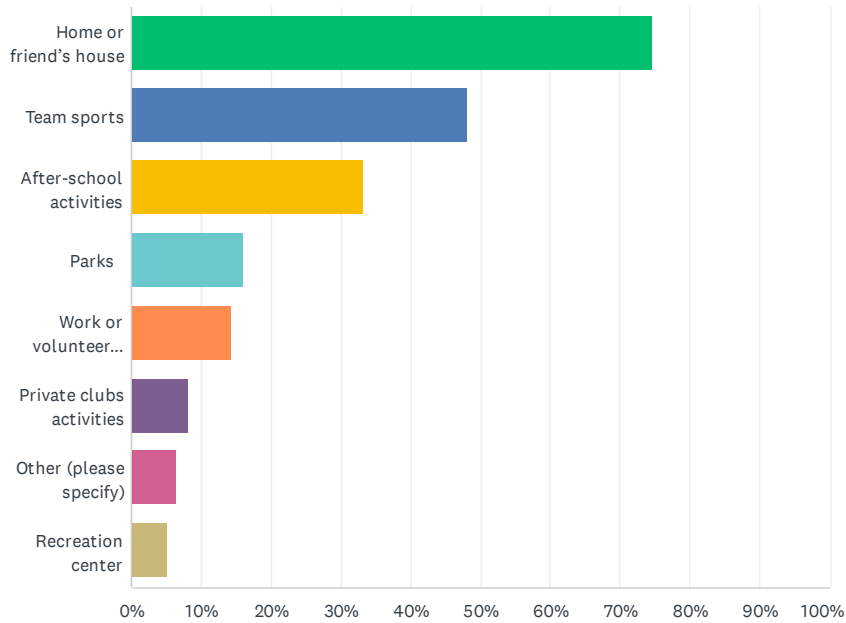
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
14 years old	57.47%	100
13 years old	14.94%	26
15 years old	9.77%	17
17 years old	5.75%	10
16 years old	5.17%	9
12 years old	3.45%	6
18 years old	3.45%	6
TOTAL		174

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q2 Where do you usually go after school? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



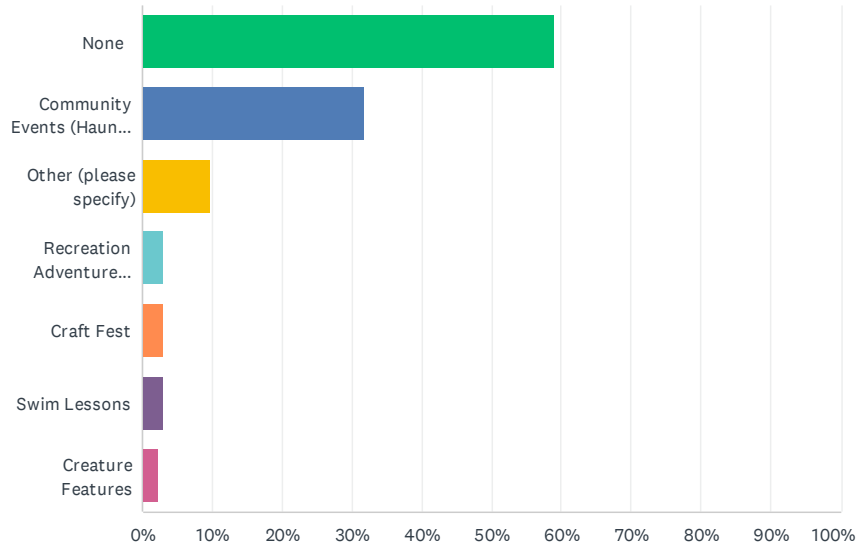
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Home or friend's house	74.71%	130
Team sports	48.28%	84
After-school activities	33.33%	58
Parks	16.09%	28
Work or volunteer activities	14.37%	25
Private clubs activities	8.05%	14
Other (please specify)	6.32%	11
Recreation center	5.17%	9
Total Respondents: 174		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q3 What parks and recreation programs do you participate in? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 173 Skipped: 1



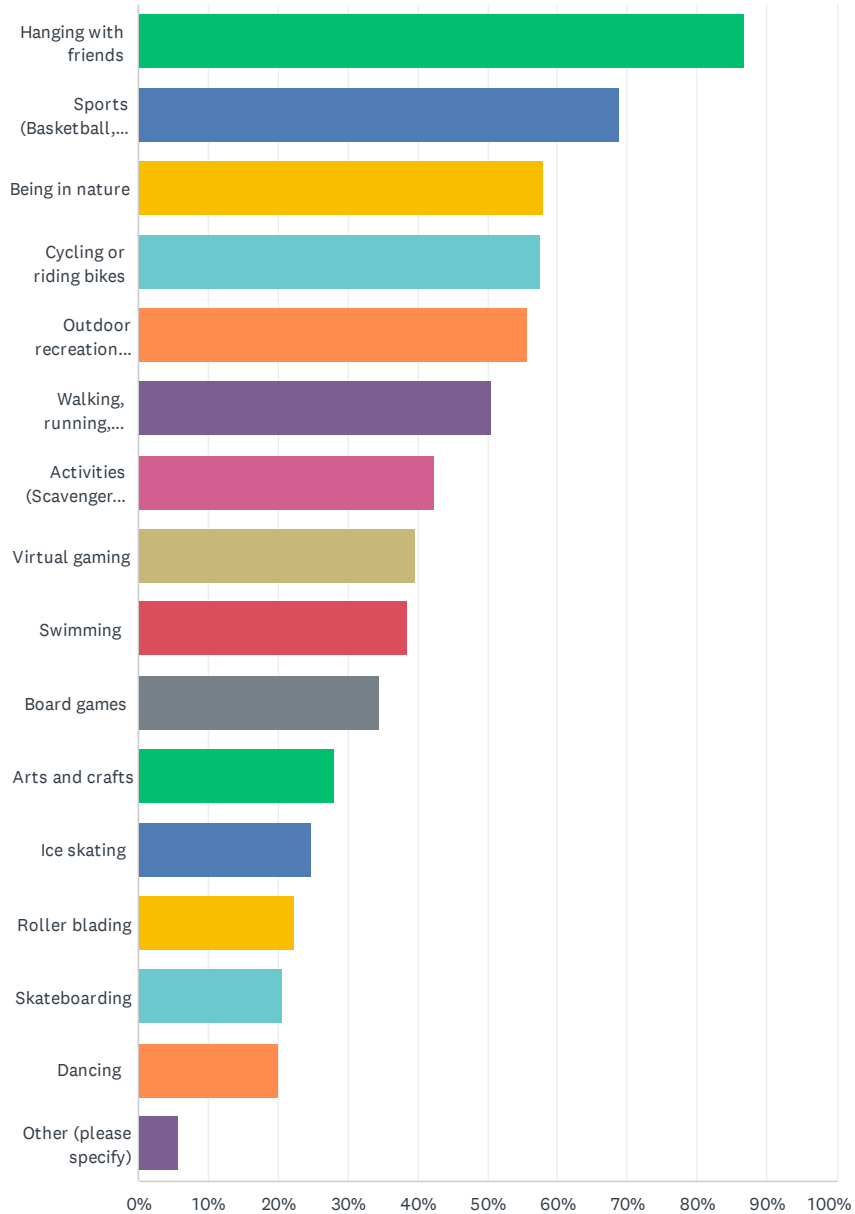
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	58.96%	102
Community Events (Haunted Trail Walk, Concerts, Movie Nights, etc.)	31.79%	55
Other (please specify)	9.83%	17
Recreation Adventure Program	2.89%	5
Craft Fest	2.89%	5
Swim Lessons	2.89%	5
Creature Features	2.31%	4
Total Respondents: 173		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q4 What do you enjoy doing? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

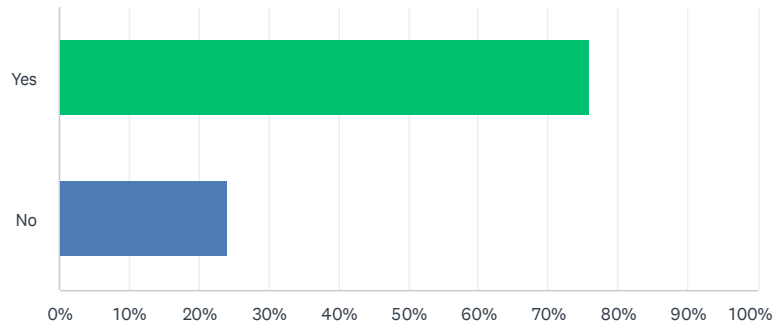
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hanging with friends	86.78%	151
Sports (Basketball, volleyball, soccer, etc.)	68.97%	120
Being in nature	58.05%	101
Cycling or riding bikes	57.47%	100
Outdoor recreation (hiking, fishing, archery, etc.)	55.75%	97
Walking, running, jogging	50.57%	88
Activities (Scavenger hunts, stargazing, water fights, flying kites, etc.)	42.53%	74
Virtual gaming	39.66%	69
Swimming	38.51%	67
Board games	34.48%	60
Arts and crafts	28.16%	49
Ice skating	24.71%	43
Roller blading	22.41%	39
Skateboarding	20.69%	36
Dancing	20.11%	35
Other (please specify)	5.75%	10
Total Respondents: 174		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q5 Would you use or go to teen hangout space? This would be a dedicated space for teens to hangout/socialize, play games, participate in activities/events, etc.

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	75.86%	132
No	24.14%	42
TOTAL		174

