

# City of Gahanna Department of Parks & Recreation



## Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan June 2006

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CITY OF GAHANNA

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

**City of Gahanna  
Comprehensive  
Parks & Recreation Master Plan**

**June 2006**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Gahanna Department of Parks and Recreation has a growing need for a comprehensive master plan to guide the decisions which impact the parks, the recreation programs, and the community they serve. As the City has grown, so have demands on the park system. The City of Gahanna currently owns over 630 acres of parkland and reserves which serve a population of almost 34,000. These natural, cultural, and recreational resources in large part define Gahanna's image and quality of life. The creeks and green space, along with recent town center revitalization efforts, create a special identity and focus for Gahanna while possessing great potential to improve desired community connectivity. Studies polling Gahanna's citizens indicate that all segments of the community hold the parks and the recreation programs in high esteem; more importantly, the community earnestly supports the need to maintain and improve them.

With funding from Gahanna City Council, the Department of Parks and Recreation contracted consultants to facilitate the development of a comprehensive master plan based on direct input from the community and stakeholders. The comprehensive planning process resulted in three products:

- Executive Summary
- Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Appendices

The Executive Summary provides an overview of the purpose and goals of the plan, the planning process, findings, mission and vision, and guiding principles, and concludes with recommendations and action tasks.

## Purpose and Goals of the Plan

The purpose of the *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan* is to guide the decision-making process related to programs, policies, operations, maintenance, and capital improvements over the next ten years. Currently there is no guidance for questions such as:

- When should we take land in lieu of fees from developers?
- How do we determine fair fee policies for resident and non-resident use of facilities?
- How do we know we are meeting the expectations of the community for recreation programming?
- What standards of park maintenance does the community expect?
- Are we effectively marketing our programs, services, parks and facilities?
- How do we most effectively design our parks to meet the needs of our community?
- Would our community financially support improvements to our facilities and program offerings?
- How do we prioritize capital improvements in our parks?

The process in developing the master plan centered around three broad goals:

- Provide parks and recreation services that are essential to the livability and economic health of the community.
- Create a balanced, accessible and integrated system of open spaces, recreation facilities and recreation programs that serve current and future residents and visitors to the City of Gahanna.
- Develop aggressive and sustainable funding source strategies that support the Department's capital and operational needs for providing parks, recreation facilities and programs.

The planning process established six key areas, guiding principles, objectives and action tasks to improve the quality of parks and recreation services and facilities and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. The planning process resulted in findings that echo the community's desire to improve the system.

## Process

### Public Input

In assessing the immediate and future needs of the parks, facilities, and recreation programs, extensive public input was included to ascertain the character and values of the community. Public input was gathered by way of **public workshops, focus group meetings, stakeholder interviews** and a **citywide citizen's survey**. Through these venues, more than 780 citizens participated, ranging from those directly involved with running the parks and recreation programs to those who use them.

### Needs Assessments – Programs, Parklands & Facilities and Operations

Program assessment focused on seven existing program services including: **adult sports, senior programs, youth camps, adult programs (non-sports), youth programs, family programs and nature programs**. The programs were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Demographic served
- Quality of service
- Financial performance
- Capability to meet the expressed needs and priorities of the community

Parks and facilities assessment categorized the parks by type, identifying current levels of service, and determining how well the parks and facilities meet the expressed needs and priorities of the community.

Operations and maintenance assessment included evaluation of staffing, organization, budgets and the capability to meet the expressed needs and priorities of the community.

### Existing Information

In addition to public input and needs assessments, demographics, economics, growth trends, previous plans and physical planning factors were considered.

Information gained through this process became the basis for developing the recommendations in the Master Plan.

## Findings

The Gahanna community is proud of the park system's rich tradition of stewardship and wishes to build upon this for the future. The community-at-large desires high-quality parks, recreation facilities, and programs. In general, the findings determined that the community is satisfied with the Department of Parks and Recreation's efforts, although there is room for improvement. The following identify key park and recreation issues:

- **Balance** within the Department is lacking as it relates to programs, facilities and the distribution of park locations and types.
- **Standards** for parks, facilities, programs and operations need to be established in order to create a balanced parks and recreation system.

- **Connectivity**, through expansion of the greenway system, needs to be improved as it is important to connect neighborhoods to parks, schools and other places of interest in the city and county.
- **Repair and proper maintenance** of existing assets is needed.
- **Program provisions** should be a top priority for the Department after operation of well-maintained parks and facilities has been achieved.
- **A balanced, accessible offering** of programs including, but not limited to, special events for people of all ages and programs for toddlers, youth, teens, and people with disabilities are the responsibility of the Department.
- **Citizens of Gahanna desire sustainable parks and recreation.** To achieve this, residents expect the Department to work cooperatively with partners to maximize the community's resources and avoid the unnecessary duplication of services. In addition, citizens are willing to fund park and recreation system improvements through a tax increase.
- **Policies and standards** built on the priorities expressed through public input need to be adopted by the Department to meet those priorities in the following areas:
  - Programs and services
  - Parks and open space
  - Land acquisition
  - Maintenance and operations
  - Funding and partnerships

These findings represent the growing need to address the issues that the Department of Parks and Recreation faces. If these issues are not addressed now, more issues and a weakened park system will only compound them in the future. Additionally, these findings serve as the primary point of reference in creating the mission and vision for the master plan, which provide clear direction in addressing these issues.

## Mission and Vision

The mission for the Department of Parks and Recreation is to conserve the natural environment through parks and open space as well as provide balanced, sustainable and accessible recreation opportunities and facilities. The mission works to define how to achieve the vision.

Gahanna's vision for the future of parks and recreation is the foundation for characterizing its future. The vision is to enhance and preserve parks and recreation services, lands, and facilities through high standards and innovation that positions Gahanna as a leading community and a great place to live, work and play.

The vision and mission distinguish Gahanna with direction, providing a means to achieve heightened results with regard to its parks and recreation system for the next ten years.

## Recommendations

The *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan* recommendations include two primary components: Policies & Standards and Key Areas of Function. The **Policies and Standards** will guide and improve the internal operations of the Department of Parks and Recreation over the next ten years. The **Key Areas of Function** address how the City and the Department will work to improve the overall parks and recreation system for the benefit of all. For each Key Area identified in the plan, the Guiding Principles Objectives and action Tasks are listed. Together these form the framework that will direct the implementation of the comprehensive master plan.

The following outlines the six Key Areas, Guiding Principles and Objectives.

### Key Area 1 – Recreation Programs and Services

Guiding Principle: Recreation programs and services in Gahanna will provide opportunities for our residents to participate in quality planned activities that create lifelong users and a sense of place and livability in partnership with other service providers in the City.

**Objective 1:** Provide a balance of recreation program activities for all age groups and types of families in the City.

**Objective 2:** Build identity for programs and services offered by the Department through effective marketing strategies.

**Objective 3:** Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships for the delivery of recreational programs and facilities.

**Objective 4:** Lead, as a partner in the City of Gahanna, in the development of community and individual wellness.

### Key Area 2 – Parks and Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Guiding Principle: Parks and recreational facilities will be attractive, clean and safe and will provide opportunities for both passive and active pursuits.

Guiding Principle: Gahanna will provide a balance of different park types and experiences within the city that are equitable in their distribution and accommodate current and future population densities.

Guiding Principle: Parks and recreational facilities will be developed in a manner that creates economic value for the City and are an expression of Gahanna's character.

Guiding Principle: The City of Gahanna will utilize a balanced, leading approach to environmental stewardship.

**Objective 1:** Build connectivity between parks, schools, Olde Gahanna, Metro Parks and adjacent communities through the development of trails and greenways.

- Objective 2:** Focus new parkland acquisitions and the development of existing parklands on providing appropriate types of parks in underserved and future growth areas of the City and on building connectivity within the existing system.
- Objective 3:** Support viability and sustainability of outdoor community pools through cooperative agreements and diversification of facilities with the YMCA and private swim club pools in Gahanna.
- Objective 4:** Customize park facilities to meet the needs of surrounding neighborhoods and a diversity of users.
- Objective 5:** Enhance existing, and provide new, multiple-use and practice athletic fields to meet quantity and quality standards for both existing and emerging recreational youth and adult sports leagues.
- Objective 6:** Maintain and improve parks and park infrastructure to support the staging and hosting of programs and community events.
- Objective 7:** Increase the community's use of open space, landscape and forestry best practices to achieve environmental sustainability in the community, its parks and public right-of-ways and set an example of stewardship excellence within the parks.
- Objective 8:** Update and enhance the golf course, including its facilities and programming, to improve viability and support sustainability.
- Objective 9:** Identify parkland, new acquisitions and/or partnerships to provide facilities and/or programming for non-traditional activities such as Frisbee golf, bridle trails, bocce, fly fishing, archery, mountain biking, ATV and paddling.

### **Key Area 3 – Indoor Recreation Facilities**

Guiding Principle: Gahanna will develop multigenerational, multi-use community facilities that provide consistent access to indoor space.

Guiding Principle: The community recreational facilities will be accessible to residents, and developed in a manner that provides programming opportunities for a broad range of activities, ages and users, and creates economic value for the City.

- Objective 1:** Develop new indoor facilities in a manner that will allow the flexibility to respond to existing and future recreational trends and needs.
- Objective 2:** Upgrade existing facilities to appeal to and be accessible to multiple users and age groups.
- Objective 3:** Program, design and manage existing and new facilities to cover a percentage of operating costs based on what the community desires and expects.

## Key Area 4 – Operations and Management

Guiding Principle: The Department of Parks and Recreation will be a best-practice organization that is productive and outcome-based, delivering quality parks, programs and facilities to the community in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

**Objective 1:** Develop and adopt Core Services and standards by which to manage.

## Key Area 5 – Financial Structure and Funding

Guiding Principle: Parks and recreation services within the City of Gahanna are essential to the current and future quality of life and economic viability of the City and will be supported through a system of sustainable funding mechanisms.

**Objective 1:** Establish systems of alternative funding for parks and recreation beyond general revenue funding, and develop systems and mechanisms to sustain such funding.

**Objective 2:** Establish parks and recreation as an essential service within the City of Gahanna.

**Objective 3:** Establish adequate funding levels and a viable revenue policy for the Department that will sustain programs and facilities desired by the community. Funding for programs and facilities will be based on the level of cost and recovery desired for each program type and facility type provided in the city.

**Objective 4:** Determine appropriate levels of tax subsidy for each primary service and program area offered.

## Key Area 6 – Governance

Guiding Principle: Parks and recreation services within the City of Gahanna will be supported by ordinances, governmental policies, and procedures that are consistent with the City of Gahanna and the Department's mission and vision.

**Objective 1:** Establish new and clarify current landscape and street tree standards, procedures, and ordinances.

**Objective 2:** Focus available resources by defining standards and performance measures appropriate for recreational programs, categories of parkland and recreational facilities.

**Objective 3:** Promote advocacy for parks and recreation in Gahanna.

**Objective 4:** Establish and track the economic impact of Parks and Recreation events on the City. Determine and plan for the cost of staging and supporting events to the Department.

**Objective 5:** Develop and implement organizational changes that support the Department's vision.

**Objective 6:** Review, revise and implement legislation to provide the proper mechanism for environmental sustainability in the community through land dedication/purchase, ecosystem restoration, protection and preservation and natural resource management.

**Objective 7:** Review, revise, and implement landscape legislation to create a community landscape standard, natural resource management guidelines, and clarification with regard to the duties of the landscape board.

**Objective 8:** Review, revise and implement planning and zoning practice of land dedication to clarify differences between park dedications, open space dedication and park impact.

## The Opportunity

According to the National Recreation and Parks Association, our health, our community, our economy and our environment all benefit from investments in parks and recreation opportunities.

- **Our Health** – Access to parks and recreation facilities leads to healthy lifestyles for people of all ages. Activities in parks can build self-esteem, reduce stress and improve overall wellness.
- **Our Community** – Parks give communities a vital identity. Well-maintained, accessible parks and recreation facilities are key elements of strong, safe, family-friendly communities.
- **Our Economy** – Parks enhance property values, contribute to a healthy and productive workforce and help attract and retain businesses.
- **Our Environment** – Parks play a key role in preserving water and air quality, reducing congestion and protecting wildlife. People learn about the environment firsthand in parks and take those lessons home with them.

Gahanna is in a position to take its community image and quality of life to the next level. The community has clearly identified a high regard for parks and recreation in the City. The vision of the community speaks to its commitment in improving existing programs and facilities. In order to maintain and build upon the standards set by the community, the recommendations in the *City of Gahanna Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan* must be implemented. The Department's commitment to act, partner, support financially, review and refine efforts will directly impact the prosperity of the community.

The opportunity to maximize the community's potential exists, and the plan describes in detail policies, standards, and action steps to do so. Without a clear course of action, the Department of Parks and Recreation may face a deteriorating system and neglected programs and facilities. To prevent decline of the parks and recreation system, the needs of the community must be addressed. As surrounding cities' parks and recreation programs and facilities thrive, so should Gahanna's.

Everyone has somehow benefited from park and recreation at some time in their lives either directly or indirectly. The time has come to make the connection between past experiences and today's success, yesterday's activities and tomorrow's physical and mental wellness, and today's taxpayer support and safe communities for children and their children.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Gahanna Parks and Open Space Legacy

The origins of Gahanna, founded along the Big Walnut Creek in 1849, are steeped in historical, cultural and natural resources. The name Gahanna is derived from a Native American word for three creeks joining into one - the City of Gahanna's Official Seal refers to this confluence of three creeks with the inscription "Three In One."



Big Walnut Creek has served as an identifying feature in the community and has been the focal point for revitalization in downtown Gahanna. The \$36 million Creekside Plan has become the cornerstone of the community's ongoing efforts to embrace, celebrate and preserve the Big Walnut Creek corridor. Several open space issues and opportunities stimulated the effort to update the parks and recreation master plan.

The City of Gahanna has over 630 acres of parkland and reserves; a growing legacy for which Gahanna is becoming known, and of which its citizens are rightly proud. The City of Gahanna Department of Parks and Recreation is charged with the stewardship of this resource, which contributes significantly to the quality of life in the community. Over 40 properties, including 29 park sites and facilities, provide a wide range of recreational opportunities including league sports, swimming, canoeing, paddle boating, golf, skating and picnicking as well as numerous programmed activities and community and cultural events. The creeks traversing Gahanna connect many of the park properties and offer the potential to better connect neighborhoods.



The creeks and green space, along with recent town center revitalization efforts, create a special identity and focus for the community. The community saw great opportunities for the role of parks and recreation in its future and initiated a comprehensive master planning process.

As the City has grown, so have demands on the system. Families, young adults, seniors and all other segments of the community hold the parks in high esteem. The recreation programs offered are also highly regarded. Building on this success, all age groups seek increased programming and connections to the park system. To continue to meet the needs of Gahanna residents and become proactive in managing resources and meeting current and future demands, the Department of Parks & Recreation recognized the need to assess its programs, services, parks, facilities and operations today, and to develop an action plan to move forward, making optimum use of physical, human and fiscal resources.

## Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan* is to guide decision making on policy, operations, maintenance, and capital improvements over the next ten years to better position the Department to best meet the vision of the community. The planning process focused on three broad goals:

- Provide parks and recreation services that are essential to the livability and economic health of the community.
- Create a balanced, accessible and integrated system of open spaces, recreation facilities and recreation programs that serve current and future residents and visitors to the City of Gahanna.
- Develop aggressive and sustainable funding source strategies that support the Department's capital and operational needs for providing parks, recreational facilities and programs.



To meet **program and service** needs, the plan recommends standards derived from the values and preferences of the community and a realistic assessment of necessary and available resources. It outlines specific objectives and actions to implement the standards, based on priorities established by the community through extensive participation in the planning process.

To meet **park and facility** needs, the plan outlines objectives and action tasks consistent with budget considerations to help the Department provide the balanced, integrated facilities needed for priority programs and facilities.

Based on the programs and services the community most wants and supports, and parks and facilities necessary to deliver those programs and services, the plan recommends objectives and standards for **operations, maintenance and funding strategies**. It outlines actions to most efficiently deliver the priority services within the community's ability and desire to sustain both its capital and operational needs.

## The Community's Plan

Gahanna has a strong vision for the future of parks and recreation that focuses on the health and well-being of its residents and the natural environment. The Department of Parks and Recreation sees itself as a leader in enhancing the quality of life in the community. The community recognizes the great value of preserving and nurturing the health of its natural environment as well as the health and wellness of its population. This vision also recognizes the essential link between the natural environment, sustainable use of that environment, and the well being and quality of life for people who live and work in Gahanna. The vision for Gahanna combines conserving the natural environment through parks and open space with providing balanced, sustainable and accessible recreation opportunities and facilities for citizens as well as visitors.



*Gahanna's Vision is to enhance and preserve parks and recreation services, lands and facilities through high standards and innovation that positions Gahanna as a leading community and a great place to live, work and play.*

The vision, and the goals and objectives necessary to achieve it, were refined by the community through a process that included extensive public input to ensure that the plan meets the needs of the community. The process was supervised by department staff and a Steering Committee representing a cross-section of Gahanna's interests.

This process began with the assessment of existing data on demographics, economics, growth trends, previous plans, and physical planning factors. The assessment also included detailed evaluation of recreation programs and assessments of each of the City's parks and recreation facilities.

The planning process included extensive public input, grounded in a **Citywide Citizen Survey**. The process began with **Focus Group Interviews** and **Stakeholder Interviews**, and included two **Public Workshops**. The Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Group Interviews included approximately 126 people, all with considerable involvement with parks and recreation in Gahanna. There were over 600 survey participants, giving the data statistical validity to predict community-wide interest. The Public Workshops were attended by over 60 participants and provided an opportunity for direct input at critical points during the planning process. Information from each source of public input was thoroughly reviewed to identify the park system's strengths and weaknesses. These findings, in turn, served as a foundation for many of the recommendations provided in this master plan. The recommendations were discussed at a public workshop and several Steering Committee meetings (see Appendix A).

## Background on Gahanna

Gahanna has been a growing community, experiencing a growth rate of 19 percent during the past decade. Today, the City is essentially built out with an estimated 2005 population of 33,866 (Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission 2004). Gahanna will continue to grow through redevelopment of lands within the City, annexation of Township lands surrounded by the City, and some annexations of Township lands to the east of the City. Without annexations, the population of Gahanna could increase to 35,000 within the next 5 to 10 years. Given the relaxed annexation policy of Gahanna, it is safe to assume that the population will increase slightly within the next 5 to 10 years to approximately 36,000 residents.

Growth rate and patterns will influence the future demands on the recreational opportunities within the city. These projected demands, in conjunction with other assessments, help to formulate the vision for the Department for the next ten years.

Natural, cultural and recreational resources of the City help to create its image and quality of life. Natural creek corridors and cultural resources such as Olde Gahanna are important community assets with great

potential to improve connectivity and expand trails. The creek corridors, focused on Creekside Park and Olde Gahanna, help to define the community. Significant cultural features include the John Clark House, the Log House, the Stone Family House, the Mifflin Presbyterian Church, the Sanctuary, the Old Schoolhouse, the 1875 Church, the Mifflin Inn, the Old Saloon, the Gahanna Bank, Veterans Memorial Park and the Ohio Herb Education Center located in the Ridenour House. In addition, schools can help meet facility needs for recreational activities; however, increased demand for school use of those facilities are limiting use by the Department.

Olde Gahanna was once a 19<sup>th</sup> century rural village, and today it is the historic heart of the City of Gahanna. Olde Gahanna was created by City Council in 1976 to recognize the "unique characteristics, history, existing uses, and potential of the original part of Gahanna." Today, local businesses and developers are redeveloping Olde Gahanna into an attractive destination for residents of Gahanna and its visitors. Creekside, a mixed-use redevelopment on the banks of Big Walnut Creek, links the Olde Gahanna business district to the park system, both physically and through special events, reinforcing the role of parks and recreation in the economic health of the city.

Parks and recreation in Gahanna has historically been heavily focused on preservation of green space and provisions of facilities for sports. As the community grows, the demands on parks and recreation are also growing. Gahanna currently offers recreation programs focused on seven areas of service:

- Adult Sports,
- Senior Programs,
- Youth Camps,
- Adult Programs (other than sports),
- Youth Programs,
- Family Programs and
- Nature Programs.

The strongest programs tend to be those in high demand with facilities adequate to house the programs offered. The planning process identified the need to classify parks by size and function to help organize and prioritize programming and establish maintenance standards and priorities. This evaluation also formed the basis for recommendations to improve balance in the distribution of both facilities and programming.

The stabilization of Gahanna's growth rate coupled with revitalization generated by the combination of economic and recreation redevelopment at Creekside and in Olde Gahanna helped to set the stage for a new forward-looking plan to guide the emergence of parks and recreation as a balanced and vital force in the growth of Gahanna as the community of choice in central Ohio.

## CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND DATA

### Introduction

Natural, cultural and recreational resources of the City help to create the image of Gahanna and quality of life for its residents (see Figure 1). Natural creek corridors and cultural resources such as Olde Gahanna are important community assets with great potential to improve connectivity and expand the existing trail systems. Creeks may also act as barriers to connections.

Recreational resources within the region include Metro Parks, Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks, golf courses, community centers, private recreation centers, YMCAs and medical centers. These resources help to serve the needs of Gahanna residents. It is important to identify how well they serve Gahanna residents, and the extent to which those services may need to be replicated within the City.

### Natural Resource Overview

#### Creeks and Streams

The City of Gahanna is fortunate to have three creeks and many smaller streams traversing the City. The Village of Gahanna was founded in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century along the edges of the Big Walnut Creek, where a grain mill was constructed. The significant creeks within Gahanna are the Big Walnut Creek, Rocky Fork Creek and Sycamore Run. In addition, Blacklick Creek is located directly to the east of the City. These creeks and streams, along with associated floodplains, allow residents to enjoy the natural beauty of the waterways, while also providing space for recreational opportunities.

Big Walnut Creek, the major watershed within City limits, flows north-south through Gahanna. This creek also flows through Olde Gahanna and is an important identifying feature of the City. Several parks are located along Big Walnut Creek, including Creekside Park, Academy Park, Woodside Green Park, McCorkle Park, Veteran's Memorial Park, Friendship Park, Price Road Reserve and Pizzurro Park, as well as several other reserves and the Gahanna Golf Course. Creekside Park was created as a focal point of the community and hosts many events.

Rocky Fork Creek flows into Big Walnut Creek south of Olde Gahanna at Friendship Park. It runs north-south in the northeastern part of the City, continues south through Jefferson Township, and then curves west flowing east-west toward Olde Gahanna. Shull Park and Friendship Park are located along this waterway. Sycamore Run flows into Rocky Fork Creek within Friendship Park. Sycamore Run flows north-south through the City, adjacent to Shull Park, the community gardens and Friendship Park.

These creek corridors provide the framework for an open space network that could link most areas of the city together. This system also connects a majority of the City's current parkland. To the extent that the creek corridors can accommodate bike and pedestrian paths in addition to watershed and habitat conservation, they would provide excellent connectivity between several major parks.

#### Gahanna Woods State Nature Preserve

Gahanna Woods Park and State Nature Preserve is located on the eastern edge of the City. It is a combination of three sites totaling more than 150 acres, with different ownership: Gahanna Woods Park, the State Nature Preserve and Taylor Road Reserve.

Gahanna Woods State Nature Preserve protects some of the highest quality buttonbush swamps and vernal pools in central Ohio. A pin oak-silver maple swamp forest surrounds these woodland pools. Mature oak hickory and beech maple associations are found on the higher and drier sites within the preserve. Numerous spring wildflowers can be found within these woods, including the yellow water-crowfoot, swamp saxifrage, wild hyacinth, skunk cabbage and several species of trillium. The only known population of cypress-knee sedge in Ohio is found in the buttonbush swamps within the preserve.

## Cultural Resource Overview

### Olde Gahanna District

Olde Gahanna was once a 19<sup>th</sup>-century rural village and today it is the historic heart of the City of Gahanna. Olde Gahanna was created by City Council in 1976 to recognize the “unique characteristics, history, existing uses, and potential of the original part of Gahanna.” Today, local businesses and developers are redeveloping Olde Gahanna into an attractive destination for residents within and outside Gahanna. Several businesses, restaurants and vacant lots have recently been redeveloped in order to make Olde Gahanna a pedestrian friendly entertainment and commercial area that embraces the Big Walnut Creek and the Creekside Park development project.

### Creekside Park



The creation of Creekside Park is known as Phase I of the Olde Gahanna revitalization effort, and was completed in 1999. This was a \$1.2 million improvement project. Creekside Phase II began construction in 2004, and is to be completed by 2007. This project will create a new water feature and public plaza area adjacent to Mill Street. Creekside Park is home to the annual Creekside Blues and Jazz Festival that began in 1999, which has evolved into a three-day event that attracts over 70,000 people. Creekside Park is once again the focal point of the community, much like in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when the grain mill powered the village's early economic success.

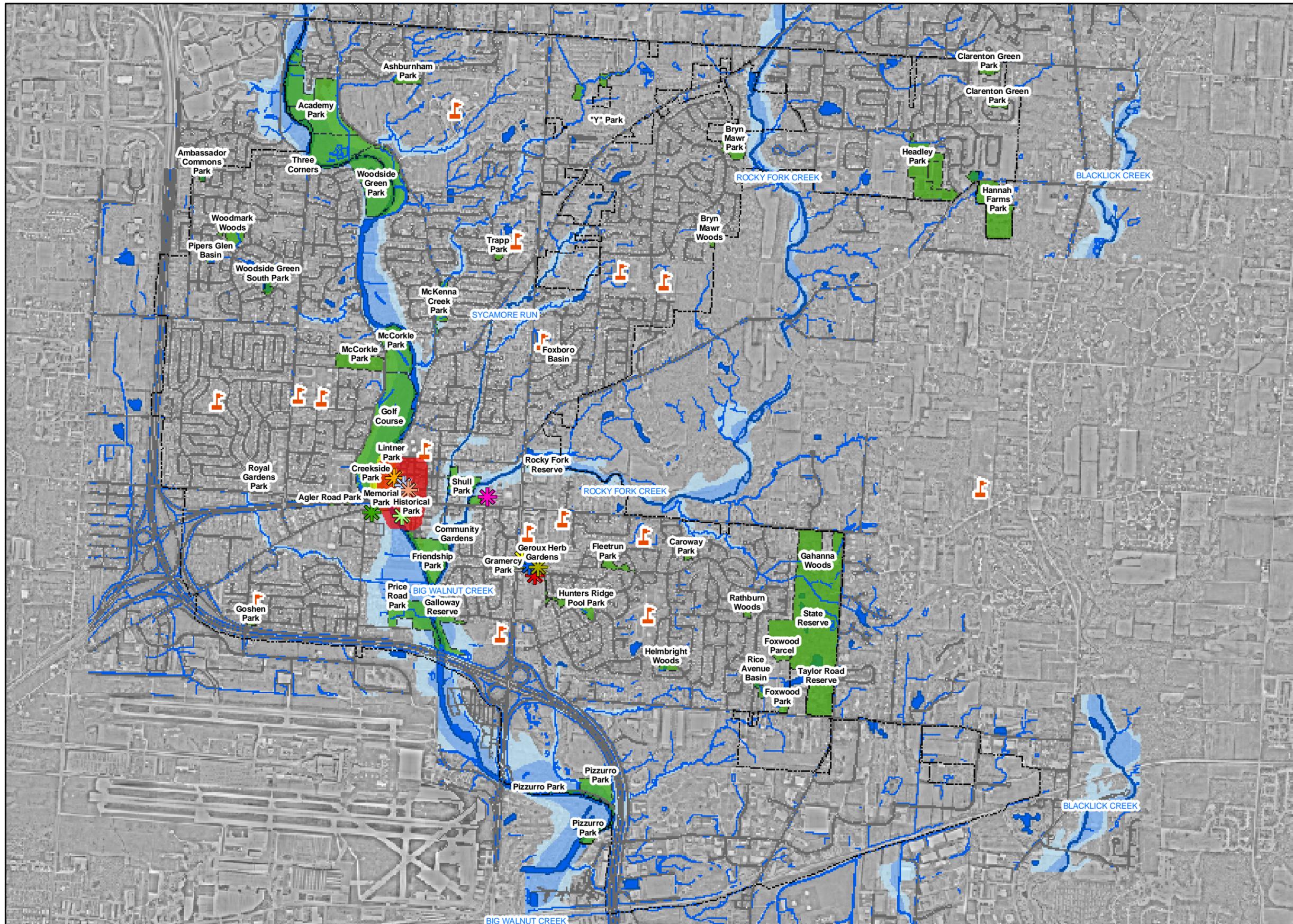
### Points of Interest

The City of Gahanna is a suburb of Columbus with many points of historical and cultural significance. Within close proximity to Olde Gahanna and Creekside Park, there are several historically significant facilities. These include the John Clark House, the Log House, the Stone Family House, the Mifflin Presbyterian Church, the Sanctuary, the Old Schoolhouse, the 1875 Church, Creekside, the Mifflin Inn, the Old Saloon, the Gahanna Bank and the Ridenour House. Additionally, Veteran's Memorial Park, the Ohio Herb Education Center (in the Ridenour House), Gahanna Convention and Visitors Bureau, Gahanna Chamber of Commerce and the Gahanna Historical Society are within or close to Olde Gahanna.

Several other points of interest are located to the east of downtown on Granville Street, a lower-density extension of the downtown, and along Hamilton Road, a major north and south corridor. These points of interest include the Gahanna Branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library on Granville Street near Shull Park, as well as the Government Complex on Hamilton Avenue, which includes the City Hall and the police and fire stations. The Senior Center is also located here. These facilities represent the administrative heart of the City, with Hamilton Road and Granville Street providing a connection to the downtown area and Government Complex.



# Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan



### Legend

- Gahanna Boundary
- Schools
- Parkland
- Olde Gahanna
- Creekside Redevelopment
- Points of Interest**
- Library - Gahanna Branch
- Gahanna Chamber
- Gahanna City Hall
- Gahanna Historical Society
- Gahanna Police Depart.
- Gahanna Sanctuary
- Gahanna Senior Center
- Gahanna Visitor Center
- Jefferson Twp Fire Depart.
- Ohio Herb Education Center
- Creeks and Streams
- Floodplain**
- 100 Year
- Floodway



**Figure 1**  
**Natural & Cultural Resources**

## Growth Overview

The City of Gahanna is an established suburb of Columbus, the most populated city in the state of Ohio with 711,470 residents. The *2002 Land Use Plan Update*, combined with current growth trends, provides a basis for projecting needs based on past, present and future growth trends within the City of Gahanna. These growth trends will influence the future demands on the recreational opportunities within Gahanna. These projected demands, in conjunction with other assessments, help to formulate the vision for the Department for the next ten years.

### Demographic Summary

According to the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Gahanna grew from a population of 27,791 in 1990 to a population of 33,865 in 2005 (22 percent). The City of Columbus did not grow as fast as Gahanna, experiencing a growth rate of 19 percent during the same time period.

Because different age groups have different needs, the age distribution of City residents is an important element to consider when planning for parks and recreation programs, services and amenities. The median age of Gahanna residents was 36.5, slightly higher than the national median age of 35.3 (2000 Census). Trends related to the aging population need to be taken into account. .

One trend is that longevity rates are not equal for men and women. Women tend to live longer (lower mortality rate) than men. The 2000 Census indicates that gender distributions in Gahanna were consistent with national trends; approximately 51.5 percent were female and 48.5 percent were male. The ratio of females to male residents from the age range of 0 to 64 is very consistent, with approximately 51 percent female and 49 percent male. However, the percentage of females age 65 and older increases to 60 percent while males represent 40 percent.

There were a total of 13,390 housing units within the City of Gahanna in 2000. Of these, 96.8 percent were occupied, with 77.7 percent of those owner-occupied and 22.3 percent renter-occupied. The total number of housing units grew 20 percent during the 1990's from 9,921 housing units to 12,390 by 2000. The average household size in 2000 was 2.7 persons, slightly higher than the national average of 2.59 persons per household.

Median household income grew 36 percent during the 1990's, from \$42,015 to \$66,031, a relatively large increase in income. The median income levels in Gahanna are substantially higher than the national median household income of \$41,994 and the City of Columbus median household income of \$37,897.

In 2000, there were 1,184 Gahanna residents (3.6 percent of the population) living below the poverty level as defined by the US Census Bureau. This percentage is significantly less than the percentage (14.4 percent) of Columbus residents living below the poverty line. The national percentage of the total U.S. population who live under the poverty line was 12.0 percent.

### Opportunities for Growth

The City is essentially built out with an estimated 2005 population of 33,866 (Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission 2004). Several physical barriers exist on the boundaries of the community that limit the expansion potential to the west and south, including the I-270 corridor and the airport, with associated industrial lands to the south of the City.

Additionally, the City is not actively seeking to annex Jefferson Township lands to the east, unless residents of those lands petition the City to annex them into Gahanna. Despite this, annexations or territorial expansion areas to the east of the city were identified in the *2002 Land Use Plan Update*. Preference should

be given to annexing the Township lands that are surrounded by Gahanna and to the territorial expansion areas before other township lands are annexed into the City. Therefore, it is projected that the population of Gahanna will increase slightly within the next 5 to 10 years to approximately 36,000 residents.

The City of Gahanna will continue to grow through redevelopment of lands within the City, annexation of Township lands surrounded by the City, and some annexations of Township lands to the east of the City. These lands have been identified as "Areas in Transition" in the *2002 Land Use Plan Update*. Figure 2 illustrates the Gahanna-Jefferson School District, Areas in Transition, territorial expansion areas and physical barriers within and surrounding Gahanna.

Within the City, growth opportunities for non-residential uses are predominately limited to parcels within the Areas in Transition. New residential land uses will most likely come into the City either through annexation of the existing Township lands that are surrounded by the City or through redevelopment. To the east of the City, Township lands are planned for residential development at rural densities. Therefore, most land that is annexed to the east of the City would most likely be low-density residential uses.

### Lands within the City of Gahanna

Township lands surrounded by the City are predominately located in the northern part of the City and east of North Hamilton Road. These lands mostly consist of single-family residential uses. The *2002 Future Land Use Plan* (Map 1 of the *2002 Land Use Plan Update*) identifies most of these lands remaining as single-family uses with some mixed-use land uses located along North Hamilton Road. Figure 3 illustrates the future land use plan for the City of Gahanna.

Areas in Transition that have experienced recent redevelopment activities and are suitable for additional redevelopment include Taylor Road, Hamilton Road (Clark State to Route 62), Hamilton Road (Route 62 to Morse Road), the Gateway Area (Route 62 and Stygler Road Area) and Creekside/Olde Gahanna. The redevelopment of these lands will most likely be for recreational, commercial, office and mixed-use developments (see Figure 3).



These redevelopment projects are important to the City and offer opportunities for further development of open space, parklands and trail corridor connections within the community. As indicated by the recent community survey, adjacency to trails, parks and recreational opportunities are identified as important elements to the quality of life in Gahanna. The Creekside/Olde Gahanna redevelopment is an example of a current redevelopment project that is helping make Gahanna a unique community with numerous opportunities for its residents.

### Township Lands East of Gahanna

The City of Gahanna and Jefferson Township share a common school district, and the recreational opportunities located within them serve both City and Township residents. The City of Gahanna will expand to a limited extent eastward into the territorial expansion areas established in the *2002 Land Use Plan Update* on the eastern border of the City.

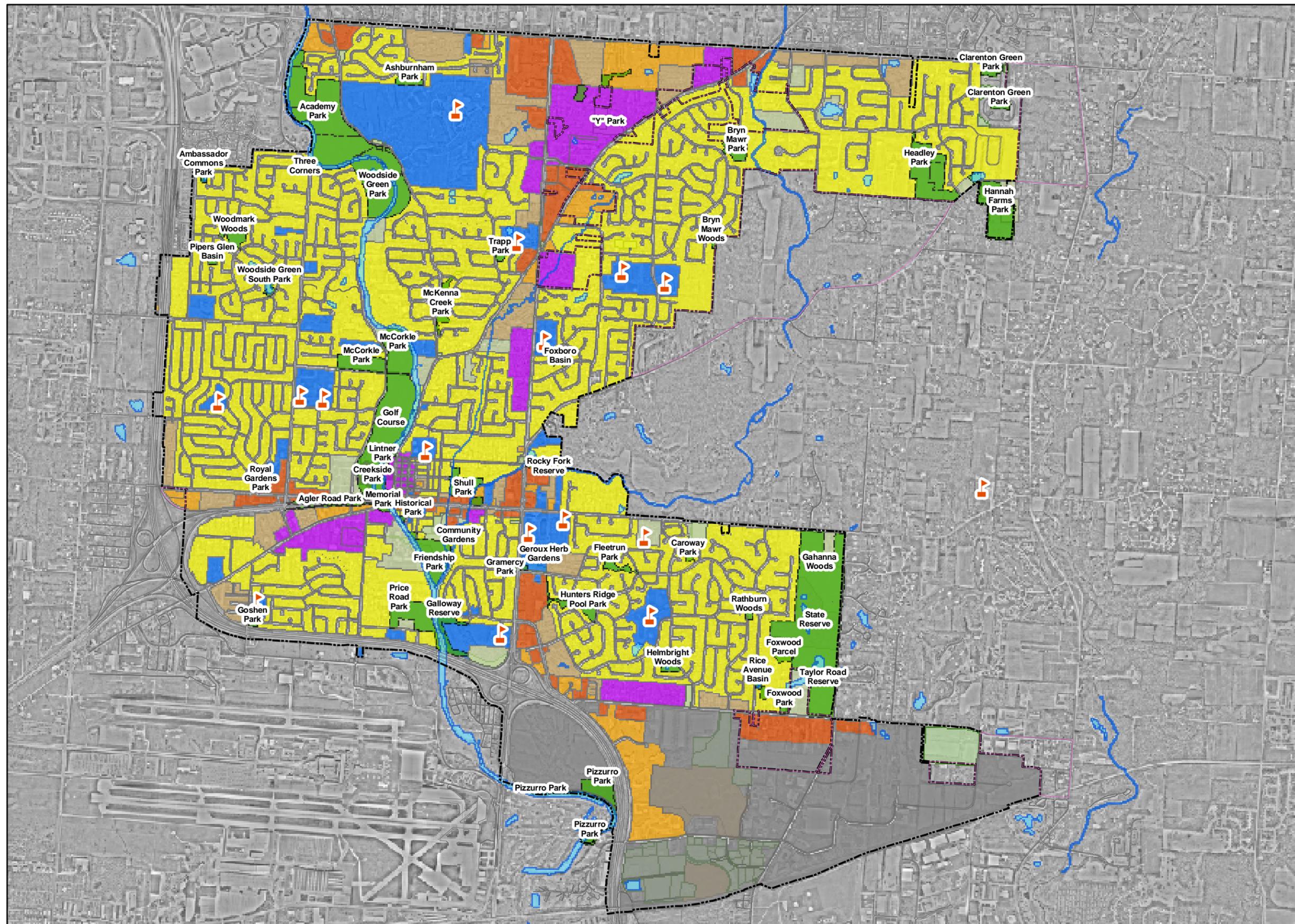
Jefferson Township promotes the preservation of resource areas and the use of conservation development standards with an open space preservation requirement of 30 to 50 percent. According to the *Jefferson Township Future Land Use Plan*, all residential development north of Havens Corner Road should have a density of one unit per three to five acres. Residential development south of Havens Corner Road should have a gross density of one unit per acre. Due to the Township development standards, annexation of lands east of the City would be mostly low-density residential land.

### **Addition of Park and Open Space Land**

As Gahanna grows, it is important for the City to continue to pursue open space preservation as a component of new and infill development. Acquisition of new parklands, where there is an expressed need or growth of population in that particular sector of the City, should also remain a priority. In the past, new development in the City has generated new parkland dedications of small parcels, wooded reserves and storm water management sites. Although they contribute to the quality of the community, these parklands are not as desirable as programmable park properties. The Department's numerous small parcels or "reserve" lands total approximately 84 acres, with many containing limited recreational potential. These small, often difficult to access, and widely dispersed reserve sites place a disproportionate demand on resources necessary to maintain and manage these parcels. The focus for dedication of new parklands within these developments needs to shift in order to insure that the City receives usable land that not only helps preserve natural resources, but also provides usable and maintainable parklands for the community.



# Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan



**Legend**

- Gahanna Boundary
- Schools
- Parkland
- City Owned Parcels
- Landfills
- Creeks and Streams
- Territorial Expansion Areas

**Future Landuse**

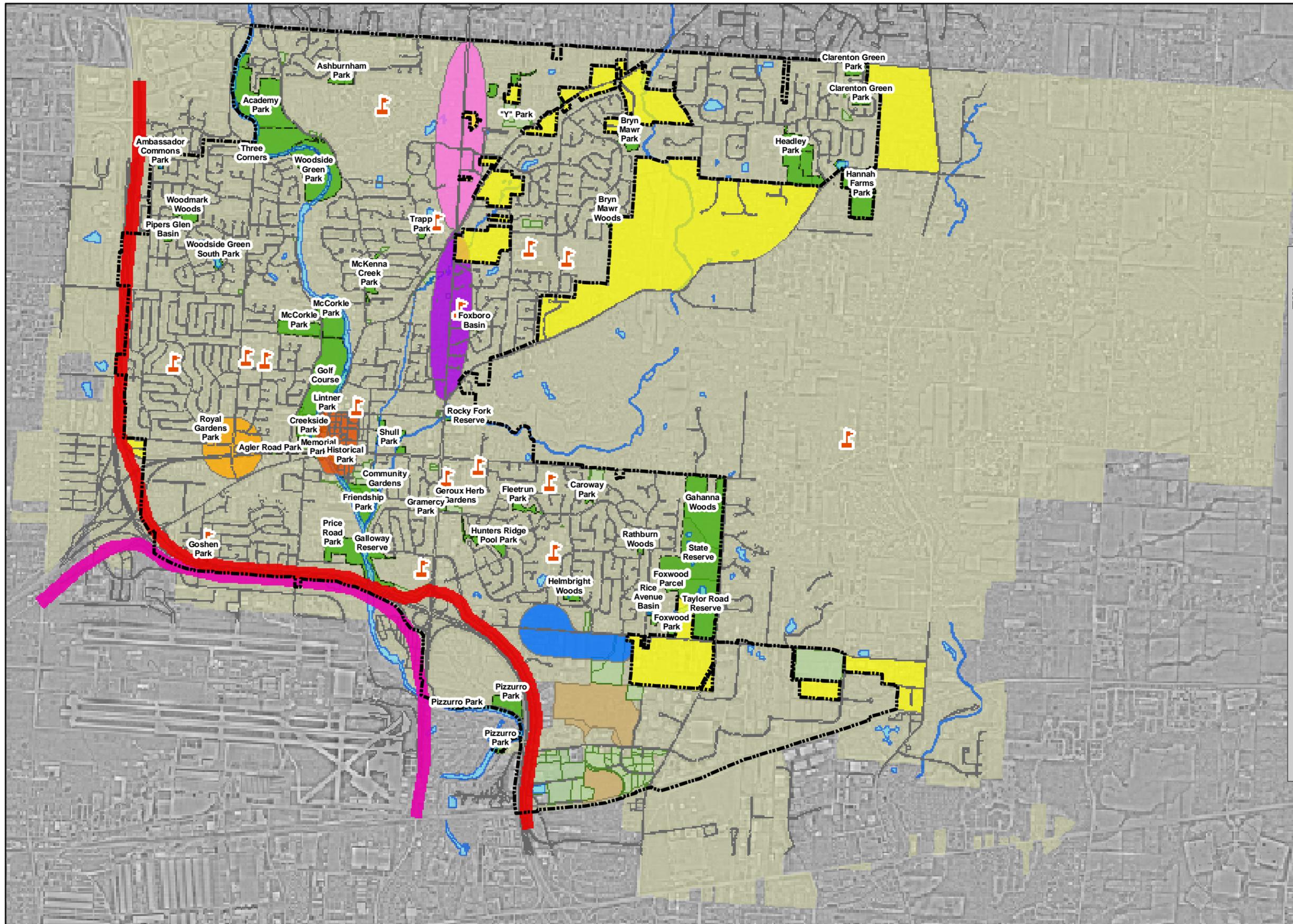
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Mixed Use
- Multi-family Residential
- Office
- Parks/Recreation Areas
- Single Family Residential



**Figure 2  
Future Land Use**



# Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan



**Legend**

- Gahanna Boundary
- Schools
- Parkland
- City Owned Parcels
- Landfills
- Creeks and Streams
- Gahanna Jefferson School District

**Areas in Transition**

- Gateway Area
- Hamilton Rd- 62 to Morse Road
- Hamilton Rd- Clark State to 62
- Olde Gahanna
- Taylor Road
- Territorial Expansion Areas

**Physical Barriers**

- Airport
- I-270



**Figure 3  
Growth Assessment**

## CHAPTER 3: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Introduction

To ensure that the *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan* meets the leisure needs of the community, the planning process included extensive public input. This process was grounded in a **Citywide Citizen Survey** and also included **Focus Group Interviews, Stakeholder Interviews and Public Workshops**. Information from each source of public input was thoroughly reviewed to identify the park system's strengths and weaknesses. In turn, these findings served as the foundation for many of the recommendations provided in this master plan.

The Focus Group Interviews, Stakeholder Interviews and Public Workshops provided valuable qualitative data and input into decisions. While all avenues of public input were vital to the preparation of the plan, the Citywide Citizen Survey provided quantitative data, which offers the best overall picture of the opinions of the community. Over 600 people participated in the survey, giving the data statistical validity to predict community-wide interest. The Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Group Interviews included approximately 126 people, all with considerable involvement with parks and recreation in Gahanna. These meetings were by definition special interest meetings that produced diverse viewpoints. The Public Workshops were attended by over 60 participants and provided an opportunity for direct input at critical points during the planning process. The results of the Interviews and the Public Workshops serve to color and add depth to the results of the Survey, while the Survey documents in a statistically defensible manner the prevailing community opinion.

The public input process confirmed that Gahanna's citizens desire high-quality parks, recreation facilities and programs. The community is proud of the park system's rich tradition of stewardship and wishes to build upon this for the future. Park users and the community-at-large are generally satisfied with the Department of Parks and Recreation's efforts, although there is clearly room for improvement. Of those responding to the city-wide survey, 97 percent consider the parks "*very important*" or "*somewhat important*" in this regard.



The public believes that the Department is unbalanced as it relates to programs, facilities, park types and the geographic distribution of the parks. The establishment of standards for parks, facilities, programs and operations is viewed as critical for creating a balanced parks and recreation system. An assessment of Gahanna's parks and recreation needs and the establishment of appropriate standards are important first steps in working toward a balance of passive and active facilities and a range of programs accessible to the citizens of Gahanna.

There is a general consensus for expanding the greenway system throughout the community. Citizens desire a community with sidewalks and trails that connect neighborhoods to parks, schools and other places of interest in the city and county. Improved connectivity is also desired for parks and neighborhoods divided by major roadways, waterways, or other obstacles. The stated need for trails includes trails within new and existing parks as well as between parks.

Residents are generally satisfied with park maintenance levels, although satisfaction decreases as amenities or properties are specified. Most of the public understands that current maintenance deficiencies are the result of departmental budget limitations. The community is proud of its older parks and has a strong sense of ownership. Citizens want to maintain and improve the existing parks and facilities to meet their current needs by repairing and properly maintaining its existing assets.

Participants were largely satisfied with the quality of programs provided by the Department. Next to operating well-maintained parks and facilities, the community views the provision of programs as a top priority for the Department. Specifically, citizens view it as the responsibility of the Department to provide teen programs, special events for people of all ages, toddler and youth programs and programs for people with disabilities.

The citizens of Gahanna want a sustainable parks and recreation system. To achieve this, residents expect the Department to work cooperatively with partners to maximize the community's resources and avoid the unnecessary duplication of services.

## Public Input

### Stakeholder Interviews

A series of interviews conducted on March 2, 2005 with key community members covered a total of 18 questions to help paint a better picture of what the community of Gahanna has, needs, and wants (see Appendix B). The questions ranged from familiarity of the current park system to types of parks most needed in Gahanna. The following summarizes the groups' responses to a standardized series of questions.

Stakeholders are familiar with the parks within the community, and rate them well overall. However, there is room for improvement as well as expansion. Dublin and Westerville are viewed as having a better balance of active and passive recreation compared to Gahanna. Recommendations for growth, upgrades and improvements will bring the current parks closer to a well-balanced, attractive park system with a positive economic impact.

In order to attain better balance, the City should add indoor recreation, adult programs and multipurpose fields. A large senior center and recreation center providing components not offered by the YMCA, in addition to more meeting space areas and nature education programs for youth and adults would also help bring about such balance. Stakeholders believe the City has ample sports complexes, but feel a sports complex attracting tournaments would bring much welcomed tourism and capital to the City.

To accommodate growth in the City and the park system, the Department staff level will have to increase to keep up the standard of care desired. Although sports facilities are adequate for the current need, they too will need to expand as the City experiences growth. The City needs to acquire more natural areas, such as wetlands, to complement Gahanna Woods. And while acquisition is important in order to meet the growth demands, the City should examine the usefulness of accepting land offered by a developer in lieu of impact fees.

In addition to balancing the park system and accommodating growth, improvements to existing system are also needed. Despite the City's significant park and open space lands, areas throughout Gahanna appear to be underserved by the park system. The west side of the community lacks parks, natural areas and pedestrian connections to the rest of the City. While the consensus is that the parks are in good shape, Friendship and Academy Parks are in need of improvement. Additionally, upgrades are needed for

restroom facilities and parking areas throughout most of the parks, as well as the clubhouse at the golf course. Other improvements include older playgrounds and shelters throughout the park system in need of restoration.

The Stakeholders had many different views on sources of funding for park improvements. User fees, fundraisers, bond issues, partnerships with surrounding townships and a proprietary fund were all suggested.

The Department is consistently called upon to preserve and manage the natural landscape and flood prone areas of the City. New development and its impact on the community is perceived as an environmental issue and is therefore a responsibility of the Department. Improvements and expansion will help develop a better park system, thus driving a better quality of life and becoming a bigger economic impact for the City.

## Focus Group Meetings

A series of 14 meetings were conducted on March 15, 2005 and March 16, 2005 with Focus Groups identified by the Steering Committee (see Appendix B). The following summarizes the groups' responses to a standardized set of questions.

### Organization

The Department has a large number of parks and facilities that are managed by an energetic and accessible staff. The leadership of the Department is very strong, and the communication with users provides a great service appreciated by the community. Citizen participation with the Department is very active and the volunteer system is very good compared to other agencies of similar size.

### Programs and Services

The marketing of programs and events needs to be improved. There is a lack of publicity about the programs offered by the City, which could be accomplished through improved placement of information in the local newspaper and neighborhood association newsletters. Additionally, marketing improvements could include alternative disbursement methods for *The Gateway*, the Department's promotional publication. Programs need to be evaluated through surveys and assessment of their lifecycles. The Department has lost programs because of poor management and planning. A wider level of program offerings needs to be considered beyond programs for sports and seniors, especially as it applies to life skill programs, the arts, family programs and more special events that connect the community. However, the special events provided by the Department in Gahanna are first class, which will continue to attract visitors from the surrounding areas. Special events should be viewed as a Core Service of the Department.

### Trails

The bike trails throughout the City are a major disappointment to residents. They are very dangerous, and there are few paths available. Trails that are safe for walking, running and bicycling should be used as an amenity to connect the City. More greenway parks connected by trails would be a great addition to the City and highly valued by the community.

### Outdoor Facilities

The green space in the City is much better than in other communities. However, the City has been left behind. Surrounding cities have been upgrading their parks and adding major recreation facilities to keep people in their community. The facilities in Dublin, Westerville and Worthington are maintained at a greater quality and Gahanna needs recreation facilities of this caliber. Pool coordination needs to be improved and the City should operate all pools with the exception of the YMCA. The city lacks parks on the west side of town and more neighborhood parks are needed in place of undeveloped, unusable parcels of land treated

as parks. Gahanna should create parks in areas that are underserved. In addition, the city needs more game fields, especially baseball and softball complexes, rather than scattered fields in neighborhood or community parks. Parking is a problem in every park and safety is an issue in parks as well. More picnic shelters are needed. A signature park with a recreation, civic and educational center needs to be developed. More specialty parks are needed such as a dog park, a Frisbee golf course area, greenway parks and nature education centers. Greater efforts need to be made to properly design parks and improve signage in the future.

### **Indoor Facilities**

There is a large need for a recreation center in the area that would provide a central location for programs and serve as a community gathering place. The City lacks a large recreation center similar to surrounding communities. As the YMCA is currently overextended, there is a need for additional program space in the City. The Senior Center is too small and needs to be expanded or incorporated into a multigenerational recreation center for the whole community. There was interest in an indoor facility such as a senior center, multigenerational center and indoor sports facility.



### **Maintenance**

Improved maintenance standards for parks and game fields, upgraded facilities and better communication between the Department and community are needed in Gahanna. The Golf Course is in need of more maintenance staff and an improved clubhouse, maintenance facility and paved cart path. Gahanna manages more land with less full time staff than many other departments in the area, resulting in levels of maintenance (mowing, trash removal, park amenities and restrooms) that are below the quality standards of other surrounding departments, especially in spring and fall. Increasing full-time staff to meet community needs as well as exploring more opportunities to spread expenses would help improve maintenance capabilities.

### **Partnerships**

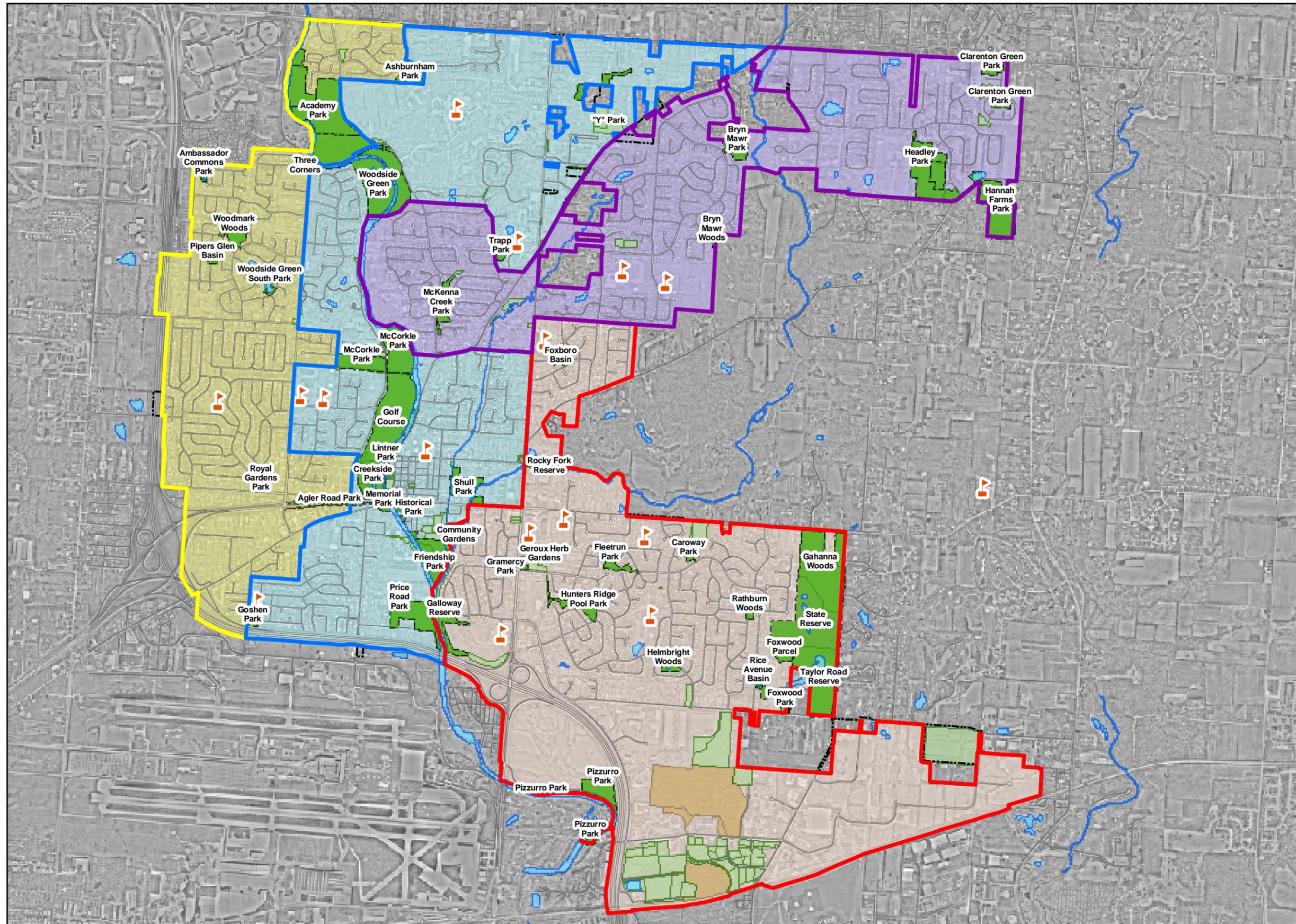
The Department should actively seek written partnerships with other organizations regarding programs and facilities, including churches, the bicycle committee, YMCA, neighborhood associations, organizations for people with disabilities, garden clubs and nature groups. Improvements to existing partnerships, such as schools, youth sports groups, private aquatic clubs, civic groups and other city volunteers are needed to make them more equitable for all partners involved. The community desires increased partnerships with developers and businesses.

### **Funding**

The community recognizes that the City has not kept up with other surrounding communities regarding parks and recreation facilities, which is impacting the City's quality of life. Residents indicated the need to move forward in upgrading the parks system. The Department has been operating with inadequate funds for a long time and should have its own dedicated source of funding to avoid competing with police and fire departments, two departments that tend to receive a majority of the City's resources. The community supports increased developer impact fees, and feels that residents would vote for a bond issue if presented with the opportunity, under the conditions that the bond be well defined and beneficial for voters and their



# Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan



**Legend**

- Gahanna Boundary
- Schools
- Parkland
- City Owned Parcels
- Landfills
- Creeks and Streams

**Ward Districts**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4



**Figure 4  
Ward Districts**

families. The community also feels that a combination of user fees and taxes is necessary to support the future parks and recreation operational and capital needs. However, the City should evaluate all possible ways to fund the Department before raising taxes.

## Citywide Citizens Survey

To determine the parks and recreation needs of the Gahanna community, 600 telephone interviews were conducted by Strategic Visioning, Inc. through a statistically valid random sampling of registered voters living in the City of Gahanna. The telephone interviews were distributed evenly throughout the City's four wards (see Figure 4) and were conducted May 5 through May 27, 2005. Respondents were read a list of up to 45 questions pertaining to the demographics of their household, the importance of parks and recreation in the community, satisfaction with parks and recreation, park visitation, use of outdoor community pools and the senior center, park facilities and recreational programs. In general, the survey results indicate that Gahanna residents lack awareness and knowledge of current recreation programs. However, there is a greater familiarity with specific parks and facilities.

A separate mail-in survey was conducted by the Department of Parks and Recreation between August and December of 2005. The mail-in survey was distributed in the Gahanna Parks and Recreation Gateway to 11,500 households offering those not contacted during the phone survey to express their opinions. Ninety-six responses were received and tallied apart from the phone survey. The full reports for both the phone and mail-in survey results are presented in Appendices C and D.

An overview of the phone survey is as follows. Note that in some instances, table and chart data will exceed 100 percent due to rounding.

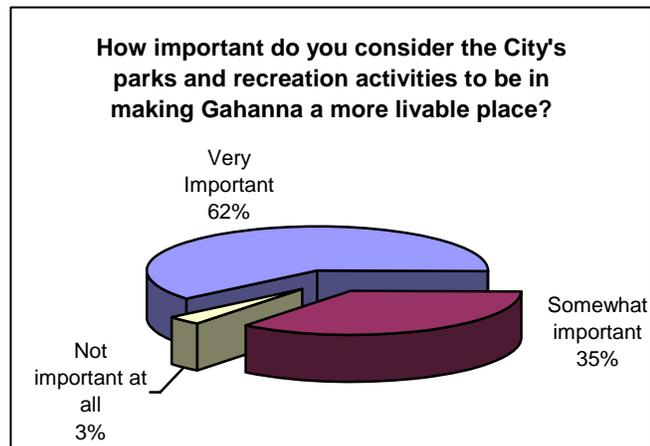
### Importance of Gahanna Parks

There is agreement among most residents that the City's parks, recreational programs and recreational facilities are important to the overall quality of life in Gahanna. The contribution of the parks is evident to the majority of all age groups. Parks play a particular role with residents who have small children. People who live with children more often consider the parks "very important" than do those who do not have children in their households. However, both groups clearly understand the contribution the parks make to the overall livability of Gahanna. Creekside Park was the most frequently visited park and Friendship Park was a close second.

Only one Gahanna resident in five did not visit any municipal park during the year before the study. Most of these non-visitors do not live with children under the age of 18.

Only Creekside, Friendship, Woodside Green, Academy and Headley Parks had been visited by at least 10 percent of the City's residents during the year preceding this survey.

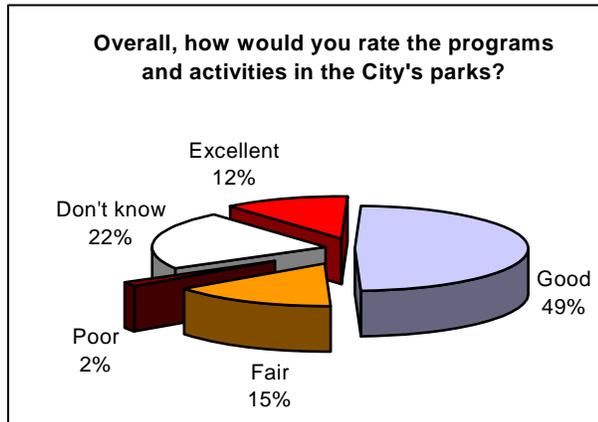
With the overall favorable ratings and high level of satisfaction with the parks, it is understandable that a large majority of the respondents said they are satisfied with their parks.



## Programs and Activities in Gahanna's City Parks

Gahanna's residents are generally pleased with the programs and activities offered by the Department. When asked to rate the programs overall on a scale of "excellent," "good," "fair," "poor," or "very poor" a majority selected the "excellent" or "good".

The most significant variation in responses is reflected in familiarity with the programs, reflected by the number of "don't know" responses.



## Recreation Program Needs

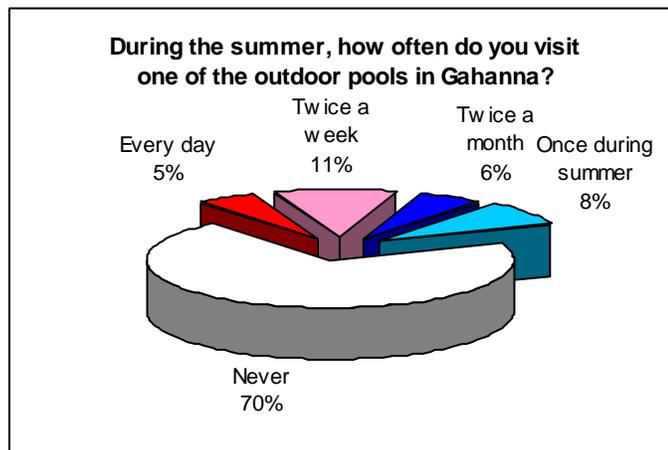
The Department offers a wide variety of programs for all ages and is interested in learning those that the public feels are well served and those groups that could benefit from additional programming. In the table below, it is evident that significant shares of Gahanna's voters "don't know" about the City's recreational programs.

The programs in the table below are listed in descending order by the share of voters who believe the targeted population is well served by current programs. For example, more than half (51 percent) of the people polled believe there is the "right amount" of sports programming for children between six and 16 years of age. At the end of the list are "programs other than sports for young adults between seventeen and thirty," where 28 percent of the people polled would like to see additional programming developed.

Recreation Program Needs	Too many	Right amount	Too few	Don't know
Sports programs for children between 6 and 16	2%	51%	11%	35%
Sports programs for adults 17 and older	1%	30%	17%	53%
Programs, other than sports, for adults	1%	30%	26%	44%
Programs for families	0%	30%	26%	44%
Programs for preschool age children	1%	27%	14%	58%
Programs, other than sports, for children between 6 and 16	1%	26%	23%	50%
Programs, other than sports, for young adults between 17 and 30	1%	17%	28%	55%

## Outdoor Swimming Pool Use

There are three outdoor community swimming pools in Gahanna. Thirty percent of those surveyed visit one of the outdoor pools during the summer months. Children are the primary reason people visit Gahanna's outdoor pools. The children's ages further influence visits to swimming pools. Those who have children in elementary or middle school are the most frequent visitors.



## Recreation Facility Needs

The facilities available to the Department of Parks and Recreation strongly impact the programming that is possible. Twelve facility options were presented to respondents who were asked if they perceive a "serious need," "some need but not serious," or "no need" for each option.

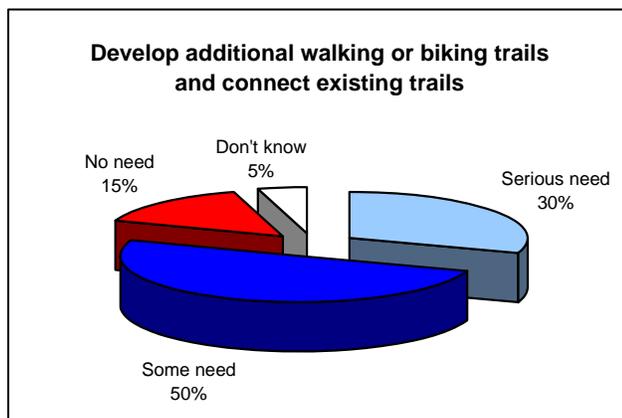
It is quite evident from the table below that the community sees the greatest need to be the development of additional walking or biking trails. The column headed "TOTAL NEED" is the combination of "serious need" and "some need but not serious" responses. Eighty-one percent of the people polled see a need to develop additional trails with the potential to link existing trails. This is 13 percentage points higher than the next perceived need in the community.

Recreation Facility Needs	Serious need	Some need	TOTAL NEED	No need	DON'T KNOW
Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails	30%	51%	81%	15%	5%
Provide additional restroom facilities at the city's parks	33%	35%	68%	18%	14%
Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds	20%	44%	64%	25%	12%
Build a community recreation center	28%	35%	63%	30%	7%
Provide additional indoor recreation space	19%	43%	62%	28%	11%
Provide additional parking around current parks	21%	35%	56%	32%	12%
Provide meeting rooms for use by community groups	16%	38%	51%	30%	17%
Build a complex for softball or baseball	12%	34%	46%	44%	11%
Provide additional outdoor basketball courts	11%	34%	45%	37%	18%
Build an indoor swimming pool	15%	29%	44%	53%	3%
Expand and renovate space for the Senior Center	13%	29%	42%	16%	42%
Provide additional gymnasiums	13%	27%	40%	47%	15%

## Walking or Biking Trails and Connect Existing Trails

Eighty-one percent of the Gahanna residents contacted for this study believe there is "a serious need" (30 percent) or "some need" (51 percent) to develop additional walking or biking trails and to connect existing trails.

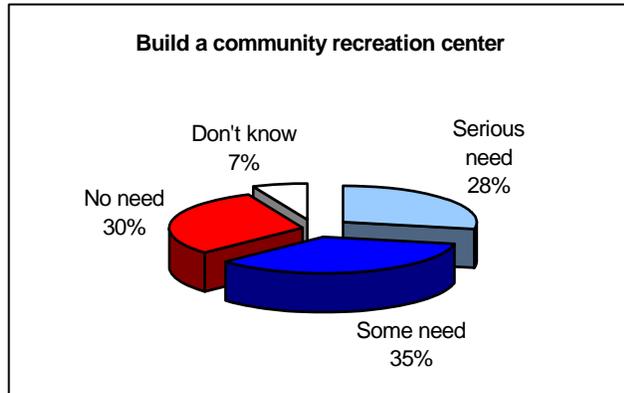
Walking trails are of greater interest to women than to men. Women are more likely to see a need for developing additional trails (83 percent) than their male counterparts (77 percent).



### Community Recreation Center

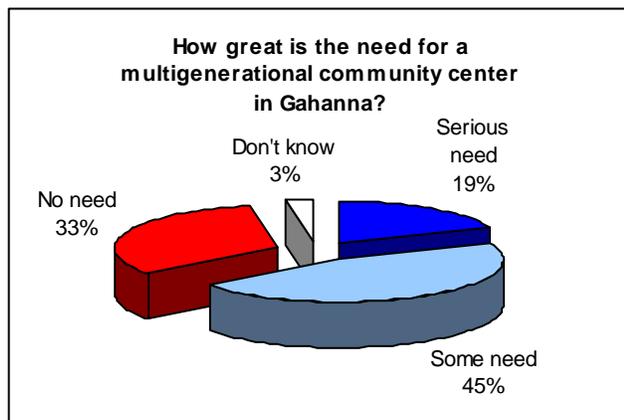
Sixty-three percent of Gahanna's residents believe that there is a need to build a community recreation center, and 28 percent believe it is a "serious need."

Support for the construction of a community center is strongest among people age 35 and younger, but at least half of every age group sees some need for the facility.



### Multigenerational Recreation Center

Some residents have suggested that the city of Gahanna build a multigenerational community recreation center similar to the one in Westerville, Ohio. The building could include areas for senior citizens, community meeting rooms, an indoor pool and a fitness facility. Voters were asked if they see a "serious need", "some need but not serious," or "no need" for such a facility. Two-thirds (65 percent) of the people polled see a need for such a center, but only 19 percent consider it a "serious need." One voter in three sees "no need" for a community center.

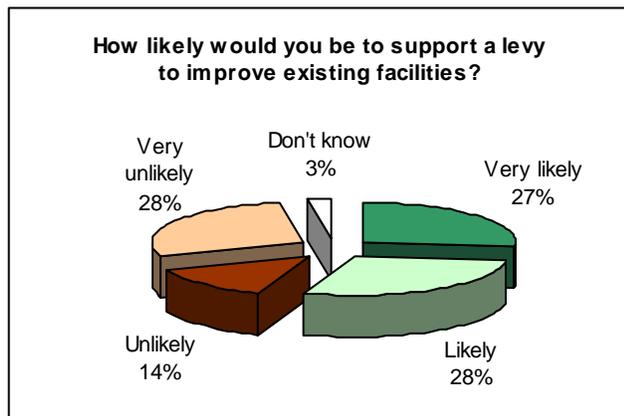


Newer residents may have expected to find a recreation center. People who moved to Gahanna during the past five years are more likely to see a need for a community center (77 percent) than are those who have been residents six to 20 years (66 percent) or longer than 20 years (56 percent). The perceived need for a community center is stronger among voters under 56 years of age.

### What Voters Will Support

Gahanna's parks are appreciated as an important element of the City's overall quality of life. Maintaining and enhancing the quality of those parks is an ever-increasing challenge for limited municipal budgets. Voters were asked a variety of questions concerning their willingness to increase taxes in order to sustain and improve the City's recreational facilities.

The first option presented to respondents was a tax increase to improve the City's current park facilities and enhance trails and bike paths. Estimates suggest those improvements may require \$15 million, in addition to the department's current budget.



Support within the community for funding the Department of Parks and Recreation at a \$75 per person level may be reasonable as long as there are the appropriate facilities and programs available and the Department is operating at a 50 percent tax supported and 50 percent fees supported basis. The

community citizen's survey indicates that 55 percent of the voters surveyed are willing to fund improvements to existing City park facilities and an expansion of bike paths through a tax increase of approximately \$10 per month. Of those surveyed that believe there is a need for a multigenerational community center, 43 percent indicated support for a levy to build a center. The community's support for tax increases to fund parks and recreation should be further evaluated in light of the following:

- Communicate specific capital improvement projects and Department objectives
- Review parks and recreation funding within the overall context of a breakdown of current taxes and user fees for existing City services
- Price the funding mechanism appropriately and offer benefits with a wide age and population appeal
- Size the funding mechanism increase to reflect the Guiding Principles of the master plan with strong public buy-in of those principles
- Determine appropriate levels of tax subsidy for each primary service and program area offered in order to establish cost of services, cost recovery goals and pricing strategies

There is a direct negative correlation between the age of the respondent and his or her willingness to increase taxes to improve the city's parks. More than half of those under 65 years of age are willing to increase taxes to enhance the parks, with the strongest support coming from people under age 45.

## Public Workshops

The purpose of the two Public Workshops was to share with residents of Gahanna the work completed to date on the parks and recreation master plan and begin identifying priorities for both the immediate future and the next 10 years. The workshops were well attended with over 60 participants in addition to the master planning consultants.

The first meeting, a Visioning Workshop, provided additional opportunity and forum for residents within the community to provide input, help validate what had been learned so far, and prioritize goals for the future of parks and recreation within Gahanna. Meeting groups were assembled to discuss priorities concerning four topics: Recreation Programs and Services, Outdoor Facilities, Indoor Facilities and Land. Many priorities and issues were raised, from a need for bike paths to a need for a centrally located community center.

At the second public meeting, the proposed mission and vision statements and master plan goals were presented. Participants discussed and prioritized recommendations for programs and services, parks and outdoor facilities, indoor facilities, operations and management, financing and funding and governance. Preliminary park master plan concepts that illustrate potential improvements to six of Gahanna's park properties consistent with the master plan goals were also presented and discussed.

## Program Assessment

The recreation program services provided by the City of Gahanna include Adults sports, Senior Program, Youth Camps, Adult Programs, Youth Programs, Family Programs, and Nature Programs. The evaluation process included the recreation staff filling out program assessment forms and one-on-one interviews with the Director of Parks and Recreation and key members of his staff in May 2005.

While youth sports programs are perceived as being provided in the "right amounts," the community survey identified a current need for programs, other than sports, for adults, young adults, teens, and children. The survey also identified a need for additional programs for families. These findings were validated by the input received through the community interview process and public workshops.

The range of program services such as sports, aquatics, senior services, camps, and special events that the Department offers to respond to residents' expressed needs are its core services. These are services that the public expects to be provided and that the Department can manage well. There are usually few other local service providers already offering similar programs. Core services are based on what the market will support. Key issues identified by the community focus on Gahanna's core services.

Overall, the Key Recreation Services Issues and Recommendations that need to be addressed are as follows:

#### Program Services:

- Further develop the Core Services to position the Department as a high-quality recreation provider for the public
- Establish program standards and performance measures for all classes, workshops, leagues and events
- Improve staff and volunteer training in areas of customer service and basic life safety skills
- Establish written partnership relationships with measurable outcomes for each partner
- Create more volunteer opportunities and better advocacy for delivery of recreation programs
- Build on the lack of programs and activities targeted to parents of 2- to 5-year-olds, preteens and teens
- Strengthen efforts to provide aquatic programs such as learn to swim classes and aquatic fitness programs

#### Facilities:

- Provide consistent recreation space for year-round programs to support needs and enhance quality
- Manage entitlement of space by special interest groups for use of City parks and recreation facilities by developing more consistent, stronger field use agreements

#### Finances:

- Assess cost of services to establish cost recovery goals and pricing strategies for all programs
- Establish a level of cost recovery and earned income requirements by implementing a pricing policy and earned income policy
- Analyze the state of the recreation budget, which is low for programming and staffing based on the needs of Gahanna residents
- Track the economic impact of festivals on the city in conjunction with Gahanna Events Inc.
- Consider additional festival sponsorship to help offset special events operational costs for logistical support that the parks and recreation system provides

#### Marketing:

- Reformat *The Gateway* program guide and deliver it by mail to each household in Gahanna
- Develop a marketing plan to better focus on marketing promotions, market trend tracking and community communications

### Adult Sports

The Adult Sports programs provide activities and leagues for adults ages 18 and over. The sports activities and leagues currently provided include: softball (2 seasons), basketball (2 seasons), volleyball (1 season), flag football (2 seasons), kickball (1 season) and dodgeball (1 season) as well as open gym for basketball, volleyball and dodgeball. The activities and leagues are offered on nights and weekends. Adult sports leagues are limited by a lack of facilities dedicated for adult play.

The outdoor recreation facilities are designed to support the programs the leagues provide, but are limited due to flooding and lighting problems. Many of the available indoor school recreation facilities are not designed to meet the specific needs of the adult programs or leagues. Other service providers who offer similar programs include the YMCA, local area municipal park and recreation agencies, churches and private leagues. The majority of leagues are offered in the late afternoon and evenings Sunday through Thursday.

Flag football, kickball and dodgeball are in the introduction and take-off stages of their program lifecycles. Softball and basketball leagues are in a mature stage, while volleyball leagues are in decline. Currently, the programs offered deliver 80 percent of the time and meet the minimum to host the program. The staff does not track any performance measures or outcomes to demonstrate success. Some formal training has been provided to staff on customer service or basic life safety skills. No volunteers work in the adult sports programs.

The City has written partnership agreements with the schools on use of their gyms. The staff promotes its programs through *The Gateway* program guide, library, Chamber of Commerce, letters to past participants and the City's web site. No formal user feedback process is in place to measure customer satisfaction. The economic value that adult sports provide to the City needs to be tracked, measured and articulated to key leadership in the city. The pricing policy in place is a guideline that does not include a cost recovery strategy or an overall philosophy for pricing of services.

### **Senior Programs**

The Senior Program area is the most established Core Service recreation program area the City provides. It has one full-time staff position and a dedicated facility available year round. The senior programs consist of social, recreational, educational, wellness and performing and fine arts programs that are meeting a basic level of standard quality. More services are needed. The targeted group for seniors is 55 years and older, with the majority of seniors taking services from the City in their 70s and 80s. The majority of programs provided for seniors are offered in the morning or early afternoon. Few classes or programs are offered in the evenings or weekends for working seniors; the majority of the classes and services are held Monday through Friday. Most of the services are one-day activities, with the exception of a few classes and some trips that are longer.

The existing Senior Center is too small to provide for the future needs of seniors in the community. The only other organization providing services to seniors is the YMCA. The senior program staff includes one full-time person, three part-time senior leader positions and volunteers to help cover the front desk. The entire senior center program budget is \$88,422. The senior program at the Senior Center could be expanded with additional staffing, extended hours and more facility space.

Most of the programs are in the mature stage of their lifecycle. Performance measures are targeted only to customer satisfaction and delivery rates. Volunteers lack training in customer service, basic life safety skills and first aid. Performance reviews are conducted yearly on the full-time staff person only and not on part-time staff. Volunteers are trained in customer service only and do not receive basic life safety skills training.

There are no established program standards or policies and procedures for senior programs in place. Senior programs are promoted in *The Gateway*, through flyers, newspapers and the community calendar. The staff does receive user feedback in the form of post evaluations surveys. The majority of programs offered is free or have a nominal charge. There is no established cost recovery goal.

## Youth Camps

The Department's part-time staff works with youth volunteers to deliver camp services, which is very helpful but limiting. The Youth Camps program provided by the Department focuses on an array of camps for youth including sports, science, arts, social skill camps, aquatics and teen camps as well as Camp Friendship day camps. Camps are offered during the summer and during school break in the winter. There are no camps targeted for school holiday recess during the school year. The majority of camps are targeted for elementary and middle school children. Before-camp and after-camp services are provided for day camps only. Approximately half of the specialty camps last three or four hours, while the rest of the camps are full-day camps with six to seven hours of service. The majority of camps are weeklong camps, with nine camps offered either on a multiple week basis or up to eight full weeks. Currently there is no park area specifically designed to support youth camps.

The majority of camps provided by the City are in the introduction or take-off stage of their lifecycle, which is excellent. Only two camps (science and basketball) are in a saturated stage of their lifecycle. The standard staff to participant ratio is one instructor to eight participants, which is excellent, although in some camps that ratio is higher. Seventy-five percent of camps offered met the minimum number of participants needed to host the camp. There is a lack of performance measures to demonstrate success and the user survey response rate is extremely low at 5 percent. Basic life safety skills for CPR and first aid are provided. Performance review for seasonal staff is in the process of being developed. There is minimal training (approximately four hours) for volunteers working with children at day camps.

Other service providers include the YMCA, YWCA, other municipalities and churches providing day camps in the area. The City has written agreements in place with private camp providers working with them in the delivery of specialty camps. The camps are promoted in *The Gateway*, flyers in the schools, the newspaper, letters to past participants, the community calendar and the City's web site. The pricing strategy is to recover 100 percent of direct costs such as staff costs and supplies.

## Adult Programs

The Department of Parks and Recreation offers a few life skills programs for adults in program areas such as belly dancing, yoga, cooking, creative movement, self-defense and healthy living. These programs are also offered by the YMCA in its family recreation programs and by other surrounding municipalities and private fitness facilities in Gahanna. The majority of Gahanna's programs are targeted to adults 25 to 65 years of age, with three program seasons per year. The adult programs could be expanded in wellness and fitness, outdoor adventure, wine tasting, cooking, art, performing arts, travel clubs, photography, historic adventure, cultural tourism and home decorating.

These programs lack a consistent facility in which to provide the services, thus making it difficult to meet the community's expectations.