TEEN SURVEY

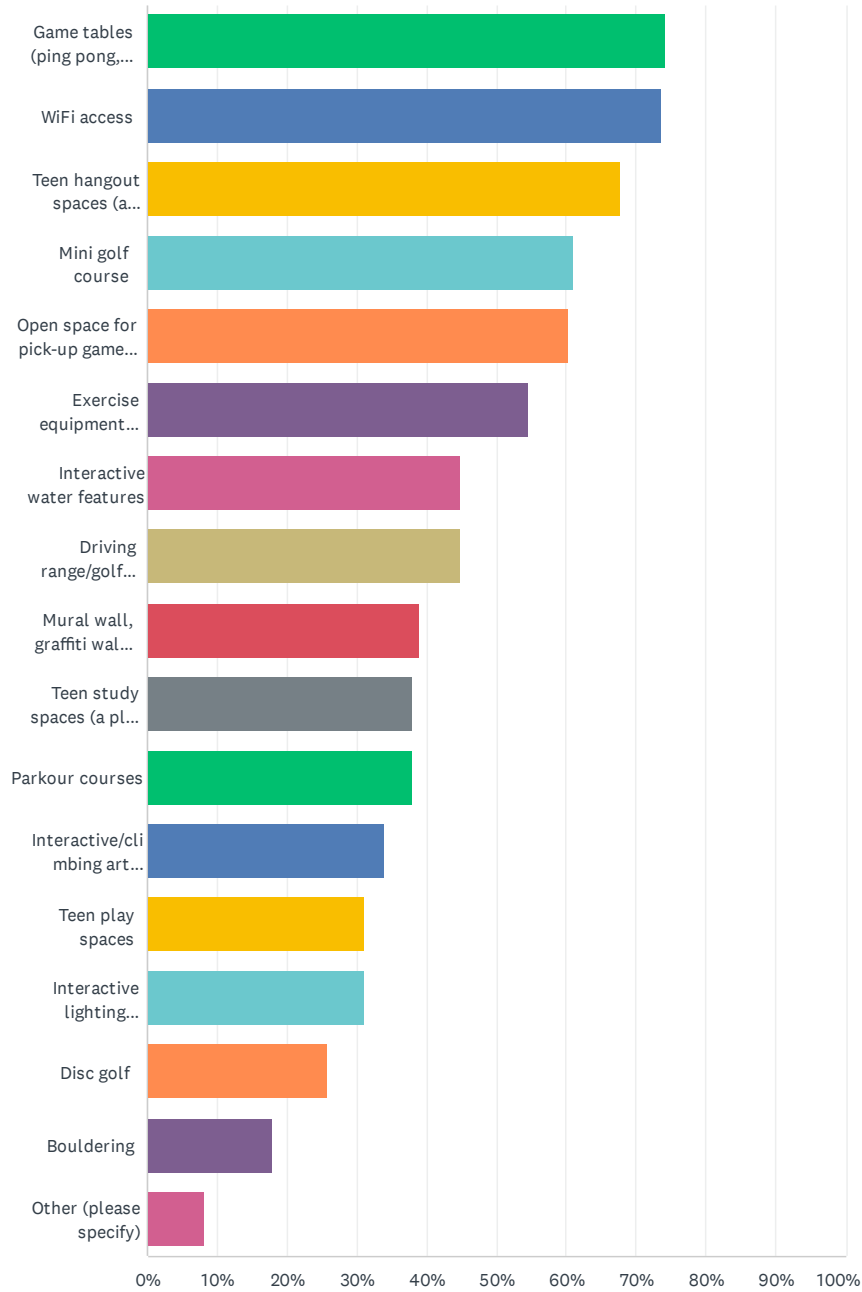
Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q6 What amenities would you like to have in the parks? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey



TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

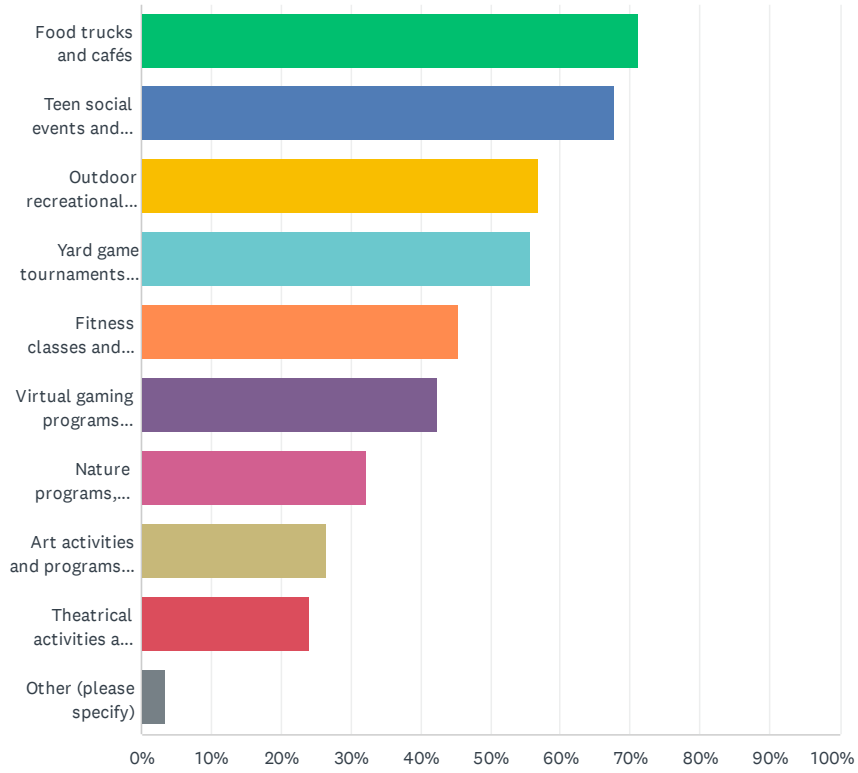
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Game tables (ping pong, pool, foosball, air hockey, etc.)	74.14%	129
WiFi access	73.56%	128
Teen hangout spaces (a dedicated space for teens to hangout/socialize, play games, participate in activities/events, etc.)	67.82%	118
Mini golf course	60.92%	106
Open space for pick-up games (football, soccer, frisbee, etc.)	60.34%	105
Exercise equipment (ninja warrior course or fitness courses)	54.60%	95
Interactive water features	44.83%	78
Driving range/golf target games	44.83%	78
Mural wall, graffiti wall or inspirational chalk board	39.08%	68
Teen study spaces (a place to hang out and complete school work together outside)	37.93%	66
Parkour courses	37.93%	66
Interactive/climbing art sculptures	33.91%	59
Teen play spaces	31.03%	54
Interactive lighting features	31.03%	54
Disc golf	25.86%	45
Bouldering	17.82%	31
Other (please specify)	8.05%	14
Total Respondents: 174		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q7 What activities would you like to see? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

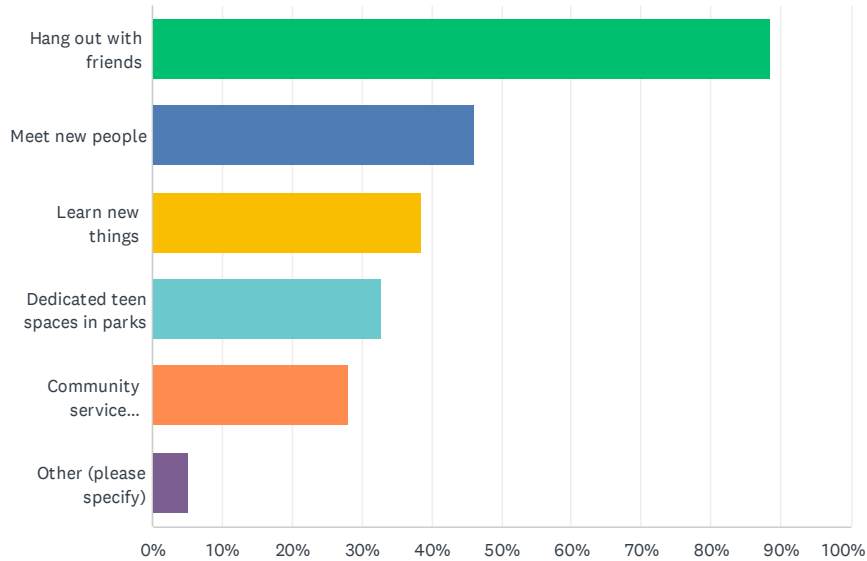
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Food trucks and cafés	71.26%	124
Teen social events and activities (roller skating night, game night, movie night, summer water fights, etc.)	67.82%	118
Outdoor recreational programs (hiking, fishing, archery, etc.)	56.90%	99
Yard game tournaments (cornhole, giant jenga, bucket ball, sand volleyball, etc.)	55.75%	97
Fitness classes and events (5k, ninja warrior competition, yoga, zumba, etc.)	45.40%	79
Virtual gaming programs (Esports, Madden, Super Smash Bros, Mario Kart, etc.)	42.53%	74
Nature programs, activities, and education (stargazing, learning about wildlife and native plants, etc.)	32.18%	56
Art activities and programs (photo contests, art contests, mural painting, how to classes, fashion design, etc.)	26.44%	46
Theatrical activities and programs (Improv, comedy, fashion shows, musical theater, open mic night, talent night, etc.)	24.14%	42
Other (please specify)	3.45%	6
Total Respondents: 174		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q8 What would motivate you to participate in teen programs? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



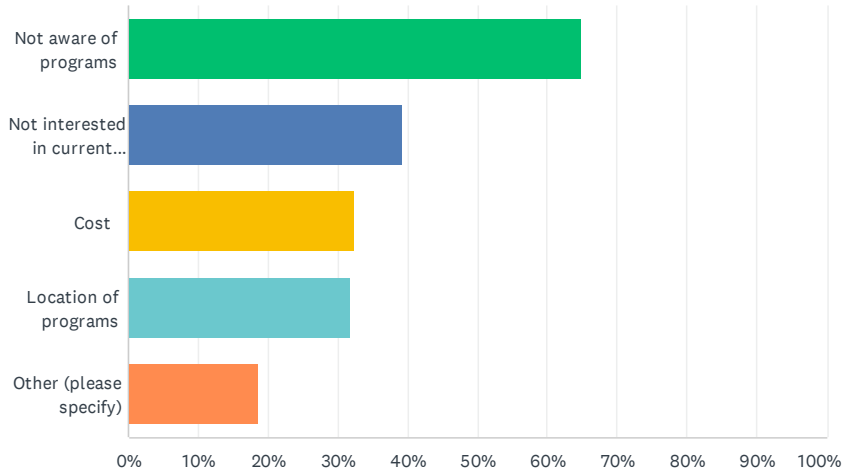
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hang out with friends	88.51%	154
Meet new people	45.98%	80
Learn new things	38.51%	67
Dedicated teen spaces in parks	32.76%	57
Community service opportunities	28.16%	49
Other (please specify)	5.17%	9
Total Respondents: 174		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q9 What prevents you from participating in teen programs? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 173 Skipped: 1



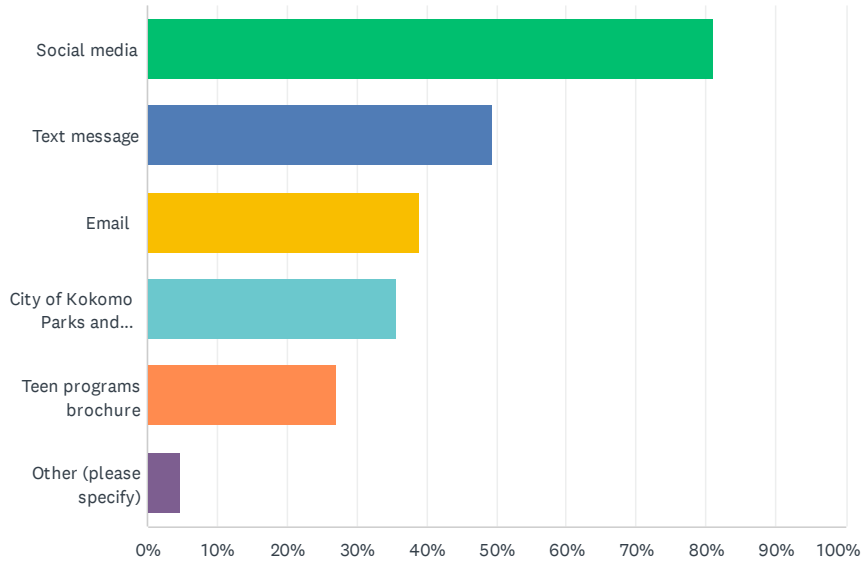
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not aware of programs	64.74%	112
Not interested in current program offerings	39.31%	68
Cost	32.37%	56
Location of programs	31.79%	55
Other (please specify)	18.50%	32
Total Respondents: 173		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q10 How would you like to find information about teen classes and programs? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



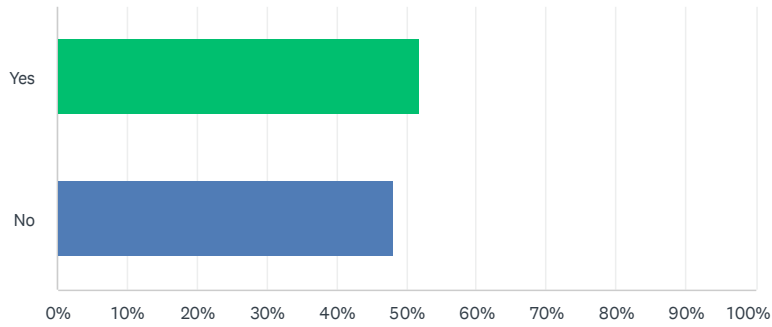
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Social media	81.03%	141
Text message	49.43%	86
Email	39.08%	68
City of Kokomo Parks and Recreation website	35.63%	62
Teen programs brochure	27.01%	47
Other (please specify)	4.60%	8
Total Respondents: 174		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q11 Would you be interested in volunteering opportunities in the parks? This could include opportunities such as cleaning up parks, helping with events, caring for trees within the parks, being a teen ambassador of a park, etc.

Answered: 174 Skipped: 0



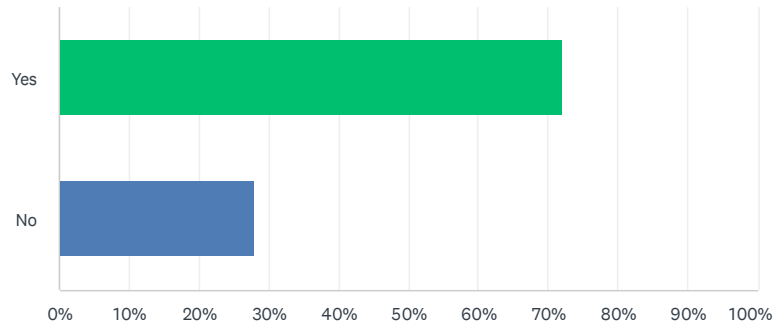
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	51.72%	90
No	48.28%	84
TOTAL		174

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q12 Would you consider a part-time job during the summer with the Kokomo Parks and Recreation? This could include being a lifeguard, working at the concessions, park maintenance, etc.

Answered: 172 Skipped: 2



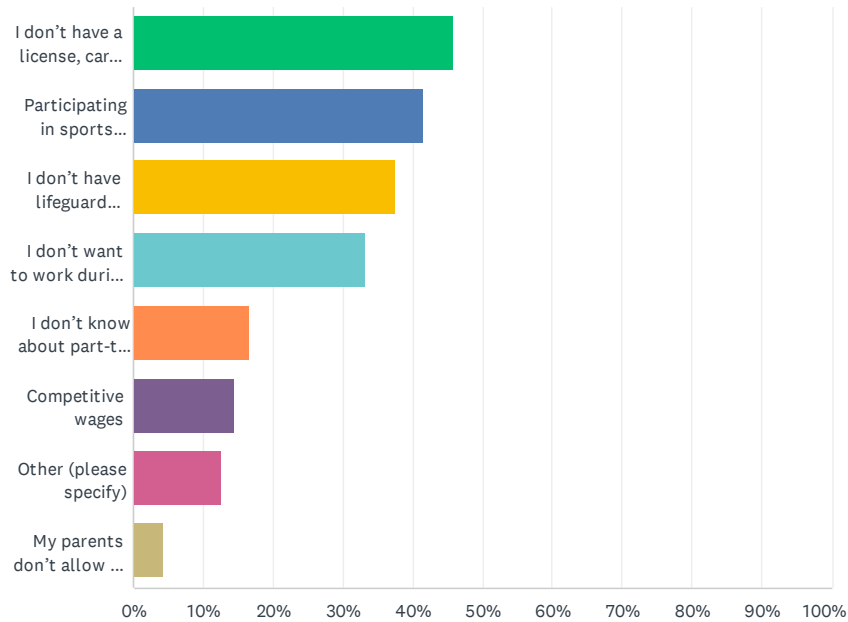
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	72.09%	124
No	27.91%	48
TOTAL		172

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q13 If you answered 'no' to the previous question, what prevents you from considering a part-time job in the summer with Kokomo Parks and Recreation? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 48 Skipped: 126



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I don't have a license, car or access to transportation	45.83%	22
Participating in sports prevents me from having a part-time job in the summer	41.67%	20
I don't have lifeguard certification	37.50%	18
I don't want to work during the summer	33.33%	16
I don't know about part-time job opportunities with Kokomo Parks and Recreation	16.67%	8
Competitive wages	14.58%	7
Other (please specify)	12.50%	6
My parents don't allow me to work	4.17%	2
Total Respondents: 48		

TEEN SURVEY

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Teen Survey

Q14 What else can Kokomo Parks and Recreation do to make you feel welcomed and have a place in the parks?

Answered: 137 Skipped: 37

PUBLIC PRESENTATION ADVERTISEMENTS: CITY OF KOKOMO

 City of Kokomo - City Hall
March 6 · 🌐

Here is your chance to have a voice in the future of our parks.

KOKOMO

PARKS & RECREATION

MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC MEETING #2

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH
FROM 6:00PM TO 7:00PM

WHERE: KOKOMO CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
100 S UNION ST, KOKOMO, IN, 46901

 Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.
March 6 · 🌐

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department will be holding a second public meeting on Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall for our 5-Year Parks and Recreati... [See more](#)

👍 😄 17 7 🗨️ 17 ➡️

👍 Like 💬 Comment

[View more comments](#)

PUBLIC PRESENTATION ADVERTISEMENTS: KPRD

 **Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.**
March 6 · 🌐

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department will be holding a second public meeting on Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall for our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The public is invited to attend and provided feedback on the master plan. A copy of the draft plan can be found on Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department's website located here:
https://cms4.revize.com/.../kok.../departments/our_parks.php


KOKOMO
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC MEETING #2

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH
FROM 6:00PM TO 7:00PM

WHERE: KOKOMO CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
100 S UNION ST, KOKOMO, IN, 46901

5 🌟 32 ➦

👍 Like 💬 Comment

 **Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.**
March 9 · 🌐

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department will be holding a second public meeting on Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall for our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The public is invited to attend and provided feedback on the master plan. A copy of the draft plan can be found on Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department's website located here:
https://cms4.revize.com/.../kok.../departments/our_parks.php

KOKOMO
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC MEETING #2

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH
FROM 6:00PM TO 7:00PM

WHERE: KOKOMO CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
100 S UNION ST, KOKOMO, IN, 46901

3 🌟 6 ➦

👍 Like 💬 Comment

PUBLIC PRESENTATION ADVERTISEMENTS: KPRD

 **Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.**
March 12 · 🌐

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department will be holding a second public meeting on Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall for our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The public is invited to attend and provided feedback on the master plan. A copy of the draft plan can be found on Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department's website located here:
https://cms4.revize.com/.../kok.../departments/our_parks.php

KOKOMO
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC MEETING #2

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH
FROM 6:00PM TO 7:00PM

WHERE: KOKOMO CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
100 S UNION ST, KOKOMO, IN, 46901

1 📌 1 ➦

👍 Like 💬 Comment

 **Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.**
March 15 at 11:00 AM · 🌐

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department will be holding a second public meeting on Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall for our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The public is invited to attend and provided feedback on the master plan. A copy of the draft plan can be found on Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department's website located here:
https://cms4.revize.com/.../kok.../departments/our_parks.php

KOKOMO
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC MEETING #2

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH
FROM 6:00PM TO 7:00PM

WHERE: KOKOMO CITY HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
100 S UNION ST, KOKOMO, IN, 46901

👍❤️😂 4 1 🗨️ 3 ➦

👍 Like 💬 Comment

PUBLIC PRESENTATION ADVERTISEMENTS: KPRD

 **Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.**
 March 18 at 1:30 PM · 🌐

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department will be holding a second public meeting on Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall for our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The public is invited to attend and provided feedback on the master plan. A copy of the draft plan can be found on Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department's website located here:
https://cms4.revize.com/.../kok.../departments/our_parks.php

KOKOMO
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC MEETING #2

WHEN: **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH**
 FROM 6:00PM TO 7:00PM

WHERE: **KOKOMO CITY HALL**
 COUNCIL CHAMBERS
 100 S UNION ST, KOKOMO, IN, 46901

👍👎 3 1 ➦

👍 Like 💬 Comment

 **Kokomo Parks & Recreation Dept.**
 March 20 at 9:00 AM · 🌐

Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department will be holding a second public meeting on Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm at City Hall for our 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The public is invited to attend and provided feedback on the master plan. A copy of the draft plan can be found on Kokomo Parks and Recreation Department's website located here:
https://cms4.revize.com/.../kok.../departments/our_parks.php

KOKOMO
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN | PUBLIC MEETING #2

WHEN: **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH**
 FROM 6:00PM TO 7:00PM

WHERE: **KOKOMO CITY HALL**
 COUNCIL CHAMBERS
 100 S UNION ST, KOKOMO, IN, 46901

👍 2 1 ➦

👍 Like 💬 Comment

PUBLIC PRESENTATION SIGN-IN SHEETS



ENGINEERING

Confidence in the built environment

135 N. Pennsylvania, Suite 2800
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

www.hwcengineering.com

Please Sign In!

Kokomo Parks & Recreation Master Plan – Public Presentation

Kokomo City Hall

March 20th, 2024 at 6:00pm

	Name	Email
1.	Cathy Stover	Cathyastover@yahoo.com
2.	Josh Winchester	JWinchester@cityofkokomo.org
3.	Alice Gollner	
4.	HOWARD GOLLNER	
5.	Shakti Sircle	
6.	Don Spell	
7.	RICK HOMKES	RLHOMKES@GMAIL.COM
8.	Trina Evans	tevanse.khcapl.org
9.	Brad Evans	
10.	Junda Alvir	
11.	Chris Alvir	
12.	Rebecca + Alex Larvas	rweiravc@gmail.com
13.	Stephanie Carrell	gruvysteph@gmail.com
14.	BOB SHAPPELL	BOBBSHAPPELL@gmail.com
15.		
16.		
17.		
18.		
19.		
20.		
21.		
22.		
23.		
24.		
25.		

PUBLIC PRESENTATION COMMENT CARDS

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

*Access to (Cameleon)
2 lights, lights, low
The backfield courts
@ Bon Air would be
wonderful!*

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Nature Explorer - Nature Play

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

*I would love to see side walks
or walking paths to connect
neighborhoods to the south branch
library. I live in the Highland Springs
neighborhood.
I would also love to see restrooms
or a port a potty put in at
Waterworks park.*

*1/2
(Bank)*

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

*Turn Regional - Connector to Frankfort
Developer include sidewalks + pocket parks*

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

*LIGHTS AT BON AIR
PICKLEBALL COURTS*

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

Thank you for your input!