The majority of programs are in their introduction or take-off level in the program lifecycle. Only yoga and belly dancing are in a mature stage. There are no established program performance measures in place, but 70 percent of the programs offered meet their minimum to host the program. Instructors receive no formal training in customer service or life safety. No volunteers are used to support instructors in classes.

The Ohio Herb Education Center is a partner with the city, providing a location and trained staff in cooking classes targeting the use of herbs. There is no established written partnership agreement with the Herb Center. The adult programs are promoted through *The Gateway* program guide, flyers in schools, the Herb Center's newsletter, letters to past participants, the community calendar and the City's web site. No post evaluations are conducted by staff on how the user feels about the programs provided. The City does not have a specific pricing strategy in place for adult programs or a cost recovery goal.

## Youth Programs

The Department of Parks and Recreation provides youth programs that focus on sports, science, arts, and social skills as well as on teens. The youth programs provided by the City are viewed by staff as a core service. In the Gahanna region, the YMCA, local dance studios, martial arts studios, art stores and Gahanna Schools offer similar services. The majority of youth programs are targeted for preschool, elementary and middle school groups. The majority of services provided in this program area are specialty programs such as birthday party packages, one-day programs, parent's night out and Columbus Theatre. The remaining programs are multiple-week programs offered year round.

Lack of dedicated indoor space limits these programs' capabilities to reach more people and provide higher levels of service.

The majority of programs provided by the City are in the introduction and take-off stages of their program lifecycle. Baton, tennis lessons and tumbling are in their mature stage while science and golf lessons are in the saturated stage of their lifecycle. These programs are meeting their minimum delivery rate of 60 percent participation. The staff does not have performance measures in place to demonstrate success. Staff is not trained in customer service, but is trained on basic life safety skills, including CPR and first aid. No volunteers assist staff in the delivery of these programs.

The City has written agreements in place with private suppliers and contract instructors to support its tumbling classes, theatre classes, science workshops, and martial arts and fitness programs. Not all partnerships in the delivery of program services have detailed written agreements. The staff promotes youth programs through *The Gateway* program guide, flyers in schools, newspapers, letters to past participants, the community calendar and the City's web site. No formal methods of customer feedback are used by the staff to seek user response and satisfaction levels. The City does not have a set pricing strategy or cost recovery goal for youth programs.

## Family Programs

The Department of Parks and Recreation provides family programs that focus on parent and child activities and community festivals. This program area targets leisure time recreational programs and promotes family growth and community spirit. The majority of the programs addresses one topic/activity or involves one-day festivals. The Creekside Festival, a three-day event coordinated with Gahanna Events, targets people of all ages. The Summer in the Park program is one night per week throughout the summer. The majority of the programs and events are offered in the spring and summer. New programs to consider include parent and child programs in fitness, tennis, golf, running, skateboarding, bicycling and basketball as well as outdoor adventure activities such as fishing, kayaking, rowing, canoeing, rock climbing and mountain biking. The family program section is viewed by staff as a core service and the Department needs staff to support it. No other service providers in the Gahanna region supply similar programs.

The family programs and events provided by the City of Gahanna are excellent, but the management of the programs could be strengthened.

The majority of the programs are in the introduction and take-off stage of their lifecycle. Creekside Festival, National Night Out, Music in the Park, Herb Festival, Freedom Festival and Spring Fling are all at a mature stage. The program delivery rate of family programs is 90 percent, which is very high, illustrating the value of family fun and participation in Gahanna. No performance measures are in place to measure the success of the programs provided. No formal customer service training is in place for staff or volunteers. The City receives strong volunteer support for its events. The City does not have a formal pricing policy or cost recovery policy in place for family programs.

The partnerships with community groups, students, the Ohio Herb Education Center, Gahanna Events and the Gahanna Historical Society are all informal. No written agreements with measurable outcomes exist. The staff promotes its family programs through *The Gateway*, flyers in schools, newspapers, letters to past participants, the community calendar and the City's web site. No formal customer feedback methods are in place.

### **Nature Programs**

The Metro Parks and surrounding park systems provide nature education programming and have specialized staff available to teach and train youth. Gahanna's nature education programs target K-8 youth and families. The programs are primarily offered from 8 a.m. to noon and from noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, with a few classes offered on Wednesday and Friday evenings. The majority of classes are one-day workshops. The Nature Core Program Area is very weak and should be strengthened or eliminated. The program lacks focus and needs many new programs to energize the community. If the City does not want to be in the nature program business, it should contract with Metro Parks to provide the service. New nature programs should focus on the following: nature photography, nature art, outdoor land labs, nature walks and hikes, and programs that focus on insects, trees, wildflowers, wildlife, water quality, composting, tracking, bird watching and gardening.

There is no dedicated park or indoor facility from which to provide nature education programs.

The programs being provided are in the saturation phase of their lifecycle. Currently, only 20 percent of the programs meet the minimum number to host the program. No formal training in customer service is provided to staff. All staff working with children are provided basic CPR and first aid training. No volunteers are assisting staff in the delivery of nature programs.

The City has no partnerships to provide nature education programs. The City promotes the nature education program in *The Gateway*, flyers in the schools, newspapers, community calendar and the City's web site. No formal methods of user feedback are used by staff to gain input into how well the services were provided. There is no formal pricing or cost recovery policy in place for nature programs.

## **Parklands and Facilities Assessment**

### **System Overview**

#### **Park Facilities**

The City has a reasonable level of game fields for soccer and football, but is somewhat underserved for softball and lacrosse. It appears that baseball is adequately served and facilities are supplemented by fields located on school properties. However, the popularity of youth leagues and the desire to expand adult leagues, coupled with field conditions that limit play, have generated intense use on available fields when they are playable. Outdoor courts tend to be below population standards for a city of Gahanna's size. Indoor recreation space is only available at the senior center and is currently used exclusively by seniors. There is limited access to school gyms. The City operates one pool, has two miles of trails, a nine-hole golf course and various playgrounds and picnic shelters within the neighborhood and community parks. Table 3-1 outlines the available park facilities with benchmarking per population. Facilities provided by the local schools are not included in this table.

Table 3-1 Gahanna Park Facilities

FACILITY	QTY	GAHANNA STANDARD PER 1000 POPULATION*	MIDWEST AVERAGES PER 1000 POPULATION.**
Playfields			
Baseball	9	1/3700	1/4000
Softball	3	1/11000	1/6000
Soccer	15	1/2200	1/4000
Football	3	1/11000	1/10000
Courts			
Basketball	3.5	1/9500	1/5000
Tennis	2	1/22000	1/6000
Volleyball	0	0	1/5000
Others			
Pools***	3	1/11000	1/20000
Open shelters	5	1/6600	1/5000
Trails (off sidewalks)	2 miles	1 mile/16600	1/3000 mile
Play areas	13	1/2600	1/2500

\* Based on 2003 projected population of 33,224

\*\* Midwest combined standard

\*\*\* Includes other community pools

### Parkland and Park Categories

There are many opportunities to improve the existing parks and increase the usability of the system. An important task for Gahanna was establishing park categories for all the properties within the system as a tool for determining city-wide distribution of park types. Establishing park categories also assists the Department in identifying appropriate maintenance levels and prioritization of park improvements. Table 3-2 identifies the acres of available parkland in each category type. Table 3-3 identifies the breakdown in park property size and category as well as additional properties that the Department currently services with other City or community partners. Both tables indicate that the overall aggregate of park acreage in Gahanna is adequate to meet the needs of a city this size. However, when the type of parkland, its distribution within the City and the character of the properties are considered, some specific deficiencies are apparent. Figures 5 and 6 illustrate the location and distribution of parks in the community and their approximate service areas. The west side and central areas of the City tend to be underserved by neighborhood parks. In these areas, there appears to be good proximity to neighborhood parks, although the creeks and major arterial streets limit access to the neighborhood parks. This deficiency is shown by input received through the public input process.

Table 3-2 Gahanna Parkland

PARK CATEGORY	GAHANNA TOTAL ACRES	GAHANNA ACRES/1000 POP.*	WESTERVILLE ACRES/1000 POP.**	COLUMBUS ACRES/1000 POP.	NATIONAL ACRES/1000 POP.
Mini Park	19.51	.6/1000	NA	NA	.25/1000
Neighborhood Park	164.63	5/1000	.3/1000	1/1000	1-2/1000
Community Park					
community	153.1	4.6/1000	4.5/1000	4/1000	5-8/1000
athletic	210.4	6.3/1000	2.1/1000		
Regional Park	NA	NA	NA	10/1000	5-10/1000
Reserve Park					
Parcels	83.95	2.5/1000	NA	NA	NA
Total Park Land	631.59	19/1000	NA	15/1000	NA

\* Based on 2003 projected population of 33,224

\*\* Projections taken from Westerville 1995 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Numbers may not reflect current park acreages.



# Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Legend

- Gahanna Boundary
- Schools
- Parkland
- City Owned Parcels
- Landfills
- Creeks and Streams
- Existing Bikeway
- Proposed Bikeway

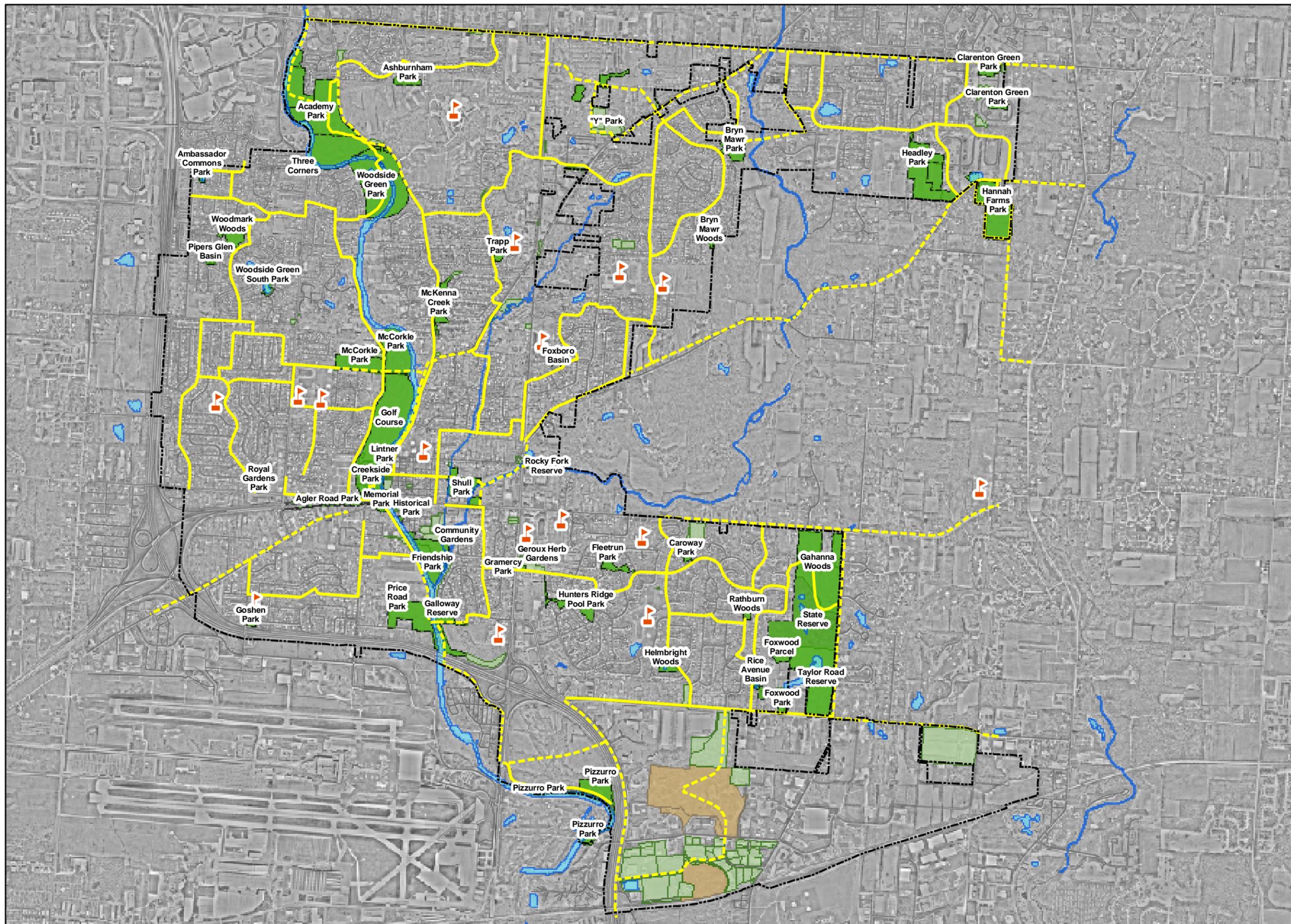


Figure 5  
Existing Park System

Table 3-3 Park Properties GIS Attribute Data

Parks	Address	Acreage	Ward District	Size	Type	Developed Area
<b>Mini Parks (.25 Mile Recreational Service Area)</b>						
Ambassador Commons Park	630 Gahanna Highlands Dr.	1.32	1	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	1.26
Clarenton Green Park	1294 Fareharm Dr.	2.82	4	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park *	0.42
Fleetrunk Park	754 Caroway Blvd.	5.02	3	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	5.02
Geroux Herb Gardens/City Hall Grounds	206 S. Hamilton Rd.	4.00	3	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	2.00
Gramercy Park	209 S. Hamilton Rd.	0.27	3	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	0.19
Lintner Park	Mill St.	0.16	2	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	0.16
Memorial Park	73 W. Johnson Road	1.74	2	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	0.35
Rathburn Woods Park	316 Howland Dr.	1.48	3	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	0.89
Royal Gardens Park	446 Agler Rd.	0.26	1	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	0.26
Trapp Park	756 Trapp Dr.	2.60	2	Less than 5 acres	Mini Park	1.04
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>19.51</b>	<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>		<b>0.6</b>	<b>11.43</b>
<b>Neighborhood Parks (.5 Mile Recreational Service Area)</b>						
Ashburnham Park	1245 Ashburnham Ct.	5.19	1	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	2.60
Bryn Mawr Park	1082 Riva Ridge Blvd.	6.48	4	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	3.89
Foxwood Park	6010 Taylor Rd.	5.20	3	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	1.56
Friendship Park	150 Oaklahoma Ave.	22.67	2	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	18.13
Hannah Farms Park	6547 Clark State Rd.	26.46	4	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	23.81
Hunters Ridge Pool Park	341 Rocky Fork Blvd.	8.77	3	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	8.77
Pizzurro Park	940 Pizzurro Park Way	23.38	3	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	16.37
Shull Park	236 Granville Rd.	10.48	2	5 to 29 acres	Neighborhood Park	9.96
Woodside Green Park	213 Camrose Ct.	56.00	2	30 acres and above	Neighborhood Park	33.60
	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>164.63</b>	<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>		<b>5.0</b>	<b>118.68</b>

Parks	Address	Acreage	Ward District	Size	Type	Developed Area
<b>Community Parks (3 Mile Recreational Service Area)</b>						
Creekside Park	123 Mill Street	7.91	2	5 to 29 acres	Community park	5.54
Gahanna Woods Nature Park	1501 Taylor Station Rd.		3	30 acres and above	Community park	0.00
Gahanna Woods		49.41				19.77
State Reserve ***		50.03				7.51
Taylor Road Reserve		40.48				2.02
Foxwood Parcel		5.26				4.73
	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>153.10</b>		<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>39.57</b>
<b>Athletic Complexes (3 Mile Recreational Service Area)</b>						
Academy Park	1201 Cherrybottom Rd.	28.00	1 & 2	30 acres and above	Athletic Complex	19.60
Cherrybottom Road Reserves		14.80				5.92
Academy Reserve		35.00				1.75
Golf Course	220 Ridenour Rd.	64.80	2	30 acres and above	Athletic Complex	0.00
Headley Park	1031 Challis Springs Dr.	33.38	4	30 acres and above	Athletic Complex	31.71
McCorkle Park	200 Old McCutcheon Rd.	34.42	2	30 acres and above	Athletic Complex	29.26
	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>210.40</b>		<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>88.24</b>
<b>Total Park Land Acreage</b>		<b>547.64</b>		<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>257.9</b>

Parks	Address	Acreage	Ward District	Size	Type	Developed Area
<b>Miscellaneous Open Space (No Service Area)</b>						
Shagbark Reserve	Stoneridge Dr.	2.43	2	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland *	0.24
Underwood Reserve	Underwood Farms	2.85	2	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland	0.71
Agler Road Parkway	273 Agler Road	6.94	1 & 2	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	6.94
Bryn Mawr Woods Reserve	800 Line Way	1.39	4	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland	0.14
Caroway Reserve	934 Caroway Blvd.	1.19	3	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland	1.19
Clarenton Green Reserve	1249 Fareham Dr.	4.32	4	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland	0.86
Foxwood Reserve	Preservation Lane	0.60	3	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland *	0.48
Galloway Reserve	289 Rocky Fork Dr. S.	11.32	3	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	1.13
Goshen Reserve	Goshen Lane	0.38	2	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland *	0.38
Helmbright Woods Reserve	445 Helmbright Woods	3.63	3	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland	0.55
McKenna Creek Parkway	486 Cherrybottom Pky.	5.91	4	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	3.55
Price Road Reserve	110 Price Road	20.19	2	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	2.02
Rocky Fork Reserve	Hamilton Road	6.65	3	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	0.00
Shull Reserve	Granville St. by Shull	1.51	2	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland	0.00
Three Corners	Steigler Road	0.66	1	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland*	0.40
Woodmark Woods Reserve	534 Woodmark Run	10.04	1	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	1.51
Woodside Green South Reserve	645 Waybaugh Dr.	3.93	1	Less than 5 acres	Misc. Parkland *	3.93
	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>83.95</b>		<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>24.03</b>
<b>Stormwater Management Sites (No Service Area)</b>						
Clark State Basin	Clark State Road	1.89	4	Less than 5 acres	Other Ownership **	0.00
Foxboro Basin	514 Tresham Way	1.82	3	Less than 5 acres	Other Ownership **	0.00
Pipers Glen Basin	633 Spirea	1.61	1	Less than 5 acres	Other Ownership **	0.00
Rice Avenue Basin	1180 Rice Avenue	2.54	3	Less than 5 acres	Other Ownership **	0.00
	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>7.86</b>		<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Parks	Address	Acreage	Ward District	Size	Type	Developed Area
<b>Community Partnerships</b>						
Chamber of Commerce Grounds		0.40		Less than 5 acres	Other Ownership ***	0.28
Foxboro Pool			3	Less than 5 acres	Other Ownership ***	0.00
Gahanna Swim Club			2		Other Ownership ***	0.00
Historical Park	103 S. High St.	0.45	2	Less than 5 acres	Other Ownership ***	0.11
Northeast School Field	500 N. Hamilton Road	5.00	3	5 to 29 acres	Other Ownership ***	0.50
St. Matthew Fields	150 Parkland Drive	10.00	2	5 to 29 acres	Other Ownership ***	4.00
Y Park		12.41	2	5 to 29 acres	Misc. Parkland	
	<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>28.26</b>		<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>4.89</b>
<b>Total Other Open Space Acreage</b>		<b>120.07</b>		<b>Acres per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>28.92</b>

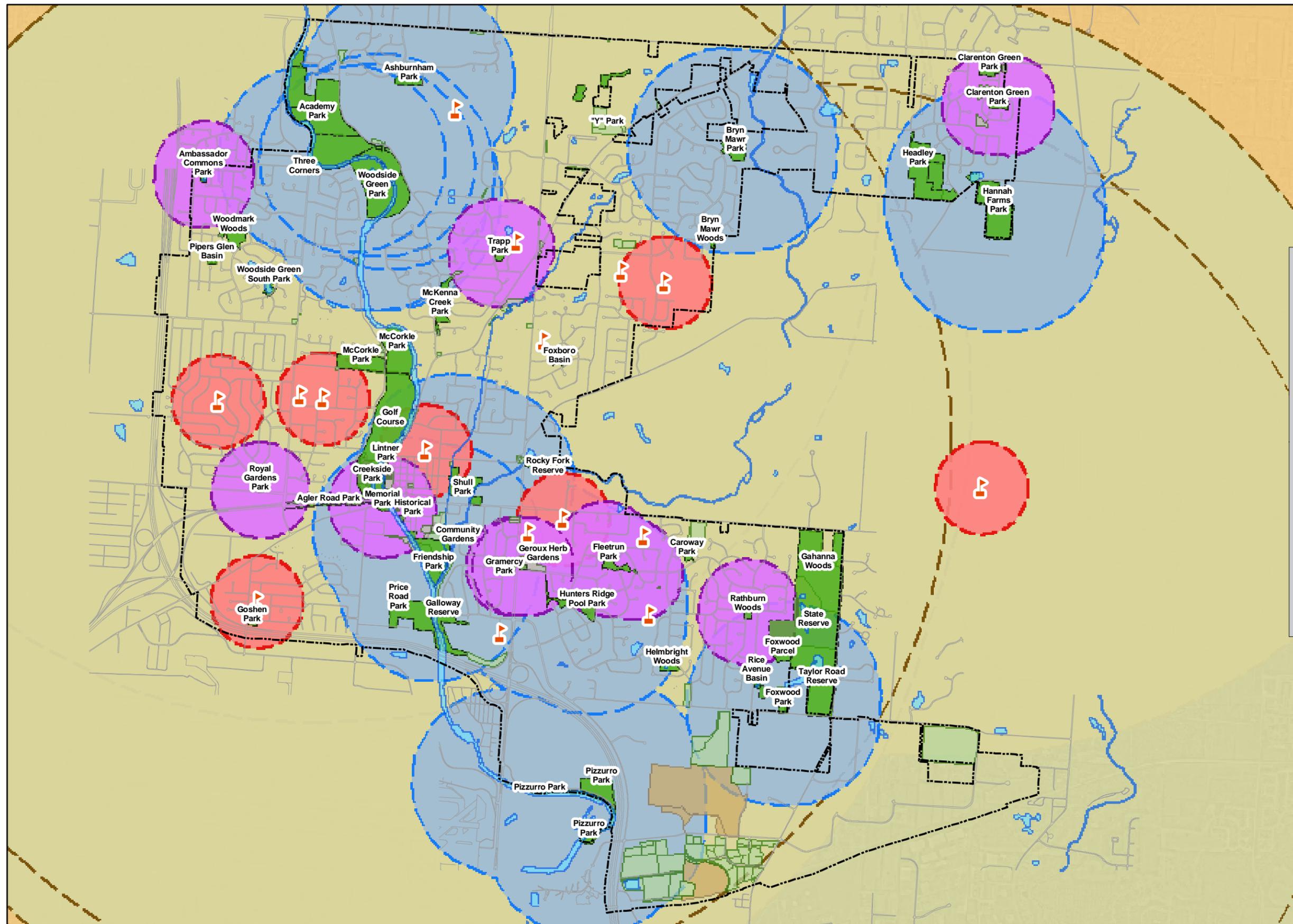
\* Parcel candidate for review

\*\* Owned by City of Gahanna, maintained by Service Dept.

\*\*\* Owned by others, maintained by GPR



# Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan



**Legend**

- Gahanna Boundary
- Schools
- Parkland
- City Owned Parcels
- Landfills
- Creeks and Streams

**Recreational Service Areas**

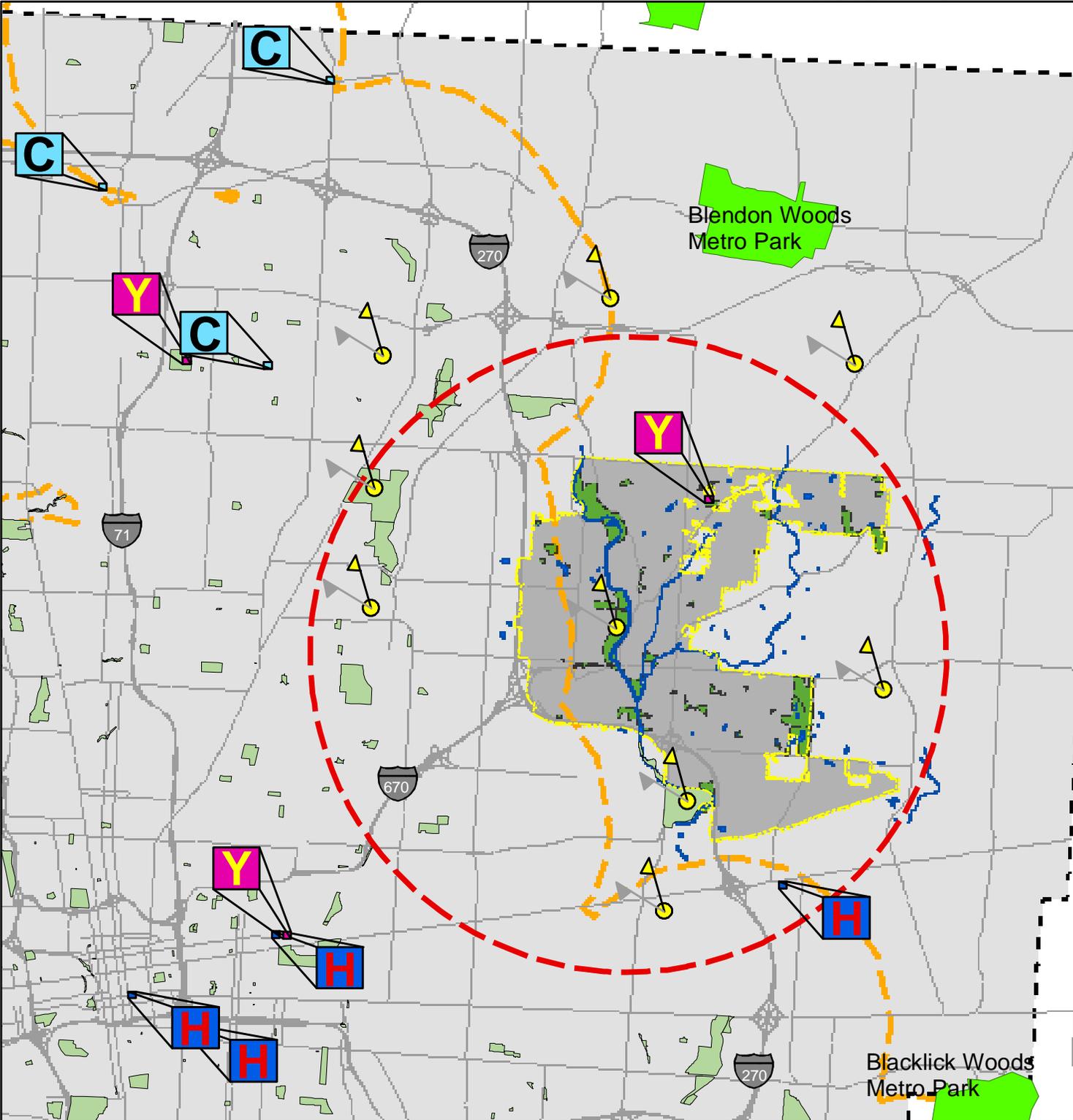
- Schools Service Area
- Mini Parks Service Area
- Neighborhood Parks Service Area
- Community Parks Service Area
- Athletic Complex Service Area



**Figure 6  
Existing Park System  
& Service Areas**

**Legend**

- Gahanna Boundary
- Franklin County
- Gahanna Parks
- Columbus Parks
- Columbus Community Parks Service Area
- Metro Parks
- Hospitals
- Community Centers
- YMCA
- Golf Courses
- Gahanna 4 Mile Service Area



**Figure 7  
Regional Parks  
& Facilities**

## Park Assessments

The consultant team and members of the Department of Parks and Recreation toured existing Gahanna Parks on April 8, 2005 (see Appendix E). The team observed and noted existing site conditions, site accommodations, current levels of service, site needs and opportunities. The parks throughout Gahanna vary greatly in size and utilization. The presence of the creeks and floodplains is a reoccurring characteristic which has been capitalized on by the Creekside Development and Creekside Park. Since many of the park properties are located within or adjacent to flood-prone areas, use of many playing fields is limited by flooding or poor drainage conditions. Gahanna also has a significant number of small, undeveloped "reserve" park parcels, most of which were acquired through parkland dedications from subdivision development. These small properties contribute to the overall open space character of the community, but also carry a maintenance obligation disproportionate to the benefits they provide. Recently developed parks and facilities include Creekside, Shull, and Headley as well as the athletic fields at McCorkle and Hannah Farms. The larger sports-oriented parks such as McCorkle, Headley and Academy are running at full capacity while some parks such as Caroway, Fleetrun and land around the Hunters Ridge Pool lack programming and park facilities all together. Overall, the parks in Gahanna are clean and well maintained.

Additional observations include the parks' general levels of development as well as their character, appearance and context within the surrounding neighborhoods. The newer parks and athletic complexes tend to lack basic landscaping, tree cover and neighborhood park amenities, making for a single-use function and appearance. Older parks such as Friendship Park and Woodside Green offer mature stands of vegetation and access to Big Walnut Creek. Gahanna Woods, which is maintained by Gahanna but owned in part by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, is a nature-oriented park containing a significant wetland resource and nature trails. Restroom facilities at Academy, McCorkle and Friendship Parks need renovation or replacement. Lack of amenities such as walking paths, picnic tables and shelters, multi-use fields and shade limit the use of many of the parks such as Ashburnham and Fleetrun. Attention to edging and surfacing details is required to assure that play equipment is accessible. Establishing standards for materials, site furnishings and landscaping for Gahanna's parks will help guide renovations and new construction as the parks are improved. This will also assist in simplifying maintenance requirements.

Not all of the properties owned by the City of Gahanna were assessed. From the smaller categories such as Mini Parks and Open Space and Reserve Parcels, only a few were assessed to represent the condition of all park properties in their respective categories. Ambassador Commons Park, Clarenton Green Park, Fleetrun Park and Rathburn Woods were chosen to represent the Mini Park category. Caroway Reserve, Clarenton Green Reserve, Shull Reserve and Woodside Green South Reserve were chosen to represent the Open Space and Reserve Parcels category. Not all neighborhood parks were assessed as well; Ashburnham Park, Friendship Park, Hannah Farms Park, Hunters Ridge Pool Park, Shull Park and Woodside Green were selected to represent this category.

### Academy Park

This 78-acre community park and baseball complex is located in the Northwest Quadrant of the City and is visible from Cherrybottom Road and the surrounding residential neighborhood. The central portion of the park adjacent to Cherrybottom Road is the main developed area of the park. The remaining portions of the park are known as the Cherrybottom and Academy "Reserve" parcels and are located within the Big Walnut Creek floodplain. Academy Park contains seven baseball fields that are used



intensively by the local youth league. Currently, 1,400 youth participate in the spring leagues and 400 to 500 play in the fall leagues. Some of the outfields on the west side of the park are located in the floodplain of the Big Walnut Creek and have poor drainage. A play area is also located in the floodplain and experiences periodic flooding. The play area is deteriorating and is slated for replacement in the near future. Parking is at a premium and a small grass field is used for overflow parking. Seating for spectators is also limited. Existing bleachers are on gravel pads and require frequent maintenance for weed removal. The concession/restroom building is in need of repair and expansion and lacks accessible restrooms. The leagues desire storage and meeting space for league use as well as expanded restrooms. An asphalt trail leads from the parking lot through the ball fields to a nature trail that crosses the Big Walnut Creek and connects with Woodside Green Park after passing through a wetland. A former water sludge dumping area is being used as an impromptu BMX bike area with kids building jumps and obstacles.

The City provides basic maintenance tasks such as mowing, trash removal and repairs and the baseball league provides additional maintenance over and above these basic tasks. Residents along the north boundary have expressed concern with development of facilities in the park and have requested an earth be and more trees along the park boundary for screening.

#### Site Features

- Seven lighted baseball diamonds
- Two full basketball courts
- Playground
- BMX bike area (unofficial)
- Access to Big Walnut Creek
- Riparian and wetland areas
- Wooded area
- Connector trail to Woodside Green Park
- Asphalt parking lot
- Concession and restroom building with 2<sup>nd</sup> floor storage

### Ambassador Commons Park

Ambassador Commons Park is a 1.32-acre neighborhood open space or mini park located on Gahanna Highlands Drive in the Northwest Quadrant of the City. Most of the park is taken up by a small pond that requires periodic filling with potable water by Park Operations. Mature shade trees are located along one side of the pond. A park and play area is provided with good visibility from the street and the surrounding residences.

#### Site Features

- Pond
- Playground

### Ashburnham Park

Ashburnham Park is a 5.19-acre neighborhood park located in the Northwest Quadrant of the City at the end of Ashburnham Court. The majority of this park is covered by woodland. A playground and half basketball court are located at the front of the site visible from road. A large detention basin sits adjacent to the basketball court and the playground. Nature trails meander through the woods. The park is surrounded by residential properties with Columbus Academy located to the south.



#### Site Features

- Playground
- Half basketball court
- Wooded nature trails

### **Caroway Reserve**

This 1.19-acre property is an open space parcel located behind residential housing with a narrow access frontage along Caroway Boulevard in the Southeast Quadrant of the City. The majority of the reserve is sloping lawn with some newly planted trees. The reserve is completely surrounded by single-family residential houses. Caroway Reserve is indicative of Gahanna's "open space/reserve parcel" category, which is comprised of open spaces acquired through development impact requirements and functions only as an amenity for the adjacent residential neighborhood. It currently does not support any programmed activities for park facilities.



#### Site Features

- Open lawn area

### **Clarenton Green Park and Clarenton Green Reserve**

Clarenton Green Park is a 2.82-acre mini park and Clarenton Green Reserve is 4.32 acres of open space located in the Northeast Quadrant of the City. Both properties, while owned by the City, serve as open space for the surrounding residential community and are maintained by the homeowner's association.

#### Site Features

- Open lawn area

### **Creekside Park**

Creekside Park is a 7.91-acre community park located adjacent to the downtown business district on either side of the Big Walnut Creek. This park is reserved for passive recreation with meandering concrete paths behind the Mill Street businesses and includes places for sitting throughout the riparian creek corridor. The park is a good example of parkland contributing to economic development. Adjacent businesses along the east bank are able to capitalize on the creek as an amenity with outdoor decks and views from the many small restaurants overlooking the park. Creekside also hosts numerous community events and is the focal point of redevelopment efforts in downtown Gahanna, with a future phase currently under construction.



Management of the park facilities is complicated by the frequent flooding and some erosion issues along the banks and walkways. The recent addition of a pedestrian bridge provides access across the creek to a boardwalk and trail system along the west side of the creek with a connection to the Golf Course. The Creekside Trailway Loop Study presents options for furthering connections between downtown, Creekside, the Golf Course and Friendship Park. The park provides access to the creek for canoeing, wading and

fishing. The millrace supports paddle boating. A plaza is planned along Mill Street that will connect it to the park, giving it more of a civic presence on the street.

#### Site Features

- Big Walnut Creek access
- Riparian area – active siltation and debris deposition
- Nature trails
- Picnic area
- Fishing
- Canoe access
- Connections to trail system

#### Fleetrunk Park

Fleetrunk Park is a 5-acre open space park located behind residences in the Southeast Quadrant of the City with access at two points along Caroway Boulevard. This park, like Caroway Park, is dedicated land behind residences but offers the potential for providing a walking trail connection within the neighborhood. The majority of the park is rolling lawn with some drainage problems. An old playground with noncompliant equipment and a deteriorating basketball court is located in the park. Parking is supplied on the streets and there is no paving or formal entrance at the access points. Single-family residences surround the park. Although access and visibility from the street are limited, its size suggests that Fleetrunk Park may be appropriate for redevelopment as a mini park.



#### Site Features

- Open lawn area
- Deteriorated basketball court (opportunity to reuse space)
- Old playground equipment
- Limited definition of parkland edges

#### Friendship Park

This 22.67-acre neighborhood park is located on Oklahoma Avenue behind the Gahanna Maintenance Facility in the Southwest Quadrant of the City. Visibility of the park is limited from the roads. This passive park features rolling terrain with tennis courts and a playground located at the confluence of the Big Walnut, Sycamore Run and Rocky Fork Creeks. An open air shelter, gazebo, small restroom building and basketball court are located on higher ground near the parking lot. The shelter and playground are currently slated for replacement. Although its current designation is that of a neighborhood park, the level of existing facilities and its intensive uses indicates a more community park-oriented role. Visitors often drive to the park for group picnics and the City conducts summer day camp here.



#### Site Features

- Two lighted courts for tennis and basketball
- Playground
- Gazebo
- Restroom
- Picnic shelter with tables
- Riparian area
- Access to Big Walnut Creek
- Parking lot (adequate for current use)
- Fire pit
- Wooden stage
- Open lawn area

#### Gahanna Woods Park & State Nature Preserve

Gahanna Woods is an assemblage of three parcels totaling 145.18 acres. The park is a significant nature preserve and community park located in the Southeast Quadrant of the City, with access from Taylor Station Road. Unique to the Gahanna Park system, the property is a combination of land owned by the State and the City and contains endangered species and Category 3 wetlands. The nature preserve is intended for nature programming and quiet, passive uses. It provides trails that traverse through many plant and animal ecosystems. A small picnic area and open lawn is located near the trail heads by the parking lot. Maintenance around the entrance and parking lot areas will be transitioned from a treated lawn area to more naturalized conditions. Users have expressed an interest in adding an observation deck and an environmental education facility. The Department's bulk and indoor storage facility and water tower also occupy a portion of the property.



#### Site Features

- Woods
- Ponds
- Wetland
- Nature trails
- Picnic area
- Parking lot (adequate for use)
- Water tower
- Parks maintenance facility

### **Gahanna Municipal Golf Course**

The Gahanna Golf Course is a nine-hole public course located on 64.8 acres in the Northwest Quadrant of the City on Old Ridenour Road. The course is located in the floodplain on the west side of the Big Walnut Creek and is flooded annually. It is a well-maintained course with a park-like feel with treated grass and mature trees. Sledding is permitted in the winter. The clubhouse is small with a lack of space for storage of mowing equipment. The second floor is one of the few meeting spaces in the City and is often mistaken for the Pro Shop. A pedestrian connection from the parking lot to Creekside Park is also provided. A significant portion of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Freedom Festival occurs on the golf course.



#### **Site Features**

- Cart path throughout course
- Clubhouse with concessions, restrooms and Pro Shop
- Mature trees
- Access to creek
- Connection to Creekside Park via board walk
- Parking lot (adequate for current use)

### **Hannah Farms Park**

This 26.46-acre neighborhood park is located in the Northeast Quadrant of the City off Clark State Road. The park is surrounded on all sides by residential properties. The entrance drive is gravel and is in poor condition. On the right is a cricket pitch in the middle of a field that is poorly drained with uneven turf. Near the rear of the site, there is a well-maintained little league baseball field with some minor drainage issues. To the west of the little league field is a newly constructed dog park. To the south of the dog park is an underused baseball field with some drainage and turf problems. The boundaries of the park are fence rows lined with mature trees. A declining apple orchard is also present at the park.



#### **Site Features**

- Dog park
- Little league baseball field
- Adult baseball diamond
- Cricket pitch
- Mature trees

## Headley Park

This 33.38-acre community park and soccer complex is located in the Northeast Quadrant of the City off Challis Springs Drive. The park is surrounded on three sides by residential properties, with an electrical substation and power line right-of-way to the west. The entrance sign to the park is visible from Clark State Road, but the park boundary along the road is screened with vegetation. Some pedestrian/vehicular conflicts arise when visitors are walking from some amenities to others. The majority of the site consists of large level playing fields dedicated to soccer, with one unused baseball field in the northwest corner. Currently, 1,200 children play in the spring leagues and 1,400 participate in the fall. Availability of practice fields is an issue. The front section of fields is irrigated with a quick coupler system. The lower level fields tend to be uneven. There are high game cancellation rates in the spring due to wet field conditions. The parking lot is in good shape but is inadequate for the number of fields present in the park. There is a concession/restroom building which also includes storage space, office space, a meeting room and a shower for referees. This facility is the prototype for what the baseball and football leagues would like to see developed for their facilities. The play area was recently relocated closer to the park entrance on higher ground and is experiencing more use.



### Site Features

- Ten full-size soccer fields
- Playground
- Concession/restroom building with picnic shelter
- Small sledding hill

## Hunters Ridge Pool Park

This 8.77-acre neighborhood park is located in the Southeast Quadrant of the city on Rocky Fork Boulevard. The pool facility was a former civic association-owned neighborhood pool and is now owned and operated by the City as a community-wide membership and daily admission facility. The park contains basketball courts, a tennis court, a playground and open lawn areas. The pool area includes open lawn areas, a rentable picnic shelter for pool patrons, concessions, restrooms and a changing facility. The grounds of the pool are well maintained, clean and in good shape. Some minor grading work could make the open play area a suitable practice field.