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

*I suggest having stompwalk
signs at multiple park locations.*

*The library would/could collaborate
to charge out the stompwalk
months! Trina Evans - Head of
Children's Services @KHCP*

Thank you for your input!
telusa@khcp.org/765-628-0824

KOKOMO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING: MARCH 20th, 2024 @ 6:00PM

COMMENT CARD

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS HERE:

*① Connect Trail from UTC Park to Highland
Park. Go around soccer field down to old
PK bridge over Kokomo Creek in Highland
Park. ② Connect Trail at Markland Ave
to trail around Soccer Field to the East.
③ Pickleball courts at Markly Park, would
be in the shade which players love.
Jackson Morrow is in the Sun and windy for
Pickleball*

Thank you for your input!

*I would also love to see a splash
pad put in at Jackson Morrow
or Highland Park.*

*I am impressed with the new
walking paths to Jackson Morrow.
Also my son is loving the
new playground at Highland
Park. Thank you!*

2/2

PUBLIC PRESENTATION STORYWALK RESOURCES

FORM NUMBER

StoryWalk® Solutions Quote Request

Angled Aluminum Post Mount (SWPWP182445B)

Storywalk® Solutions aluminum post and aluminum frame, black texture powder coat, for panel 18hx24w, 45 degree display angle. Frame installs to (1) provided aluminum post, includes (2) 18"x24" pieces of acrylic for page display, and hardware kit. Frame can contain up to ¼" thick materials including the acrylic.

NAME

Lori Seaman

COMPANY NAME

KHCPL Russiaville

PHONE

(765) 883-5112

ADDRESS

315 Mesa St.
Russiaville, Indiana 46979
United States

WILL YOUR ORDER SHIP TO SAME ADDRESS AS PROVIDED ABOVE?

- Yes

SHIPPING ADDRESS

315 Mesa St.
Russiaville, Indiana 46979
United States

IS THE SHIPPING ADDRESS EQUIPPED WITH A FORKLIFT OR LOADING DOCK?

No

EMAIL

lseaman@khcpl.org

Estimate

Product	Qty	Unit Price	Price
Aluminum Post Mount	18	\$302.82	\$5,450.76
Volume Discount	18	-\$30.28	-\$545.04

Accepted by: _____

Date Accepted: _____

ALL OR SOME OF THE FOLLOWING ACCESSORIAL SERVICES MAY APPLY DEPENDING ON DELIVERY ADDRESS:

- LIMITED ACCESS CHARGE
- LIFTGATE SERVICE
- RESIDENTIAL DELIVERY - TRUCK SHIPMENT
- NOTIFY BEFORE DELIVERY

DELIVERY CAPABILITIES MUST BE VERIFIED AT TIME OF ORDER

PUBLIC PRESENTATION STORYWALK RESOURCES

SWPWP1824-45B Shipping under 20	1	\$630.00	\$630.00
		Total	\$5,535.72

Accepted by: _____

Date Accepted: _____

ALL OR SOME OF THE FOLLOWING ACCESSORIAL SERVICES MAY APPLY DEPENDING ON DELIVERY ADDRESS:

- LIMITED ACCESS CHARGE
- LIFTGATE SERVICE
- RESIDENTIAL DELIVERY - TRUCK SHIPMENT
- NOTIFY BEFORE DELIVERY

DELIVERY CAPABILITIES MUST BE VERIFIED AT TIME OF ORDER.

TERMS ARE 50% DOWN PAYMENT WITH SIGNED ESTIMATE. BALANCE NET 10 DAYS AFTER SHIPPING

PUBLIC PRESENTATION STORYWALK RESOURCES

STORYWALK SOLUTIONS

StoryWalk® Solutions Quote Request

Angled Wood Post Mount (SW-1824-45B)

Storywalk® Solutions wood post mounted, black texture powder coated, aluminum frame for panel 18hx24w, 45 degree display angle. Frame installs to (1) customer provided treated wood post with spax screws and hardware kit, includes (2) 18"x24" pieces of acrylic for page display. Frame can contain up to ¼" thick materials including the acrylic.

NAME

Lori Seaman

COMPANY NAME

KHCPL Russiaville

PHONE

(765) 883-5112

ADDRESS

315 Mesa St.
Russiaville, Indiana 46979
United States

WILL YOUR ORDER SHIP TO SAME ADDRESS AS PROVIDED ABOVE?

- Yes

SHIPPING ADDRESS

315 Mesa St.
Russiaville, Indiana 46979
United States

IS THE SHIPPING ADDRESS EQUIPPED WITH A FORKLIFT OR LOADING DOCK?

No

EMAIL

lseaman@khcpl.org

Estimate

Product	Qty	Unit Price	Price
Wood Post Mount	18	\$234.20	\$4,215.60
Volume Discount	18	-\$23.42	-\$421.56

Accepted by: _____

Date Accepted: _____

ALL OR SOME OF THE FOLLOWING ACCESSORIAL SERVICES MAY APPLY DEPENDING ON DELIVERY ADDRESS:

- LIMITED ACCESS CHARGE
- LIFTGATE SERVICE
- RESIDENTIAL DELIVERY - TRUCK SHIPMENT
- NOTIFY BEFORE DELIVERY

DELIVERY CAPABILITIES MUST BE VERIFIED AT TIME OF ORDER

PUBLIC PRESENTATION STORYWALK RESOURCES

SW-1824-45B Shipping under 20	1	\$540.00	\$540.00
		Total	\$4,334.04

Accepted by: _____

Date Accepted: _____

ALL OR SOME OF THE FOLLOWING ACCESSORIAL SERVICES MAY APPLY DEPENDING ON DELIVERY ADDRESS:

- LIMITED ACCESS CHARGE
- LIFTGATE SERVICE
- RESIDENTIAL DELIVERY - TRUCK SHIPMENT
- NOTIFY BEFORE DELIVERY

DELIVERY CAPABILITIES MUST BE VERIFIED AT TIME OF ORDER

TERMS ARE 50% DOWN PAYMENT WITH SIGNED ESTIMATE, BALANCE NET 10 DAYS AFTER SHIPPING

PUBLIC PRESENTATION STORYWALK RESOURCES

StoryWalk® Exhibits



An exciting new way to learn

The love of reading and spending time outdoors come together with Pannier's durable and interactive StoryWalk® Exhibits! Install the exhibits along an outdoor path to promote learning and fun as families walk and read together.



StoryWalk® Exhibits open to switch stories, helping to keep viewers engaged. We also offer a wide variety of Backer Panels that can be customized specifically for your library.



Contact Pannier for more info
Scan the QR code or call us at
724-265-4900 to get started!
www.panniergraphics.com/storywalk

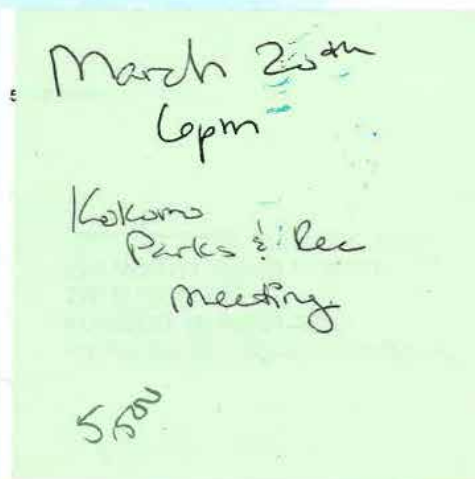
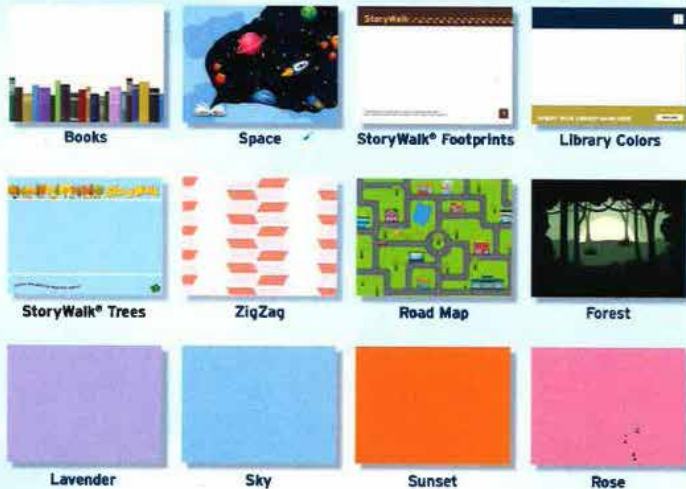
PUBLIC PRESENTATION STORYWALK RESOURCES

Backer Panels



Customize your StoryWalk®

Backer Panels function as the perfect background for the story on display. Choose from a wide variety of designs from solid colors and fun patterns to library-specific branding and nature scenes. View more options on our website!



PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NATRONA HEIGHTS, PA
PERMIT NO. 70

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



Introductions



Rebecca Mahoney
Project Manager



Catherine Puckett
Studio Lead

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



Agenda

- What is a park and recreation master plan?
- Park Inventory
- Public Input Summary
- Plan Recommendations
- Public Comment

**what is a parks &
recreation master plan?**

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

a written framework for future action, and acts as a guide for sensible facility, program and service development

**reasons
for
creating
a master
plan**

- Improve funding opportunities
- Provide opportunities for the community to share feedback
- Ensure the public wants the facilities that are developed
- Share information about programming and facilities with the public
- Gives the parks and recreation department a clear direction for the future

plan methodology & development



Phase 1
Inventory & Data Collection

January 2023 to December 2023



Phase 2
Research & Analysis



Phase 3
Results & Recommendations

January 2024 to Now

park inventory

An inventory of existing parks, facilities, and trails are collected to understand what facilities you currently have and what condition those facilities are in. Then the inventory is further examined in comparison to national trends.



... and much more!

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

public input

Public input is gathered through a variety of methods including a public survey, a teen survey, stakeholder interviews, public events and public meetings. All input is included in the plan document and inform the goals and recommendations of the plan.



stakeholder interview summaries

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

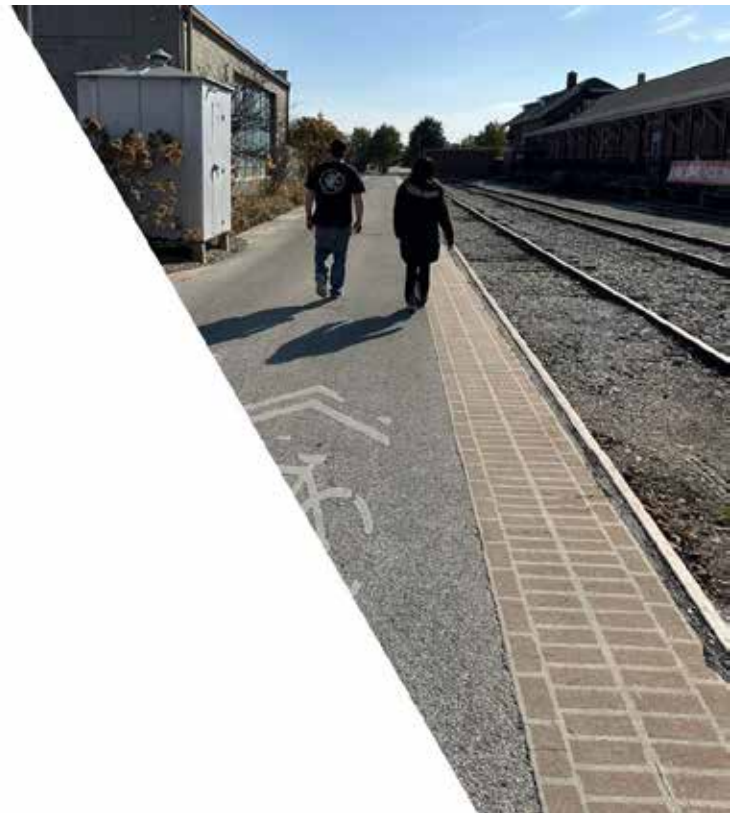


stakeholder interviews

- Stakeholder interviews were held May 17th, 19th, and 23rd via phone or virtual calls
- A total **4 individuals/groups** were interviewed
- Stakeholders represented life-long residents, active seniors, avid park users, city council representative, a local teen who serves as a park liaison, and past parks superintendent

strengths

- Adequate, updated playgrounds accommodating a variety of age groups
- High quality pool facility
- Excellent trails system and riverwalk
- Well used skate park
- Diverse programming and events
- Safe and maintained parks



PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

opportunities

- More pickleball and tennis courts
- Renovation of tennis courts
- Expansion of program offerings
- Higher level of maintenance beyond mowing and mulch replacement
- More splash pads closer to other parts of community
- Teen focused amenities
- More nodes along trails with exercise equipment or other amenities



staff interviews key takeaways:

- Maintenance is manageable, but could achieve more with increased manpower
- Vandalism is an ongoing issue
- Expansion of the surveillance system is desired
- Programs and events are well attended and diverse
- Need for more teen and nature-focused programs
- Potential need for increased staff due to programming requests

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



staff interviews long term objectives:

- If park facilities expand to meeting a growing population, additional parks staff and space for operations will be needed to meet maintenance and programming demands
- Focus on organizational infrastructure of department to set up staff for future success
- Focus on upgrading smaller parks

survey summaries

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



public survey

- A public survey with 22 questions was developed and distributed online. There were a total of **1,515** responses.

teen survey

- A teen survey with 14 questions was developed and distributed online. There were a total of **174** responses.

Both surveys were open for over 4 months from April 6th, 2023 to August 15th, 2023

top 5 park facilities: public survey

- 1** Highland Park (80%)
- 2** Jackson Morrow Park (77%)
- 3** Foster Park (61%)
- 4** Kokomo Beach Family Aquatic Center (42%)
- 5** Kokomo Municipal Stadium (34%)



PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



least used facilities: public survey

- 1 Robbins Estate A Park (0.7%)
- 2 Robbins Estate B Park (0.7%)
- 3 Robbins Estate C Park (0.7%)
- 4 Meridian Park (0.9%)
- 5 Riley Park (0.9%)

top 5 activities: public survey

- 1 Walking/ Jogging/Exercise (84%)
- 2 Time with Family & Friends (62%)
- 3 Playground (61%)
- 4 Picnicking (45%)
- 5 Special Events & Festivals (44%)



PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



top reasons for not using parks: public survey

- 1 Safety (46%)
- 2 Lack of Restrooms (38%)
- 3 Outdated Amenities (34%)
- 4 Lack of Awareness (20%)
- 5 Too Far From Home (16%)



top 5 programming needs: public survey

- 1 Community Events (55%)
- 2 Hobby/Interest Classes (50%)
- 3 Outdoor Recreation (50%)
- 4 Nature Programs (39%)
- 5 Fitness Classes (37%)

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



top 5 desired capital improvement projects: public survey

- 1 Update/add playground equipment (38%)
- 2 Add splash pads/spray grounds (37%)
- 3 Update/add lighting to parks (36%)
- 4 Add trails for walking/jogging/biking (36%)
- 5 Add nature trails (31%)



teen survey

popular activities:

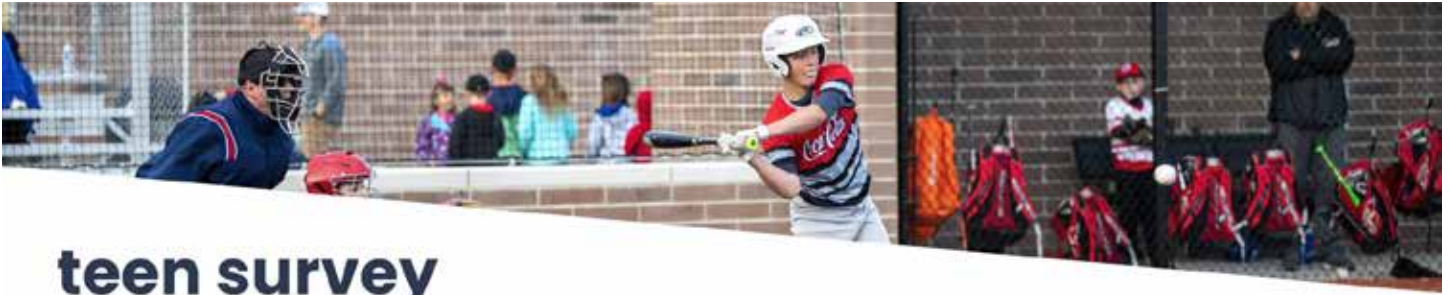
- 1 Hanging Out with Friends (87%)
- 2 Sports (69%)
- 3 Being in Nature (58%)
- 4 Cycling or Riding Bikes (58%)
- 5 Outdoor Recreation (56%)

participation in parks and recreation programs:

- 1 None (59%)
- 2 Community Events (32%)
- 3 Other (10%)

"other" answers included various sports and skate parks

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



teen survey

potential amenities:

- 1 Game Tables (75%)
- 2 Wifi Access (74%)
- 3 Teen Hangout Spaces (68%)
- 4 Mini Golf Course (61%)
- 5 Open Space for Pick Up Games (60%)

potential activities:

- 1 Food Trucks & Cafes (72%)
- 2 Teen Social Events & Activities (68%)
- 3 Outdoor Recreational Programs (57%)
- 4 Yard Game Tournaments (56%)
- 5 Fitness Classes & Events (45%)



teen survey

potential motivations for participation:

- 1 Hang Out with Friends (89%)
- 2 Meet New People (46%)
- 3 Learn New Things (39%)
- 4 Dedicated Teen Spaces in Parks (33%)
- 5 Community Service Opportunities (28%)

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

public meeting summary

On July 31st, 2023, over 70 people attended the first public meeting. Attendees had an opportunity to discuss what they enjoyed about Kokomo Parks and Recreation offerings and what they would like to see in the future.

public meeting: strengths

- Trail system
- Koko Go Bike Share
- Pickleball Courts at Bon Air Park
- Band Concerts
- Good variety of parks and activities



PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

public meeting: opportunities

- New and improved pickleball courts
- Indoor recreation facility
- Improved lighting/security
- Fishing opportunities
- More splash pads
- Winter recreation
- More park amenities (benches, tables, trash receptacles)



public meeting: points of concern

- Need more pickleball courts
- Need for more lighting and security
- Lack of restrooms/maintenance of restrooms
- Park maintenance
- Need for more drinking fountains



PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

needs analysis summary:

Another aspect of the planning process is to research and review a series of industry recognized parks and recreation trends and benchmarks to establish a baseline for the types of services and facilities which are currently in demand.



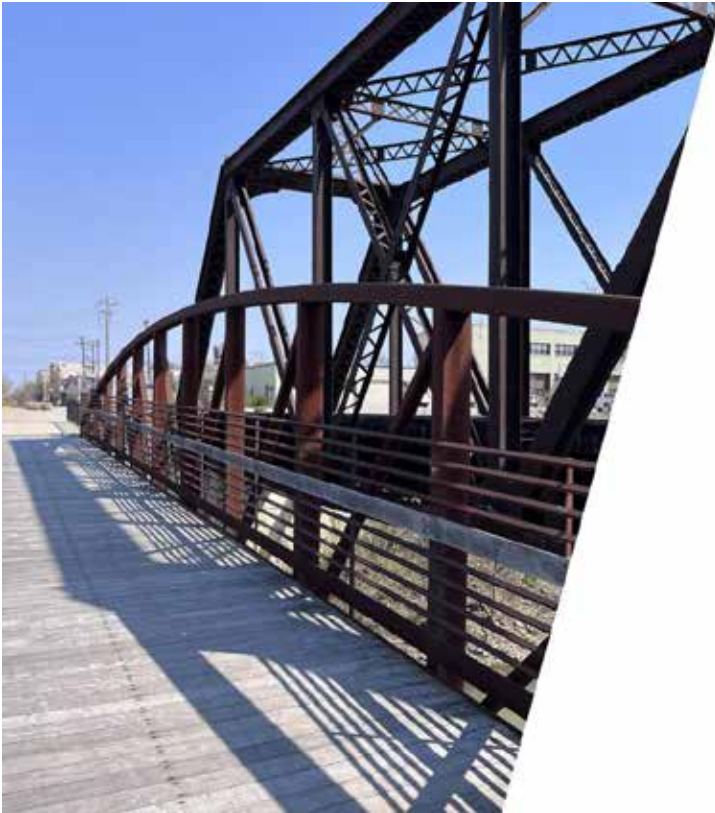
DNR

Indiana Department of Natural Resources



Reviewed publications are from Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), National Recreation and Park Association (NPR), and the Trust for Public Land (TPL)

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



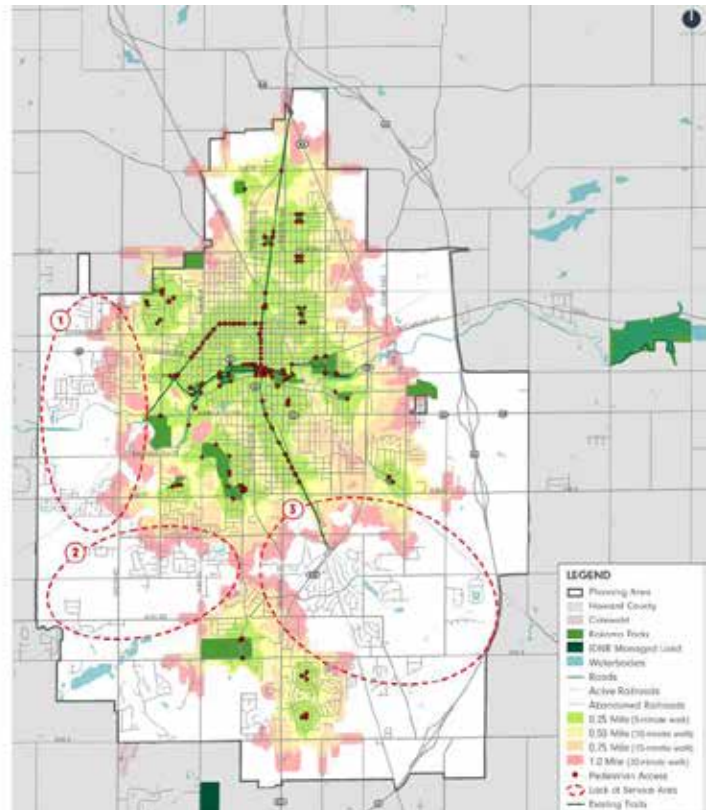
your community is unique!