### Site Features

- Pool
- Full basketball court
- Tennis court
- Open play area

- Parking lot (adequate for use)
- Concessions
- Restroom/changing facility
- Picnic shelter

### McCorkle Park

McCorkle Park is a 34.42-acre community park located in central Gahanna. McCorkle Park is surrounded by residential properties on three sides, with the Big Walnut Creek to the east and Middle School West and Chapelfield Elementary in close proximity to the southwest. The park is bisected by Olde Ridenour Road. The east portion of the park is in the Big Walnut Creek floodplain and is almost entirely wooded. The woods and access to the creek could provide opportunities for trails and picnic areas. A single soccer field is in the southeast corner. The field is well-drained and in good shape. A new parking lot serves the soccer field on the west side of Olde Ridenour Road. Located to the west



of the parking lot is the main part of McCorkle Park. A steep hill with no paved walkways separates the upper fields from the new parking area, restricting access. The western portion of the park is accessible from the west at the end of Olde McCutcheon Road. This part of the park contains three lighted football fields. Each field has bleachers, fixed goal posts and elevated, enclosed media booths. The goal posts on the north side of the park are located too close to the property line and adjacent residential properties, and the density of fields makes for a difficult fit with the adjacent residential properties. The fields are in their fourth season of use. The turf is in poor condition. Drainage problems between the parking lot and the west field and within the eastern field contribute to turf problems. Concessions, restrooms, meeting space and storage are also located adjacent to the football fields. A recently paved parking lot near the entry at the west end of the park is inadequate for the current use of the park, while the parking lot on Olde Ridenour Road is underutilized for overflow football parking. Pedestrian access is provided by a gravel walk connecting the restroom/concession building to the tot lot and Marjoram Drive.

### Site Features

- Three football fields
- One soccer field
- Woods
- Riparian area
- Concessions
- Restrooms
- Pedestrian connection to Marjoram Drive
- Access to Big Walnut Creek

### **Pizzurro Park**

This 23.38-acre neighborhood park is located in the Southeast Quadrant of the City between the Big Walnut Creek and I-270 and is accessible from South Hamilton Road. Adult softball leagues currently use the two softball fields located at the park, although availability and field conditions are often compromised by flooding. The low visibility from South Hamilton Road and its remote location add to the park's negative reputation for undesirable activity. The majority of the park is in the floodplain, with some woods to the north at higher elevation. The woods and creek along the entrance drive provide opportunity for nature trails. A future commercial development planned to the north has proposed the donation of more woodland property to the park.



#### **Site Features**

- Big Walnut Creek
- Riparian area
- Woods
- Pull-off parking spaces along entry drive
- Full basketball court
- Two softball fields
- Playground
- Picnic shelter

### **Rathburn Woods**

Rathburn Woods is a 1.48-acre mini park located in the Southeast Quadrant of the City at the end of Howland Drive. This park is completely surrounded by residential housing with pedestrian access points on all sides. Three quarters of the site is wooded with nature trails, while the remaining quarter is open lawn area. A playground structure is located near the main entrance. New tree plantings are used as screening along residential boundaries. The paths through the open area are comprised of aggregate base material.

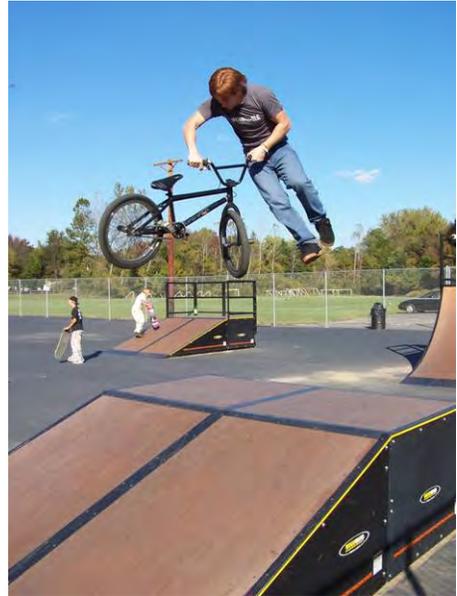


#### **Site Features**

- Playground
- Woods
- Nature trails
- Open lawn area

## Shull Park

This 10.48-acre neighborhood park is located in the Southwest Quadrant of the City behind businesses along Granville Street. Shull Park contains a skate park comprised of movable equipment and is large enough for future expansion. An inline hockey rink is located adjacent to the skate park. The large open lawn area has several small soccer practice fields that function as an “annex” to Headley Park. These fields experience drainage problems due to unmanaged surface drainage and periodic flooding by the Rocky Fork Creek. The park is surrounded by residences on three sides, with the businesses on Granville Street surrounding the fourth. An undeveloped City-owned parcel adjacent to the local branch library on Granville Street is contiguous with the park. It is recommended that the City-owned parcel be attached to the park, which would provide more visibility and street frontage along Granville.



### Site Features

- Skate park
- Inline hockey rink
- Access to Rocky Fork Creek
- Parking lot (adequate for current use)
- Soccer fields

## Woodside Green Park

Woodside Green Park is a 52-acre community park located in the Northwest Quadrant of the City with vehicular access at the end of Camrose Court. The park is well-maintained, with a pond available for catch and release fishing and ice skating when conditions permit. Baseball and softball fields are located at the north end of the site, with the softball field experiencing some availability and maintenance issues due to flooding. A concession restroom building is located in the center of the park adjacent to the rentable shelter. The restrooms have experienced some vandalism in the past. An accessible recreational trail connects the parking lot to the remaining park features. An improved recreational trail connects Woodside Green with Academy Park to the north via an elevated single span scenic bridge crossing the Big Walnut Creek.



### Site Features

- Baseball field
- Softball field
- Picnic shelter
- Restroom/concession building
- Full basketball court
- Pond

- Access to Big Walnut Creek
- Nature trails
- Parking lot (adequate for current use)
- Playground

## **Additional Parks and Recreational Resources (see Figure 7)**

### **Metro Parks**

Metro Parks operate 14 regional parks in the Columbus area, two within two miles of the City of Gahanna. Blacklick Woods and the Golf Course are located to the southeast of the City, while Blendon Woods is north of the City. These parks help to serve regional park needs of the citizens of Columbus, Gahanna and beyond. Opportunities for a potential greenway connection north of Academy Park along the Big Walnut Creek are currently being discussed, as well as pedestrian accommodations along the Morse Road corridor.

### **Columbus Parks**

The City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department operates and maintains many parks, swimming pools and recreation centers throughout the Columbus area. These parks and facilities total more than 14,000 acres. The Columbus community parks also serve residents of Gahanna and the surrounding suburbs. The western portion of Gahanna lies within the two-mile service area of four City of Columbus community parks: Innis Park, North East Park, Mock Road Park and Krumm Park (see Figure 7). Interstate 270 is a barrier between Gahanna residents and these parks; however, Agler Road and McCutcheon Road provide connections across I-270.

### **Golf Courses**

Gahanna is home to the City-owned Gahanna Municipal Golf Course. Additionally, a total of eight golf courses are located within approximately four miles of downtown Gahanna. Of these eight golf courses, the Airport Golf Course, Champions Golf Course, Minerva Park Golf Course and Bridgeview Golf Course are public golf courses. The remaining four are private golf courses, including the Columbus Country Club, Jefferson Golf Course and Country Club, New Albany Country Club and Little Turtle Country Club. Numerous other golf courses are located throughout the Columbus area.

### **Community Centers and YMCAs**

The City of Gahanna does not currently have a community center. However, the Gahanna YMCA is located at "Y" Park to the north of downtown. There are two additional YMCAs located within 10 miles of Gahanna. These are the North Branch YMCA located to the northwest and the Eldon W Ward YMCA located to the southwest. There are also three community centers located within 10 miles northwest of Gahanna: Westerville Community Center, Northland Community Center and Worthington Community Center. There are several other YMCAs and community centers located throughout the Columbus area.

### **Hospitals**

Hospitals are increasing efforts to partner with communities to create wellness facilities. Hospitals use wellness facilities for patient rehabilitation, and nearby residents use them as community centers. Wellness centers are funded by both parties.

The five hospitals located within proximity to Gahanna are Mt. Carmel East Hospital, directly south of the City; Park Medical Center, approximately six miles to the southwest; Grant Medical Center and Children's Hospital in downtown Columbus; and Mount Carmel St Ann's Hospital, located approximately 10 miles north of Gahanna in Westerville.

## Schools

The Gahanna-Jefferson School District serves Gahanna-Jefferson residents in several ways. The school buildings themselves allow for group meetings and indoor athletics, while the school ball fields provide space for practices and scheduled games. Of the 27 fields within Gahanna, nine are owned by the City while 18 are owned by the School District. The Department of Parks and Recreation does not use the elementary school gyms, as these gyms are not regulation size and normally have tile or carpeted floors. Classrooms are rarely open to the public. The elementary schools serve the following groups:

- Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
- Gahanna Soccer Association
- Gahanna Junior League Baseball
- Gahanna Youth Sports (Basketball)
- Gahanna Junior League Football and Cheerleading
- Gahanna-Jefferson residents basketball

As the athletic programs are expanded for the middle school students, less time remains for use by other organizations. The middle schools serve the following groups:

- Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
- Gahanna Junior League Baseball
- Gahanna Youth Sports
- Track areas available for Gahanna-Jefferson residents to use for walking/running
- Gahanna Parks and Recreation Adult Sports

There is difficulty in scheduling all of the activities that take place at the high school. The practice times in all three gyms are divided into three time slots each evening. As gym space is scheduled, the high school has to allow for ample time for scheduled tournaments. The high school serves these groups:

- Track areas available for Gahanna-Jefferson residents to use for walking/running
- Tennis courts used by the Gahanna Senior Center and Gahanna-Jefferson residents
- The Auditorium used by Pinnell Dance, Extravaganza, Gahanna Community Theatre, elementary and middle school performances
- The cafeteria used by Gahanna Civil Service Commission, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, OHSAA meetings, GLHS team meals
- Gyms used for Chapelfield Jump Rope for Heart, Gahanna Health Fair, Blood Drive and various other athletic events
- Gahanna Parks and Recreation Adult Sports

## Operations Assessment

### Department of Parks and Recreation Operational Review

The operations assessment, conducted in May 2005, included meetings with the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation and key staff members. The elements assessed included: organizational design and staffing, work-schedule procedure, service contracting, human resources management, management of the Department, financial management, planning, partnerships, performance measures, information technology, marketing, personnel policy management, field equipment resources and governance..

The Department is an organization in transition. For years the Department was limited to a focus on land acquisition, low levels of park development and a limited role in recreation program development. The Department has a reasonable level of game fields for baseball, softball and soccer. However, sports courts

are below standards for a city of its size. Indoor recreation space is only available at the Golf Course Club House and the Senior Center with some limited access to school gyms. The City operates one pool, one nine hole golf course and has two miles of trails and a scattered amount of playgrounds and picnic shelters. The operating budget for the Department is approximately \$2.5 million.

The Department has created a high level of energy among residents, and has put a lot of effort into increasing the maintenance levels of parks and enlarging the number of recreation programs and special events in the City. In addition, the Department has increased planning for the design of parks and recreation facilities and the creation of a vision for the community for parks and recreation services, programs and facilities through the development of the first parks and recreation master plan.

The operational review focuses on the management practices of the Department that will allow the City and Department to manage forward and not be reactive in meeting the recreation and park needs of citizens in the future.

### **Organizational Design and Staffing**

At the time of assessment, the Gahanna Parks and Recreation organization had three divisions: Recreation Services, Golf, and Park Maintenance. The staffing levels for Park Maintenance are extremely low for the level of responsibility, number of parks and community expectations for quality maintenance of parks, game fields, trails and landscaped areas of the City. There are three full-time park maintenance staff and a Superintendent of Parks. The Department hires seasonal staff all year with the majority working May through August. There are approximately 26,000 hours of maintenance personnel available, or 12.5 full-time equivalents, to maintain 43 parks, 31 game fields, two miles of trails, approximately 134,000 square feet of landscaped beds, one outdoor pool, 96 acres of natural areas, 13 playgrounds, five picnic shelters, 100 pieces of rolling maintenance equipment, approximately 10,000 street trees, a senior center and other public spaces in Gahanna. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff (a combination of full-time and part-time staff based on 1,600 hours) total 21.9 persons. This results in a ratio of 13 acres maintained per person, which is an excellent level of maintenance when compared to best practice agencies. The problem exists in the number of full-time staff versus part-time. During the spring and fall, when part-time staff is limited, maintenance staff is overloaded. The Department needs to convert part-time staff hours to full-time staff to ease the level of stress during this time period. Projected staff needed should remain at one staff person per 15 acres of parkland that is actively maintained. Maintenance staff is also hampered by an inadequate maintenance facility that lacks storage and security. The Department needs its own maintenance facility to store equipment and bulk supplies.

The Recreation Division has two full-time staff members and a Superintendent of Recreation, along with approximately 16,800 hours of part-time and contracted staff to provide recreation services in seven core services program areas (a total of 8.12 FTE). The Recreation Division is responsible for the 900-member Senior Center, several seasonal day camp programs, a 13-week summer entertainment series, one outdoor pool and a variety of community special events and programs. The division is also responsible for marketing and communications programs for the Department, including *The Gateway* publication, issued three times each year. This division also lacks significant levels of programming staff to manage the seven core program areas at a level that meets the public's expectation for recreation services. The projected program staff should equal 1 program equivalent person per 5,000 city residents, based on a minimum of seven core services programs offered. This number will be higher if a full service recreation center is built. As with maintenance, part-time staff hours should be converted to additional program positions.

The golf course has one full-time staff and four seasonal staff to maintain the nine-hole golf course and manage the clubhouse. This one staff position is stretched too thin to meet the maintenance levels requirements of a golf course as well as the demands of associated program responsibilities including leagues, lessons and special events. Typically, on an 18-hole public golf course, the full-time staff structure

is usually five positions and for a nine-hole golf course the structure is three full-time positions, with 1.5 FTE in the Pro Shop. The golf course is open for play March through December, but work continues during the off season as well. While play is seasonal, operating and maintaining the club house for public use is year round.

The Department's organizational structure should be evaluated and redesigned based on the future vision developed in this *Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan*. In order to operate at the levels described by the stakeholder groups, focus groups and surveyed citizens, new positions will need to be created to support the parks and recreation needs of residents based on hours to produce a task and the frequency required.

### **Work-schedule Procedure**

The Parks Division staff has done an excellent job of evaluating the maintenance hours required to meet a desired park standard. Park standards need to be established with staff trained on how to meet the standards. The current level of available staff hours does not match the standards established and desired. The maintenance manager/supervisor should establish weekly work plans and measure the staff's ability to meet the established standards on a consistent basis. Performance measures need to be instituted as part of the staff weekly work plan. The yearly parks maintenance budget must be tied to the maintenance standards desired and articulated to key City leadership on what staff is capable of delivering against desired standards. No preventive maintenance work time is available, which reduces the asset life of the Department's infrastructure. A work order system should be purchased to track work orders and costs. This will help to demonstrate the workload of staff and the maintenance staffing levels needed to meet desired standards and protect assets.

In recreation program services, the staff put in significant levels of overtime to meet the program desires of citizens. It is unreasonable to expect that this could or should continue. The staff must document their workload levels, time and outcomes more clearly to the leadership of the City. In all cases, volunteer groups cannot be expected to cover the City's shortcomings in staffing needs for park maintenance and recreation services. Recreation program standards need to be established with staff trained on how to meet the standards. The yearly recreation budget must be tied to the program standards desired and articulated to the key City leadership on what staff is capable of delivering against desired standards. Volunteers are valued, but volunteer efforts are limited by the equipment that can be used, the type of work that is meaningful, and the supervision required to make a good volunteer program work.

The golf course staff is required to fulfill a seven day operation and is struggling to keep up with maintenance levels desired by the golfers. The burden is increased by the many flooding problems that have taken place on the golf course. The yearly golf course budget must be tied to the maintenance and program standards desired and articulated to the key City leadership on what staff is capable of delivering against desired standards.

The divisions within the Department work very well together and support each other in the delivery of programs and maintenance requirements, which needs to continue.

### **Service Contracting**

The Department of Parks and Recreation does limited work in the area of outsourcing maintenance elements. The City should allow the staff the opportunity to outsource more for specialized work because of the difficulty the Department has in hiring staff to achieve the maintenance levels desired. Staff know they are capable of doing the work, but the time required to keep up with the workload before the seasonal employees begin is taking a toll on the quality of maintenance in the parks. The areas the Department should consider or continue to contract out include forestry, restroom cleaning, some horticulture

maintenance elements, concessions, pool start-up and shutdown and painting of facilities and amenities. The Department already contracts with recreation program instructors and this should continue.

### **Human Resource Management**

The Department needs to annually review, update and create accurate written job descriptions as necessary for all full-time and seasonal staff. Evaluations of full-time staff are done yearly, but part-time staff and seasonal staff also need evaluations based on future rehiring. The personnel policy manual for the Department must be updated. The evaluations of staff should be based on the Department meeting its yearly goals. Additional training for full- and part-time staff as well as volunteers is needed as it concerns customer service, basic life safety skills, budget management, revenue management pricing, and creating and maintaining standards for maintenance, facilities and programs. Orientation for new employees should begin when they start work. The Department does a good job of cross-training, which increases motivation and productivity. Salary assessments need to be done every three years. All employees should be aware of the organization's mission. As the master plan unfolds, the staff should be involved in understanding the goals and future direction of the Department and the ongoing role of staff.

### **Management of the Department**

The leadership of the Department of Parks and Recreation does a good job of creating a vision for the Department and the staff is committed to meeting this vision. This vision will be extended and increased based on the level of community involvement in the development of the new 10-year master plan for the Department. As this vision unfolds, the Department should be managed through a set of outcomes that are measurable, allowing key administrators and leaders in the City to see the importance of investment in park and recreation programs, services and facilities and its impact on livability in the community and economic growth for the City.

The management outcomes should focus on efficiency, customer satisfaction, operational budget growth and partnership development. Also, these outcomes should demonstrate to key leaders and the community how effectively the Department is meeting their needs and achieving their goals established against targeted focus points outlined in their budget. The following is a list of outcome measures that the Department should consider:

1. What percentage of recommendations outlined in the master plan were implemented?
2. What levels of standards were met for recreation programs, facility management and park maintenance?
3. What levels of revenue goals were met to help offset operational budgets?
4. What level of partnership outcomes were achieved as it applies to public/public partnerships, public/not-for-profit partnerships and public/private partnerships?
5. What level of program services were met as it applies to programs offered versus programs held, retention of users, customer satisfaction levels, cost-per-experience, cost recovery goals met and capacity levels met?
6. What level of management practices met best practices of parks and recreation services?
7. What level of budget compliance was met as it applies to investing in standards desired, capital improvements and assets management?
8. What percentages of planning efforts were implemented as it applies to marketing, site specific master plans and revenue development?

### **Financial Management**

The Department develops its budget based on current needs and future opportunities. It is reviewed and modified by the Director and presented to the Mayor and the Director of Finance. The Mayor presents the final budget to City Council for approval and appropriation. Currently, the Department budget is funded at six percent of the entire City of Gahanna budget. Staff should continue to present the standards that

residents desire concerning the maintenance and management of parks, natural resources, landscaping, and recreation facilities as well as program development and implementation. This will give City leaders a much clearer understanding of what the Department is capable of accomplishing and the implications to residents and users of the system.

If given this opportunity, the staff should build the budget around standards and the cost to produce the standard.

The Gahanna community expects the Department to provide good value at a reasonable price. The majority of the community would like to see the participant cover the direct costs associated with the activity, except for youth sports, which it believes should be subsidized at a 50 percent level. The price points should be based on true costs, both direct and indirect. It is important to communicate the pricing formula so that participants understand what they are paying and what the City is investing. The majority of citizens are willing to pay if they know that the goal is to enable the Department to be self sufficient. The key is to communicate what that goal is, and focus on high volume, low price services so as to not eliminate anyone because of price. The community expects the tax subsidy amount applied to programs and facilities to be comparable to that of other agencies, including private and not-for-profit groups, so as to not compete with them but rather to complement them in their program efforts.

All staff should continue to help build the budget so they learn about the cost to produce a standard. Currently, the staff is overextended in all areas of the system due to their inability to decline requests for new parks that come on line or deny support for new programs that are presented to them throughout the year. Staff cannot accurately describe its needs and the standards it wants to provide through an open budget process. If the key leadership of the City wishes to limit the Department, the standards should be reflective of that change, or new revenue sources should be allowed into the Department's budget. The City needs to develop a pricing and revenue policy for all services in the City based on a clear understanding of direct and indirect costs and cost recovery. This will help eliminate some entitled groups the City protects each year and will create more financial equity across the system. The staff should develop partnerships that leverage their resources. These partnerships need specific policies on public/public partnerships, public/not-for profit partnerships and public/private partnerships.

## **Planning**

The Department values planning as a necessary budget item as it applies to site specific park master plans and the value of having a master plan. The key will be to act on these plans and orchestrate their implementation. Other plans that must be developed include a trails plan that will allow the community access to parks and create connectivity without the interference of motorized vehicles. The existing bicycle plan should also be implemented. Loop trails should be added to some community parks in the system. Other plans that should be created are a marketing and communication plan, as well as a business plan for the golf course. If a new multigenerational center is considered, a feasibility study and business plan should be developed, which will allow the community and key leaders to have a clear understanding of how the facility will be operated, funded and managed. All parks in the system, with the exception of mini parks that are five acres or less, should have an updated master plan that is customized to the neighborhoods the park serves.

## **Partnerships**

The City has many partnerships in place with the school district and youth sports clubs and associations. The partnerships should be written with measurable outcomes that are agreeable and traceable. The current partnerships that exist are all relationship partnerships that lack the fairness and equity needed to build a strong, solid foundation between the City and the partner. The City must adopt individual partnership policies for each type of partnership in place as it applies to public/public partners, public/private partners and public/not-for-profit partners. Partnership agreements must be developed with the school district, the

YMCA, swimming pool organizations, youth sports associations, the Ohio Herb Education Center, events sponsors, leased facilities, watershed groups and other public jurisdictions such as the township. This will create fairness between the City and partners and eliminate entitlement. The staff should report yearly on the results of their efforts in the management of partnerships through their budget process annual report.

### **Performance Measures**

The staff currently tracks very few performance measures. They track revenues and expenses for programs and services including golf, number of participants involved in services and programs, number of volunteer hours and customer satisfaction levels for some programs. Ideally, the Department should focus on tracking the lifecycle of programs, cost-per-experience, cost recovery rates based on direct and indirect costs, standards met, earned income created to help offset operational costs, partnership investment, retention of users, capacity management of facility, programs offered versus programs desired and cost to produce a maintenance task. Evaluation of customer satisfaction levels should be mandated on all classes and programs provided by the City.

Staff has not been able to develop performance measures due to lack of time and staff available to track the outcomes of their work. If the Department can become an outcome-driven agency that can collect and maintain consistent data, it will become a more effective and efficient department in the future. This information will also help in decision making.

### **Information Technology**

The City of Gahanna as a whole does a great job in using technology to reduce staff cost and manage convenience of city services data collection. The department has access to GIS data, demographic data and online access to services and technical reports. The Department needs a technology plan for the future. The technology plan should include infrastructure improvements (e.g., fiber optics, wireless hot spots) that will increase the ability to provide for more effective and efficient delivery of programs and services (e.g. online registration, increased connectivity within the park system, maintenance management system). Some of these IT needs are currently being planned and discussed.

### **Marketing**

The Department promotes its programs, services, parks and facilities through a variety of ways including *The Gateway*, City web site, newspapers, flyers, letters to past participants, and community calendar as well as through information sent to the library, schools, Chamber of Commerce, Ohio Herb Education Center and Gahanna Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Department currently distributes their program guide, *The Gateway*, through direct mail, which appears to be more effective than the The Bag delivery method used in the past.

A marketing planning process is needed to evaluate current program trends, incorporate systems to track current and future users, and establish a communication plan with promotional strategies. A marketing plan will allow staff to better position their services as well as the parks and facilities they manage. This will also allow staff to create a consistent image as it applies to promotional materials, signage and facilities. Currently, each staff in the Department does their own program flyers and there is no overall marketing strategy, which creates inconsistency. The marketing plan needs to incorporate methods to attract volunteers, sponsors for events, pricing of services and themes of attractions. A dedicated full- or part-time person is needed to implement the marketing plan once in place. The results of their efforts would more than pay for the position through increased participant usage and awareness of the services. Customer feedback methods need to be incorporated into the marketing plan so staff can address needs through a consistent improvement process.

## Personnel Policy Management

The Department needs to have an updated, community supported policies and procedures manual in place to guide staff consistently. The updated policies and procedures manual will educate staff about key standardized processes and procedures to follow and will help build a better managed system. The Department has some written policies in place for programs and services, but they are not consolidated in one document. A good policy manual is updated every two years and allows the park and recreation system to manage forward and avoid being reactive. The policy manual is not a rules and regulations manual, but instead is more focused on best practices as they apply, for example, to land use, facility use, program services, pricing services, partnership development, earned income development, marketing of services, signage, refunds and volunteer services.

## Field Equipment Resources

There has been an improvement in the availability of needed equipment in recent years. The Department has a vehicle equipment replacement policy in place that needs further evaluation. A complete inventory and replacement schedule should be created. Currently staff operates out of three small garage spaces for maintenance. Once standards are created for parks maintenance, natural resource management, landscaping, forestry, signage and recreation facilities, a maintenance shop needs to be planned with the purpose of maximizing staff productivity. The golf course needs to separate its maintenance operations from the clubhouse, which will allow for a more efficient operation.

## Governance

The Director of Parks and Recreation reports directly to the Mayor. This is a strong advantage worth continuing. Staff work with an Advisory Board; however, its role and accountabilities should be clarified, and its level of authority should be defined. An advisory board needs to understand what elements of park management it is able to advise on, especially as it applies to land use policies, recreation development, partnership development, budgeting of services needed, pricing of services, facility development and organizational management. In addition, the staff work directly with the Landscape Board, which should be a committee operating under the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to build consistency between the two.

## Findings

The Gahanna community is proud of the park system's rich tradition of stewardship and wishes to build upon this for the future. The community-at-large desires high-quality parks, recreation facilities, and programs. In general, the findings determined that the community is satisfied with the Department of Parks and Recreation's efforts, although there is room for improvement. The following identify key park and recreation issues:

- **Balance** within the Department is lacking as it relates to programs, facilities and the distribution of park locations and types.
- **Standards** for parks, facilities, programs and operations need to be established in order to create a balanced parks and recreation system.
- **Connectivity**, through expansion of the greenway system, needs to be improved as it is important to connect neighborhoods to parks, schools and other places of interest in the city and county.
- **Repair and proper maintenance** of existing assets is needed.

- **Program provisions** should be a top priority for the Department after operation of well-maintained parks and facilities has been achieved.
- **A balanced, accessible offering** of programs including, but not limited to, special events for people of all ages and programs for toddlers, youth, teens, and people with disabilities are the responsibility of the Department.
- **A sustainable parks and recreation system is desired by the citizens of Gahanna.** To achieve this, residents expect the Department to work cooperatively with partners to maximize the community's resources and avoid the unnecessary duplication of services. In addition, citizens are willing to fund park and recreation system improvements through a tax increase.
- **Policies and standards** built on the priorities expressed through public input need to be adopted by the Department to meet those priorities in the following areas:
  - Programs and services
  - Parks and open space
  - Land acquisition
  - Maintenance and operations
  - Funding and partnerships

These findings represent the growing need to address the issues that the Department of Parks and Recreation faces. If these issues are not addressed now, more issues and a weakened park system will only compound them in the future. Additionally, these findings serve as the primary point of reference in creating the mission and vision for the master plan, which provide clear direction in addressing these issues.

## CHAPTER 4: GAHANNA'S VISION

### Mission and Vision Statements

#### Introduction



While the Department of Parks and Recreation has benefited from the direction provided by its current mission and vision statements, the master planning process provides an opportunity to revisit and update them. The revised statements are derived from input received from community stakeholders, focus groups, staff, the Steering Committee, the community survey, and the public during the visioning workshop. The following statements are an expression of Gahanna's values as they relate to parks and recreation.

#### Mission Statement:

- *To conserve the natural environment through parks and open space*
- *To provide balanced, sustainable, and accessible recreation opportunities and facilities*

#### Vision Statement:

*Gahanna's vision is to enhance and preserve parks and recreation services, lands and facilities through high standards and innovation that positions Gahanna as a leading community and a great place to live, work and play.*

### Master Plan Guiding Principles

The master plan Recommendations focus on six Key Areas of function. The Guiding Principles under each key area form a foundation, reflective of the community's values, and support the Objectives and Action Tasks that comprise the Recommendations outlined in Chapter 5. The following principles will guide Department efforts over the next ten years.

#### 1. Recreation Programs and Services

*Guiding Principle: Recreation programs and services in Gahanna will provide opportunities for our residents to participate in quality planned activities that create lifelong users and a sense of place and livability in partnership with other service providers in the City.*

## 2. Parks and Outdoor Recreation Facilities

**Guiding Principle:** *Parks and recreational facilities will be attractive, clean, and safe, and will provide opportunities for both passive and active pursuits.*

**Guiding Principle:** *Gahanna will provide a balance of different park types and experiences within the city that are equitable in their distribution and accommodate current and future population densities.*

**Guiding Principle:** *Parks and recreational facilities will be developed in a manner that creates economic value for the City and are an expression of Gahanna's character.*

**Guiding Principle:** *The City of Gahanna will utilize a balanced, leading approach to environmental stewardship.*

## 3. Indoor Recreation Facilities

**Guiding Principle:** *Gahanna will develop multigenerational, multi-use community facilities that provide consistent access to indoor space for recreational programming.*

**Guiding Principle:** *The community recreational facilities will be accessible to residents, and developed in a manner that provides programming opportunities for a broad range of activities, ages, and users, and creates economic value for the City.*

## 4. Operations and Management

**Guiding Principle:** *The Department of Parks and Recreation will be a best-practice organization that is productive and outcome-based, delivering quality parks, programs, and facilities to the community in the most efficient and effective manner possible.*

## 5. Financial Structure and Funding

**Guiding Principle:** *Parks and recreation services within the City of Gahanna are essential to the current and future quality of life and economic viability of the City and will be supported through a system of sustainable funding mechanisms.*

## 6. Governance

**Guiding Principle:** *Parks and recreation services within the City of Gahanna will be supported by ordinances, governmental policies, and procedures that are consistent with the City of Gahanna and the Department's mission and vision.*

# CHAPTER 5: MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## Introduction

The *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan* recommendations include two primary components: Policies & Standards and Key Areas of Function. The **Policies and Standards** will guide and improve the internal operations of the Department of Parks and Recreation over the next ten years. The **Key Areas of Function** address how the City and the Department will work to improve the overall parks and recreation system for the benefit of all. For each Key Area, the Guiding Principles, Objectives and Action Tasks are listed. Together these form the framework that will direct the implementation of the comprehensive master plan.

## Recommendations for Policies and Standards

An important component of the master plan is determining appropriate policies and standards for the Department of Parks and Recreation. Policies and standards provide the framework for what programs and facilities are provided and how they are operated, maintained, and eventually replaced. Once standards are identified, the organization and necessary funding can be built around what is required to deliver services to the community. Over the next ten years, the Department will further position itself as the essential parks and recreation service provider in the City with adequate resources to provide programs and maintain and operate its parklands and facilities. While comparisons to other communities and national standards are a starting point, the true basis for Gahanna's parks and recreation standards is ultimately the input received from the master planning and public survey process. This process revealed the residents' needs and priorities. Recommendations for policies and standards fall under three categories: 1) Programs and Services, 2) Parklands and Facilities, and 3) Maintenance.

### 1. Programs and Services

Based on criteria developed to guide both current and future recreation programs, the following **Core Recreation Services** (see Appendix F) comprise the key programs and services that the Department should provide:

- Active Older Adult Programs
- Adult Programs
- Aquatics
- Cultural Arts
- Environmental Education
- Family Programs
- Golf
- Special Events
- Wellness
- Youth and Teen Programs



Recreation program standards support these core services and focus on four parameters:

- Quality Experience,
- Operations and Cost Recovery,
- Marketing and Communication, and
- Performance Measures.

### **Principles and Guidelines for a Quality Program Experience**

For the Core Recreation Services, the following standards are recommended to be in place to constitute a quality experience:

1. Instructor or program coordinators' qualifications are in place, requiring in-the-field experience in the program specialty for which they are responsible.
2. Instructor-to-participant ratios are appropriate for the participant to feel attended to and safe.
3. The program is provided in an appropriate recreation space designed for that program, either indoor or outdoor, and is safe and clean.
4. There are minimum and maximum numbers of participants in the program or class that creates a quality experience.
5. Recreation equipment or supplies used by participants are high-quality, safe, and appropriate for use or consumption.
6. The length of the program is age-appropriate for the participant to respond effectively and enjoy him/herself in the activity.
7. Appropriate support staff or volunteers are in place to help guide participants and support teachers or program supervisors.
8. All staff and volunteers are trained in basic life safety skills.
9. All staff and volunteers are trained in customer service and diversity to make all participants feel welcome and appreciated.
10. Customer feedback methods are in place to seek input from participants on their expectations of the program and the results of their experience, which should include pre- and/or post-evaluations, focus groups, and/or follow-up calls.
11. Pricing of services are explained to participants and/or parents to clarify their level of investment in the program as well as the City's level of investment in the experience.
12. Each instructor or program supervisor is provided a tool box that includes the following: his/her class or program roster with phone numbers or email addresses, name tags for participants, feedback forms, registration forms, a program guide, pertinent park information and emergency phone numbers, thank you cards for the instructor or program supervisor to give to participants at the end of the class, and an introduction sheet of what will be occurring in the program or class, how it will be conducted, and what outcomes are desired.
13. All class or program policies are available to the instructor or program supervisor to adequately explain policies that apply to the class or program.
14. A first aid kit is readily available and accessible in less than one minute.
15. Appropriate recognition and awards are given at the end of the program to participants based on outcomes achieved or skills learned.
16. Authorized background checks are conducted yearly for all instructors and volunteers.
17. Any disciplinary actions taken by an instructor or program supervisor with a program participant are written and documented.
18. Class or program curriculum or work plans are prepared by the instructor and program supervisor the week before the class or program is to begin and signed off by the appropriate management staff within the recreation division.
19. Drivers transporting participants have the appropriate license and certifications in place.

20. All equipment or program space used for a program or class is inspected prior to the start of the class or program, is noted by the instructor or program supervisor, and is recorded daily, weekly, and monthly.
21. All tracked performance measures are shared with instructors or program staff at the end of each session.
22. Exit interviews are conducted with all part-time staff before they leave each season and notes are taken with regard to their rehiring potential.
23. A class or program budget is prepared for each activity and shared with the instructor or supervisor on how class monies are spent. Final budget results will be documented at the end of the program area and shared with the superintendent of recreation.
24. All regulatory requirements for programs are completed on time and according to guidelines.

### **Principles and Guidelines for Operations and Cost Recovery**

1. A pricing policy is in place, and staff understand the philosophy behind it and how to communicate price to participants.
2. A full cost-of-services accounting is created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs; cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place and staff are trained on this process.
3. Pricing of services is established based on cost of services, and is overlaid into programs or classes based on primetime and non-primetime rates, location, time, age segment, group, and level of exclusivity that users receive over and above a general tax payer; staff will be trained on setting prices.
4. Quarterly results of programs are posted and shared with staff on services that are underperforming, meeting, or exceeding the recovery goals.
5. Mini business plans are created for each Core Service program on a yearly basis to evaluate the program based on how well it meets the outcomes desired for participants, cost recovery, percentage of the market and business controls, cost of service, pricing strategy for the next year, and marketing strategies to be implemented. Cash collection standards and refund process standards are incorporated, which will be the basis for budget development.
6. Yearly competitors and other service providers are evaluated or shopped as to changes they are making and how they compare with the City efforts in the core services provided.
7. Partnerships with core program services are updated yearly, the contribution level each is making to the program is documented, and performance measures are tracked and shared with each partner.
8. Non-core services are evaluated yearly and reduced, eliminated, or transferred to other service providers to reduce the impact on staff time.
9. All entitled groups are informed of the cost and services provided by the City and written partnership agreements are established with measurable outcomes tracked on a yearly basis. Annual meetings are established to share results.
10. Staff meets with maintenance staff yearly to set standards for programs involved in recreation facilities and parks.

### **Principles and Guidelines for Marketing and Communication**

1. All core and non-core programs are evaluated yearly based on their lifecycle, position in the marketplace, and trend data in order to make retention decisions (i.e., keep the same, revise or eliminate).
2. Core program priorities receive the appropriate times and space in recreation facilities to keep the service strong and viable.
3. A cost benefit criteria is incorporated each year into the core services business plan.

4. Program guides will dedicate space to core services as their primary target. Non-core services that could become a core service will have a marketing strategy created and tested yearly.
5. A market plan is created and updated yearly as it applies to promotion of services, pricing of services, communication and feedback from users, age segment management, lifecycle management, partnerships and sponsorships, competition assessment, facility and program positioning, and ease of access to the system. New pricing strategies are developed as needed for revenue centers to keep them viable.
6. The program guides will have a cost of service assessment for each guide including the results of participant impact and cost recovery goals met.
7. Training of staff is provided by the marketing division on strategies to increase participation, create more revenue, or revise pricing to meet cost recovery goals.
8. Service gap assessment is conducted yearly by the marketing staff to support community needs.
9. The City develops a customer survey (mail or phone) every three years to gauge how well the system is meeting the needs of residents and what program areas need stronger support.

### **Performance Measurement Indicators**

The following performance measures should be considered to track desired outcomes and demonstrate to key leadership the value of the investment being made in recreation programs:

1. Program capacity levels met based on total availability and enrollment numbers with the targeted goal of 85 percent.
2. Programs offered versus programs held with a targeted goal of 80 percent.
3. Retention of participants, season pass holders, and facility monthly pass holders are targeted at 75 percent, which is tracked by a class point of sale system.
4. Cost recovery goals met at 95 percent for each core service.
5. Customer satisfaction levels met at 95 percent or greater in all services provided.
6. Earned income goals met at 95 percent in all programs provided by the City.
7. Cost per experience does not exceed \$5 per hour per program or activity.

## 2. Parklands and Facilities



The Department's parks system is based on a hierarchy of park sizes, detailed under Chapter 3. General guidelines for park categories are organized according to size and types of facilities. Typically, the smaller parks can be classified as mini or "pocket" parks. Mid-size parks are typically neighborhood parks, with the larger, more developed parks designated as community parks and athletic complexes. The largest parks are most often regional parks, typically outside of the realm of a city parks and recreation department to provide and maintain. In addition to this typical park hierarchy are multi-use trails and other types of open spaces that provide for easements or natural resource protection. Gahanna has a substantial number of undeveloped open spaces, preserves and reserves.

Neighborhood parks generally give the greatest number of residents easy access to a park. These parks are designed for family use as well as relaxation for nearby residents. While it appears there is adequate acreage for parks of the various categories system-wide for a city the size of Gahanna, some parts of the community are underserved at the neighborhood park level when distribution of neighborhood parks and facilities are examined (see Figure 6).

Despite lack of access to neighborhood parks in the western and central portions of the city, Gahanna is serviced well by community parks and athletic complexes. Community parks and athletic complexes generally serve a larger area (i.e., several neighborhoods) and require parking for automobiles. Although many community parks contain athletic fields, they sometimes include other facilities such as playgrounds and picnic shelters.

Regional parks are typically the largest parks in the system with large areas of natural open space that offer activities such as horseback riding, educational programming, boating, and fishing.

Although there is a hierarchy of park sizes, size does not always dictate a park's uses. Regional parks can act as community parks, and community parks can act as neighborhood parks. These factors are based on access to the park and its facilities. This section provides an overview of the park design principles and the hierarchy of park sizes and functions.

### Park Design Principles

In addition to adequate land area, each park must also be programmed, planned, and designed to meet the needs of its service area and classification within the overall system. The term programming, when used in the context of planning and developing parkland, refers to a list of uses and facilities, and does not include staff-run recreational programs. The program for a site can include such elements as ball fields, spray parks, shelters, restrooms, game courts, trails, natural resource stewardship, open meadows, nature preserves, or interpretive areas. The needs of the population the park is intended to serve should be considered and accommodated at each park.