It is important to note that the benchmarks reviewed are just an inventory and review of data for comparison. There is **not a “one size fits all”** approach to parks and recreation planning. Each community has **unique** needs, desires, and challenges, and future planning should reflect this.

walkability map

there are 3 areas that lack service in the community

- The map identifies three areas lacking park and recreation services: one in the west (Area 1), one in the southwest (Area 2), and another in the southeast (Area 3), all with residential housing.
- Area 1: Mainly housing, farmland/open space, and a quarry south of Wildcat Creek. Recommendations include extending the Cloverleaf Trail for recreation and/or acquiring property near existing housing to establish a future park.
- Area 2: Mainly housing and farmland/open space. Recommendations include adding a trail connecting Highland Park to Jackson Morrow Park via Webster Street and/or acquiring property in the northern area near existing housing for future park development.
- Area 3: Mostly housing and farmland/open space. Recommendations include acquiring property in the northern area near existing housing for future park establishment and/or extending the Industrial Heritage trail southeast to link it with the overall trail system.



PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

plan recommendations and goals



goal 1

FOCUS ON IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY IN THE PARKS

- Add inclusive playground to main park such as Foster Park
- Designated accessible parking
- Add accessible routes from accessible parking to park amenities
- Update playground surfacing
- Conduct an ADA Evaluation of parks and programming

goal 2

INVEST IN THE PARKS DEPARTMENT STAFF

- Add 10 full-time staff to the KPRD team
- Assess organizational chart to establish more management positions as department grows
- Increase pay for salaried positions to attract and retain talent
- Encourage staff to stay/be rewarded as they increase responsibilities/experience
- Hire specialty positions such as a horticulturalist or arborist to increase quality, efficiency, beautification of parks and landscape

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



goal 4

goal 3

PRIORITIZE IMPROVEMENTS IN LESS PROMINENT PARKS

- Bon Air Park
- Cutler Park
- Huston Park
- Mehling Park
- Mendota Park
- Reservoir Park

CATER NEW FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING TO TEENS

- Develop teen social spaces
- Expand free WiFi from downtown to park spaces
- Involve teens in the popular Easter Egg Hunt event
- Add E/Sports and/or E/Gaming programming
- Incentivize a private business to establish zip-lining/kayak/SUP/paddleboats rentals within an existing park or the riverwalk
- Rent a portable mini-golf course for a weekend and program a teen night
- Develop teen positions on staff year-round (tree tenders/nature camp counselors)
- Evaluate the need for an indoor teen center



goal 5

PLAN FOR FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH

- Evaluate properties for future expansion of parks system acreage in areas that lack service. Look for large plots of land 40+ acres in size if possible.
- Evaluate current park properties, specifically small parks such as the Robbins parks, and determine if properties could be relinquished or repurposed so KPRD can better allocate resources.
- Develop a plan to increase parks staff and budget proportionally to facilities increase.
- Continue development of existing trail system.

goal 6

EXTEND "LOVED" FACILITIES TO ALL QUADRANTS OF THE CITY

- Splash pads
- Updated playgrounds
- Toddler areas
- Trails
- Dog Parks
- Net games

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT



goal 7

RE-IMAGINE OLD BASEBALL & SOFTBALL PARKS

- Develop a vision for Cutler Park and Highland Park old diamond fields such as concessions.

goal 8

IMPROVE AND EXPAND “NET GAMES” FACILITIES

- Renovate existing sports courts at parks such as Cutler Park, Highland Park, and Studebaker Park.
- Add new facilities to Jackson Morrow Park and Future Park
- Northwest Park: Use art project to screen old tennis courts turned storage facility.



goal 9

EXPERIMENT NEW WAYS TO COMBAT VANDALISM

- Try a “vandal proof” restroom facility in one location
- Continue partnership with Kokomo Police Department and provide more direct patrols of the park with capacity allows.
- Expand security cameras system to high vandal areas where infrastructure allows.
- Continue to increase lighting along trails and in parks.

goal 10

“AMENITIZE” EXISITING TRAILS AND PARKS TO INCREASE USAGE/ IMPROVE SAFETY

- Add restrooms in parks and along trails
- Add nodes for exercise/rest/rotating artwork along trails and walking paths in parks.
- Add shade shelters and shade trees to parks
- Add drinking fountains to targeted areas in parks such as near sports courts and playgrounds.
- Add doggie fountains and accessible seating areas for owners in dog parks

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

goal 11

EMPHASIZE NATURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN FACILITIES/ PROGRAMMING

- As new acreage is added to the park system, make acreage natural parkland.
 - ◆ Restore environments such as forests, prairie and wetlands
 - ◆ Add amenities such as nature trails, overlooks, shelters, disc golf, etc.
 - ◆ Offer outdoor recreation programming such as hiking, fishing, etc.
- Develop a “playcosystem” as a part of the nature center improvements in Jackson Morrow Park or a new park.
- Increase environmental education programming.



tennis & pickleball updates

- Removing tennis and pickleball courts in Foster Park due to flooding damaging the surfacing of courts.
- Adding or renovating 20 pickleball courts to various parks throughout Kokomo.
- Adding or renovating 10 tennis courts at various parks throughout Kokomo.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION POWERPOINT

**whats
next?**

- Incorporate feedback from this public meeting into the plan
- Master plan to be adopted by the Parks Board
- Master plan to be submitted to Indiana DNR by April 15th

**public
comment**



ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES

Some notes on accessibility, again this list is not expansive:

- Accessible parking needs to be signed & marked and on a accessible surface (gravel is not an accessible surface).
- If accessible routes from park entrances and/or accessible parking are not present to accessible park amenities and facilities, then those park amenities and facilities are not actually accessible.
- Maximum slope percentages for paths (without requiring handrails and landings) is 5%.
- Accessible paths should be a minimum 5 feet wide, no gaps greater than ½", "firm and stable" surface, minimum grades and cross slopes, etc.
- In order for playgrounds to be accessible, not only does there need to be an accessible route to the playground, but it also needs accessible surfacing underneath it. Ordinary wood mulch, gravel, sand, dirt, grass, or pea gravel are not ADA-compliant. The safety surfacing needs to meet ASTM F1951-99 "firm and stable", and ASTM F1292-99 "impact attenuating" standards. It should also connect the accessible route to an accessible mini-ramp or gap through any surrounding perimeter mulch/safety surface barrier, railroad ties, or landscape timbers to provide access all the way to the play area safety surfacing from the accessible route.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: ADA NATIONAL NETWORK



National Network

Information, Guidance and Training on the
Americans with Disabilities Act

Call us toll-free
1-800-949-4232 V/TTY
Find your regional center
at www.adata.org

For the most current and accessible version, please visit
<https://adainfo.us/DisabilityDefinition>

How is Disability Defined in the Americans With Disabilities Act?

In the United States, there are different ways of defining disability, both culturally and in our laws. Many organizations and government agencies have different definitions of disability that people must meet before receiving services, financial assistance, or disability benefits. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law that protects the civil rights of people with disabilities. The ADA does not provide benefits or services. Instead, the ADA protects people with disabilities in the United States from discrimination. To be protected under the ADA, a person (including children) must meet its legal definition of disability and be “qualified”. Many state laws provide additional rights beyond the ADA.

The ADA has a specific definition of the term “disability” that establishes the requirements a person must meet to be considered “an individual with a disability under the ADA.” Determining whether you are a person with a disability under the ADA is not always simple. This article explains in detail how the ADA defines “disability” to help you understand how an individual may be protected from discrimination under the law.

What is a Disability Under the ADA?

The ADA defines a person with a disability as someone who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or
- Has a history or *record* of an impairment (such as cancer that is in remission), or
- Is *regarded as* having such an impairment by others even if the individual does not actually have a disability (such as a person who has scars from a severe burn that does not limit any major life activity).

This is a legal definition—not a medical or social justice-related definition. In addition, there is not a registry or a list of medical conditions or disabilities that are protected by the ADA. The intent of the United States Congress was to establish broad protection from discrimination against individuals who may have any medical condition or disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Thus, if your condition meets the criteria stated in the ADA definition, your civil rights are generally protected by the ADA.

To know if you are considered a person with a disability under the ADA, you need to understand what is meant by “a physical or mental impairment,” “substantially limits,” and “major life activities.” In the following sections, we discuss the meaning of these key terms so you can consider whether they apply to you.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: ADA NATIONAL NETWORK



How is Disability Defined in the Americans With Disabilities Act?

What is a Physical or Mental Impairment Under the ADA?

The ADA defines a physical or mental impairment this way:

- Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems, such as: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or
- Any mental or psychological disorder such as intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disability.

The ADA regulations give examples of impairments that are considered disabilities, but it is very clear that “the definition of ‘disability’ shall be construed broadly in favor of expansive coverage.” This means that the examples do not include all possible disabilities. You should always evaluate whether a condition or impairment fits under the ADA definition.

What is a Major Life Activity?

Under the ADA, the definition of a disability requires that impairments substantially limit the ability to perform major life activities. **Major life activities are basic activities that most people can perform with little or no difficulty.** Some examples of major life activities include:

- Actions like eating, sleeping, speaking, and breathing.
- Movements like walking, standing, lifting, and bending.
- Cognitive functions like thinking and concentrating.
- Sensory functions like seeing and hearing.
- Tasks like working, reading, learning, and communicating.
- The operation of major bodily functions like circulation and reproduction.
- The function of individual organs like the heart, lungs, or pancreas.

What Does it Mean to Substantially Limit Major Life Activities?

Once you decide that a person’s impairment affects major life activities, the next step is to assess how much it affects those major life activities. The ADA regulations include rules to help you identify whether there is a substantial limitation of a major life activity. These rules include the following:

- An impairment does not have to limit a major life activity completely or severely for it to be considered substantially limiting. In other words, the limitation can be less than complete or severe.
- Congress intended that the words “substantially limit” be interpreted broadly to result in expansive coverage of people with disabilities under the law.
- Determining whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity requires an individualized assessment. What may not be substantially limiting for one person in one situation may be substantially limiting for another person in another context.

Deciding whether a disability substantially limits a major life activity does not have to be complicated or involve a lot of documentation. A common-sense assessment comparing a person’s ability to complete specific major life activities to the ability of most people is all that is required. For example, most people can walk short distances without assistance or can hear without the use of hearing aids.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: ADA NATIONAL NETWORK



How is Disability Defined in the Americans With Disabilities Act?

An impairment that limited either of these abilities beyond what most people can do would be considered “substantial.”

Example: Two People with Low Vision

Tamra is in his thirties. He has difficulty seeing without glasses and must wear them to see clearly and complete daily tasks. Since wearing glasses or contacts to correct vision impairments is common in the general adult population, Tamra is not considered a person with a disability.