Each park category serves a specific purpose, and the features and facilities in the park must be designed for the number of age segments the park serves, the length of stay deemed appropriate, and the uses it has

been assigned. Recreational needs and services required differ based on the age segments that make up the community. A varying number of age segments will be accommodated with the park program depending on the classification of the park. The age segments are:

- Ages 0-5
- Ages 6-12
- Ages 13-17
- Ages 18-24
- Ages 25-34
- Ages 35-44
- Ages 45-54
- Ages 55-64
- Ages 65-75
- Ages 76 +

The following principles should be considered in developing design standards for each category of park:

### **Mini Park**

As the smallest park classification, mini parks are often referred to as pocket parks, tot lots, scenic overlooks, or landscaped public areas. Mini parks range from 1,500 square feet to 2 acres and include amenities such as small playgrounds, swings, benches, and landscaping. Mini parks typically have a localized service radius of one-quarter mile and can be either passive or active, reflecting the overall standards of the entire park system.

- Size of Park: 2 acres or less
- Service Radius: .25 mile
- Length of stay: One hour experience or less
- Amenities: small playgrounds, swings, benches, and landscaping
- Revenue facilities: none
- Land Usage: 90 percent active/10 percent passive
- Parking: None
- Lighting: Security Only
- Naming: May be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or a natural landmark
- Other: Customize to demographics of neighborhood; safety design meets established standards (CPTED); integrated color scheme throughout

### **Neighborhood Park**

While these parks typically serve a population of up to 5,000, in many cases more people are served. To accommodate a population this size, a neighborhood park should be 2 to 10 acres; however, some neighborhood parks are determined by use and facilities offered and not by size alone. The service radius for a neighborhood park is one-half mile. Neighborhood parks should have safe pedestrian access for surrounding residents; parking may or may not be included.

- Size of park: 2 to 10 acres
- Service radius: 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents or 0.5 miles
- Length of stay: One hour experience or less
- Amenities: One signature facility (e.g., major playground, bandstand); no non-producing/unused amenities; no restrooms; playground targeted to ages 2 through 8; no reservable shelters
- Revenue facilities: None
- Land usage: 85 percent active/15 percent passive

- Programming: None
- Maintenance standards: Higher than maintenance levels of surrounding neighborhood
- Signage: Strong signage throughout the park
- Landscaping: Low level
- Parking: 5 to 10 spaces including handicap spaces; typically angled parking
- Lighting: Security lighting only
- Naming: May be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or a natural landmark
- Other: Customize to demographics of neighborhood; safety design meets established standards (CPTED); integrated color scheme throughout

### **Community Parks and Athletic Complexes**

Community parks and athletic complexes are intended to be accessible to multiple neighborhoods. When possible, the park may be developed adjacent to a school. Community parks, which provide recreational opportunities for the entire family, often contain facilities for specific recreational purposes: athletic fields, swimming pool, tennis courts, and jogging trails as well as picnic areas, shelters, and a playground. Passive outdoor recreation activities such as bird watching also take place at community parks.

Community parks generally range from 10 to 50 acres. Community parks serve a larger area—a radius of 1 to 3 miles—and contain more facilities than a neighborhood park.

- Size of park: 10 to 50 acres
- Service radius: 3 acres per 1,000 residents or 1 to 3 miles
- Length of stay: Two- to three-hour experience
- Amenities: Four signature facilities (e.g., trails, sports fields, shelters, community playground, recreation center, pool, sports complex, water feature); public restrooms provided
- Revenue facilities: One to two (e.g., pool, sports complex, pavilion)
- Programming: 65 percent active/35 percent passive
- Land usage: Four to five essential services can be provided (e.g. sports, camps, aquatics)
- Maintenance standards: Higher than maintenance levels of surrounding neighborhood
- Signage: Strong signage throughout the park
- Landscaping: Strong landscaping throughout the park
- Parking: Sufficient for amenities; occupies no more than 10 percent of park
- Lighting: Acceptable (sports and safety)
- Naming: Not named to a neighborhood
- Other: Strong appeal to surrounding neighborhoods; integrated color scheme throughout the park; partnerships developed with nearby schools or other organizations; looped trail connectivity; linked to regional park or facility; safety design meets established standards (CPTED)



### Regional Park

A regional park serves a large area of several communities, residents within a county, or residents across multiple counties. Depending on activities within a regional park, users may travel as many as 60 miles for a visit. Regional parks include recreational opportunities such as golf, boating, camping, conservation-wildlife viewing, and fishing.

Although regional parks usually have a combination of passive areas and active facilities, they are likely to be predominantly natural resource-based parks. A common size for regional parks is up to 1,000 acres.

- Size of park: More than 50 acres
- Service radius: 4 acres per 1,000 residents or 5 miles
- Length of stay: All-day experience
- Amenities: 10 to 12 amenities to create a signature facility (e.g. golf course, tennis, fields, courts, lake, regional playground, 3+ shelters, recreation center, pool, gardens, trails, zoo, specialty facility); public restrooms provided; special events site
- Revenue facilities: More than two; park designed to produce revenue
- Land usage: Up to 50 percent active/50 percent passive
- Programming: More than three core services provided
- Maintenance standards: Higher than maintenance levels of surrounding neighborhood
- Signage: Strong signage throughout the park
- Landscaping: Strong focal entrance and landscaping throughout the park
- Parking: Sufficient for amenities
- Lighting: Acceptable (sports and safety)
- Naming: Not named to a neighborhood
- Other: Safety design meets established standards (CPTED); integrated color scheme throughout the park; linked to major trail systems; public transportation available; dedicated full-time staff with on-site manager

### Multipurpose Trails

Multi-use trails are corridors of land recognized for their ability to connect people and places. Linking neighborhoods, parks, recreation facilities, and streams with a multi-use trail fulfills two guiding principles simultaneously: protecting natural areas along river corridors and providing people with a way to access and enjoy them. Multi-use trails also offer a safe, alternative form of transportation, substantial health benefits, habitat enhancements for plants and wildlife, and unique opportunities for outdoor education and cultural interpretation.

- Age segments served: Six to 10
- Amenities: Walk, bike, run
- Parking: Community or neighborhood trail access to parking
- Lighting: At trailheads and high use areas
- Amenities: Restrooms at trailheads only
- Signage: Half-mile markers
- Maintenance standards: Higher than maintenance levels of surrounding neighborhood, with a consistent minimum level throughout the City
- Other: 12 feet or wider; strong color scheme; connectivity to signature/regional parks/facilities or attractions in the city

### 3. Maintenance Standards

Park and open space maintenance is recommended to be designed, budgeted, and scheduled on three basic levels to optimize resources and user experience.

**Level One** maintenance is normally recommended to be approximately 15 percent of a department's overall budget and usually applies to front entrances to regional or community parks. Public buildings such as City Hall, a recreation center or pool, golf courses, and sports game fields will also receive Level One maintenance.

**Level Two** maintenance is usually recommended to make up approximately 60 to 70 percent of the maintenance budget and is applied to neighborhood parks, school parks, some community park areas, along trails, and in regional parks.

**Level Three** maintenance is essentially land management of natural areas including trails fence lines, trash cleanup, and minimal storm damage cleanup.

Level One maintenance is about providing a service to enhance users' appreciation, especially where they have paid for a service. Level Two maintenance is an acceptable standard that creates a clean, safe park and typically meets the community expectation. Detailed maintenance standards for parks and facilities are detailed in Appendix G.

The final assignment of level of maintenance for each park and facility, and the priorities for assigning resources and budget, will be based on the following Core Service criteria and maintenance performance measures established for parks by the Department staff:

#### Core Service Criteria

1. The public expects that city employees can and should be the ones providing the task.
2. The relationship with the public should be maintained at a high level since users expect public employees to be accessible and maintain the site (a playground inspection program is an example).
3. The park agency operations are cost effective and efficient and the cost-benefit is in the City's favor.
4. Employees are as much a part of the program as the facilities and they are an extension of the facilities.
5. Quality can only be provided by public employees at the level the community desires.
6. A permitting agency requires the work to be done by a public agency (in some cases federal and state agencies will only issue some types of permits to public entities).
7. Accountability for the work belongs solely to the park maintenance staff.
8. The historic involvement is best protected by public employees.
9. The public expectation is that the public agency has ownership and a sense of pride.

Once final assignment of criteria is completed, a list of regularly evaluated performance measures should be created. A list of recommended performance measures is as follows.

#### Park Division Performance Measures

1. Maintenance standards frequency levels that are established for each type of park and amenity will be met at 95 percent consistency.

2. Cost-per-acre expenses for each type of park facility will be met at 95 percent.
3. Design standards for parks based on outcomes that focus on age segments, length of stay, type of experience desired, and beautification will be met at 100 percent (all aspects of the standard are met).
4. Lifecycle asset management schedules will be met at 95 percent for all infrastructures.
5. Customer satisfaction levels of internal staff on support provided for facilities and programs will be at 95 percent satisfaction level.
6. Park signage levels will be met at 95 percent accuracy and installation criteria.
7. Park maintenance training in customer satisfaction, standards management, basic life safety skills, and cost containment will be met at 100 percent for all maintenance staff on a yearly basis.
8. Equipment maintenance performance will be met at 95 percent of targeted time tables to extend the lifecycle of the asset.
9. Customer satisfaction of both active and passive park use, measured through surveys and program evaluation forms, will be met at 90 percent or greater.

## Recommendations for Key Areas of Function

The Department of Parks and Recreation will position itself to be a leader in the delivery of parks and recreation services over the next ten years. The City and its residents recognize the important role that parks and recreation play in making a community an attractive and healthy place to live, work, and play. The master plan recommendations are based on the needs and concerns identified through the master planning assessments, the community survey and input process, and the stakeholder and focus group interviews. The recommendations are organized around six Key Areas:

1. Recreation Programs and Services,
2. Parks and Outdoor Recreational Facilities,
3. Indoor Recreational Facilities,
4. Operations and Management,
5. Financial Structure and Funding and
6. Governance.

For each Key Area the following lists its Guiding Principles (identified in Chapter 4), its Objectives and Action Tasks.

## Key Area 1: Recreation Programs and Services

*Guiding Principle: Recreation programs and services in Gahanna will provide opportunities for our residents to participate in quality planned activities that create lifelong users and a sense of place and livability in partnership with other service providers in the City.*

**Objective 1: Provide a balance of core recreation program activities for all age groups and types of families in the City.**

**Tasks:**

1a. Focus programming on the following:

**Core Recreation Service Areas**

- Adult Programs
- Active Older Adults Programs
- Youth and Teen Programs
- Family Programs
- Special Events
- Cultural Arts
- Environmental Education
- Wellness
- Aquatics
- Golf

1b. In addition to existing programming for adults, children, and seniors, provide programs and activities for the following groups:

- Preschool children
- Preteens and teens
- Young adults
- Adults
- Families

1c. Establish program standards and performance measures for classes, workshops, athletic leagues, and community events. Specific standards and performance measures for programs should be based on those recommended in the Standards section above.

1d. Determine the cost of services for all programs in order to establish cost recovery goals and pricing strategies.

**Objective 2: Build identity for programs and services offered by the Department of Parks and Recreation through effective marketing strategies.**

**Tasks:**

2a. Develop a marketing plan for the Department that focuses on promotions, market trend tracking, and community communications.

- 2b. Continue distributing *The Gateway* by mailing it directly to all Gahanna households and tracking results in terms of program awareness and participation.

**Objective 3: Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships for the delivery of recreational programs and facilities.**

**Tasks:**

- 3a. Develop written measurable outcomes for partnership relationships.
- 3b. Expand aquatics programming, in partnership with the community pools and the YMCA, that focus on:
- Learn to Swim Programs
  - Aquatic Fitness Programs
  - Mommy and Me Classes for Preschool Children
  - Lifeguard Development Programs
  - Water Safety Instruction Programs
  - Aquatic Special Events at each Pool
  - Aquatic Swim Clinics and Workshops in Synchronized Swimming, Diving, and Water Polo
- 3c. Expand current sponsorship opportunities and levels for major and minor special events to help offset the operational cost for staging events. Establish and track the cost of events to the City and the Department.
- 3d. Review and update existing partnership agreements with youth athletic leagues in order to manage the entitlement of public park facilities and manage the use of current and future athletic facilities. Focus support on community recreational leagues and facilities that maximize use and sharing of resources.
- 3e. Review and update existing partnership agreements with the Gahanna-Jefferson School District in order to continue to secure consistent availability of indoor space for programs and to coordinate and develop the use of outdoor facilities for neighborhood use. Expand and develop current relationships with schools in regards to maintenance programs, maintenance supplies, equipment, land, and facility planning. Establish a calendar of available times in school facilities to determine spaces that could be available for consistent program space. Share results with elected officials to demonstrate lack of available space for program services. Meet with principals as well as school and City leaders to review the existing school district and city joint use agreement and gain consensus on implementation. Indoor space for recreation programs that schools can accommodate include space for fitness and aerobics, adult basketball and volleyball, youth after school programs, summer camps, teen services and events, life skill programs for adults, sports clinics for kids, parents, coaches and officials, and cultural arts programs.
- 3f. Develop new, enhance existing, and disband ineffective partnerships based on an evaluation process guided by a set of organizational standards to insure consistency of City offerings.
- 3g. Recommend the following for additional partnerships:
- Partner with the Ohio Herb Education Center on cultural arts programming. Formalize a partnership agreement with the Center and its Board in order to enhance Gahanna's status and distinction within the State as the "Herb Capital of Ohio" by growing and sustaining the Center and its offerings.

- Lead, participate, and enhance partnerships with community organizations such as the Gahanna Community Theater, Gahanna Art League, and local businesses to expand the Creative Arts opportunities available to the Gahanna community.
- Partner with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Metro Parks in providing newly focused nature education programming and developing nature trails and interpretive facilities.
- Participate in and provide leadership to river corridor greenway organizations that address land preservation and management along the Big Walnut, Rocky Fork, and Blacklick Creek Corridors.
- Partner with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Jefferson Township, New Albany, the Airport, and Metro Parks in the development of bikeway and trail connections.

**Objective 4: Lead, as a partner in the City of Gahanna, the development of community and individual wellness.**

**Tasks:**

- 4a. Develop a wellness/fitness expo that parents and youth can attend to increase awareness of services available in the City and programs that promote wellness and fitness.
- 4b. Develop a wellness/fitness matrix by age segment and service provider to establish what services are missing for which age segments.
- 4c. Establish a “Healthy Fitness City” initiative to increase wellness and fitness programs for youth, families, adults, and business leaders in the City.
- 4d. Establish fitness special events such as fitness walks, runs, hikes, and challenges that will motivate residents to become more fitness focused.

## Key Area 2: Parks and Outdoor Recreation Facilities

*Guiding Principle: Parks and recreational facilities will be attractive, clean, and safe and will provide opportunities for both passive and active pursuits.*

*Guiding Principle: Gahanna will provide a balance of different park types and experiences within the City that are equitable in their distribution and accommodate current and future population densities.*

*Guiding Principle: Parks and recreational facilities will be developed in a manner which creates economic value for the City and are an expression of Gahanna’s character.*

*Guiding Principle: The City of Gahanna will utilize a balanced, leading approach to environmental stewardship.*

**Objective 1: Build connectivity between parks, schools, Olde Gahanna, Metro Parks, and adjacent communities through the development of trails and greenways.**

**Tasks:**

- 1a. Develop the Big Walnut Creek Corridor as a primary greenway feature in the City with multi-purpose trail connections between existing parks and communities beyond Gahanna to the north.

- 1b. Establish a secondary and tertiary trail and sidewalk network connecting to the Big Walnut Creek Corridor.
- 1c. Work with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Committee and other neighboring and regional partners on the implementation of bikeway corridors and standards within Gahanna.
- 1d. Strengthen priority connecting corridors through street tree plantings, landscaping, lighting, and pedestrian improvements, such as drinking fountains and benches.

**Objective 2: Focus new parkland acquisitions and development of existing parklands on providing appropriate types of parks in underserved and future growth areas of the City and on building connectivity within the existing system.**

**Tasks:**

- 2a. Give priority in the near term (1 to 5 years) to the development of existing park facilities and connectivity within the system.
- 2b. Evaluate, develop, and upgrade existing park properties to meet the needs of underserved or future growth areas.
- 2c. Develop and implement a friendly land acquisition strategy to acquire previously developed and undeveloped land in underserved and future growth areas.
- 2d. Anticipate City growth and future parkland needs. Future growth will likely occur with greater densification of Gahanna's neighborhoods through infill development. The Department should take a proactive stand on accommodating future parks and recreational needs generated by potential annexation of Township land to the east.
- 2e. Base the distribution of parkland and facilities not only on location but also on the density of population within the community.

**Objective 3: Support viability and sustainability of outdoor community pools through cooperative agreements and diversification of facilities with the YMCA and private swim club pools in Gahanna.**

**Tasks:**

- 3a. Provide leadership in the formation of a collaborative aquatics organization within Gahanna that strengthens and builds upon existing community pool resources. Seek partnerships that support an expanded aquatics program and diversification of aquatics facilities within the City.
- 3b. Develop a long-term plan to insure the continuation of one or two major community pool/aquatic centers in the city. A city-wide aquatics plan should explore the following components:
  - Conduct a detailed feasibility study in cooperation with the City, the community pool organizations, and the Gahanna YMCA to determine the viability of the local market to support outdoor and indoor pool facilities within Gahanna
  - Organize Hunter's Ridge, Gahanna Swim Club, and Foxboro Pools into a city-wide membership cooperative that allows members and guests to visit any of the three pools while enabling the pools to share resources, memberships, and expenses

- Develop an up-to-date, diversified outdoor aquatics facility at a single viable location within the City that supports recreational, wellness, and educational aquatics programs
- Close one or more of the community pool facilities preceding the above

**Objective 4: Customize park facilities to meet the needs of surrounding neighborhoods and a diversity of users.**

**Tasks:**

- 4a. Review demographics surrounding each neighborhood park and determine appropriate outcomes to support the needs of the neighborhood and park users.
- 4b. Establish and implement design principles for each neighborhood park.

**Objective 5: Enhance existing and provide new multiple-use and practice athletic fields to meet quantity and quality standards for both existing and emerging recreational youth and adult sports leagues.**

**Tasks:**

- 5a Increase the availability of youth baseball and softball fields. Improve or replace the existing seven-field youth baseball/softball complex at Academy Park with a facility that can accommodate larger parking areas, more fields, and improved drainage and turf conditions.
- 5b Improve practice and game field capacity for youth football. Develop a two- to three-field youth football complex that provides adequate space for fields and parking.
- 5c Add adult sports field capacity for the Department's existing programs, including softball, flag football, and soccer. Develop a new four-field adult softball complex, possibly at Pizzurro Park.
- 5d Increase multipurpose practice fields and identify a location for Lacrosse practice and games.
- 5e Develop a friendly acquisition strategy to acquire land to meet existing and future needs of adult and youth athletic programs.

**Objective 6: Maintain and improve parks and park infrastructure to support the staging and hosting of programs and community events.**

**Tasks:**

- 6a. Continue support for the development of Creekside Phase II, which will become the focus of major gatherings for events.
- 6b. Continue to develop Creekside and Olde Gahanna infrastructure to accommodate downtown and Big Walnut Creek Corridor special events and programs.
- 6c. Develop and update other existing and new park facilities and infrastructure to support hosting of programs and community events.
- 6d. Develop and update existing and new park facilities and infrastructure to increase accessibility.

**Objective 7: Increase the community's use of open space, landscape, and forestry best practices to achieve environmental sustainability in the community, its parks and public right-of-ways and set an example of stewardship excellence within the parks.**

**Tasks:**

- 7a. Build on the character of Creekside, Gahanna as the land of "three creeks joining into one," and Gahanna as a diverse and progressive community in the development of image and branding for Gahanna's park properties.
- 7b. Identify priority streetscape corridors that relate to bikeways, downtown Gahanna, and major City gateways for the development of street tree plantings, parking lot buffers, pedestrian enhancements, and site furnishings.
- 7c. Enhance neighborhood and community park entrances with improved landscaping, entry signage, and lighting.
- 7d. Install buffers for parking lots in City parks that meet or exceed current City standards.
- 7e. Review, revise, and implement policy to provide the proper mechanism to achieve environmental sustainability in the community through land dedication/purchase and stewardship of natural resources.
- 7f. Set a standard for environmental sustainability and implement best practices in public projects, maintenance programs, and capital improvements.
- 7g. Create, implement, and review a comprehensive natural resources stewardship program for the park system as well as for each project that includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Natural resource inventory
  - b. Ecosystem restoration, protection, and preservation
  - c. Natural resources management (e.g., invasive species, wildlife)

**Objective 8: Update and enhance the golf course, including its facilities and programming, to improve viability and support sustainability.**

**Tasks:**

- 8a. Separate the maintenance functions from the Pro Shop by developing a flood-proofed maintenance compound north of the golf course along Olde Ridenour Road.
- 8b. Relocate the existing Pro Shop to allow greater accessibility to it and the golf course.



**Objective 9: Identify parkland, new acquisitions, and/or partnerships to provide facilities and/or programming for non-traditional activities such as Frisbee golf, bridle trails, bocce, fly fishing, archery, mountain biking, ATV and paddling.**

**Tasks:**

- 9a. Coordinate development of non-traditional recreational facilities and programs that address regional recreational trends.
- 9b. Capitalize on Gahanna's unique natural resources in identifying opportunities for non-traditional activities.

### **Key Area 3: Indoor Recreation Facilities**

**Guiding Principle:** *Gahanna will develop multigenerational, multi-use community facilities that provide consistent access to indoor space.*

**Guiding Principle:** *The community recreational facilities will be accessible to residents, and developed in a manner which provides programming opportunities for a broad range of activities, ages, and users, and creates economic value for the City.*

**Objective 1: Develop new indoor facilities with the flexibility to respond to existing and future recreational trends and needs.**

**Tasks:**

- 1a. Develop a new multigenerational community center adjacent to or near downtown and the Big Walnut Creek Corridor. The facility should build on the momentum and energy created by the Creekside Redevelopment. It should be accessible and central to Gahanna residents. In order to promote the preservation of creek corridors and limit permitting and construction constraints, the site for the facility should be located outside of the 100-year floodplain zones.
  - Select a site for the facility that offers opportunities for future expansion
  - Include signature park amenities such as an interactive fountain, an outdoor amphitheater, and attractive landscaping
- 1b. Program and design the facilities to meet the needs identified through the survey and public input process for seniors activities, cultural arts meeting space, and drop-in recreation.
  - Provide opportunities for drop-in activities for teens
  - Include space for increased program needs to serve the growing active older adult population
  - Include space for a cultural arts component
- 1c. Program and manage the center to cover a percentage of costs consistent with overall identified levels of citizen expectations.
- 1d. Develop an indoor nature education center located at Gahanna Woods to host educational and interpretive programs.

**Objective 2: Upgrade existing facilities to appeal to and be accessible to multiple users and age groups.**

**Tasks:**

- 2a. Upgrade or install public restrooms, rentable shelter space, and space for concessions, league storage, and meeting rooms at existing athletic complexes including soccer, football, and baseball.

- 2b. Secure facilities through multiple measures to insure safety and accessibility.
- 2c. Renovate the existing golf course club house, including removal of the Pro Shop and maintenance space, to create a community multi-use two-story facility available for facility rental, recreation programs, and community meeting space.
- 2d. Work with the Ohio Herb Education Center to secure the current location of the Ohio Herb Education Center or identify a new location in close proximity to Creekside and downtown Gahanna. Develop the center facility and grounds with expanded indoor program spaces and horticultural display gardens.

**Objective 3: Program, design, and manage existing and new facilities to cover a percentage of operating costs based on what the community desires and expects.**

**Tasks:**

- 3a. Design facilities that produce revenue to offset operational costs.
- 3b. Seek partnerships to bring down capital costs and operational costs.

## **Key Area 4: Operations and Management**

**Guiding Principle:** *The Department of Parks and Recreation will be a best-practice organization that is productive and outcome-based, delivering quality parks, programs, and facilities to the community in the most efficient and effective manner possible.*

**Objective 1: Develop and adopt a set of core services performance indicators to manage programs, facilities, and parks.**

**Tasks:**

- 1a. Establish staffing levels based on the hours required to meet a desired standard for maintenance, recreation facility management, and recreation program implementation. Establish adequate levels and composition of staffing to support the delivery of recreation core program services. Recommended levels of staffing for delivery of existing programs are as follows:
  - 1b. Document time required to achieve standards in order to determine appropriate staffing levels.
- 1c. Include staffing, maintenance, operational, and infrastructure needs with the addition of any new or future program, park, or facility based on the hours required to support a desired standard of care and outcome.

## **Key Area 5: Financial Structure and Funding**

**Guiding Principle:** *Parks and recreation services within the City of Gahanna are essential to the current and future quality of life and economic viability of the City and will be supported through a system of sustainable funding mechanisms.*

**Objective 1: Establish systems of alternative funding for parks and recreation beyond general revenue funding and develop systems and mechanisms to sustain such funding.**

**Tasks:**

- 1a. Pursue grant opportunities as a means of supplementing local park facility capital improvement dollars. Provide staffing support for grant writing and application processing.
- 1b. Consider the formation of a community foundation with the support for parks and recreation, wellness programs, and the protection of the natural environment as major components of its mission. Seek endowments not only for capital improvements but also for associated operations and life-cycle replacement costs.

**Objective 2: Establish parks and recreation as an essential service within the City of Gahanna.**

**Tasks:**

- 2a. Demonstrate the Department's fiscal responsibility and efficiency through the implementation of standards for accountability and measures of performance.
- 2b. **Develop a regular review of the residential developmental impact fee on an annual basis.**
  - In 2006 increase residential development impact fees from \$150 per unit to \$500 to \$750 per unit. (Refer to the overview of Chapter 1109 of Gahanna's Planning and Zoning Code in Appendix H). Document cost of parks and recreation services and capital improvements per capita to support increase. Earmark funds for capital improvements for the City-wide park system, not just adjacent mini or neighborhood parks.
- 2c. Secure the permanence of the quality of life principle by establishing the Parks and Recreation Department as a "charter" department within the City.

**Objective 3: Establish adequate funding levels and a viable revenue policy for the Department that will sustain programs and facilities desired by the community. Funding for programs and facilities will be based on the level of cost and recovery desired for each program type and facility type provided in the City.**

**Tasks:**

- 3a. Establish appropriate pricing for services and facilities based on the true cost to deliver the service and cost recovery goals.
- 3b. Develop earned income alternatives to support operational costs from all available resources that traditional parks and recreation systems are afforded such as sponsorships, grants, bond issues, sales taxes, developer impact fees, land leases, concessions, advertising, partnerships, foundations, friends, associations, permits, reservations, and admission prices.
- 3c. Consider implementing a funding increase for parks and recreation operations and capital improvements.
- 3d. Determine the cost of services for all programs in order to establish true cost recovery goals and pricing strategies. This would also apply to non-resident fees and facility rental fees. A target goal, based on what the community feels is equitable, should be 50 percent of the cost of services covered by taxes and 50 percent supported by user fees and earned income

## Key Area 6: Governance

**Guiding Principle:** *Parks and recreation services to the City of Gahanna will be supported by ordinances, governmental policies, and procedures that are consistent with the Department's mission and vision.*

**Objective 1:** Establish new and clarify current landscape and street tree standards, procedures, and ordinances

**Tasks:**

- 1a. Update landscape and street tree ordinances in order to establish clear ownership and levels of responsibility pertaining to landscape and street tree improvements, maintenance, and replacements.
- 1b. Consider an assessment on properties with street trees in the public right-of-way to fund street tree maintenance and new street tree plantings in established neighborhoods:

**Objective 2:** Focus available resources by defining standards and performance measures appropriate for recreational programs, categories of parkland, and recreational facilities.

**Tasks:**

- 2a. Establish management outcomes for efficiency, customer satisfaction, and operational budget growth as well as for partnerships with other service providers.
- 2b. Improve customer service and basic life safety skills training for staff and volunteers.
- 2c. Identify appropriate levels of use and accompanying maintenance requirements associated with different types of athletic fields (i.e., competition, practice, and multi-use).
- 2d. Identify appropriate levels of maintenance required for each category of parkland and open space and communicate outcomes and expectations to the public.
- 2e. Work with other City departments on the development of standards for other community land and open space (e.g., right-of-ways, storm water management sites, and greenways).
- 2f. Identify appropriate levels of maintenance standards and preventative maintenance measures required for each parkland category and open space, and communicate outcomes and expectations to the public (see Appendix H).
- 2g. Establish adequate levels of staffing to support standards for park maintenance and preventive maintenance of assets and equipment. Recommended levels of staffing for maintenance will be determined by hours associated with maintaining each type of park and frequency task.
- 2h. Consider contracting for services where applicable.

**Objective 3: Increase advocacy for parks and recreation in Gahanna.**

**Tasks:**

- 3a. Develop more volunteer opportunities for the delivery of program services and the maintenance of parks and facilities.
- 3b. Document and communicate the Department's involvement in staging special events and providing programs.
- 3c. Document the health and economic benefits of parks, open space, and recreational programs to the City of Gahanna.
- 3d. Develop a "Friends of Gahanna Parks and Recreation Association."

**Objective 4: Establish and track the economic impact of parks and recreation events on the City. Determine and plan for the cost of staging and supporting events to the Department.**

**Tasks:**

- 4a. Identify and track Department staffing levels required for the staging of events
- 4b. Identify costs and budget for infrastructure improvements to stage events in City parks. Determine which capital improvements are appropriately funded through event revenues.
- 4c. Survey participants and the business community on the economic impact of major events such as the Creekside Festival and sports tournaments.

**Objective 5: Develop and implement organizational changes that support the Department's mission.**

**Tasks:**

- 5a. Establish a senior administrative position that takes on a role to manage grants applications, partnership opportunities, and operational supervision.
- 5b. Correlate department standards to operational needs in order to plan for organizational changes.

**Objective 6: The City of Gahanna will utilize a balanced, leading approach to environmental stewardship (see Appendix I).**

**Tasks:**

- 6a. Review, revise, and implement legislation to provide the proper mechanism for environmental sustainability in the community through land dedication/purchase; ecosystem restoration, protection, and preservation; and natural resources management.
- 6b. Review, revise, and implement landscape legislation to create a community landscape standard, natural resource management, and clarification with regard to the duties of the landscape board.
- 6c. Review, revise, and implement planning and zoning practice of land dedication to clarify the difference between parkland dedication, open space dedication, and park impact.

# City of Gahanna Department of Parks & Recreation



## Appendix

Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan  
June 2006



**STRATEGIC VISIONING, INC.**



CITY OF GAHANNA

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

**City of Gahanna  
Comprehensive  
Parks & Recreation Master Plan  
Appendix**

**June 2006**

**Master Plan Steering Committee**

Brandi Braun  
Tony Collins  
Diane Cantrell  
Mark DiGiando  
Marlene Eader  
Terry Emery  
Troy Euton  
Tom Evers  
Candace Greenblott  
Matt Huffman  
Tom Kneeland  
Alan Little  
Nancy McGregor

Luke Messinger  
Dot Micacchion  
Eric Miller  
William Murdock  
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Kristin Rosan  
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**STRATEGIC VISIONING, INC.**

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# Appendix A: Meeting Notes



# Meeting Minutes

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**Date of Meeting:** January 21, 2005  
2:00 PM

**Re:** Pre- Kick-off Meeting for Master Plan

**Location:** Golf Course Club House  
Gahanna, Ohio

**Issue Date:** February 3, 2005

**Submitted By:** Woolpert, Inc.

## In Attendance (Pre-Meeting):

Carl Norris, Parks Superintendent	Leon Younger, PROS
Alan Little, Golf Course Superintendent	Bruce Rankin, Woolpert, Inc.
Mike Musser, Recreation Superintendent	Lydia Sowles, Woolpert, Inc
Tony Collins, Director	Jim Frank, Woolpert, Inc
Lisa Dillon, Administrative Assistant	

## Pre-Kick Off Meeting 2:00 to 3:00

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

A pre-meeting was conducted to review the agenda for the kick-off meeting. The following was discussed:

1. Introductions
2. Signed contracts for Master Plan and Hannah Farms
3. Leon and Woolpert reviewed his sub-contract
4. Tony reviewed GIS software with Bruce, Leon, and Lydia
5. Tony gave binders with requested data
6. Bruce intro
  - a. Discussed Communication protocol. Bruce and Tony to receive copies of all correspondences with Lisa and Lydia as back-up contact people.
  - b. Lisa will handle distribution of materials to team members on the City side.
  - c. GIS based documentation standards
  - d. Public meetings coordinated with school and vacation schedules
  - e. Clarified that this is a preview meeting for the 3:00 meeting
7. Tony clarified who will attend 3:00 meeting
8. Bruce outlined Consultant team roles
  - a. Bruce: prime contact and project director
  - b. Leon: business, operations and program assessments
  - c. Diane: (not present) user surveys
  - d. Lydia: facilitate process, project documentation and program

- e. Jim: heads up parks assessment and design
- 9. Tony distributed GPRD 2005 Priorities
- 10. Tony states preference to have corrected minutes available prior to next meeting.
  - a. Submit minutes for review prior to meeting for opportunity to review and correct.
  - b. Distribute via email electronically. Electronic submittals preferred. FTP site may be utilized for large file transfers.
  - c. GIS staff from consultant and City to coordinate standards
- 11. Reviewed schedule overview
  - a. First public meeting in May before losing families to summer vacation
- 12. League starts help determine when citizens are in town
- 13. Public meetings
  - a. Visioning
  - b. Preliminary Master Plan Options
  - c. Final Plan Presentation
- 14. Presentation dates will be confirmed by Steering Committee input
- 15. Leon recommends conducting Stakeholder interviews before focus groups in order to engage them in the process and to help frame questions to use with the focus groups. The user survey format then grows out of the interview process. Focus groups could include:
  - a. Sports Organizations
  - b. Environmental Conservancy Interests
  - c. Passive Recreational Interests

These notes are our best understanding of the proceedings and discussions conducted during the meetings. Please advise of any corrections or additions.

Cc: Attendees  
Diane Lawrence, Strategic Visioning  
David Rickard, Woolpert, Inc.  
Chad Adkins, Woolpert, Inc.



# Meeting Minutes

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**Date of Meeting:** January 21, 2005  
2:00 PM

**Re:** Master Plan Kick-off Meeting

**Location:** Golf Course Club House  
Gahanna, Ohio

**Issue Date:** February 3, 2005

**Submitted By:** Woolpert, Inc.

## In Attendance (Steering Committee Meeting):

Carl Norris, Parks Superintendent	Leon Younger, PROS
Alan Little, Golf Course Superintendent	Bruce Rankin, Woolpert, Inc.
Mike Musser, Recreation Superintendent	Lydia Sowles, Woolpert, Inc
Tony Collins, Director	Jim Frank, Woolpert, Inc
Lisa Dillon, Administrative Assistant	Karl Wetherholt, City Engineer
Sadicka White, City of Gahanna	Jim Proesch, Woolpert, Inc.
Mayor Becky Stinchcomb	Terry Emery, City of Gahanna
Fred Wood, Planning	William Murdock, Development
Marlene Eader, GPR Board member	Eric Miller, GPR Board member
Diane Cantrell, GPR Board member	Dot Micacchion, GPR Board member
Frank Treadway, GPR Board member	Dave Thom, PR Board member

## Steering Committee Meeting 3:15 to 5:00

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

The purpose of the meeting was to kick-off the master planning project. Project procedures, methodology, expectations and schedule were reviewed. The following was discussed:

1. Staff team introduced, then Steering Committee, then consultant
  - a. Tony will be point of contact with staff
  - b. Parks and Recreation Department Administrative team
  - c. Parks and Recreation Board
  - d. Planning and Development
  - e. City Engineer
2. Agenda Overview
  - a. Process
  - b. Schedule
  - c. Input

3. Requested materials were compiled into an outstanding package received by Woolpert prior to the meeting.
4. Schedule and agenda distributed
5. Outlined roles of consultant team:
  - a. Jim: principal in charge and local resident.
  - b. Bruce: prime contact and project director
  - c. Leon: business, operations and program assessments
  - d. Diane: (not present) user surveys
  - e. Lydia: facilitate process, project documentation and program
  - f. Jim: responsible for physical parks assessment and design
6. Deliverables come out in pieces for review before final submission.
7. Documentation standards for drawings and graphics will be GIS based and compatible with Gahanna's system. Distribution of meeting notes will be electronic.
8. Attendees expressed their expectations for the master planning process. Comments included the following:
  - a. Mayor Stinchcomb
    - The annual top 10 priorities established during their 2005 planning session focused in large part on facilities. An example is the location of the Justice Center and courts, which puts people awaiting court hearings and work detail prisoners alongside residents coming in to sign up for parks and recreational programs. The Senior Center is currently undersized and may be a potential site for relocated court functions if a new Senior Center can be planned.
    - The City lacks multi-functional spaces, public or private for meeting spaces, for both civic, community and private functions.
    - The parks planning process should dovetail with facilities planning for the City and anticipate that community facilities are a priority issue.
    - A broad range community survey is budgeted for in 2005 and will be initiated soon. The parks and recreation survey should be coordinated with this broader effort. The City would appreciate advice on how to proceed with the community wide survey and how it relates to the parks survey.
    - The master plan should address how to increase financial resources within the system and take a serious look at the current structure and size of development impact fees. Gahanna's development impact fees are considered low for the area and the Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Board seek guidance on whether it is best to accept land or fees in lieu of land.
    - The City is in the process of evolving staffing requirements that were developed when it was still a Village and Charter requirements still reflect a village standard. Gahanna is in competition with more affluent communities, but is without similar resources. Benchmarking with other communities may be appropriate as long as it's done with an understanding of the local culture and resources.
    - City needs to hear the truth about its facilities and resources without a "sugar-coated" view, present the hard realities and unmanipulated information.
    - Gahanna has a diverse racial and economic population. Process needs to reach out to everyone. Demographic profiles vary widely. We have white collar million dollar homes and widows living on fixed incomes. The process should document who is saying what? Is there a new Gahanna vs. old Gahanna?
    - Gahanna has not had a tax increase since 1970. The City's reputation is to not increase taxes and that we provide basic services only. If community wants increased services, are they willing to pay for it and how?

- Senior services are in a little building and now have outgrown the facility, which was perceived as a big facility for seniors at the time it was built. Now it has 900-1000 members and Gahanna's population is aging.
  - Gahanna also has areas that are underserved for parks and recreation, particularly the west side. The hiking and biking trails are in part intended to provide greater connectivity to existing parks. What are options for further connectivity and expansion?
- b. Board Member
- The survey process and finding out what people want is most important component of the project. Take this opportunity to hear directly from the citizens about what they want in a way that listens to others besides the squeaky wheels. Need to hear from a broad range of constituents that represents a cross-section of the community.
  - The process is breaking new ground for the community; a survey has never been done before.
  - Allow people to share their opinions.
  - Get an honest assessment and good data.
- c. Mr. Collins
- Validity. Survey should represent a strong, accurate sample of the public. The planning process and data needs to be defensible with the ability to verify public input.
  - Documents should be workable and represent incremental options. Implement in phases.
  - The Master Plan should be able to integrate into the City's GIS system and into city-wide systems and plans for planning and development as well as the parks and recreation department. The master plan should become the parks and recreation "bible".
  - Not pie in sky plans that represent facilities that won't happen or cannot be sustained. It has to work from a cost and investment standpoint.
  - Match the wish list with expected funding and projected funding increases to programming revenue etc.
- d. Mr. Younger
- It is important that the values of the community are understood and acknowledged. An important outcome to a public process is that when you ask people's opinion's they will tend to advocate for you.
  - "Best Practices" (for Gahanna) may be a more appropriate term than "Benchmarking". That way what is appropriate for the community is outlined rather than just trying to keep up with other communities. The action plan will be incremental in nature in that is outlines annual programs and phased improvements.
- e. Board Member
- The Master Plan should be a guide that helps lead decision making. Do we need a recreation center? Are our fees too high or too low? Should we accept fees and lieu of land from developers?
- f. Board Member

- The Master Plan should give us direction. Are fees appropriate? Is space adequate? What can we do and how can we do it and how much does it cost?
  - The plan should be realistic and outline priorities.
  - Growth in Gahanna is now slowing after doubling in size. We have had to be lean and mean with still keeping an eye towards growth. What are the options for further growth and enhancement of the system now that land is largely developed?
- g. Ms. White
- What is the need policy wise? Are code changes needed for open space planning? What is the desired definition of "open space" vs. "parkland" as it relates to zoning code? The Development Department has the ability to act as the first line of open space acquisitions when it comes to negotiations with developers.
  - Amenities that make the community more livable, as a place to live and work, include safe trails, proximity to parks and golf, connectivity within the community. Gahanna works to attract employers and businesses with employees, as well as residents with these amenities.
  - Coordinate efforts with the Visitors and Convention Bureau.
  - Define what parkland is existing. What and where do we need parks and in what capacity? Identify residual land and if it is appropriate for disposal. Does Gahanna currently have the ability to swap parcels of parkland?
- h. Board Member
- Protection of the environment and preservation of open space as a means to countering urbanization of the community is important. The Master Plan should represent a community wide balance. Possibly restore green space in abandoned brown fields.
  - Parks and Recreation currently markets services and facilities but are there ways to do it better? Often encounters people in the community who are unaware of facilities and programs they offer.
- i. Planning Commission Chairman
- How can we generate as much public community input as possible? People currently involved in the process are generally in favor and support the parks, but how can we engage those who may not be in favor? Who are those people?
  - Research under served areas to determine needs. What is the process for soliciting and verifying community input?
- j. Mr. Collins
- Tony clarified that public input will be solicited four ways:  
 First: Stakeholder and focus group interviews  
 Second: A phone survey with 600 successful responses will be used, 150 in each ward.  
 Third: The written survey will be published in the paper  
 Fourth: Three public workshops and presentations will be conducted
  - Operations should address marketing of the parks and recreation facilities.
  - Gahanna wants to be better without spending as much as some other communities. What is out there that is not being done well in which Gahanna can do it great with much less? Gahanna wants to be very aggressive in creating distinction without wasting resources.