Jean is also in her thirties and has low vision. She wears glasses, but still cannot see clearly and requires assistive technology to use the computer and her smart phone. Jean’s amount of visual difficulty is not typical for her age group. She is considered a person with a disability under the ADA.

How Do You Assess the Impact of an Impairment on Major Life Activities?

People with disabilities often take action to eliminate or reduce the effects of their disabilities. These actions are called “mitigating measures.” Mitigating measures include medications, treatments, assistive technology, hearing aids, wheelchairs, therapies, and much more. A person’s impairment should be assessed on how it impacts major life activities and body systems without using mitigating measures. (There are a few exceptions, such as eyeglasses and contact lenses.)

Example: Mitigating Measures

Bill has diabetes and uses insulin to manage his condition. For Bill, insulin is a “mitigating measure.” Without insulin, Bill’s diabetes would severely limit his major life activities and overall body functions. Bill is a person with a disability under the ADA.

Some impairments have symptoms that are not always present. These types of impairments are called episodic. Some impairments resolve permanently while others go into remission and may return. Whether or not you have a disability under the ADA, is based on the impact of an impairment on major life activities and body functions when symptoms are active. **Even if you do not have active symptoms, you are protected by the ADA if your symptoms meet the definition of disability.**

This applies to impairments that may go into remission, such as cancer. Other examples of impairments that may be episodic or have periods of remission include multiple sclerosis, mood disorders, asthma, seizure disorders, severe migraines, and autoimmune disorders.

Examples: Episodic Conditions and Remission

Marla has multiple sclerosis and uses both a wheelchair and a cane for mobility. Typically, she uses the wheelchair for long distances and the cane for short distances. But when her condition is in remission, she only uses the cane. Some of Marla’s co-workers think she shouldn’t receive accommodations because she doesn’t always use a wheelchair. However, Marla does not have to use a wheelchair daily to be a person with a disability under the ADA and to receive accommodations related to using a wheelchair.

Linn has Seasonal Affective Disorder. His symptoms of depression only affect major life activities at certain times of the year. Because Linn’s condition is long-term and impacts major life activities when present, it is considered a disability under the ADA, even though the condition is not always present.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: ADA NATIONAL NETWORK



How is Disability Defined in the Americans With Disabilities Act?

What Does it Mean to Have a Record of an Impairment?

Some impairments may resolve while others may go into remission. However, people may still experience discrimination because they had these impairments in the past. Sometimes they are not offered certain kinds of work because the employer is concerned that the condition may return. Other times, they are not hired or retained because employers are concerned that their healthcare costs will be too high or that they will have poor attendance in the future. **The ADA covers people who had an impairment in the past.**

Example: Record of Impairment

Tim has been cancer-free for five years and doctors believe he is in complete remission. His employer does not promote him as expected because the employer says the “cancer may come back.” Under the ADA, Tim is protected from discrimination that is based on his history of having a disability.

What Does it Mean to be ‘Regarded as’ Having an Impairment?

Sometimes people do not have a disability, but people believe that they do. If they are discriminated against based on that belief (for example, if they are not hired, or not allowed to participate in a program), they may be able to file a complaint under the ADA.

Example: Regarded As Having an Impairment

Jenna has noticeable burn scars on her face. Her scars have no impact on major life activities. However, Jenna is turned away from a job interview because of her facial scars. The employer believes her “condition will make her unable to work with customers.” Under the ADA, Jenna would be protected from discrimination because her employer regarded her scars as a disabling condition.

Sarah asked to be reassigned to a different warehouse job because of shoulder pain. The company terminated her and told her there were no other jobs available, although one was posted soon after. Under the ADA, Sarah may have a legitimate complaint under the “regarded as” part of the disability definition.

What is Meant by “Qualified Person with a Disability?”

The ADA requires that state governments, local governments, and private businesses ensure that people with disabilities can take part in their programs, services, and activities, if the person with a disability meets eligibility requirements. In other words, having a disability under the ADA does not guarantee protections in all situations. You must also be qualified for the job, activity, service, or program.

For example, employers are only required to provide reasonable accommodations to employees and job applicants who are qualified for the job. In this situation, qualified refers to necessary requirements such as degrees, certifications, skills, training, physical abilities, and experience. Qualified also includes the ability to perform the “essential” or main functions of a job, with or without accommodations. A job applicant who is Deaf may meet the qualifications for one job and request an interpreter during the interview. If the same applicant does not meet the basic education and experience requirements for a second job, the applicant is not able to request an interpreter.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: ADA NATIONAL NETWORK



How is Disability Defined in the Americans With Disabilities Act?

Do I Have a Disability as Defined by the ADA?

As you can see, determining whether you are a person with a disability under the ADA is not always simple. It can help if you ask yourself a few questions:

1. Do I have an impairment that limits a major life activity or body system functions, OR a record of having such an impairment, OR am I regarded as having an impairment?
2. If I have an impairment, does it cause a substantial impact on one or more major life activities or body system functions?
3. Am I qualified for the program, service, activity, or job?

If you have more questions after reading this article, you may want to reach out for information and guidance from the [ADA National Network](#).

You can call 1-800-949-4232 to talk with a specialist who can answer your questions or email: <https://adata.org/email>

Content was developed by the Great Plains ADA Center and the ADA National Network, and is based on professional consensus of ADA experts.



The contents of this factsheet were developed under grants from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90DP0086). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this factsheet do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

© Copyright 2023 ADA National Network. All Rights Reserved.
May be reproduced and distributed freely with attribution to ADA National Network (www.adata.org).

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: IPEMA



Public Playground Accessibility Checklist

1. Public Playgrounds must have an accessible route (206.1-2 Accessible Routes) to the play area at least 60" wide, maximum running slope of 1:20 and maximum cross slope of 1:48 (403.3 Slope). The route to the play area is an accessible route. Minimum width is 36" (403.5.1 Clear Width) and the maximum slope is 1:12 (405.2 Slope). Any running slope over 1:20 or 5% is treated as a ramp with handrails and landings (403.6 Handrails). For further clarification refer to Chapter 4, Accessible Routes, DOJ ADA 2010.
2. Within the play area, the safety surfacing must comply with ASTM F 1292-99 or -04 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment when located within the use zone for proper impact attenuation. All accessible routes within the play area, clear floor or ground spaces at play components required to be accessible and turning spaces must comply with ASTM 1951-99 Standard Specification for Determination of Accessibility of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment (1008.2.6 Ground Surfaces).
3. Within the play area, the accessible route must be at least 60" wide, with a maximum running slope of 1:16, a maximum cross slope of 1:48 and a minimum of 80" overhead clearance. For small play areas of less than 1000 square feet in total size, the accessible route must be at least 44" wide, with a maximum running slope of 1:16, a maximum cross slope of 1:48 and a minimum of 80" overhead clearance. (1008.2 Accessible Routes, 1008.2.4 Clear Width, 1008.2.5 Ramps).
4. Composite play structures that include a transfer system as a means of access must meet the following criteria (1008.3 Transfer Systems):
 - Transfer platform height must be between 11-18" with clear minimum width of 24" and depth of 14"
 - Transfer steps are maximum of 8" high and include handholds to aid movement.
 - Minimum 30" by 48" transfer space must be provided adjacent to the transfer platform. The 48" long minimum dimension of the transfer space shall be centered on and parallel to the 24" long minimum side of the transfer platform. The side of the transfer platform serving the transfer space shall be unobstructed.
5. Composite play structures that include ramps that connect elevated play components as a means of access must meet the following criteria (1008.2.5 Ramps):
 - Elevated ramps must be at least 36" wide, maximum running slope of 1:12 and maximum length of 144" (12inches) before providing a landing.
 - Elevated ramps must include handrails on both sides meeting hand-gripping criteria and with a height between 20-28". Elevated ramps with handrails, barriers beyond the ramp edge and barriers not extending within 1" of the ramp surface must have edge curbing at least 2" high for the entire ramp length. No handrail extensions are required.
 - When elevated ramps change in direction, a minimum 60" diameter level landing must be provided at both the top and the bottom of each run.
6. Elevated ramps and accessible platforms attached at ramp levels shall have no openings on surface greater than 1/2" and vertical change in level less than 1/4" or up to 1/2" with a 2:1 beveled edge (303 Changes in Level).
7. Openings on elevated ramp accessible platforms for access/egress play opportunities must be narrowed to 15" or less. (ASTM F1487-11, Section 7.5.5.2 (1-4)).
8. Advisory Reach ranges for accessible manipulative and interactive sensory and communicative

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: IPEMA



9. Ground level upper body equipment intended for use by a person using a mobility device must be less than 54" above protective surfacing, (ASTM F1487-11, Section 8.3.3).
10. Ground level play tables and components must have a minimum vertical knee clearance of at least 24" high, a minimum depth of at least 17" deep and a minimum width of at least 30". The maximum top of playing surface shall not exceed 31" (1008.4.3 Play Tables).
11. Composite play structures must have elevated accessible routes by ramp and or transfer systems to connect at least 50% of the elevated play components (240.2.2 Elevated Play Components). Large composite play structures with more than 20 elevated play components must have at least 25% of the elevated play components connected by elevated ramps (1008.2.1 Ground Level and Elevated Play Components, Exception 1).
12. Play areas must have the minimum number of accessible play components and types on the accessible routes per the following criteria: Remember it is one of each type at ground level and 50% elevated that must be accessible. The trigger to use the table is for Additional Number and Types. Where elevated play components are provided, ground level play components shall be provided in accordance with Table 240.2.1.2 and shall comply with 1008.4 Play Components.
EXCEPTION: If at least 50 percent of the elevated play components are connected by a ramp and at

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: SCOPING

ADA CHAPTER 2: SCOPING REQUIREMENTS

Table 240.2.1.2 Number and Types of Ground Level Play Components Required to be on Accessible Routes

Number of Elevated Play Components Provided	Minimum Number of Ground Level Play Components Required to be on an Accessible Route	Minimum Number of Different Types of Ground Level Play Components Required to be on an Accessible Route
1	Not applicable	Not applicable
2 to 4	1	1
5 to 7	2	2
8 to 10	3	3
11 to 13	4	3
14 to 16	5	3
17 to 19	6	3
20 to 22	7	4
23 to 25	8	4
26 and over	8, plus 1 for each additional 3, or fraction thereof, over 25	5

least 3 of the elevated play components connected by the ramp are different types of play components, the play area shall not be required to comply with 240.2.1.2 .



INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACE DESIGN

PLANNING GUIDE

slr
landscape
structures®

INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUNDS HELP BUILD COMMUNITIES.

Well-designed inclusive parks and playspaces welcome children of all abilities to play, learn and grow together. But did you know that their benefits extend even further?

UNIVERSAL DESIGN is a process that enables and empowers a diverse population by improving human performance, health and wellness, and social participation.

— *Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDeA Center), University of Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning*

WHY EMBRACE UNIVERSAL DESIGN? Because it benefits everyone regardless of condition. Applying Universal Design does not mean that all the fun and risk of a park and playground are eliminated. Instead, it helps to create a place where all can play, learn and grow together.

Inclusive playgrounds also allow adults of varying ages and abilities to actively engage with the children in their care. The playground thus becomes a truly multigenerational gathering space for community enjoyment, socialization, healthy bodies and imaginative fun.

This guide can help you create an inclusive playground unique to your community, from concept through installation and beyond.

OUR DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

Landscape Structures creates inclusive playgrounds featuring activities that are age and developmentally appropriate, sensory stimulating and universally designed. Our design philosophy is influenced by the tenets of Universal Design, a theory of design that strives to make environments more usable, safer and healthier for all.

Our collaborative process engages your stakeholders, interprets community needs and ultimately results in a responsive design that reflects your vision. To this we apply our extensive experience with inclusive play, infused by our ongoing research into empirical evidence-based best practices.

This process creates a strong foundation for inclusive playground design, incorporating scientific findings into the play experiences themselves as well as the overall design.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES

PARTNER

Start by aligning yourself with like-minded community members.

1. BUILD A STRONG COMMITTEE.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS. Invite people associated with your neighborhood, school, park or city—to join. Be sure to include people with disabilities, as they will be able to contribute a great deal of valuable insight. A multigenerational committee will ensure that you are aware of everyone's needs: kids, parents, grandparents, etc.

2. FORM SPECIALIZED TEAMS WITHIN YOUR COMMITTEE.

BUDGET/FUNDRAISING. The most important considerations are to be both realistic and complete. Once your budget is complete, estimate the portions of that budget that will likely be funded by the following sources:

- ___ % parks and rec
- ___ % city government
- ___ % private donations/fundraising
- ___ % foundation grants

PUBLICITY. Distribute information about the inclusive playground development process to the community through the press, special events, mailings and a website.

RESEARCH. Gather information on inclusive playgrounds and your community needs that you can use to support your efforts.

DESIGN. Collaborate with community members and city authorities to design the best inclusive playground for your site and specific purposes.

CONSTRUCTION/INSTALLATION. Coordinate volunteers for construction and installation duties.

3. START FUNDRAISING.

This can vary somewhat depending on the size and geography of your community, but here is a short list of proven sources.

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS. Parents, neighbors, churches and local businesses.

LOCAL AND STATE FOUNDATIONS. Grants from corporate foundations and local non-profit groups are an excellent source of capital for causes that benefit kids. Your parks and recreation department will also be able to tell you if your state offers recreation grants. Landscape Structures offers a helpful grant guide that can get you started.

CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS. Check with the Kiwanis, Jaycees, Rotary, Lions and Optimist chapters in your city. They often make donations for causes such as yours, and may even host fundraising events of their own on behalf of your playground.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS. You can reduce the need for financial donations by raising in-kind donations for materials, labor, equipment and supplies. Perhaps a local landscaping company will contribute trees, shrubs and labor, or a printer will donate the printing of your fundraising flyers.

ACTIVITIES. One of the best sources of funding will come from fundraising events that your committee will host. Try to find several people at local schools or churches who have fundraising event experience and ask for their help. Consider events such as door-to-door solicitations, silent auctions, car washes, raffles, gift bricks, etc. Get creative and have fun!

EDUCATE

You don't have to become an expert. Consult with them, instead.

1. ASK LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES.

Leverage our deep knowledge of inclusive play. We will apply our evidenced-based best practices and extensive design expertise to create the best play experiences for the most people.

2. CONNECT WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

When you include people with disabilities as part of your committee and/or planning process, you will glean real-world perspectives on everyday issues that typically-abled people do not routinely consider.

3. USE THIS INSIGHT TO DEFINE AND REFINE YOUR PROJECT.

Pair expert recommendations with the wishes of your community, and you've got a winning solution.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES

DESIGN: THE PLAYGROUND

Our extensive experience with inclusive play, blended with the philosophy of Universal Design, has resulted in a process that builds a strong foundation for inclusive playground design.

1. PLAY EXPERIENCE. Playgrounds can offer many opportunities for children to further develop physical, cognitive, sensory and social skills. An inclusive design includes a balance of play experiences to build all these skills.

SENSORY STIMULATION. All children are attracted to sensory activities. A sensory-rich inclusive play environment can bring children together while providing each one with the sensory experiences they seek.

Tip: Make a wide range of materials and textures available for touch—rough and smooth, hard and soft, warm and cool.

Tip: Natural elements such as sand and water or flowers and plants provide ever-changing multisensory experiences.

Tip: Interactive play panels captivate kids of all abilities with displays of color, moving objects and visually stimulating surfaces.

Tip: Color can sometimes generate strong responses for visually sensitive children; consider simple color schemes in more muted color tones and/or earth tones.

Tip: Include elements that offer strong visual contrast for children with low vision, especially to highlight sudden elevation changes.

Tip: Many children like to discover sound and enjoy their own musical creations, so consider incorporating music panels and instruments.

LEFT:
Wabun Picnic Area,
Minnehaha Regional Park
Minneapolis, Minn.

SWINGING, SPINNING AND SLIDING.

Most kids enjoy sliding, spinning/rotating and swinging. Besides being fun, these activities sharpen our internal senses—vestibular (awareness of how our body moves through space and against gravity) and proprioception (awareness of body position and how much force is needed for an activity).

SOCIAL/IMAGINATIVE. As children challenge themselves physically, they also learn how to manage joy and frustration, friendship and conflict, while developing their imagination and dramatic play skills. Whether engaged in parallel play, quiet play or active social play, an inclusive playground provides plenty of social and imaginative play opportunities for children.

Tip: Include a variety of gathering spots, some that can accommodate several children as well as cozy, quiet spaces for just a few.

2. VARIABILITY. This design intention meets a child's curiosity with developmentally appropriate challenge, building comfortably on the skills they already possess to help them gain new skills. By striking this balance and achieving a "just right fit," children are encouraged to challenge themselves in ways that they can control and manage.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE COGNITIVE AND PHYSICAL PLAY.

Kids learn by doing. Cognitive play can happen individually, in an interactive group, and in teaching moments between adults and children. And all kids benefit from physical activities such as balance and coordination, muscle strength and endurance, cardiovascular exercise and motor planning.

Tip: A playground can reinforce learning and enhance problem-solving skills with games, mazes, maps of the world, tracing panel and more.

Tip: To meet as many needs and skill levels as possible, consider including graduated levels of challenge, complex alternative routes, elements that encourage cross-lateral movement and a variety of developmentally appropriate risks.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES

FLEXIBILITY/OPTIONS. While many children readily flock to large playstructures, some feel more comfortable in smaller, cozier spaces.

Tip: Add ground-level activities to allow small groups to explore different play experiences at their own pace.

Tip: Include overhead events at different heights or create combinations of stepping forms and balance beams.

SELF DIRECTED. Empowering children to choose the activities that capture their interest puts them in charge, building confidence in their abilities and contributing to their self-esteem.

Tip: Offer a variety of equitable yet diverse options to accommodate the needs of the widest range of users, for example, install Saddle Spinners at different heights.

3. SAFETY, COMFORT AND ACCESS.

Creating a welcoming, safe and accessible environment is just as important as the play equipment you put in it. A well-designed environment makes the space more comfortable and user-friendly for children and families of all ages and abilities.

FENCING. A fence can help define and contain the activity area, providing a sense of comfort to both children and their parents.

Tip: Fencing can be purely functional, or incorporate a playground's theme.

SIGNAGE. All people feel more comfortable when they have a better understanding of their surroundings.

Tip: Include signage that identifies accessible facilities, meeting spots and play areas by age group as well as amenities such as water and restrooms.

SHADE. Children's tolerance levels of sun and heat vary greatly.

Tip: Plenty of shade is recommended over the playstructure—incorporate natural shade whenever available.

SEATING. Benches with backs and arm rests, tables and game tables may be strategically located around the play area (preferably in shaded areas) for supervision, resting and to promote multigenerational socialization.

PATHWAYS. Accessible pathways that transition between activity areas should be short and direct. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires a minimum 60-inch width—wide enough for a wheelchair and someone walking next to them.

Tip: Universal Design would recommend that you try to improve upon width and slope requirements whenever possible.

Tip: Like fencing, pathways can be thematic as well as functional.

RAMPS AND TRANSFER POINTS.

Wheelchair-accessible ramps and transfer modules to higher play events/overlooks offer more equitable access and encourage interactive play among kids and adults of all abilities.

PROTECTIVE SURFACING. A truly inclusive playground should incorporate a unitary surface such as poured-in-place surfacing or rubber mats/tiles on the accessible routes.

Tip: Continue a theme in your surfacing design.



DESIGN: THE ENVIRONMENT

Make sure everyone can access your inclusive playground! The ideas behind Universal Design can help you go beyond basic regulations and truly make your entire park inclusive.

1. Parking.

Whenever possible, exceed the ADA minimum required parking spaces. Ideally, accessible parking should be scattered throughout the park, located near the activity areas where inclusive play happens, creating different access points in the park that can be used by all visitors.

2. Pathways.

Whenever room permits, try to exceed ADA width guidelines of 60-inches. Wider pathways allow for easier group access for all visitors while accommodating multiple wheeled devices like wheelchairs and strollers. Where available, try to improve upon slope requirements as well.

3. Restrooms.

If individuals with disabilities cannot access the public restrooms in a comfortable way, they will not come and use your park. A well-designed park will include accessible restrooms in close proximity to ball fields, playgrounds and activity areas. These restrooms should include at least one family restroom that is large enough to include a full-size changing table. This enables adults with disabilities to stay longer at the park, since they have the restroom supports that they need.

4. Public buildings.

All the principles of Universal Design should be considered in these buildings, including incorporating wider doorways into locker rooms and roll-in showers to accommodate users of varying abilities.

5. Pools/spray pads and water play areas.

When designing or renovating a pool or spray pad, consideration should be given to creating inclusive access points. The ADA requires a transfer lift, but Universal Design expands options to zero-depth entry design that allows visitors to walk or roll into the pool. For natural water features like a public lake or beach access, consider a variety of roll-up access mats, accessible beach chairs that can be used to take an individual with a disability into the water, and access to fishing docks.

PAGES 8 & 9:
Cooke School
Northfield, Mich.

LEFT:
River Banks Orchard Park
Hutchinson, Kan.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES: LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES

INSTALL

Installing the playground is an exciting step for the entire community because they get to see the playground come to life.

1. Community build.

A community build is a great way to involve everyone and create a sense of pride and ownership in the play area. Landscape Structures has a comprehensive Community Build Guide to walk you through the process all the way to the grand opening.

ENJOY

Start having fun!

1. Get the word out.

Just because it's built doesn't always mean people will come. Use publicity—newspaper, television and social media—to promote your inclusive playground. Drop off flyers at homes and schools throughout your community. Continue to host special events at the playground even well after the grand opening.

2. Maintenance.

Your playground should last for many years to come; regular inspections and proper maintenance will ensure it is safe and compliant. Landscape Structures customizes maintenance kits for each playstructure purchase. The cost and frequency of inspections and maintenance varies depending on the equipment and products you choose. Consult your Landscape Structures playground consultant for assistance. Retrofitting and adding to your play area in phases are great ways to update and add equipment to your play area over time.