9. Stakeholder and Focus Group Discussion: Who are the community's stakeholders to be interviewed and what should the focus groups address? Both advocates and hard-sell people should be included. Focus groups should be no more than a dozen people, approximately 6 to 8 groups total. The Steering Committee will review and comment on list of proposed stakeholders and focus groups.
  - a. Mr. Younger
    - The City must identify key stakeholders first. Who are the key people who make this town go? Find them in neighborhood groups, past officials; we are looking for specific people, not groups. Get them involved first so they can begin to support the process.
  
10. Potential Themes for Focus Groups:
  - a. Seniors
    - Senior Center
    - Facilities (on-going issue for all themes)
  
  - b. Environment / Natural Systems
  
  - c. Trails / Bikeways / Greenways
    - Mifflin and Jefferson Townships need to be included. Particularly when it comes to planning for Rt. 62 Gahanna and New Albany regional bike connections
    - Franklin County Engineer
  
  - d. Sports
    - Recreational Leagues
    - Select Leagues
    - Involve Schools
    - Recreation Roundtable members already meeting to discuss sports and aquatics
  
  - e. Aquatics
    - May or may not be combined with sports theme
    - Recreation Roundtable
    - YMCA
  
  - f. Education / Youth
    - Engage PTAs, kids and schools (may "crossover" with all themes?)
    - Nature programming
    - Possible children's park planning workshop as component of the public workshop
  
  - g. Neighborhood Councils / Civic Organizations
    - Important to engage grass roots advocates and service organizations (also "crossover" potential)
    - Extensive e-mail lists
    - Potential economic development tie-in
    - How do we incorporate concept of multi-jurisdictional service providers?
    - CVB Convention and Visitor's Bureau
    - Gahanna Vets

11. Project Schedule Review

- a. It is important to complete interviews, the survey process and assessments in order to conduct the Visioning Workshop before schools let out for the summer.
- b. The Steering Committee prefers to slide the Second Public Workshop to the week of August 15<sup>th</sup>, just before school starts (week of August 23). Try to work remaining tasks into the schedule so the Master Plan recommendations can be incorporated into the 2006 Appropriations schedule to be decided in September.
- c. Publishing or distributing the preliminary Master Plan recommendations prior to the Public Workshop would allow time for review prior to conducting the workshop. A display could be put together for the Creekside and Freedom Festivals during the summer.
- d. Steering Committee meetings are best scheduled on Thursdays from 3:00 to 5:00. Next meeting is scheduled for February 17<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 5:00.
- e. Track Council and Planning Commission meetings to incorporate presentations to those groups. Planning Commission adoption would precede Council adoption.

These notes are our best understanding of the proceedings and discussions conducted during the meetings. Please advise of any corrections or additions.

Cc: Attendees  
Diane Lawrence, Strategic Visioning  
David Rickard, Woolpert, Inc.  
Chad Adkins, Woolpert, Inc



# MEETING MINUTES

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**Date of Meeting:** February 17, 2005 3:00-5:00 PM      **Re:** Steering Committee Meeting

**Location:** City of Gahanna      **Issue Date:** February 22, 2005

**Submitted By:** Bruce A Rankin, Woolpert, Inc.

**In Attendance:**

Becky Stinchcomb, Mayor	Tony Collins, Parks & Recreation Director
Nancy McGregor, Councilwoman	Carl Norris, Parks Superintendent
Diane Cantrell, GPR Board member	Mike Musser, Recreation Superintendent
Eric Miller, GPR Board member	Alan K Little II, Golf Course Supervisor
Frank Treadway, GPR Board member	Lisa Dillon, Administrative Assistant
Dot Micacchion, GPR Board member	Ken Ventura, PROS
Sadicka White, Development Director	Bruce Rankin, Woolpert, Inc
William Murdock, City Planner	
Karl Wetherholt, City Engineer	
Daniel Michalec, GIS Manager	

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

1. The group discussed who the Community Stakeholders are:
  - o Leaders involved with groups- an interest; influence ability to make actions happen.
  - o If on the Steering Committee, should they be Stakeholder? They are still Stakeholders, but can be interviewed by phone.
  - o Look for people who can give a fresh approach.
2. A majority of the meeting was centered on determining the Community Stakeholders list. The group agreed on the Community Stakeholders listed below:
  - o Canini, Larry- Developer
  - o Dennis, Fran- President/Gahanna Chamber of Commerce
  - o Evers, Tom- Council President/Ward 3
  - o Geroux, Bunnie- Ohio Herb Education Center; Former Councilwoman
  - o Kauser, Fred- Deputy Fire Chief/Mifflin Township
  - o McComb, Scott- Heartland Bank C.O.O.
  - o McGregor, Jim- State Representative of Ohio; Former Mayor
  - o McKenna, Windy- Gahanna - Jefferson School Board
  - o Mitchell, Raleigh- Former Parks and Recreation Director
  - o Moran, Mike- Attorney; BZA Member; Former Member/Parks & Recreation Board
  - o Morris, Greg- Superintendent of Gahanna – Jefferson School District
  - o Shumate, Alex – Attorney

Alternates:

- Dioun, Mo- Developer
  - Harper, Ivan- Attorney
  - McComb, Tiney- Heartland Bank President
  - Schmidt, Jack- Former Superintendent of Gahanna – Jefferson School District
  - Smith, Elizabeth
  - Stehle, William L.- Attorney; Former Member/Chairmen of Parks and Recreation Board
3. The Community Stakeholders meeting was changed to March 2, 2005.
  4. The Focus Groups meetings were changed to March 15 & 16, 2005.
  5. The Community Stakeholders and Focus Group questions were handed out for review, and should be returned to the master planning team by Friday, February 25<sup>th</sup>.
  6. The Focus Groups will be adjusted as follows:
    - Add Business Groups.
    - Elected becomes Community Officials.
    - Break neighborhood councils and Civic organization into two groups.
    - Add a partners group.
    - Add Golf Course.
    - Churches are included in the Civic group.
    - Under Environmental, "Watershed Protection Groups" was changed to "Waterway Protection Groups".
  7. The group discussed assessing the community by Quadrants vs. Wards.
    - The City can be split into quadrants around Hamilton and Granville, for geographic assessment.
    - The group agreed to survey by ward, to give council a reading on constituents, and plan by quadrant, to achieve geographic balance.



# Meeting Minutes

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**Date of Meeting:** March 31, 2005      **Re:** Gahanna Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting

**Location:** City of Gahanna      **Issue Date:** June 6, 2005

**Submitted By:** Bruce Rankin

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

The purpose of the meeting was to review the results of the stakeholder and focus groups meetings, to review goals for the survey and to discuss the preliminary community survey questionnaire. The following was discussed:

1. There are three general levels of public input involved in the process
  - Stakeholders perspective is from the inside of the system, looking out to the community
  - Focus Group members are generally engaged with parks and recreation and their perspective is from the outside, looking in.
  - The Survey provides an outside perspective; respondents have only a general knowledge
2. People have said there was a lost opportunity in the Triangle property. The City took money in lieu of land. Projects come in piecemeal fashion; therefore it can be hard to judge the relative value of land or money at the time.
  - The Department needs a long term plan that establishes what the City wants to do in each area of the city as a basis to review proposals.
  - Often land is offered that is what is left over, inaccessible and unusable.
  - If plan says what is needed, the City will be in a better position to express what will be acceptable for each situation.
3. For most people, the image of a park is a parcel of managed and maintained land. The Steering Committee would like to know how the community views the relative importance of managed park land compared to natural, undeveloped open space.
4. The Survey is intended to help define the community view, community wide preferences for development and use of park and open space. The Survey will allow the Department to independently assess importance to public
5. The question "How many parks have you visited?" is designed to determine the public's general knowledge of what resources the City system has.

6. It would be good to know if there is a small open space in the neighborhood, does it factor into wanting a home there?
7. The Survey will quantify what parks and programs do people use and why?
8. The Committee wants a plan that locates needed park land so that the development plan review process can be defined and allow for and guide acquisitions
  - Should City aggressively seek to acquire new park land?
  - Do citizens support paying for it?
  - How aggressive should the city be?
  - Is there enough land in the neighborhood, or the City as a whole?
  - Should the City acquire more?
9. Review of the survey can couple responses about how well served people feel they are with how aggressive the city should be.
10. Questions can differentiate between the relative need for athletic space and civic meeting space in a Community Center.
  - Paint a picture of what the community would gain and the cost per person
  - It may be valuable to know if the community wants to be average
  - Surrounding community have facilities Gahanna doesn't have; the Committee wants to know how important it is to provide those services within Gahanna
11. A question should explore whether citizens are willing to pay more for better parks and recreation services, such as seniors programs, bike trails, parks and green space... Respondents will be given a list of suggestions and asked if they agree, strongly agree, etc.
12. If willing to pay more, what method would be most acceptable?
13. Of all things community wants, questions will try to identify what is top priority
14. The Department wants to prevent pools from closing, but needs more information on demand
  - Should there be one membership for all?
  - Should City close all existing pools and build one new facility?
  - What happens when pools fail (should the city take over)?
  - Should City continue to run the pool? (operates at a loss at Hunter's Ridge Pool)
  - If not, why not?
  - Do respondents use it, do they like a pool in the neighborhood, do they go elsewhere?
  - Where do respondents want to spend their money – on a pool or other facilities?
  - Gahanna Pool costs \$260/season
15. The Survey will be a phone interview, so we have to watch the time. It could get too lengthy; we need to keep it below 12 minutes
16. Planning for next meeting
  - Review survey results
  - Preparation for the Public Workshop
  - Physical inventory
  - Review preliminary Needs Assessment
  - Staff interviews—Operations Assessment
  - mapping



# Meeting Minutes

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Date of Meeting: June 9, 2005                      Re: Gahanna Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting

Location: City of Gahanna                      Issue Date: June 16, 2005

Submitted By: Lydia Sowles

Attendees: See attached list

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

The purpose of the meeting was to review the preliminary results of the park facilities assessments and the public survey. Planning for the June 15<sup>th</sup> public visioning workshop was also discussed.

1. Park assessments and the condition of the parks were discussed. Park facilities are in generally good condition with flooding and drainage issues the most often observed issue with many of the parks and facilities located within flood prone areas. Opportunities for connections between parks and within parks between facilities and neighborhoods are often not realized.
2. Categorization of the various types of park land within Gahanna was reviewed. While the quantity of public park properties may appear to be adequate for a City the size of Gahanna, the categorization of the parks still needs to be reviewed and refined. The distribution of park land, particularly in the neighborhood park category is somewhat lacking in the western and northern parts of the City.
  - Some parks such as Pizzurro and certainly Creekside would fall into a community level of park.
  - While the inventory of mini and miscellaneous park land may seem high in relation to population standards, this category needs to be reviewed in how important of a resource these lands are for contributing to the character of Gahanna.
  - Moving Woodside Green from a neighborhood park category to a community park category when combined with Academy Park should be considered.
  - Including storm water basins in the park land allocations may skew the allocations.
  - The definitions of the various parks, i.e. mini-park, neighborhood park and community park should be refined to reflect the realities of park land in Gahanna. Neighborhood parks tend to take on a more intensive role and residents often drive to them.
  - Community gardens should probably not go into mix since those are planned for relocation to allow for expansion of the City maintenance compound.
  - Comparison of Gahanna standards with neighboring communities other than Columbus will be helpful
  - Woolpert to work with Parks staff to refine categorization and update within two weeks.

3. An inventory of park facilities and Gahanna standards per population were reviewed. It appears that athletic facilities are adequate, although condition of the fields and availability of practice fields are an issue. Neighborhood park type facilities such as courts and restrooms may be somewhat under represented. Adequate trails in miles per population are also lacking which supports some of the survey findings. Assessments acknowledge private facilities within and outside of the community such as the school facilities and the YMCA although the standards use only public park facilities for comparison with other communities. Other recreational resources are outlined within the "Natural and Cultural Resources" memo and mapping.
4. Diane Lawrence shared the preliminary findings from the community survey. Some interesting points indicated by Gahanna demographic information gathered include:
  - There is a good spread of residency periods indicated (18% have moved to Gahanna within the last 5 years as compared to 35% having lived there 20 years or longer). This may indicate some stability in terms of growth trends and future programming needs, i.e. not too top heavy with either young children or senior populations.
  - 37% of households have children which is higher than an average of 30%. The number of children under 18 is above average at 1.4 children per household vs. regional average of 1.2 children per household.
5. 97% of respondents indicated the parks and recreation is important to community. This is a very high ranking.
6. 91% of respondents are satisfied or somewhat satisfied with overall parks and recreation services within Gahanna.
7. Outdoor Pools: 69% never visit one of the pools, 17% visit at least once a week and only 9% leave the community to use pool facility. Primary users are people with children particularly between elementary school to middle school age. 57% felt there would be no loss if pools closed and 37% felt there would be a loss if they were to close. Note that a higher percentage would feel there is a loss than actually use the pools. It's important to note that with many types of parks and facilities residents will have perception of value even though they may not actually use the facility.
8. Senior Center: 69% of seniors over the age of 76 have visited the senior center in Gahanna. Younger seniors (66 to 75) don't perceive themselves as seniors with 48% indicating they have visited the center. The use drops with age. Of the portion of the population that uses the senior center, 89% rated the facility good or excellent and 74% rated the programs and activities good or excellent.
9. Survey questions related to programs tended to receive a higher percentage of "don't know" responses than the facility questions which is not unusual. This may also be an indication on how available or accessible program information is.
  - Sports are perceived of as having the right amount of programs while programming for activities other than sports are perceived of as having the right amounts to a lesser degree.
10. Additions to facilities indicated a preference for improvements to trails, restrooms and playgrounds. 81% of respondents indicating a need for trails which is high. 62% indicated a need for indoor recreational space was but only 44% indicated a need for an indoor pool.
11. Steering committee member comments included the following:

- Survey results seem to indicate a need for indoor recreation space but not necessarily an indoor pool
  - Drop-in space rather than membership arrangements would be attractive, especially for teens.
  - Do not overlook the importance of Creekside as a community park and focus for the community within the context of the master plan. There is a desire for greater connectivity of Creekside to the neighborhoods and other parks. Multiple opportunities for recreation for all age groups should also be a goal. Paddle boats are appealing for kids but activities for little children are currently lacking, maybe a rock/water feature that could be incorporated into Creekside II plaza.
  - Interest expressed in looking at relation of wards to survey responses. Final report will include that level of information.
  - Tax amounts stated in survey questions originated with Gahanna tax department
12. Planning for the visioning meeting was discussed. The agenda will include an overview of assessments and survey with the bulk of the evening spent in group discussions. The goal for the workshop is to talk about Gahanna's priorities for parks and recreation, the community's values, immediate needs and then what are some possibilities for the future. Topics for discussion will be ordered around programs, outdoor facilities, indoor facilities and land. Woolpert and PROS will facilitate group discussions. Tony is working on getting the word out and expects a good turn out. The vision statement is not created out of just the workshop but will reflect all the work and planning completed to date.
13. July 7<sup>th</sup> is the next scheduled steering committee meeting at 3:00.



# Meeting Minutes

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**Date of Meeting:** June 15, 2005      **Re:** Gahanna Parks and Recreation Master Plan Public Visioning Workshop

**Location:** City of Gahanna      **Issue Date:** June 16, 2005

**Submitted By:** Lydia Sowles

**Attendees:** See attached list

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

The purpose of the Visioning Workshop was to share with the residents of Gahanna the work completed to date on the parks and recreation master plan and to begin identifying priorities for the immediate future and for the next 10 years. The workshop was well attended with over 50 participants plus the master planning consultants. Fred Wood, Chairman of the Planning Commission opened the evening and introduced the project. Tony Collins, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department introduced the Parks and Recreation Department staff, the Park Board and the consultant team members from Woolpert and PROS Consulting. The following was discussed.

1. The agenda and parks and recreation master plan process was outlined by Bruce Rankin from Woolpert. The consultant team is currently finalizing the results from the community survey and needs assessment phases which represent an extensive interview and community survey process with approximately 730 individuals providing input into the needs and requirements of the parks and recreation facilities, programs and department within Gahanna.
2. The intent of the Visioning Workshop is to provide an additional opportunity and forum for residents within the community to provide input, to help validate what has been learned so far, and to prioritize goals for the future of parks and recreation within Gahanna.
3. Findings to date include an inventory and assessment of Gahanna's public parks and facilities. An overview of the types and condition of parks within Gahanna, park facility issues, and Gahanna standards of park acreage and facilities to population was presented by Lydia Sowles from Woolpert.
4. The Stakeholder and Focus Group interview process was outlined by Leon Younger from PROS Consulting and key issues and needs were reviewed. Items noted are issues that were consistently identified during this process and represent a qualitative assessment of the needs and priorities for parks and recreation in Gahanna. An assessment of the recreation programming and preliminary observations of department staffing issues were also reviewed.

5. An overview of the community survey process was provided by Bruce Rankin. The survey was conducted by phone by Strategic Visioning in May and consisted of a random sample of 600 registered voters who are residents of Gahanna. The survey which included sampling per ward within the City provides quantitative input into the needs and priorities per ward as well as citywide.
6. Leon Younger presented an overview of the visioning process and the overall goals of the master plan process. The City's vision for parks and recreation is expressed through input by the community stakeholders and leaders; the parks and recreation department staff; and by the community itself. The vision establishes the values of the community; key issues for parks and recreation; priorities and a timeline to accomplish tasks. Out of the vision the departments mission is refined, goals established; tactics for delivery of services and financing strategies identified. The goal of the master plan is to provide guidance in creating a balanced park system. The department and volunteer groups are currently operating in a reactionary mode and need to grow into a more proactive position.
7. Groups assembled to discuss priorities concerning four topics. There were a total of six groups which covered topics including programs and services, outdoor facilities, indoor facilities, and land. A summary of the group discussions is as follows:

**Recreation Programs and Services Group:**

Priorities established by the group include

1. Programs for 2 to 5 year olds
2. Programs for pre-teen (12 to 15) and teens (16 to 18) year olds
3. Educational classes and life skills training opportunities
4. Mind and body wellness and fitness classes

Other ideas for recreational programs and services included:

- Development of the Lacrosse club, emerging sport in the community
- Dancing
- Arts and fine arts and partnering with the Arts Council
- Community Band and music programs
- Environmental education
- Tennis programs
- Young adult programs with the golf course
- Wider use of the golf course and golf programs for kids and leagues
- Bike club
- Cross country
- Outdoor activities and canoes
- Space needs to be available for programs, marketing required
- Herb Education Center programs
- Seniors space is lacking
- Frisbee golf

**Outdoor Facilities Group 1:**

Priorities and issues include:

- Concern with properties counted with park land inventory and questions the usability of these lands as a recreation/park resource such as the golf course, Galloway Reserve and Price Road Park
- Bike paths are underdeveloped and poorly maintained and signed. Identify underserved areas. Sidewalks are often inadequate for connections between neighborhoods and downtown and other parks.

- Need open and available restrooms in all community parks, at least porta johns until permanent facilities are available.
- Drinking fountains never work
- Need Lacrosse fields and tennis courts
- Playgrounds tend to not have opportunities for the toddlers and little children. Woodside Green's equipment is probably the best example of good equipment. The relocated play area at Headley is no longer visible a family has children playing at both the fields and the playground.
- Parks could use more landscaping
- Outdoor pools are not economically viable. They are outdated and not useful for adults. They are most attractive to families with young children. Facilities are aging and expensive to maintain and the Y has siphoned off some summer use with their outdoor pool. The Gahanna swim club is the largest facility but needs capital improvements. The city stepped in and is subsidizing Hunter's Ridge. Foxboro is outdated. Are there opportunities for partnering with the Y or banding together on maintenance costs?

### Outdoor Facilities Group 2:

Priorities and issues include:

- Lacrosse practice and playing fields
- Multi-use and bike paths rather than trails are needed
- Would like sidewalk route to connect with path system so people can walk to downtown or to Headley. Sidewalks existing within neighborhoods for the most part but are often lacking on main roads like at Hamilton and Clark State Roads.
- Multi-sport practice fields (110x60 yds) are needed and room for new emerging sports leagues such as lacrosse and field hockey
- Restrooms
- Maintenance of playing fields needs to be upgraded to more than just cutting grass. Example of Headley, some regarding required, "conditions are embarrassing for when teams come from other communities with better fields"
- Playgrounds need to accommodate multiple age levels. Equipment is lacking for very young children
- More connections between parks and to downtown are needed

### Indoor Facilities Group:

What are our needs?

- More meeting spaces, various sizes
- More exposure – central locations
- Space with options such as kitchen, audio/visual
- Public/private partnerships in providing meeting spaces
- Create a database to display all needs (public and private)
- Identify partners and what space is available
- Need better determination of programs, Gateways are a way of distributing
- Need to document usage and turn aways
- How many outside groups have programs they need space for?
- Build it and they will come- some activity will arise with space
- Combine services with other services- separate space in common facility. Requires scheduling, but you will get more for the money.
- Need to build staff along with existing staff
-

What do we want?

- Multi-purpose facility. Potential locations include Friendship Park (community gardens site), Hamilton Road site, or North of golf course (flooding issues)
- Need multipurpose gym, and eventually an indoor pool
- Community to take a stand on something that will add value back to homes
- Do not want to replace the Senior Center with a stand alone facility. Need to fold new Senior Center into a community center
- A centrally located and accessible community center

**Land Group:**

Priorities and issues include:

- Change the perception of Pizzurro Park, create a tie-in to adjacent vacant parcel (Buckles Track)
- Create a connecting trail way between Pizzurro to Morse Road along Big Walnut Creek
- Selling of unusable lands for the purchase of usable lands for parks and recreation
- Recommend purchase of land NOW to develop for parks
- Request space for lacrosse club teams
- Review current City policy regarding parkland dedication vs. fees in lieu. Make sure the City receives something that has value and is usable.
- Pursuing joint discussion with Jefferson Township
- Pursue Antrim Park type park setting
- Layer uses on existing parks, add facilities to complement picnic and ball fields. Etc.
- Create an educational center at Creekside
- Buy Shareef property
- Adhere to scenic byway rules, develop by the standards, and apply for grants. This is an existing opportunity to partner with Township.
- Connect to Creekside via property behind EMH+T, by flood marker and along the river corridor
- Partner with airport to route bike path through and around



# Meeting Minutes

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**Date of Meeting:** July 7, 2005      **Re:** Gahanna Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting

**Location:** City of Gahanna      **Issue Date:** July 13, 2005

**Submitted By:** Lydia Sowles

**Attendees:** Brandi Braun, Mayor's Executive Assistant  
Tony Collins, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Diane Cantrell, Chair, Parks and Recreation Board  
Nancy McGregor, Councilwoman (at large)  
Luke Messinger, Member, Parks and Recreation Board  
Eric Miller, Member, Parks and Recreation Board  
Mike Musser, Recreation Superintendent  
Lydia Sowles, Woolpert, Inc.  
Sadicka White, Director Planning and Development  
Fred Wood, Chair, Planning Commission

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

The purpose of the meeting was to review information on remaining assessments and conduct discussions on the vision statement. Notes from the June 9<sup>th</sup> steering committee meeting and the June 15<sup>th</sup> public visioning workshop were also reviewed.

1. Meeting notes from the June 9<sup>th</sup> were reviewed. Ms. Cantrell did not receive the previous e-mail transmittal of the notes. Several of the committee members present were not present at the previous meeting and would like an extension to review the notes and materials distributed at the previous meeting. It was decided that the meeting notes would be tabled for approval until the next steering committee meeting.
2. Materials that were distributed during the June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting will be redistributed electronically to all the members for final review and input at the next meeting. It is important that this information is on track and acceptable to the committee since it forms the basis of the vision statement and subsequent recommendations.
3. Comments on the meeting notes from the June 15<sup>th</sup> Visioning Workshop were noted and notes will be corrected. Notes are accepted pending corrections.
4. Committee members felt that the visioning workshop was helpful. Approximately one half of the participants was staff, council or affiliated with the City in some manner.

- There was discussion regarding editorializing the survey data, as illustrated by one of the power point presentation slides. The facts should be simply stated. The fact that fewer respondents were willing to support funding of improvements than supported the idea of improvements is not really negative.
5. The final community survey report is now complete and includes information related to households, wards and age groups. A hard copy will be provided to Tony. It is available in electronic format without the cross tabulation charts which do not transmit well electronically. Tony's copy will include these tables. The electronic version will be sent out to committee members.
  6. Copies of the Program, Growth and Operational Assessments were distributed to the committee members. Comments and questions on these assessments should be provided before or during the next steering committee meeting.
  7. The categorization of parks was discussed in some detail.
    - Tony provided comments regarding the list of parks and their assignment to categories prior to the meeting. An example of a park that may require re-categorization is Agler Road Park which is really a parkway type property between Agler Road and Rt. 62.
    - There are other nomenclature issues where properties that are open space preserves and storm water management sites are called parks.
    - Several parks have several contiguous parcels with different names such as Gahanna Woods and Rice Avenue Basin.
    - City owned parcels adjacent to Gahanna Woods will be deeded to the State for the nature preserve. One acquisition goal is to fill in the missing pieces of property around the nature preserve, particularly the pond, since there are sensitive habitats within the preserve.
    - The categorization chart should only include all properties that are under the ownership of Parks and Recreation. Goshen Park and Caroway Park could easily be re-categorized as "open space preserves". Woolpert is to make recommendations on re-categorizations.
  8. The legacy of the numerous small park parcels has created a maintenance burden on the parks and recreation department. The intent of the zoning code for preserving open space and significant stands of trees within subdivisions is still very desirable but continuing to create new fragments of park property is not a sustainable course in the future.
    - The City may not necessarily want to back off of ownership of open space preservation areas since the alternative to ownership (private preservation zones) still would still require some manner of enforcement.
    - There is a level of perceived control with the City's ownership of preservation parcels, although it carries the cost and responsibility for maintenance and management.
    - The zoning code currently permits accepting fees (cost of land) in lieu of land. There needs to be direction and policy regarding when they exercise this option. Where are the target areas for creating connectivity? Can future proposed open space parcels be swapped for acquisitions within target areas?
    - Tony requested that the master plan assessments include an evaluation of the current parks development impact fee of \$150 per residence in relation to what other communities are charging.
    - Is there a cost savings for contracting for maintenance of some types of park land, particularly those that require just grass mowing?
    - Does it make sense to include the category of parkland on park signage, which would then be correlated with the level of expectation for maintenance? For example, "Caroway Park" could be called "Caroway Green" or "Preserve"

9. Time for review of the vision statement was limited and it was apparent that the visioning statement required further development and organization. The committee also needed time to review assessments. Woolpert will resubmit the vision statement for review at the next meeting.
10. The next scheduled steering committee meeting is August 18<sup>th</sup>. The public workshop for presentation of preliminary master plan recommendations will need to be rescheduled for sometime in September. Tony and Woolpert will review schedule and report back to the committee.



# Meeting Minutes

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Date of Meeting: August 25, 2005      Re: Gahanna Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting

Location: City of Gahanna      Issue Date: August 29, 2005

Submitted By: Bruce Rankin

**Attendees:** Becky Stinchcomb, Mayor  
Tony Collins, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Diane Cantrell, Chair, Parks and Recreation Board  
Marlene Eader, Vice Chair, Parks and Recreation Board  
Nancy McGregor, Councilwoman (at large)  
Luke Messinger, Member, Parks and Recreation Board  
Dot Micacchion, Member, Parks and Recreation Board  
Alan Little, Golf Course Supervisor  
Jane Allinder, Member, Landscape Board  
Fred Wood, Chair, Planning Commission  
Matt Huffman  
Bruce Rankin, Woolpert, Inc.

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

The purpose of the meeting was to review the vision statement and park classification table and map, and to discuss the schedule for completion. Notes from the July 7<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting were also reviewed.

- A. Meeting notes from the July 7<sup>th</sup> were reviewed. There were no comments on the minutes.
- B. The Committee reviewed the Park Classification table (titled Gahanna Parks & Recreation Master Plan – Parks GIS Attribute Data), and found it quite helpful.
  - 1. Tony clarified that the +/- 5-acre City owned parcel adjacent to Gahanna Woods is part of the original development agreement be given to the State.
  - 2. Rathburn Woods will be corrected to Rathburn Woods Park
  - 3. Creekside Park is in the Community Park category because of its function, even though it is smaller than a normal Community Park
  - 4. Academy Park had in the past included two reserves across the creek from Woodside Green. They are in fact deeded as Woodside Green reserves, and are now shown that way on the table
  - 5. Foxwood basin will be corrected to Foxwood Reserve

6. There are three categories of non park lands, Reserves, Parkways and Greenways. Parkways are circulation dominated; containing a roadway, while Greenways are natural system dominated, and often, but not always, contain a trail (but generally not a road).
  7. Tony expects more stormwater management sites to be added to the list. They will remain on the list for now to see if any can play a role in connectivity.
  8. Rocky Fork Reserve is on the map, will be added to the list.
  9. The Board needs to review options for Goshen Reserve
  10. Future use of Woodside reserve needs further discussion
  11. Foxwood and Clarendon are maintained by Parks & Recreation, and will be corrected to show a single asterisk.
  12. Under Academy Park, the Water Treatment Plant Reserve will be called Academy Reserve.
  13. Agler Road Park has been changed to Agler Road Parkway; Tony suggests it be further changed to Gahanna Parkway.
  14. McKenna Creek Park is called Parkway as well
  15. The Three Corners at Steigler will be added to the list and identified on the plan
- C. The Vision Statement will be refined to a two to three sentence backed up by the Department's Mission Statement Goals and Objectives.
1. The numbered statements are the Goals, and the subordinate statements are objectives.
  2. The objectives will be bulleted, and reworded for consistent parallel sentence construction.
  3. The Vision Statement will be two to three sentences that explain what the Department wants to be.
    - Woolpert will put together a draft for review by the Board and Steering Committee.
    - The City wants to be in the top 25% of central Ohio communities
    - The Committee wants people to move to Gahanna because of the parks
    - Build on the City's vision and mission statements
  4. The Mission Statement should be simplified to a single sentence that captures the connection of people to parks and natural resources.
    - The Steering Committee will develop the Mission Statement.
    - The goal is to make it short and easy to remember
  5. The final Vision statement will be a clearer representation of:
    - Vision—two to three sentences
    - Mission—one clear sentence
    - Goals—refine numbered statements
    - Objectives—refine lettered statements and express as bullets
  6. Lisa will send Woolpert a copy of the VISION 2015 slide
- D. So far the Committee has been seeing the plan in pieces, and it is not always easy to put it all together. The Committee will need to be able to study all pieces compiled into a complete whole.
- E. The next edition of *The Gateway* will feature the Master plan and will include the written survey.
- F. The dog park at Hannah Farms Park is very successful. Police have reported that at times there are 60 to 100 people there.
- G. Tony will send Woolpert an update of the County bikeway map.
- H. Upcoming Meetings
1. The Parks & Recreation Board meets September 7. Steering Committee members will e-mail Vision Statement comments to Lisa as soon as they have them, but within a week. The refined Vision statement, updated schedule and minutes of this meeting will be issued September 2.

2. The next Steering Committee meeting will be September 15. the Agenda will include:
  - Mission and Vision Statements
  - Initial review of outline recommendations
  - Review of plans for six park sites (including Hannah)
  
- I. The Schedule will be updated to show the following dates:
  1. Staff Charette at Woolpert September 6 to begin drafting recommendations
  2. Park Board 9/7
  3. Steering Committee 9/15
  4. Public meeting to review draft Recommendations 10/6
  5. Planning commission introduced to the Draft master Plan 11/9
  6. Joint Steering Committee/Planning commission workshop 11/15
  7. Planning Commission Public Hearing and approval 11/23
  8. City Council Public Hearing, First Reading 12/5
  9. City Council Committee of the Whole 12/12
  10. City Council Second Reading and approval 12/19 (possibility of special meeting 12/26 if needed).



# Meeting Minutes

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**Date of Meeting:** September 15, 2005      **Re:** Gahanna Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting

**Location:** City of Gahanna      **Issue Date:** November 28, 2005

**Submitted By:** Bruce Rankin

**Attendees:** Becky Stinchcomb, Mayor  
Tony Collins, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Diane Cantrell, Chair, Parks and Recreation Board  
Marlene Eader, Vice Chair, Parks and Recreation Board  
Terry Emery, Director of Public Service  
Matt Huffman, Planner, Development Department  
Alan Little, Golf Course Supervisor  
Nancy McGregor, Councilwoman (at large)  
Luke Messinger, Member, Parks and Recreation Board  
Mike Musser, Recreation Superintendent  
Carl Norris, Parks Superintendent  
Sadicka White, Director of Planning And Development  
Fred Wood, Chair, Planning Commission  
Bruce Rankin, Woolpert, Inc.

## ITEMS DISCUSSED

The purpose of the meeting was to confirm the vision statement and review the draft recommendations, policy standards and Draft Park Concept Plans. The Committee also reviewed preparations for the October 6 Public Meeting.

- J. Meeting notes from the August 25<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed and accepted without comments.
- K. The committee made final refinements to the Vision and Mission Statements
  1. The Vision Statement will begin with "Gahanna's vision is...."
  2. Change "leader" to "leading community."
  3. Begin the Mission Statement with "The City of Gahanna Parks and Recreation Department's mission is...."
  4. Eliminate the third bullet under the Mission Statement
  5. Additional word changes were recorded on a markup of the statement and will be incorporated into the presentation at the meeting.

- L. Bruce Rankin summarized the key elements of the Draft Recommendations, which will constitute Chapter 5 of the Master Plan document.
  - 1. The goals section should be led with government policies
  - 2. develop more general Objectives
  - 3. The bullets under Goal 6 appear to be more action items than objectives
  - 4. eliminate the word "tax" from the subsidy discussion
  - 5. Staff will send comments back to Woolpert

The Draft Recommendations will be organized by objective.

## Appendix B: Stakeholder and Focus Group Notes

## Stakeholder Meetings

Gahanna Parks and Recreation Key Stakeholder Meeting notes.

Mayor Becky Stinchcomb  
Jim McGregor  
Windy Mckenna  
Mike Moran  
Ellen Walker  
Karen Elyon  
Fred Woods  
Leslee Blake

Tom Evers  
Fran Dennis  
Raleigh Mitchell  
Greg Morris  
Larry Canini  
Bunnie Geroux  
Fred Kauser  
Scott McComb

### Q1. Are you familiar with the Parks and Recreation Department in Gahanna? If yes, what is your overall impression of the parks or facilities you are familiar with?

- We have good parks they are not outstanding
- Headway park has seen some improvements which is good
- Academy park where all the baseball park is in good condition
- Neighborhood parks don't get the attention as they should as it applies to maintenance
- I'm somewhat familiar and I know Tony. I'm familiar with the skate park and the golf course. My feelings are the system is good and they provide a lot of activity for citizens and visitors.
- There hasn't been a master plan for the department before and this is a good move on the city's part to make this happen.
- The department needs to work to improve the existing parks. The staffing is good in the department. The long range indoor recreation center complex is needed. The department relates well to the community.
- There maybe was a master plan in 1978 that may have come from Woolpert but I am not sure.
- The overall impression of the department is good and the city needs to continue to acquire park properties such as wetlands, and natural areas etc.
- The current facilities and parks have kept up with what is needed by this community.
- The city has more ball fields and open space than most mid Ohio cities.
- The indoor recreation facilities are supported by the private sector and the YMCA and don't have to be the sole responsibility of the city to provide.
- The overall impression of the parks system is good and that we have more green space than other cities.
- At one time parks were being planned by people who did not have children and could not understand what kids needed.
- I feel that we have used athletic parks for community events which are good but we have over built sports fields for organized groups.
- The city needs to have a recreation center like Westerville
- We are in a transition from people who only think only about preservation versus a family focus that is thinking about providing facilities and programs to people of all ages.
- The parks and recreation staff is doing a good job. The new staff in place is going to take the parks and recreation department where it needs to go.
- Gahanna is going to grow and the new staff in place has a good vision for what is needed for the future.
- The department does not market their services very well and I don't know what the department does.

- The department needs to be more aggressive in promoting the programs that are provided.
- Most of my park activity is observing grand kids in activities and I live next to a park which gives me a nice perspective on how the system is being used by the community.
- The city's past Mayor had a past strong vision for passive recreation which was good to a point but there is a need for a more balanced approach to services and facilities.
- The staffing levels are low and mostly volunteer driven which is a problem.
- There is not a well thought out plan for where the parks and recreation department needs to go. This is a good start to set us in the right direction.
- The city does not have experience in operating a recreation center and should let someone else that does operate the future recreation center for the city under a contract.
- The school district and the park district are seamless in operating facilities
- The department is developing more programs then they did in the past which is good.
- Yes, it is a large park system under maintained and under developed.
- General knowledge of system; it seems oriented towards recreation rather than preservation.
- Good park system with good staff.
- An up and coming Department and working to improve with good progress.

**Q2. What parks, recreation facilities or programs have you experienced or participated in over the last couple years? What is your opinion about the quality of these services?**

- My family and I have not participated in any park and recreation parks programs over the last several years.
- The special events are a good service and the staff has done a nice job with providing them for the city residents to enjoy.
- The quality of the golf course is good and a good outlet for beginner golfers.
- The quality of the special events is good and is above the neighboring cities.
- The quality of the services is very good. The department was restricted to growing the department's recreation efforts because of the old mayor philosophy on focusing on passive parks and natural areas.
- I would like for the consulting team to look at the hotel and motel tax and should these revenues be directed to the parks and recreation department in some way.
- The soccer facilities and baseball fields are used extensively and the facilities are very good. The facility that is mis-located is the skate park. It is in too small of a facility for the use it gets. The hockey inline facility is mis-located as well.
- Gahanna has a rural image and it gets lost in a park that is over built.
- Creek side activities have been excellent and should continue
- The baseball fields at academy park are excellent
- The inline skate facility and the skate park are excellent
- If the city had a pool they would use it but the city does not have a pool
- I would like to see a bike trail on both sides of the creek
- If they are looking for quiet space they do not go to a Gahanna Park
- The department does not have a central focused facility to deliver programs in
- A recreation center is needed in the city similar to Westerville
- I've not taken advantage of the programs directly but indirectly through the not-for-profit association with baseball. The facilities are ok at best. The soccer fields are nice and the amenities are ok but they are not signature type facilities
- There is a need for more sports fields in the city. The people here are glad to have someplace to play but more is needed.
- The soccer group has built a storage building and meeting space that is nice

- Parking is a problem in every park
- The city should buy as much land as possible for the future
- The political system wants the parks and recreation park board to be a rubber stamp for the mayor and city council which is right
- Overall quality is good, as it applies to recreation programs. The programs are limited in scope and number of offerings.
- My family and I have attended special events that include jazz, creekside events, and art shows. The department does a good job in hosting events and they have a good marriage with developers.
- Not participated but perceives Department as well organized.
- The quality is good for events and programs; facilities need improvement.

**Q3. How does the Gahanna Park and Recreation Department compare to the other cities in the region as it applies to recreation and parks facilities and programs?**

- Gahanna lacks behind Dublin and Westerville. We are in the upper half but not in the top levels
- Reynoldsburg and Hilard are communities we are ahead of.
- The parks system is above the neighboring communities. New Albany is copying what a lot of the city is doing. She would like for Gahanna to set the standard and operate out of the box and lead other cities versus being a follower.
- The department is at the top of what other communities are providing. We can't compare to Westerville. The golf course is an asset that other communities don't have. The senior center is a good asset. The department staff is a good staff that is compatible to other departments. The salaries are comparable now.
- The department leads in a number of categories across Ohio as it applies to land, facilities, and efficiency of the low number of staffing levels per capita.
- We believe the Westerville Park and recreation system is a more balanced system for organized and passive spaces. They have invested in indoor and outdoor recreation facilities that Gahanna does not have.
- The department does not have the level of money to work with as other systems
- Friendship Park needs a lot of work and doesn't have the quality of facilities that other parks systems have in the area.
- This park system is difficult to compare but Westerville is the only comparable agency in the area.
- The Westerville system had a well thought out operational plan on how to operate their new facility which needs to occur in the future recreation center.
- We are getting more dollar for the buck than other agencies in other cities in the region
- He doesn't really know except that we need a community center that could fill a major role for the city in the future.
- Gahanna is behind surrounding communities.
- Rated well and more visionary than other cities.
- Other cities may appear to have more growth but Gahanna has growth too.
- Gahanna has high marks and good quality when compared to others.
- Programs above average; facilities need improvement.

**Q4. Are there any areas in the City of Gahanna not served adequately by parks? By recreation facilities? By programs? If so, where?**

- In parks the city policy of where parks are located is adequate
- The previous administration focused on parks and natural areas versus recreation facilities so recreation facilities are not equitably distributed.

- The current administration is focused more on recreation facilities which are good.
- Baseball, football, soccer fields are adequately served.
- The mind set of the current administration is broader than in the past
- The programs that are provided seems adequate but more could be provided
- The areas of the west side of the city are not adequately served and more parks are needed. More parks are needed. She thinks a new meeting place for businesses is needed like a civic center is needed.
- The department seems to be adequately serving parks in neighborhoods, and recreation facilities. The schools and the department need to work closer together and the city should work to provide more programs for younger ages.
- The YMCA is not a catch all for the community for providing a recreation center need.
- There is definitely a need for another recreation center in the city
- Some older neighborhoods do not have adequate parks like the west area of the city.
- Maybe in athletic facilities we may be underserved.
- There are no areas in the city that does not have adequate access to parks
- The city is in competition with the YMCA
- The city has a lot of children programs and they are excellent
- There is a need for more parks in the Royal Manner area
- The department is not very big and it seems very low end in terms of services provided
- The ability to drive to a park is not a deterrent to access in Gahanna
- The city and school district cooperate on facilities which are distributed fairly equitably
- The Westside feel left out and does not have enough parks or services as they would like.
- The RATHERN Woods area does not have a lot of park land available for public use
- It appears that parks and facilities are not adequate on the west side of Gahanna. There are a lot of young people with recreation needs there that need to be served.
- Imbalance of active and passive recreation system wide.
- Lack of connecting paths.
- Need for more ball field complexes to attract sports tournament market.
- Parks lack an identity. Have a lot of natural areas that are not able to use as parks.
- Programs are adequate but facilities and land acquisition is lacking.

#### **Q5. What types of parks are most needed in Gahanna?**

- We have a good amount of park space. The types of space for parks are adequate but the appropriate development of parks needs to be increased. Adding bike paths would be good to add. Some of the neighborhood parks need to be enhanced.
- Some of the green space the city has accepted in the past is not appropriate.
- Some of the park properties that are not appropriate should be evaluated or sold
- The walking, biking, type park trails are most needed. A softball complex for tourism business is needed and to keep revenues in the city from tournaments etc
- Neighborhood parks with playgrounds are most needed.
- The city is covered well in open space needs and in ball fields
- The park and recreation department needs to be the architect of planning for neighborhoods. There needs to be some adventure park areas around neighborhood parks for kids to explore that are more wild than maintained.
- Natural areas in the inner city are not available anymore and we rob youth of the opportunity to explore. No site development plans should not take place with out the parks and recreation department involved in the planning effort.

- One of the most prominent corners is the east side area. With the development of Tim Horton's it is disgusting for Gahanna and out of character for Gahanna.
- The quantity of land that is available is adequate for athletic fields
- We need more passive places where families can go and relax and enjoy life
- Most parks are designated for permitted use and there is no place to enjoy on a non scheduled basis
- There is a need for finishing the bike trail through the city and extended to more areas in the city
- There is a need for more adult programs in the evening
- The city is ok with the number of passive parks available
- The open space green space parks are very nice but we need activity based parks for adults just not kids.
- A central park is needed that addresses all ages and needs of all citizens
- The greenway plan needs to be developed and we need to more add trails.
- We need a special indoor recreation facility like Westerville that is a kiddy park
- There is a shortage of ball fields for just practice and pick up games
- The church programs in this town is very high and they serve the community well in basketball and the city should not duplicate their efforts
- We definitely need more sports fields for soccer. There is also a need for basketball courts and neighborhood parks.
- A need for more neighborhood parks.
- Need for more sports field complexes.
- Need for amenities for family and school reunions.
- City needs to look at open space.
- Community parks of 10 or more acres are needed. City Trails are definitely lacking because most of trails on streets. Sports fields in good condition.

**Q6. What type of recreation facilities are needed most in Gahanna?**

- We have an over abundance of pools in the city.
- Three local pool associations within the city and the YMCA have a small pool which seems to be covering the need of aquatics.
- I think that the YMCA is filling a need of the community.
- The skate park is good.
- The golf course is holding its own.
- Pizzurro Park needs to be looked at for more recreation opportunities.
- We need a larger senior center.
- Pools are failing and something has to be done. They are over built.
- There are plans to expand the senior center and churches also offer senior center type services.
- There is no need for a recreation center. The churches provide recreation centers.
- The sanctuary provides meeting space. The Golf course provides meetings space. He feels that the community is pressed for meeting space but they have handled it.
- A major recreation center is most needed in the community.
- There is not enough space for the senior center. Parking is a issue at the existing senior center
- The city needs a recreation center to program out of now and not wait for another 10 years.
- The city needs its own recreation center
- The nine hole golf course should be eliminated and the golf course site should be used for adult sports and attractions that create more energy in the park than golf and will serve a lot more residents

- The city doesn't manage anything now as it applies to recreation programs. Have the non for profit groups manage things that are marginal but there is a need for more consistency of rules as it applies to youth sport and better maintenance is needed on existing sports fields
- A indoor facility may not be necessary but we need to provide more review before a final decision is made
- The facility will compete with the YMCA unless it has separate key components like a strong fitness facility, gyms and program rooms not available at the YMCA
- Bike trails are needed in the city
- There seems to be enough recreation facilities in the city currently
- The golf course is in need of some improvements
- We are lacking a municipal recreation center.
- The YMCA provides scholarships to people who can't pay
- Exercise spaces for children are needed.
- Need for shelters and gathering facilities.
- Play structures, trails, large neighborhood parks but no need for more pools or a recreation center.
- Lacking indoor and outdoor meeting space. No place for community to use and the community goes to facilities outside City. Need a camp for scouts locally to provide incentive to stay local use City park system.

**Q7. Is there a need for multifunctional space for civic, community or private events? Is this an appropriate service for the City of Gahanna to provide?**

- There is a need to for civic space in Gahanna. This is lacking. People should pay to use it and treat it like they would an apt clubhouse.
- Yes, more meeting space is needed.
- There is a need for a civic center but it should be met through a recreation center versus a stand alone facility.
- There is not enough meeting space in the city and everyone struggles to find space.
- There is an old agreement with the school district that demonstrates the city to have first priority for recreation programs in school facilities that needs to be updated.
- The hospitality demand is handled by the private sector now and there is not a need for the city to provide this service.
- There is not enough meeting space in the city for a host of activities
- A small conference center is needed as well
- There is a need for recreation meeting space in the city like a civic center
- The golf course rents out rooms for meetings
- A civic center is needed to host meetings and events
- The civic center may be needed but I doubt that people will pay for it.
- There is a need for a civic center for public functions
- Private facilities will open up their buildings if you know someone
- There is a need for wedding and receptions and similar types of events.
- The city needs to have a facility for kids to go to in the summer when there are storms.
- No, there are enough facilities to fill the need for space through YMCA, Golf Course, and Sanctuary.
- Yes, but it would depend on the use and need. We do not need a conference facility but more a multi-purpose area.
- There appears a need for a recreation center.
- Should provide something but it should not be a burden on taxpayers. It needs to be a public/private venture.

**Q8. Is there recreation programs that need to be created based on the needs of the residents? What types of recreation services are needed and for whom?**

- I have not heard from constituents on what programs are needed. He feels that the sports associations cover the need for youth sports recreation services.
- She doesn't feel that any more is needed. Older parks need to be improved.
- Nature education programs and outdoor recreation programs are needed. This is an expressed need by the teachers in the community for this service.
- Much of the recreation thought is geared for youth sports but more types of services are needed that are outside of sports.
- There are a sufficient number of in house programs in place and the private sector seems to be picking up the slack. The city does not need to respond to fads.
- Parks need to be dedicated for key causes and then assessed accordingly
- More space for bicycling and inline skating is needed
- More Skateboard parks are needed
- There are needs but we need to get what is desired from what the residents desire
- More adult types of programs are needed
- A wellness program is needed for anyone in the community
- More adult activities are needed
- More senior services are needed
- More programs for assisted living facilities is needed
- There may be interested people that would be interested in bike trails
- If they staff the department more then they could have more people involved
- We need to make sure all kids who need services are served in the summer programs with good programs not just babysitting types of programs.
- After school programs are needed as well. The YMCA can only handle so many kids and more programs are needed. More programs that are educational such as keyboarding, foreign language and swimming need to be provided.
- Need programs for middle aged to seniors.
- Need a system of multipurpose trails for joggers and walkers not just street ways but something to get folks off street ways.
- Need more space for seniors and teens; also need to address programs for with working parents and coordinate to make more user friendly times offered.

**Q9. What existing park and recreation facilities need the most improvement? Are there amenities that need to be added or removed?**

- Neighborhood parks need to be improved and playgrounds need to be repackaged and enhanced.
- The improvements being made are good and the city needs to continue their efforts.
- More restroom facilities are needed at the parks like at the skate park.
- Academy Park needs to be improved.
- The large parks where the associations play sports are doing a good job.
- The parks are vanilla in nature. If new parks are created to create more activity then the current parks that would be ok.
- The major parks all need to be enhanced and improved.
- Older parks need playgrounds, restrooms, shelters, and parking facilities.
- Friendship Park needs some improvements and the storage cabin needs to be removed. The park is junky.
- We should not build restrooms in public parks. Portables are the way to go.

- Large group restrooms are used on a permitted bases. Vandalism is a huge problem and the public does not appreciate it. Parks need to minimize facilities that require staff to be latrine managers.
- Pizzurro Park doesn't have a problem.
- Line fences need to be kept up and maintained and the staff should inspect property fencing an boundary signs to keep encroachment to a minimum.
- The recreation facilities that need the most improvement is the storm damaged ones
- Adding new facilities are more needed than enhancing old facilities
- The park and recreation department needs more help
- The department needs to develop more programs in the community
- The staff do a great job on the special events
- The walking paths need to be added to the system
- The academy park needs a lot of improved services and it needs improved bathrooms
- More shelters are needed
- A dog park may not be needed but I can't imagine spending money for a dog park
- Dogs should not be allowed to come to activities with kids
- Friendship Park needs improvement and the bathrooms need improved. It needs help
- We have about 20 real parks with amenities but more are needed
- Under no circumstances should the city divest itself of land that is surplus
- The pools need to be consolidated and made into one good facility
- There is not a need for a dog park.
- Need to review parks and determine if they are appropriate for activities or just flood retention areas.
- All amenities need to be evaluated and reviewed for upgrades and/or replacement.

**Q10. The City of Gahanna has not raised local City taxes since 1976. How do you think the facilities, parks or programs you identified as lacking or needed should be financed?**

- Implementation of user's fees is needed to cover additional revenue needs.
- There are some opportunities to cut expenses in the city that money could be transferred to parks and recreation.
- Where does park and recreation fit in the department's order of magnitude? In the middle of the pack.
- He would not be in favor of a tax increase.
- With the number of special events that are being provided by the city it would not go over well in the city.
- Private money should be raised via a capital campaign.
- The city is reluctant to set up a new taxing structure and they should.
- Adequate monies should be directed to parks and recreation from other areas in the city before taxes are raised.
- The city will have to bond for the recreation center if it would come about.
- They have been able to operate out of the general fund and the city has to bite the bullet when the money is not there but it will be there in the future. The bonding support is out there to support major improvements. The city has a strong tax structure and parks need to be supported by this method. No new taxes need to be created to support parks and recreation.
- General revenue needs to support parks.
- Stop tax abatements and have good environmental efforts in place and the businesses will flock here.
- Parks and recreation needs to be a vision builder.

- We have to reconcile what we are paying now and how and then make adjustments where the public desires the city to spend money
- What is the bench mark for other cities like Westerville and Mentor spending on a per capita basis versus Gahanna?
- Debt service is the best way to go versus raising taxes because you are spreading it out over 20 years
- We need to invest in things that everyone will use
- He does not support the one and one half cent income tax for improvements
- The public would support a bond issue for a recreation center
- The city should not compete with the school system for taxes
- The public should let people pay for the services they get
- Let the public vote on a bond issue that raises the quality of life that is visible and needed
- If the city continues to do development along creek side let these new taxes pay for the recreation improvements
- The users should pay for the services they use
- A bond issue is what is needed to build improvements in the parks
- Nice parks up the value of your home
- The city should bond for the improvements in lieu of raising taxes
- The user fees should not have to pay for parks. Ok for recreation programs and for non residents
- A joint recreation park district with Jefferson township should be formed to allow for more taxes to support services that they use of the city
- User fees need to cover the future operational needs and a bond issue to support park facility and recreation improvements either new or old.
- User fees seem most logical for area to initiate or raise funds.
- If explained raising taxes could be an option but need to have it spelled out specifically.
- User fees should be high in consideration for new development.
- Would like to see a proprietary fund set up for parks to assist in operations, but it need to be clearly stated what and how it will be used and communicated to public.

**Q11. What is a higher priority for the City of Gahanna? To accept land from developers in lieu of fees or generate the dollars from impact fees?**

- The city should take the money versus the land.
- The city took land in the past that may not have been appropriate. Land will always appreciate and they should take the land.
- The city needs to take the dollars from the developers. Since the city is built out they need to take dollars.
- The city doesn't have to take the land because the developer will probably leave the land anyway.
- Jefferson Township will probably be annexed and they have some significant parks that can be brought into the system and I would stress taking the money.
- The land that the city gets from the developer is the least desirable and virtually unusable. They provide green space but useable green space.
- If the monies go back to the city coffers and not designated then it is a net loss
- The city needs to take the money for parks and recreation in lieu of the land
- The city should take the impact fees versus the land
- The city should take the money now versus the land
- The city needs larger pieces of property and they should take the money and buy larger pieces of land
- Look at it on a case by case basis

- The judgment needs to be made by professionals based on the needs of the city
- Elected officials and people who live here should make the decisions
- The city should accept land but it needs to be appropriate not land that people can't use. Accepting land helps to manage density and this helps schools with overcrowding.
- Should consider a Conservation Development Program to set funding aside for capital improvements on natural areas to make more accessible.
- The accepting of land has not positioned the City with usable areas for active or passive recreation.
- Land that has been donated in lieu of fee has been unusable however; the city has not done a good job communicating how the funds received as a fee have been used. Need to look at each new development and determine best course to take not a blanket policy.
- Need more land suitable for park development not just green space.
- Priority should be to generate dollars because developers have not provided land which was usable.

**Q12. Should the City consider raising impact fees since they are much lower than surrounding cities?**

- Yes they should increase impact fees.
- The city should look at what the other cities are charging and make adjustments accordingly.
- The creek side park needs to leave most of the natural areas as much as it can.
- A balance of natural areas and developed areas in a park is always needed.
- Parks and recreation department is the most appropriate department to manage this.
- The city impact fee is fair and city doesn't need to change this.
- The city should accept land over money. There are exceptions to this but in reality the city needs to land first.
- No, the impact fees are difficult and a poor methodology because they go into the general fund and the department never sees the money.
- The developer needs to make the improvements themselves. There is no shortage of money in Gahanna.
- The tax payers need to raise impact fees if it benefits the community as a whole.
- All users' fees should cover the cost of the activities that people participate in.
- The city should be competitive but the city can't give it away
- Yes, they should increase the impact fees
- If you are 95% BUILT OUT they should increase the fees
- Increases impact fees.
- City should be comparative to surrounding communities.
- Should bring up but not too high as to deter development; it needs to be balanced with surrounding growth.

**Q13. What environmental issues need to be addressed to protect, conserve or restore natural systems in the City? Is this the responsibility of the parks and recreation department?**

- There are number of creeks that converge at Creek Side Park that need to be addressed in erosion areas and along the creek. The parks system is the appropriate department to manage this for the city.
- The city seems to follow all state regulations and guidelines. Enforcement of the drainage issues is important.

- The land fill should be used for a golf course. The development department thinks that they can develop retail office space around it. A shooting range area is not appropriate within an office complex. Develop the golf course for the next 20 years.
- The department is the primary contact for managing the restoration of the natural areas. The rest of the flood plain needs to be purchased quickly.
- The city should not allow more development in flood prone areas. Leave engineers out of flood management. The island is nothing with out the historic trees.
- It's nice to have concerts on the island but we need laws to keep engineers out of establishing the parameters of a site.
- The parks system is the only one with the vision, the training to protect the natural areas of the city.
- I can't think of any areas that is causing harm
- The department needs to provide nature education programs
- The city can't lower the standard of development
- There is more development in the city and it is causing more flooding in the city
- Non point pollution sources need to be managed better in the city
- Illegal dumping goes into the sewer system now
- Transition between areas need to be managed better between development and the creeks
- The developer needs to stay focused on what the needs of the property owner and city need to be.
- Need to work more in streams and creek protection.
- Conservation development and increasing park areas with natural themes.
- Flood plane control and work on shorelines and riparian maintenance. Need to evaluate current areas because not all land should be under parks jurisdiction. The staffing levels are too low and should consider non park areas over to Public Works.

**Q14. What partnerships need to be initiated, strengthen or expanded in the City as it applies to working with the Parks and Recreation Department in delivery of parks, recreation facilities and programs?**

- The relationships with the sports groups could be better with soccer.
- Communication with the department needs to be improved. The city and the school districts have a good relationship from a governing body stand point.
- The recreation and parks department needs to have a better relationship with the Chamber of Commerce and the Convention and Visitor Bureau on development of special events in the city and sponsorship efforts need more coordination
- Tony came from the YMCA and they have good communication.
- Coordination with the pool association is improving.
- More public and private partnerships could be improved. They could provide facilities that could attract more people to the city and to keep existing citizens here and bring people into the city.
- The city will need to always work with the sports groups.
- Smaller groups such as the theatre groups should be enhanced.
- The school relationships need to be continued. The city does not pay rent for the school facilities. They do pay for custodial.
- The city at one time had a design reserve board and a planning commission. A landscape commission needs to be revived and there are no preservation efforts in place. Parks are not being allowed to provide input into landscape and the environment and the urban forest.
- There is no need for a dog park in Gahanna. There is no need to fence off an area to allow dogs to run. People let their dogs off their leash anyway.
- They seem to have a good relationship with the other departments and with the fire department on special events and ems services

- The department does a good job in partnering with the Chamber of Commerce
- More feedback partnerships need to be created for users to respond to and make children a part of the process
- The Herb Society of Gahanna and the parks and recreation department needs to have a stronger relationship with operating the Herb Festival
- People want to know how to use herbs to resolve illness issues
- Container gardening is a growing trend in the community
- Peter Hatch is an excellent herb growing professional that needs to be connected with the city and the area
- The partnerships they enter into need to have a positive impact like the baseball program.
- Almost everyone that is young is not interested in volunteering but they need to be encouraged.
- The city needs to partner with the chamber of commerce more
- Find more people to assist the department on specialty partnerships is needed
- The department needs to create volunteers and build on this in the future.
- More development of the greenways is needed through developer partnerships
- The township partnership needs to be improved on park and recreation issues
- Annex Mifflin Township is needed which would help to redevelop the area and provide a long term financial gain for the city
- The city needs to push east and into Mifflin Township
- The city and the school district must plan jointly together more than they do now.
- See Department working hard at partnerships but may take time to see impact.
- Township would like to partner more with city especially on multi-use paths which could be connected to current system of paths.
- Good partnerships with junior leagues, Sanctuary but need to outreach to business community.
- Strong partnership with schools and need to develop more partnerships with businesses.

**Q15. Do you think the Park and Recreation Department provides economic impact? If so, in what way could their efforts be enhanced to increase their economic contribution to the community?**

- They could be enhanced by creating and improving facilities so people will spend money here.
- Having good parks and recreation programs is good for the community.
- He picked this community because of location for work purposes. They liked the feel of the community. He like the schools and the house they bought was next to a park.
- The department does provide economic impact as it applies to people wanting to live in the community.
- The developers make their money back quickly as well as the business community.
- Yes, they play a major role and they need to be at the development table to preserve the landscape of the area. This is what will provide economic development.
- Development is an environmental issue and it belongs in the parks and recreation department.
- The department does not add economic value to the community
- The deficiency that lies in Gahanna is the lack of indoor recreation space
- Existing parks do not provide economic value to property values in the present level and condition they are in.
- The department creates economic impact for the city through users fees and events
- If the city had an indoor recreation center they could bring more events and activities that are needed to the community
- If the city had better literature it would be good to promote the city as a destination for special events
- The city puts on great public events and they do a good job promoting the city

- The parks do enhance property values
- The parks are not that visible and so the public doesn't understand what the value its parks are
- The department sends information home with students so people do see the value of the parks
- There needs to be more partnerships improvements with the city and the sports groups. A need exists for a sports commission in the city.
- Coordination of fundraising is needed in the city between all the groups and the city.
- The better park system you have, it will drive a better quality of life and will be an economic impact for the city.
- Department provided good benefit because it attracts businesses and people to an area with the benefits offered through a good and well maintained system.
- Sports tournaments are under rated as the benefit they provide to the City.
- Huge impact in the City because businesses look for quality of life issues when relocating and parks is a main benefit they look for in this area.

**Q16. How do you perceive the Parks and Recreation Department's efforts in marketing and promoting the services provided? What areas need improvement?**

- The department's efforts to send out a mailing quarterly are good.
- They should advertise in the local papers more.
- There are more opportunities to let people know what is going on that haven't been used by the city and they should.
- Collaborate with the schools on delivery of services. The City should use home owner's newsletters more
- They should develop more partnerships with the Chamber and the Convention and Visitor Bureau and partner with them on their publications.
- We expect them to be here but they need to reach out better.
- An internet campaign could be developed to create more marketing efforts and to make them a trend setter.
- He doesn't have any suggestions for improving on the marketing efforts in place.
- Tony does a good job on this and he is heading in the right direction.
- They are effective in working with the corporate community.
- The development department use to do the events in the city and the parks and recreation department needs to be the department that leads the direction on special events.
- They do a good job in this area and they are using the kiosks in the parks to notify people of the programs in their area.
- The marketing efforts are adequate to the services provided
- The department does a good job in marketing the services
- The marketing efforts need to be improved and the city needs to send a quarterly program brochure to every household to let people know what is going on.
- The department does a good job on marketing the programs and facilities.
- Department has a weak effort and is not getting to the average citizen.
- They have done an adequate job considering their budget. Need to find an effective way to get the gateway to the residents.
- Do a good job but it needs improvement; would like to see more web page and online registration opportunities.

**Q17. Are there any policies associated with the parks and recreation system that need updating?**

- Yes, but they all need to be looked at and updated by default.

- Pricing policy needs to be looked at.
- I don't know of any.
- The polices that need updating includes working with developers on the impact fees needs updating.
- The development department has lost site of the value of the land ordinance. The policy needs to be looked at.
- Yes all the development issues policy needs updating.
- The city provides space to other organizations like sports groups but I am not sure what they provide to me as a taxpayer on a yearly basis
- There is a lack of organization of parking for events as it applies to safety
- Parking is not adequate and a determent to delivering safety services
- Some of the jobs need to be updated
- We are not sure of the policies in place that need attention
- The department needs to improve their web site. The dynamic way to manage the park system is a better web site.
- The policies that need to address is user fees philosophy.
- Need to look at the policy on open space for usable park areas and areas with a function.
- Staff policies should all be reviewed.
- Look at user fees and relation to how much it costs for the service and out of city cost compared to residents.

**Q18. What is your vision for the park and recreation system for the next ten years? What will be the key components to making this vision a reality?**

- His vision for parks and recreation for the next ten years is for the parks system of overhaul itself. They need to more of a active part of the community versus passive.
- The parks need to be upgraded.
- They need to have more visible presence as it applies to events in the city. The master plan is a great first step.
- The next ten years need to provide programs that are really utilized and drop programs that are not.
- Fees to be enhanced.
- Her vision is to get businesses and residents buy in if you are going to ask them for money.
- Her vision for flooding needs to be addressed.
- Trail improvements would be a added value.
- Landscape improvements are needed in the city.
- More bike trails are needed.
- A amphitheatre would be a added component that could be good for the city.
- The relationship between the Chamber and the parks and recreation needs to be enhanced. Tony needs to get a seat on the board.
- His vision for the parks system is for the parks demonstration to stay the same within the city.
- Park improvements need to be made over the next 10 years and the need for the indoor recreation center. Some of the city council takes their kids to Westerville. It will not be a hard sell for the community. He doesn't think it would be a major impact for the YMCA.
- The parks and recreation department was put together in piece meal and not comprehensive as it needs to be.
- She would like to inform businesses on what is going on the master plan and they too are doing focus groups and they would like to test some of the things we are asking against what they are hearing from their focus groups.

- After the creek side is developed the parks should continue to develop it.
- Linear greenways that follow our waterways need to be addressed and leading to protection of green space and creating pathways for people to enjoy.
- Having broad open spaces is good
- More flood plain needs to be purchased
- The department needs to take over the Herb Center
- Getting the recreation center is important
- The senior citizen building should be under parks and recreation
- Their vision is the development of a indoor recreation facility that has indoor and outdoor facilities in one location
- I would like to see better separation of active and passive space in parks
- The leadership of the parks and recreation system is a positive change in the city
- Getting input from the community needs to continue
- From a green space perspective the city needs more trees and less concrete
- A ice hockey rink is needed in this town that can be a outdoor facility that is free for skating
- Continue to brand the parks image and they need to be branded better
- People need to pay to play period
- There is not a lot of programs for special needs kids and families and programs for young children
- More seniors are using parks and we need to evaluate all the barriers that keep them from using the parks
- Neighborhood parks need a volunteer system to develop advocacy to help maintain them
- Friends groups need to be created to support neighborhood parks and build advocacy
- The creek side stores need to focus on herbs and they could put on the brand that Gahanna is the Herb capital of the country.
- He would like to eliminate the baseball program or work with them on how to manage the program better. The quality needs to be improved
- More program marketing and promotions needs to be done on a quarterly basis
- He would like to see a feasibility study on how to use the golf course land for better use.
- More bike paths are needed and needs to be made a part of the plan
- Most people think of parks and recreation as a good thing but they don't get many complaints on the parks system.
- Infrastructure improvements need to be made to keep the parks in good shape
- The parks and recreation department is very accommodating
- The acquisition of land and improvements to the infrastructure
- I would like to see a recreation center if it can be properly managed and operated.
- See the downtown area developed with a community/recreation center and a need to give identity to the large neighborhood parks and eliminate the small retention areas.
- To have an interconnected system of multiuse paths, less sports fields and more natural areas for passive recreation.
- Increase land and have geographically distributed. The survey responses are going to be the most important information on where the City should go because it will give the way to stay responsive to the peoples needs.
- Funding will be a key component to making the vision a reality.

## Focus Group Meetings

Gahanna Focus Group Meeting Notes Held March 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005

The following Focus Group Questions were asked of local residents on their opinions of the future direction of the Gahanna Parks and Recreation Department for the next ten years. Approximately 110 residents participated in the focus groups in 14 separate meetings including a staff focus group.

**Q1. What are the strengths of the Gahanna Parks and Recreation Department that we need to build on over the next ten years?**

**Summary of Question 1.**

Gahanna Parks and Recreation Department has a large number of parks and facilities that are managed by an energetic and accessible staff. The leadership of the department is very strong, and the communication with users is a great asset. The citizen participation is strong and the volunteer system is great.

The Creek Side area will be a great benefit when completed. The Creek Side festivals are great and additional attempts need to be made to get other groups involved with the festivals. The department values parks as green spaces as well as recreation, which is an active outlook. The Senior Center has excellent staff and programs, but the facility does need to be updated. The program guide receives positive feedback and needs to be circulated at a larger quantity to promote the facilities and programs of the Department.

Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- The number of parks and facilities is one of the strengths of the department.
- There is cooperation between the schools and the department, which is seen in the summer classes, and the two have a great relationship.
- Creek Side will be a great benefit when it is completed.
- The leadership of the department is very strong.
- The junior sports leagues are a tremendous asset.
- The senior center staff is excellent.
- The bikeways need to be developed and updated. Currently, the label as a "bike friendly" community is a wrong message.
- The Parks and Recreation Department supports the senior center and the golf course which is very positive.
- The City offers diverse programs, which is excellent.
- The marketing and circulation of information for programs is exceptional.

Focus Group Meeting 3

- The senior center offers an accessible staff and excellent programs, but needs to be updated and increased in size
- The recreation facilities are in great shape and are proactive in updating.

Focus Group Meeting 4

- The department has great communication with users, which is seen in their program guide. It offers a broad range of programs.
- There exists a lot of Green Space throughout the community.
- The coalition building with the Red Cross is a great asset.
- The department is up to date with the trends of programs and facilities.

Focus Group Meeting 5

- The department has plenty of land for parks, and has a vision for their development.
- The employees of the department are excellent.
- The City has responded proactively to the youth soccer needs in the community.

- The diversity of the programs is excellent.
- The special events and parades are outstanding.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- The land that is available to the department is great.
- There is a variety of activities available for all ages and users.
- The Creek Side area is a positive for the community, which is demonstrated in the special events.
- The focus groups are glad to see the master plan.
- The department has done a great job of targeting families.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- The promotion and marketing of the different parks is efficient.
- The summer day camps receive positive feedback.
- They do great job with the very little money that is allocated to the department, and their vision towards the future is great.
- They do a good job working with partners throughout the community.
- They value parks as green spaces as well as recreation, which is active.
- The staff, which is very committed, has a good understanding of the surrounding community.
- Gahanna does a good job providing facilities.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The activities for young children, including the playing fields, are excellent.
- The new director and staff are first-rate and very positive.
- The staff is very proactive and accommodating. They find a way to support what the community desires.
- The parks are very well maintained.
- Skating rink has been a great addition.
- The relationship with the senior center is great, and it does a good job keeping seniors active.
- The events held with Creek Side are excellent.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- The department has been a shell organization, and they need a plan.
- They have a lot of acreage for parks.
- They have a lot of good programs but need more marketing.
- City has great park and open spaces.
- There are great volunteers working with the department.
- The Bicycle Committee needs to be an important group in the master plan.
- Tony is a great asset for the department.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- The department is a great facilitator of community events.
- The department is growing, which is positive versus being stagnant.
- The new dog park will be a great addition.
- The tennis program is a good program provided by the City.
- The skate park was a positive amenity to the City.
- The program guide for kids is an excellent tool for youth programs.
- The City has a lot of parks and events, such as the parades, which is good.
- The Gateway brochure is excellent.

### Focus Group Meeting 11

- The department is family oriented, and sponsors good programs.
- Their commitment to green space is excellent, and the parks are clean and aesthetically pleasing.
- The concerts in the parks are excellent.
- The YMCA feels they are a good partner with the department.
- The Department works with Junior Leagues.
- The program guide is an excellent tool for the members of the community.
- The department is very innovative with the construction of the skateboard park.

### Focus Group Meeting 12

- The parks are doing a decent job of preserving some of the forestry areas and natural areas.
- The special events have been excellent.
- The community Gateway brochure should be expanded to four seasons.
- The Heartland Plan needs to be connected with this plan and should identify land for future parks.
- More communication of the schedule of activities should be more available to the community.
- The Creek Side area will be a nice development.
- The staff desires to be involved in the future direction of Gahanna.
- The Junior Leagues have worked well with the soccer and football groups.

### Focus Group Meeting 13

- The art programs and sports activities do not reach out to home and school, and the parks system should focus on this.
- Currently, more K-12 programs are being provided.
- The department should keep obtaining green space in the City, and should retain what it already manages.
- The walking path arrangement from Creek Side and Cherry Bottom is excellent.
- Creek Side is very attractive.
- The department should try to tie the entire park system together.
- The Development of the rest of Creek Side would be a great project.
- The skateboard park has received much praise.
- Summer programs have been excellent.
- The Creek Side festivals are good and more attempts need to be made to get other groups involved with the festivals.
- The green space of the community is a strength and the natural resources they provide is positive.
- The golf course and the club house are a strength that the public gets to use.
- The staff is superb in their efforts and their attitudes.

### Staff focus group meeting

The department has very dedicated and knowledgeable employees.

- The staff tries to meet the needs of the community.
- There are a lot of undeveloped areas in the City.
- The program brochure does a great job of communication.
- The parks are nice and very natural.
- We are a diamond in the rough.
- There is more opportunity here in Gahanna than in other areas.
- The citizen participation is strong and the volunteer system is great.
- The staff is very aggressive, and they have a good attitude.

## Q2. What are the major weaknesses that need to be addressed through the Master Plan?

### Summary Report of Questions

There is a large need for a recreation center in the area that would provide a central location for programs and serve as a community gathering place. The maintenance standards that are in place need to be upgraded and enhanced. The marketing of programs and events needs to be improved. There is a lack of publicity about the programs offered by the City, which could be accomplished through better information placed in the local newspaper and in neighborhood association newsletters.

The Department should actively seek partnerships with other organizations and facilities. There needs to be a better relationship with the youth sports groups in the community through scheduling and improved field maintenance. Programs need to be evaluated through surveys and assessing the lifecycle of certain programs. The Department has lost programs because of poor management and planning.

The bike trails are a major disappointment in the City. They are very dangerous, and there are few bike paths available. Bike trails should be used as an amenity that would connect the City. There is a need for walking trails as well that can connect the various parks in the city and are safe to travel on for walking, running, and bicycling on. The YMCA is over extended and there is a need for additional program space in the City. The Senior Center is too small and needs to be expanded or incorporated into a Multi-generational Recreation Center for the whole community. There is a need for more game fields in the city especially in baseball and softball that is in a complex format. Parking is a problem in every park and needs to be addressed. The park maintenance standards need to be improved in neighborhood and community parks. The Golf Course needs to continue to be updated with paved cart trails and maintenance of the golf course. Greater efforts need to be made to properly design parks in the future. Pool coordination needs to be improved and the City should operate all the pools with the exception of the YMCA. More picnic shelters are needed in the parks. A wider level of program offerings needs to be considered beyond programs for sports and seniors especially as it applies to life skill programs, the arts, family programs and more special events that connect the community together.

### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- The budgeting picture needs to be enhanced.
- The senior center needs to have computers where people can practice, and the center needs to be expanded. A full time assistant director would be helpful.
- More game fields are needed for the future.
- Entry programs do not receive any money from the City, but should.
- Field maintenance needs to be a priority and maintained properly.
- More land for sports groups are needed. When a sports group invests money into a field they feel that they own it.
- More golf holes should be added to expand the course to 18 holes.
- Gahanna has had to redo many things in the past because tasks/projects were not completed correctly the first time.
- No rails to trails in Gahanna, which is needed. More walking trails need to be added to the City.
- Questionable allocation of funds for the management of the pool.
- The YMCA has been controlling most of the pool use in the City, and the City spends too much money on the pool it operates; all three pools need to operate as one.
- The \$235,000 spent on the skate park is too much money.

### Focus Group Meeting 3

- The maintenance staff does not meet the needs of the community.
- The gazebo maintenance is inadequate.

- There is a general interest in the community for more trails, they should be developed.
- Gahanna Woods needs to be promoted because it is underutilized.
- Interpretive signage is needed in the parks and natural areas.
- The City needs an interpretive shelter to offer programs in the winter.
- There is a need for an indoor recreation center or community center.
- There needs to be a center focus like Dublin and Westerville.
- The Department needs to be actively involved with the Franklin County greenways.
- There is a lack of publicity about the programs offered by the City, which could be accomplished through information in local newspaper and association newsletters.
- The youth programs have received a flood of growth and need a building/storage.
- The football program needs to have a location for storage.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- Communication with the schools needs to be improved.
- The department needs to drop information in the schools should be done on a seasonal basis.
- The Department needs to market in churches in the area.
- Needs to be better coordination of scheduling facilities.
- Need to decide how the department will distribute their program brochure. Currently, park and recreation information is not distributed on a timely basis.
- Two weeks to get a birthday party scheduled is too long.
- Last summer the basketball camp there was a problem of getting out of the sun. The kids could not sit under the picnic shelter.
- Program standards need to be in place for the safety of users and for better coordination of facilities.
- Portable restrooms for summer programs are not appropriate.
- No evaluation of programs after the program was complete. The Department needs to conduct surveys of the users.
- A youth sports weekend that showcases Gahanna during the Creek Side Festival would be a great addition to the weekend. This is done for the aquatic programs to get people into the City.
- The golf course has had poor maintenance for a number of years. They mow the fairways to short in the summer, but do a good job on the greens.
- Cancellations of programs are an issue that needs to be dealt with. They should not cash the check. Some type of communication on where the class stands is appropriate.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- There exists a need for a sports complex and recreation center. Baseball desperately needs more places for practice and games that is located in a central area.
- Programming and marketing on the City's part is very poor, and it should be enhanced based on growth of the City. Most people do not know about the Parks, which is unfortunate.
- There is limited accessibility for softball fields for girls.
- Parking is an issue at all the parks.
- There are a lot of kids that are left out because they cannot afford different programs.
- More programs are needed for adults and kids.
- The department needs to subsidize those kids who cannot afford to pay, and the City should develop a sponsorship program.
- Programs for Junior and High School kids are needed.
- The Gateway brochure needs to be mailed, and the format should be updated.
- More camps, clinics and special needs programs, especially during the summer, need to be added.
- The playgrounds need to be more accessible.

- Many of the past City officials did not see the value of parks and recreation as a service. This needs to be a priority of the current Parks and Recreation staff.
- Creek Side is unsafe, especially the bridge.
- Creek Side is an entertainment district and not a park.
- Gahanna used to be a transient City and there was not a need to develop their parks like it is needed today.
- A YMCA partnership should be developed.
- More attention needs to be focused on the parks to make them "signature." The parks need to be enhanced and made to feel very special
- The stage at Friendship Park is not used.
- Signage in the City needs to be updated, especially around the Gateway.
- There is a need for walking trails in the City that are both paved and unpaved.
- We need a park for kids, not a dog park. There needs to be a community center for kids in Gahanna.
- The department needs to take an ad out in the local newspaper.
- A welcome wagon program is needed.
- The City needs to mail the Program brochure or should establish a way to email the brochure to past users of programs.
- The City made a critical error in the development of the YMCA. The community needs to decide how it is going to support its families.
- The department is way understaffed for what has to be accomplished.
- The City needs to realize that people are moving to Westerville and other communities because Gahanna is not meeting the community's needs.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- The City does not go over board in working with private groups.
- The City needs to do a better job of marketing itself to users.
- There needs to be a better relationship with the youth sports groups in the community. There is little to none of a relationship with the sports groups, and the fields need to be maintained better.
- Improved utilization of the parks is needed.
- Small parks are not used they are just green spaces.
- We need connectors to join the community through trails.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- Would like to see more traditional park space that is not sports driven, and a recreation building for programs and classes is needed.
- More life skill classes are desired by many in the community.
- The facilities have not kept up with the times or trends in parks and recreation.
- Need to be more shelters and picnic facilities in the City.
- More biking and walking trails need to be established.
- Need to be larger parks that allow for high usage and are a selling point for the Parks department. We need more green space, but does not need to be a park. The land should be used as buffer zones.
- More family gathering spaces are needed throughout the community.
- The west side and north triangle lack park space.
- The schools are currently used as parks.
- Parks need more permanent personnel.
- The pools need to have one pass to access.
- The parks need more staff to achieve what the community desires.

- The quality of the park maintenance needs to be improved.
- The bikeways are very dangerous.
- More programs and a large recreation center for young adults, seniors and families is needed.
- More summer programs are needed and a place to host them does not currently exist.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The recreation facilities are poor and need to be improved and new amenities need developed.
- The park system is highly under funded; an independent funding source is needed.
- Our sports programs have outgrown the facilities, and which has caused many people to move to other cities. New Albany's facilities are much better.
- Baseball fields are in very poor condition, and not having lights on the fields is an issue. The lights at Headley Park are a hot issue.
- There has been a lack of vision and leadership. The previous administration felt that private groups can do better than the City providing services.
- The Gahanna Swim club is a struggling situation because the YMCA is built with City monies, and private facilities are struggling because of too many pools.
- The previous administration had no vision for parks and recreation except to access free unusable land.
- The piecemeal approach to the development of the sports organization is dysfunctional.
- Lack of signage in the system needs major improvement. The City has never had a professionally designed park.
- The parks need to connect the community.
- The bike trails are a major disappointment in the City. They are very dangerous, and there are few bike paths available. Bike trails should be used as an amenity that would connect the City.
- There is nothing wrong with volunteer organizations, but has been difficult to keep the program going because of a lack of leadership.
- There is a total lack of vision in the system. The YMCA is too small and over crowded.
- There is no place for young teens to go.
- An arts center is needed in the City that would be managed by the parks system.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- We need to know what the role of the parks and recreation system is going to be in the community.
- The programs across the City need to be planned and scheduled with all providers in the City.
- There is a lack of information available, and the promotion and marketing of the Parks programs can be more effective.
- The pools need to be coordinated, and included in the planning process.
- The marketing efforts need to be much more enhanced and coordinated.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- The summer programs need to be expanded. More marketing efforts of services need to be completed.
- The City needs to promote the shelter houses for events.
- The brochure needs to explain what the benefits of the programs are to the reader.
- Bike paths are needed and must be promoted. However, the bike paths should not be on streets fighting traffic.
- The park system needs to offer more intramural and club sports in volleyball and soccer for middle school students.
- The volleyball courts and leagues need to be enhanced.
- Additional nature walks and environmental programs are needed.

### Focus Group Meeting 11

- The staff does not have captain meetings, which would help in making sure that problems do not incur in scheduling, as it applies to volleyball.
- Additional parking in the parks is needed.
- The City needs to provide bike trails in the City that are safe.
- The drainage on the golf course and parking is a problem.

### Focus Group Meeting 12

- Marketing and communication of the department needs improvement.
- The department should connect trail paths with parks and destination areas in the City.
- The entrances coming into Gahanna send a very positive image of the City.
- Communication in general needs to be improved; the website is out of date and needs to be updated much more frequently.
- The pool associations that work with the City must be coordinated.
- There have been repercussions on other pools in the area after the City gave the YMCA \$2 million. The pools need to work together

### Focus Group Meeting 13

- There needs to be more programs and the parks need to be utilized more effectively.
- The land next to the library should be used by the department.
- More adult and teen activities are needed, which is one of the factors on why we lose citizens to other cities.
- Bike paths need to be safer and should be upgraded.
- Summer staff should be recruited and trained more effectively.
- A recreation center is needed in the community that both kids adults can go, a multipurpose facility would be great. There is not a community center in the City.
- Gahanna seniors want their own space in a multigenerational center.
- Evasive species in the parks need to be managed more successfully.
- Riparian corridors on mowing needs to be at least 50 feet.
- A nature center is needed in the community that has an enclosed class room, so there will be no problems with weather; a wildlife habitat learning center should be created.
- The parks need to develop program Gahanna Woods.
- The wetlands would be a good place to build a shelter or center for teaching children.
- There needs to be upgrades on all three pools, both in marketing them and upgrades.
- An organized camping program would be a great addition to the City.
- The department should get Hocking College involved with teaching people the value of the parks.
- City should charge for facilities that are used.
- The restroom facilities are in horrible condition, especially at Friendship Park, which desperately needs maintenance due to tree damage.
- Staffing levels are a weakness for the department.
- The tree care needs to be improved, and proper cutting and trimming is not in place.
- The department has lost programs because of poor management and planning.

### Staff Focus Group Meeting

- There is a need for a recreation facility where programs can be provided at an effective and regular basis.
- The golf course needs a maintenance facility.
- The need for facilities is a large issue of the department.

- The department has not kept up with the growth of the City and the services desired by the community.
- The department has not done a space study.
- There is a need for a justice center and a facility audit.
- The community is unaware of the services that are offered by the department.
- The department is not balanced as it applies to parks and facilities.
- The City has had to shift mindset of development of facilities.
- The YMCA is over extended and there is a need for additional spaces.
- We need to figure out the culture of the community, and how they react to the services provided.
- The department is always fixing things versus managing forward.
- Lack of planning and a lot of redo's of existing facilities needs to be corrected.
- Our knowledge as a department is very inexperienced.
- The staff has not seen the end product.
- The parks lack visibility and connectivity. The City needs to have trails that connect the community.
- The YMCA addresses a certain segment of the population, and does not fit the needs of all the residents; 5000 members do not fill the needs of 31,000 residents.
- The City is very diverse economically, and demographically the City is changing.
- The previous mayor ran the City, and the new mayor is very challenged to meet the needs of the community.
- The partnership between the police department and the staff is excellent.
- Gahanna parks need more play pieces for children and amenities that support the needs of kids.
- Jefferson Parks has some nice areas and their efforts on maintenance have improved.

### **Q3. How does the Gahanna Park and Recreation Department compare to the surrounding communities from a park and recreation view?**

#### **Summary Report of Questions**

Gahanna manages more land with less staff than many other departments in the area. However, the City lacks a large recreation center that surrounding communities use for programming. The events in Gahanna are first class, and they are regional events that bring people come from all over the area.

Maintenance of parks and facilities are below the standards of other surrounding departments, as it applies to mowing, trash removal, park amenities and restrooms. Maintenance standards need to be upgraded. The green space in the City is much better than other communities. However, the City has been left behind due to surrounding cities upgrading their parks and adding major recreation facilities to keep people in their community. The facilities in Dublin, Westerville, and Worthington are maintained at a greater quality and Gahanna needs recreation facilities at this caliber.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- The department manages more land with less people than other departments.
- Other cities have recreation centers and Gahanna needs to have one too.
- The senior center needs to be larger and does not fill the needs of too many seniors. There is also a lack of staff at the center.
- The Westerville department does a lot more than Gahanna and the department needs to mirror their effort.
- Dublin Parks and Recreation department is very good.

### Focus Group Meeting 3

- The department is lacking employees to provide the depth of programs that the community desires.
- Other cities are better rounded in programs that are offered.
- Westerville is a good model to follow.
- Internal space is most lacking in this Gahanna.
- The City needs to combine the senior center and youth programs.
- The school cannot handle the load any more, and the public does not understand this.
- There is a lack of gymnasiums, and the City lacks a recreation center and ice facility.

### Focus Group Meeting 4

- Gahanna does not have their own facility where it can operate programs.
- Gahanna compares favorably to Worthington for youth programs.
- There are not enough adult programs.
- Maintenance of facilities is lacking as it applies to mowing, trash, and restroom cleanliness. Maintenance standards need to be upgraded. An 'adopt a park' program could be effective.
- A permitted shelter should require standards on maintenance.

### Focus Group Meeting 5

- A community civic center is needed in this community.
- More facilities for girl scouts and community service groups are needed.
- Teens need more programs to fit their needs.
- The Westerville facility is an excellent facility to model.
- The soccer organizations and sports groups need to work together.
- The residents do not support the parks and recreation department and they do not support the community.
- The City and the newspaper need to work together better.

### Focus Group Meeting 6

- The facilities in Dublin, Westerville, and Worthington are maintained at a greater quality.
- The parking lots in Gahanna are lacking when compared to other Park districts in the area.
- Parks and recreation has not been at the top of City Council agenda.

### Focus Group Meeting 7

- The department has fallen behind the other cities. An example is the aquatics facilities in New Albany and Westerville. Families are moving to these communities because of these facilities.

### Focus Group Meeting 8

- Many people in the community are going elsewhere to get their recreation needs met.
- The City has been left behind due to surrounding cities upgrading their parks and adding major facilities to keep people in their community.
- The YMCA responsibility is to their members and not to the community.
- In the other communities they have large playgrounds with trees and cover shelters so kids don't get burned buy the sun and the equipment.
- The group feels the City has not been committed to development of playgrounds.

### Focus Group Meeting 9

- A dog park is needed in the City.
- Small parks are not parks, they are pieces of open space that are expensive to maintain.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- The parks in Gahanna are not at the same level as the surrounding cities.
- Both Westerville and Arlington are what Gahanna should strive to be.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- The green space is better than other communities.
- The department does value community input.
- The staff listens well to what the community wants and desires.
- The events are first class in the area, and the events are regional events that bring people come from all over the area.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- The Gahanna Parks and recreation on a scale of 1 to 10 is a 6. Many other communities have invested much more in their systems than Gahanna.
- New Albany partners with Gahanna.
- New build monies should be used to support the parks versus land acquisitions.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- Gahanna parks and recreation facilities are not at the same level as other communities as it applies to recreation facilities and quality of parks. These communities such as Westerville, Dublin, and Worthington have all made parks and recreation a higher priority than Gahanna. Gahanna has more green space but the quality parks is not the same.

#### Staff focus group meeting

- The department has the smallest staffing department in central Ohio.
- 550 acres of park land of which 250 and 300 acres are developed.
- The combination of opportunities from the past and the future are going to make a difference.
- The citizens believe that parks and recreation is important and efforts are improving to allow parks and recreation programs and facilities to become a higher priority.
- The department in the past has never been able to show their strengths.
- The golf course needs a lot of improvement.
- The department has not grown with the community.
- More activities for kids need to be developed.

#### **Q4. What types of parks are most needed in Gahanna?**

##### **Summary of Questions**

The city lacks parks on the west side of town. More neighborhood parks are needed that can be used versus parcels of land that are called parks that can't be used. More greenway parks are needed with walking trails and bicycling trails. The City needs to create sports complexes versus putting sports fields in neighborhood parks or community parks. More specialty parks are needed such as a dog park, a Frisbee golf course area and greenway parks. Safety in parks is an issue. Signage to get to the parks the City owns is an issue. A quality signature community park is needed in the city.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- There are no options for additional land to develop parks
- Greenway parks and walking and biking

- Softball and soccer fields in need to be updated and added. More athletic field parks are required to fit the needs of the growing community.

#### Focus Group Meeting 3

- We need to add programs for girls and more sports fields for the community.
- Gahanna does a good job and it appears there are adequate parks.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- The focus group need not know what types of parks are most needed in the community.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- The focus groups did not know what is needed in types of parks.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- All of our parks are serving double and triple purposes.
- The City needs to design parks that are in a complex and not necessarily in community parks. Safety design is a key issue. Neighborhood parks should be for neighborhoods and sports parks should be separate.
- Consistency by the City is needed.
- The size of the parks needs to be increased to support larger activities, such as Frisbee golf.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- The services are here, but we do not have a quality community park.
- The youth centers are not used like they once were.
- The YMCA is small in scope, and it does not have the facilities to support the needs of the City.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The City needs a regional park and greenway parks that incorporate trails that connect the community.
- The City needs a good trail system that is safe and allows people to move freely through the community.
- The City needs to update its signage throughout the area. We need good clear professional signage.
- Gahanna does not have an identity.
- The Creek Side hub is a good place to build off.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- The City needs to make up its mind on how to address the pool needs.
- There is a need for bicycle paths in the City that are safe and accessible. Public bike lanes are not safe and are for adults only.
- We need restrooms in the parks that are open, and the portable restrooms are not acceptable.
- The City needs more meeting spaces in the City for groups to meet and for recreation programs. A community center is needed in the City.
- The City should conduct a Space Plan to look at all available land.
- If the City put in money for the YMCA they should have a relationship.
- A dog park is needed.
- The local pools are really struggling because of a lack of a coordinated effort in planning.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- The neighborhood parks need to be redesigned for the community that it serves.
- The community parks need more amenities, and improvement needs to take place on existing parks.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- We need greenways and trails that connect the community together
- The parks are centrally located but there appears to be a lack of parks on the west side.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- Neighborhood parks are needed.
- The parks and recreation department needs to acquire the land now.
- Nice walking parks are needed.
- Gahanna needs park parks with benches, trees, paths, playgrounds, bench parks, and more flower beds. Parks like the one across from the herb house.
- More natural features need to be preserved. The maintenance of sport fields need to be enhanced.
- Sports parks and courts are needed. An indoor recreation facility would be a great addition to the community. Gahanna is missing a field house type of space.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- The City has too many small pieces of property that are not parks
- We need to have more parks that can meet neighborhood needs and not serve as sports parks
- We need more natural area parks that are not programmed but are self directed

#### Staff focus group meeting

- The community parks need to be updated. The west side is under served
- Many of the playgrounds in the community need to be updated. The department is doing the best that they could do in all areas of improvement, but lack the necessary resources.
- The Worthington department, as an example, provides excellent quality that Gahanna would like to see; they have excellent maintenance standards.
- The community does not know about the parks and services available.

#### **Q5. What recreation facilities and services need to be addressed the most as it applies to: Outdoor recreation facilities and indoor recreation facilities?**

##### **Summary of questions**

The indoor recreation needs of the community include the need for an expanded senior center, an indoor recreation center comparable to Westerville's facility, more gym space is needed in the city because the schools cannot provide consistent space to user groups or the city to meet the demand. A space for teens to gather is needed. More fitness space is needed for people who do not want to join a club or the YMCA. The YMCA is viewed as a sports facility and not as a community center facility and is over crowded. A civic center space is needed for groups to meet and for hospitality events and functions. Most groups go out of the city to rent other cities facilities for Gahanna events. The existing indoor rental spaces such as the golf course and Sanctuary are outdated and need updating and do not meet the needs of residents.

The outdoor recreation needs of the city residents include the need for more walking trails and safe bike paths that connect the city together. More tennis courts are needed. More sports complexes are needed.

Better designed and maintained neighborhood parks are needed. Safety in parks is an issue that needs to be addressed. Improved bathroom facilities are needed in the city. The need for lights on some game fields is needed. An update playground program is needed to enhance existing sites. Better maintained parks are desired with more amenities available for users to enjoy such as picnic facilities, basketball courts, playgrounds, walking trails, adequate parking and restrooms.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- The schools provide the indoor space needs of the department.
- The senior center needs to be expanded.
- A recreation center is needed for the City, similar to Westerville.
- The YMCA is not a community facility, per se, but a recreation center is needed.
- There is not enough gymnasium space in the City that is easily accessible.

#### Focus Group Meeting 3

- Paved bike trails and a recreation center are needed.
- A civic center is needed in the City. However, there are a lot of underutilized facilities in the City.
- Walking trails are needed in the city.
- The use is not balanced as to type of parks.
- Are the parks safe? The community needs to feel safe at these facilities.
- We need to have walking types of parks and loop trails and that can connect to other trails.
- The side walks need to be connected to downtown.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- We need a broader focus than the YMCA offers.
- The schools are over used, which makes it difficult to schedule.
- Need lights on fields, so they could be used longer in the summer.
- Creek Side mosquitoes are bad.
- A community recreation center is needed that would allow for year round indoor programming.
- All the pools in the City should be made available through a universal/one pass versus being separate. Each of the pools will be a lot more successful if this happened.
- There is nothing to do in the winter time. The YMCA is the only option and there needs to be more
- Sports marketing should be pursued and the types of tournaments Gahanna could host.
- The golf course club house needs to be updated and improved.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- There is a lack of tennis facilities.
- There is an issue of safety in the parks that needs to be addressed.
- Walking paths that are connected to other parks would be a great addition.
- Gahanna needs to address the needs of parks and recreation and bring it up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- There is no room to expand the parks.
- The Westerville recreation center serves Gahanna people.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- Gahanna needs an indoor recreation center in the City.
- There is no place to play around the schools. Indoor facilities for program purposes are needed.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- The parks in Westerville are more aesthetically pleasing. Our parks need more image value. The parks need to be landscaped.

- People don't know where the parks are located; the two big parks are buried.
- We need to have paved trails to roller blade on.
- There are a lot of design issues in the parks.
- Connection trails are needed.
- The parks need to be visible, and we need to make better choices on where we acquire land.
- Signage needs to be updated and enhanced.
- More time and money is needed for the parks system as a whole.
- Pizzurro Park needs to be dealt with.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The indoor facilities are really lacking in the City and should be top priority.
- The program space for existing programs is not appropriate.
- The golf course club house needs to be restructured.
- The Creek Side development should include a major recreation center.
- The Herb Center needs to be incorporated into the master plan.
- The playgrounds need a plan to update.
- Bike paths are needed in the City that could be used by families.
- A playground program is needed.
- The YMCA is not a community center. It is a sports center.
- A priority needs to be put on development of the recreation center, while the department continues to enhance the parks.
- We need an indoor place to go as a family.
- The YMCA is very piece meal in their program offerings.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- The staff does a good job on programs for kids and seniors.
- There are not a lot of adult programs or life skill classes.
- Bicycle maintenance programs are needed.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- An indoor recreation space is needed in the city that can serve recreational needs of the community and serve as a civic center for community functions and serve the needs of residents.
- More walking trails are needed in the city
- More quality parks are needed in the city that are visible and safe
- The play grounds need updated in the city
- A dog park is needed in the city
- More lighted fields are needed in the city
- The pools need to be combined and managed by the city.
- Better restroom facilities are needed in the city parks.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- We need an indoor recreation facility in the City.
- There is a need for more meeting space, it is the number one complaint
- We need space that can host 75 people or more.
- The senior center needs to be larger.
- The membership at the YMCA is 10,000, which is 60% Gahanna residents.
- A multi-purpose type space is needed in the City.

### Focus Group Meeting 12

- Bike paths are needed.
- Lighting is needed in the parks and sport fields.
- Safety is a concern in parks and lighting is not adequate.
- Meeting places are needed in the community.

### Focus Group Meeting 13

- Indoor space for programs is needed, such as a nature center.
- Bike paths are needed.
- A senior center that is larger.
- A civic center for meetings is needed.
- The YMCA is too small.

### Staff focus group meeting

- The department needs an indoor recreation center and pool.
- Parking is an issue in all parks, especially at sports facilities.
- There is no way to rotate facilities to perform maintenance.
- There are not enough tennis courts.
- An all purpose gym is needed, such a civic center space that can be used for multi-purpose activities.
- We need an 18 hole golf course.
- A metro park is needed in the City.
- The bike path system needs to get off the roads.

## **Q6. What recreation program facilities and services need to be addressed?**

### **Summary of Questions**

The community desires to have a much broader level of programming available to the community than is occurring. Space is the limiting factor that the community recognizes is not in place that is needed to support the programs the community desires. The programs the community discussed that are needed are more programs for teens and pre-teens that can't drive. Programs need expanded for after school students and in the environmental education and outdoor recreation areas. More adult programs are desired for life skill classes, arts programs and sports programs. Summer playground programs are needed. Family type programs are desired and more special events to draw the community together. Sports tournament facilities and events are needed in the community instead of Gahanna residents traveling to other communities. This would provide an economic component to the city as well. Computer training for seniors is desired. Program facilities that are needed include a recreation center, an ice rink, another skate board park, an arts center for classes and events, a nature center were mentioned as needed in the community.

### Focus group Meetings 1 & 2

- More fun nights at the pool than just movie nights. Make it more community oriented.
- There needs to be more teen programs. The old firehouse should be a teen center.
- The skate park is rough and it dominated by older kids. The skate park times should be divided up into times by younger and older kids.
- Computer training for seniors is needed and more advanced programs should be pursued.

### Focus Group Meeting 3

- There needs to be programs for all ages and types of kids.

- A park coordinator should help program the parks, and help providing safety for users.
- More after school programs are needed.
- Having someone on site would allow for the facilities to be open.
- An outdoor adventure needs to be programmed.
- The City needs a program center.
- An outdoor or indoor skating rink should be pursued.
- There needs to be more programming for youth.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- We need more family programs and senior sports programs.
- Sports tourism should be pursued.
- There should be more fitness programs for all ages.
- We need more non sport programs.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- More senior programs and programs for persons with disabilities are needed.
- The skate board park is unsafe.
- Teen age programs are needed. Currently, the community is taking their kids out of the City for programs.
- More affordable programs are needed.
- We need art programs, summer programs and life skill programs.
- There is a need for day camps in the summer for 10 weeks in various parks.
- The marketing of the programs needs a lot of improvement.
- Gahanna needs a public-relations department to maximize the services available.
- More volunteer programs are needed.

#### Focus group Meeting 6

- An ice skating rink is needed in the City. 25% of Columbus ice skating program for hockey is coming from Gahanna.
- More nightly senior activities would be a great addition.
- The golf course is barely adequate and it is usually reserved.
- Need more marketing on issues and programs.
- More art programs should be pursued.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- We need a multi purpose facility for the community. The YMCA is more of a sports facility.
- Gyms in the community are usually not accessible. The elementary gyms are not used to their fullest capacity and should be scheduled for use.
- We need to develop an outdoor adventure facility using the Big Walnut area.
- Bigger shelters are needed that incorporate a fire place.
- Trails need to be added and updated.
- Safety lighting around facilities should be enhanced.
- More life skill classes and programs for teens that are not sports activities are wanted.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- There are too many pools in Gahanna. The City should commit to the aquatic system and programs or should get out.
- The City needs to create friends groups to help support the arts in the City.
- There is a quality factor missing in the programs and facilities in the City.

- No one is advocating that community organizations go out of business, but they should enhance the quality of the experience.
- Major program planning is needed in the Gahanna.
- Teen programs are needed in the arts and life skills.
- More greenery and trees are needed in the City.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- A park district needs to be created with a dedicated tax for parks and recreation
- More programs for families and teens are needed.
- A more coordinated aquatic program is needed in the city and should be managed by the city.
- A wider range of program services is needed in the city and better overall management of what is provided needs to occur.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- We need an indoor recreation center beyond the YMCA that incorporates volleyball courts, soccer fields and an indoor facility for a diverse group of users.
- Parents desire a place for kids to go that is safe. Family programming should be pursued. Environmental education programs and outdoor recreation programs would be a great family activity.
- Life skill programs and youth and teen programming are needed.
- The programs are all hit and miss, and there is no central place to provide programs.
- We need a Westerville and Dublin facility.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- Preteen services are needed.
- More Art programs are needed in the City.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- There are not enough teen programs, especially pre-teens.
- The senior programs are much more organized and the department needs to offer more adult classes.
- More adult sports leagues and tournaments are needed.
- More youth sports tournaments are desired and it is an economic draw for the City.
- More activities down by Creek Side should be developed.
- A farmers market is needed in the City and it could be held at Creek Side.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- More programs for youth and teens are needed beyond sports activities.
- More special events are needed in the community to connect the community together.
- More adult and family programs are needed in the city.
- More environmental programs are needed in the city that focuses on the outdoors and the natural environment.

#### Staff Focus Group Meeting

- We need to have recreation programs that focus on the water and outdoor adventure aspects.
- A shooting sports facility for the City would be a great addition.
- Frisbee golf could be established in one of our parks.
- We need environmental education programs.
- Gahanna woods could be an environmental program site.

- Ice hockey facilities and ice programs would be an excellent addition.
- The adult softball fields need to be moved.
- The Herb Center is a good facility that can be improved.

**Q7. The City of Gahanna has not raised local City taxes since 1976. How do you think the facilities, parks or programs you identified as lacking or needed should be financed?**

**Summary of question responses**

The community feels that a combination of user fees and taxes is what is needed to support the operational and capital needs of the community for the future. The City should evaluate all possible ways to fund the department as possible before raising taxes. Some departments in the city get what ever they want and others like the parks and recreation department don't even get close to what they need. The community feels that residents would vote for a bond issue if given the opportunity to vote and if it was spelled out well and had wide voter appeal with something everyone could see that would benefit them and their families. Pricing of services needs to be addressed and communicated accurately as there is a lot of mis-information about resident rates and non-resident rates. Some people support the wage tax increase because the city is one half of a percentage below other communities in the area. The community feels that the department has been under funded for a long time and should have its own dedicated funding source so they don't have to compete with police and fire that tend to get most of the city's resources. The majority of the community was not aware that the city had not raised taxes since 1976 and that the department of parks and recreation had never had a bond issue to support the development of parks. The community supports stronger developer impacts fees. The community does not understand how a tif for parks and recreation would work to support parks and recreation. The community recognizes that the city has not kept pace with other surrounding communities for parks and recreation facilities and it is becoming a quality of life issue the city must address.

Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- Sports groups need to pay their way, versus having the City pay for their needs.
- All non-for-profit organizations need to support their way. People resent having to pay out city fees.
- The City needs to work on total development before they ask people for a tax increase.
- The wage tax is a flat tax and it should be addressed.
- User fees should cover the majority of the operational costs of the department.
- A bond issue would be difficult to pass, but is a possibility.
- The sports groups need to charge a larger fee for non-residents.

Focus Group Meeting 3

- Taxes need to fund the future. Fundraising needs to be developed
- The department should seek grants to help fund the needs of the community.
- The community would support a bond issue if given the opportunity.
- The developers need to support the development of the parks and recreation facilities and programs.
- A bond program would be supported if it is marketed correctly.
- Evaluate the Heartland Plan and how it applies to parks and recreation.
- User fees should support programs now and in the future.

Focus Group Meeting 4

- If the facilities were update, raising taxes is a possibility.
- People will vote for it if it is presented properly.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- Parks and recreation is an essential service and should be funded.
- The businesses should help with many of the services.
- Increasing taxes in a modest way could help support the services.
- Many residents would pay this versus going out of the community for services.
- The City is not clear on who pays non-resident fees, and the City needs to identify the tax base.
- The department needs to have a dedicated funding source.
- We need more programs beyond sports, such as music and the arts are needed.
- The budget for parks and recreation needs to be spelled out.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- The group felt the bond issue would be difficult to pass but it would need to be marketed correctly to make it go and have wide voter appeal.
- The group felt the city should fund raise like the YMCA to build a recreation center and the city should match the money raised.
- Every available funding opportunity should be pursued before raising taxes.
- The City Officials need to create more balance of money spent in other departments versus a few getting the majority of money.
- The sports groups should pay their way and users should pay their way but make it affordable
- The residents should be given the opportunity to vote for parks and recreation facilities at some point in the future.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- The City needs to have a better definition of what is park land. We need to have a long term goal of what we are trying to do with parks.
- This master plan will convince the community that the City is serious about the parks.
- General operational funds need to increase.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The financing of the parks and recreation needs to have a dedicated funding source, like a levy.
- The City has never done a bond issue for parks and recreation and it is time.
- The City council needs to have a City manager versus an elected strong mayor.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- The school district seems to be a good partner that should be developed.
- An inventory of what is available and the cost should be made public.
- The Gahanna Group has done a good job on beautification with the City.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- The citizens will support a tax increase for a quarter percent if they know what it will go for.
- The chamber folks would probably not be in favor of it unless people vote for it.
- The City should develop a fundraising strategy for a recreation facility.
- The voters should be given the opportunity to vote on the issue.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- User fees should finance the programs.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- Corporate sponsorships and more events to raise money should be pursued.

- An impact fee on development should be followed.
- Most residents are not going to support taxes, but we need to give the department a dedicated budget.
- The parks and department should not be the lowest funded department in the City. This should be asked on the survey.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- The department should charge a usage fee.
- A bond issue would not pass.
- If you showed some success than people would vote in favor, but people need to know what will be done with the money.
- Make it an affordable tax and people will support.
- We have to have a bond issue to make the improvements in the parks.
- Volunteer donation to the parks would be an avenue that should be pursued.
- The system needs to be totally outside of the general fund.
- We need to raise money for the facilities.
- Civic groups should aid in raising money.

#### Staff Focus Group Meeting

- The City should do residential tif's to fund the system.
- The tif would have a dedicated funding source.
- A dedicated income tax and funding source is needed.
- The golf course needs to be profitable enough to help support other programs.
- The governance of the parks system needs to be evaluated.
- A separate park district should be considered.
- The income tax should be looked at as well.
- The City does not focus on grants.

**Q8. What partnerships need to be initiated, strengthened or expanded in the City as it applies to working with the Parks and Recreation Department in delivery of parks, recreation facilities and programs?**

#### **Summary of Questions**

The community feels that the partnerships need to be expanded and made to be fairer between the city and the partners. Some partnerships receive more favorable investment by the City than others. Partnerships need to be expanded to include churches, the bicycle committee, YMCA, people with disabilities, neighborhood associations, garden clubs, and nature groups. Improvements to existing partnerships are needed that include the schools, youth sports groups, private aquatic clubs, civic groups, volunteers and with other cities. More partnerships with developer and businesses are also desired by the community in the delivery of parks and recreation services.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- Partnerships need to be more equitable and business partnerships need to be expanded.
- Church partnerships and the bikeway committee needs to be expanded.
- The youth sports commission needs to be addressed

#### Focus Group Meeting 3

- YMCA partnerships would be good; currently, the facility is overcrowded and it is an expense.

- The City is doing well with partnering with youth sports programs.
- The school district and parks system should focus on a joint facility.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- Sharing programs with other cities is an avenue.
- More partnerships with the state of Ohio Natural Resources.
- The partnership with the pool owners should be pursued.
- People with disabilities groups.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- The YMCA, the schools and the newspaper needs better partnerships.
- More partnerships with the service organizations are needed.
- More volunteers are needed to support activities in the system.
- The business community needs to be pursued for partnerships.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- We need signature facilities to attract people to the City. The new City council will be a positive for the future of the City.
- Better relationship with the youth sports organization is needed.
- The baseball program uses 27 fields, and the City needs to provide some help.
- More partnership with the bicycle organization.
- The City needs to recognize that they are a facility provider and enhance their relationship with the new staff and City Council.
- A partnership with the Frisbee users is an idea.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- The City needs to create advocacy groups for managing pocket parks.
- The German Village concept with neighborhoods should be pursued in Gahanna.
- Sell naming rights to benches and shelters.
- Master gardeners at OSU would be a great partnership, and we need to seek them out.
- We need to have a vision in place for the parks and ask people to support that vision.
- We need a park foundation for the City.
- East Career Center would be a good partner.
- The City and the schools need to have a coordinator that schedules facilities.
- The metro parks would be a good partnership.
- There needs to be an examination into the youth sports association partnerships, and the level of equity that each group supports.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The swim club relationship is good because of the new staff in place.
- Tony has been a big influence of the positive changes in the City.
- The YMCA has not met the expectations. The YMCA is just trying to find their way, and their impact is minimal.
- An aquatic partnership would be beneficial, between the private facilities and the City.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- Flood issues are a problem in the City.
- The waste water facilities are eye sores for the community and are not properly maintained.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- More partnerships with business should be pursued, which will help sell the value of the recreation programs and facilities.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- The City is good collaborators with the other service providers, and they should have a recreation round table.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- More partnerships with developers are needed. Any body that wants to develop should be making a contribution to the parks system.
- All the pools should be interchangeable.
- Neighborhood and civic associations should help care for green spaces.
- Lease facilities for activities. More permitting of facilities is needed.
- The business community benefits from parks and recreation facilities, and the department should get some of the tourism tax.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- The group was out of time to answer this question

#### Staff Focus Meeting

- The staff did not have time to discuss this question.

### **Q9. What environmental issues need to be addressed to protect, conserve or restore?**

#### **Summary of findings**

The community responses included the need for the City to deal with flood control issues up steam that impact the floodway in Gahanna. Also the power lines in the city need to be buried. Storm water and debris in the stream is an issue. Garbage in the parks is an environmental issue that needs to be dealt with. Permanent restrooms are needed in the parks versus port-a-pots which is an environmental issue. Evasive species is needed in the creek corridors to protect the trees and water shed. Geese are a major problem at the golf course and some parks that need to be dealt with. Fishing quality in the stream is a concern that it is not producing the quality or quantity of fish as in the past.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- Flooding issues need to be addressed, and the flood plain areas need to be maintained. .
- The City should set some land aside for the Herbs Center.
- Power lines need to be buried.

#### Focus Group Meeting 3

- Flooding issues are a problem.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- Flooding at Creek Side and Woodside Park is an issue.
- Park inventory needs to be addressed in the parks.
- Storm water and debris in the stream. Garbage in the parks is an environmental issue and more effort for recycling in the parks needs to be done.
- Permanent restrooms are needed in many of the parks.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- The group did not respond to the question.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- The geese are a major problem on the golf course that needs to be dealt with.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- Evasive species management is needed, and protection of our natural resources needs to take place with developers.
- Waste water run off is a problem.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The group did not respond to the question.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- Fishing concerns in the stream is a concern. The creek is trashy and needs to be maintained.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- The group did not address the question

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- Flood issues need to be addressed.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- No environmental issues need to be dealt with

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- The group did not address the question.

#### Staff Focus Group Meeting

- The staff did not address the question because of a lack of time.

### **Q10. How do you feel about the marketing and promotional efforts used by the parks and recreation department to inform citizens how to access services?**

#### **Summary of responses**

The Department does a good job with the quarterly program brochure but the method of distribution gets lost because of the format it is delivered in. The special event signage is good when an event is held and the staff should inform the community through the same signage to look for the Gateway Program Guide in the same manner. The Department should do better job marketing information through the schools and through other service providers. The web site should be managed better and made to be more user friendly. A map of all the parks needs to be created. Each of the parks needs a message board that is up to date and includes park rules and where the parks are located. The Department needs to cross market with neighborhood newsletters, churches and businesses of services and events that are up coming.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- The recreation and parks marketing efforts are good. When there is an event, the City does a good job of informing people.
- They do a good job on the quarterly brochure.

- The special event signage is good.

#### Focus Group Meeting 3

- Marketing and promoting services with other service providers.
- Community papers with a regular column should be provided.
- The web site should be managed and used more effectively.
- A map of all the parks is in the gateway report.
- Work should be done with the schools through distribution of flyers and the Gateway.
- Each of the parks needs to have a message board.
- All organizations need to promote the programs offered by the department.
- The civic group newsletters would be a good place to advertise.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- The group felt that the distribution method used by the Department was not serving the community well as many people throw the supplement away.
- The City should mail the brochure to ever household and include the cost of mailing in the cost of the classes
- More efforts to ask people what is the best way to receive information is needed
- Registering on line is needed

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- The method of distributing program information needs to be improved.
- The staff needs to develop a market and promotional strategy and follow it consistently.
- Many people are confused of when the brochure is coming out and it comes out late and some of the classes have already started.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- The City needs to change the way they communicate with users.
- It is worthless to get something in the newspaper.
- The Gateway has not been effective.
- The City doesn't plan with the sports groups on any aspect of the programs.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- Signage and marketing of the parks is needed.
- Road access is needed.
- We should evaluate what other cities are doing.
- We need kiosks at each park.
- We need a central place for registration. The web site is a good marketing tool that could also be used for registration needs.
- The gateway is a good publication.
- We need to do a feature on each park in the newspaper.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The pools need to be connected as one, versus being separate.
- People in Gahanna go to New Albany and Grove Port for their aquatic facilities.
- The City leaders see the parks and recreation as a liability versus an economic tool.
- Partnerships need to be equity driven, and the partners are tired of always asking businesses for money.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- The department does a poor job of marking the services to the community through the local newspaper.
- The Gateway comes out too late, and some of the classes are full when it is delivered.
- The City needs to have more ways to access services.
- The park signage system is poor.
- The use of the Web site needs to be enhanced.
- E-commerce needs to be established

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- More marketing efforts need to be expanded and promotional efforts need to be enhanced.
- The City needs to expand on e-commerce, and use the newspapers more with a specific column.
- The department needs to continue to reach out to the chamber with strategies to bring the business community into the vision of the community.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- The marketing efforts are good in the community. The newspapers help.
- The people who are new to the community do not know where to get information.
- The parks and recreation need to work with the realtors on distribution of materials and knowledge.
- People do not know how to get involved in the volleyball programs.
- Need to put flyers at Gatsby's on programs offered.
- Cross marketing is needed in the City with other service providers.
- Non-resident fees are not working from a marketing perspective. It is a problem, and why charge when the leagues are full?

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- Marketing efforts need to be improved in every area. The community does not know of the services that are provided.
- More cross marketing efforts need to occur with other agencies to get the word out about the programs provided.
- The signage efforts to find the parks in the city needs improvement
- The city needs a message board to inform the community of events and when the brochure is going out.
- The programming efforts need to be improved and standardized along with marketing efforts. The Department is too inconsistent in getting the word out.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- The focus group did not have enough time to answer the question.

#### Staff focus group meeting

- The staff did not have time to answer the question.

**Q11. Are there any existing policies that need to be addressed as it applies to Parks and Recreation Department that you feel are outdated or need to be improved?**

#### **Summary of questions**

The focus groups indicated that the non-resident fees and policy needs to be addressed. The policy is confusing and the fees need to be made larger. The restroom policy of no restrooms in the parks doesn't

make sense and to have a permit to open doesn't make sense. Using porta Potts doesn't make good policy if the city wants to have women use the parks. The staffing levels need to be enhanced on weekends in the parks as it applies to cleaning and servicing the parks. Park safety is a concern that needs to be addressed by the police department and the City working together. The cancellation policy on programs needs to be addressed and is not working to parents liking. Greater coordination and communication between parents and the City on when classes may be cancelled needs improvement. The Department needs to operate from a set of performance measures to demonstrate to users and the key elected officials the level of success they are having. The City needs to have a better policy on when they accept land versus money from developers. The policy is very confusing. The pricing policy needs to be dealt with as it is confusing and inconsistent. The off leash dog policy needs to be extended in lieu of developing a dog park.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- The non-resident fees need to be larger.
- The restroom at Goshen Lane School needs to be fenced.
- This last year has been good, and the staff has really stepped up.
- The department needs adequate staffing and the man power for the future.
- Tony is a great asset to the City.

#### Focus Group Meeting 3

- The policies are fine.

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- Weekend maintenance improvements.
- Accountability of programs with customer feedback.
- The cancellation policy.
- Permanent restrooms are needed.
- The department needs to have performance measurement.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- The focus group did not have time to answer the question.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- The focus group did not have time to answer the question.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- Evaluate and having better guidelines for accepting money versus land.
- The City should decide which parks need to be preserved and which ones should be developed.
- There needs to be a better park classification system for the parks.
- Pricing policies need to be addressed.
- Can we work with Mifflin Jefferson Township on developing projects together?

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- The locking of bathrooms is not a good policy.
- The pricing policies need to be addressed.
- The permitting of facilities is expense.
- The off leash dog policy needs to be addressed in the future.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- The group did not have time to address the question.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- The non-resident fees do not make sense when there are openings in the programs and leagues.
- The school facilities should be open to the public.
- The schools are over scheduled now.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- The group did not have time to address the question.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- The group did not have time to address the question.

#### Staff focus group meeting

- The staff did not have time to address the question.

### Q12. What is your vision for the parks and recreation department for the next ten years?

The Consultant is incorporating all vision statements as everyone had the opportunity to give their vision in every focus group.

#### Focus Group Meetings 1 & 2

- Parks need to be more handicap accessible.
- The parks need to be expanded in programs for youth.
- A golf cart needs to be available for people who are handicap as it applies to trails and the golf course.
- The golf course needs to have cart paths, and the rates should be increased for non-residents.
- The City and the schools need to work together.
- The City needs to put a flag on a golf cart for handicap people.
- The facilities need expanded for the kids in the community. Programming needs to include non-athletic activities.
- The facilities need to be improved and expanded such as adding a recreation center that can house a diverse group of users.
- There needs to be additional staff that can carry out what the community wants in services.
- The bike trail and pathway programs need to be developed.
- More athletic fields and an indoor recreation center are required.
- Gahanna needs to expand the bikeway system in the City.
- Expand the opportunity for expanding programs for funding.

#### Focus Group Meeting 3

- A connected trail system is needed.
- More programs for kids and teens
- An indoor recreation center and connected trails would be great additions.
- Respect and protection of the environment through effective programs and nature related facilities.
- General awareness of what services are available needs to be established.
- Trails, a central community center and environmental programs.
- An expansion of a community center, trails, and the aquatics center.
- Phones in the parks for emergency are needed; safety needs to be upgraded...

#### Focus Group Meeting 4

- Would like to see a broader focus than just sports.

#### Staff focus group meeting

- The department needs to have program standards and instructor standards in place.
- The department needs to exceed the expectations of the residents to create a livable community.
- Better customer service and responsiveness is needed.
- The renovation of the golf course lodge is needed, as well as the golf course.
- A community center is needed for program use. The community center needs to have offices.
- Additional staff is required to meet the needs of the community.
- A larger senior center needs to be incorporated into the community center.
- Upkeep of the facilities we have needs to be upgraded.

#### Focus Group Meeting 5

- Programming for kids needs to improve. A centralized sport complex and recreation center
- More resources for the parks and recreation department need to be acquired.
- More security for people in the parks.
- More social interaction with kids beyond sports.
- Gahanna has to realize that we are a community with needs for recreation, and we need to provide facilities and programs. More partnerships are needed and everyone needs to work together.
- Special needs programs need to be improved.
- A centralized coordinated parks and recreation department that works well with the other organizations in the City should be a goal.
- Governance of the parks and recreation needs to change to enhance the value of parks and recreation.

#### Focus Group Meeting 6

- We would like to see the board walk completed from Creek Side and Friendship Park.
- The City needs to put the Gateway brochure in the bags like the metro parks.
- The department needs to establish an effective marketing strategy.
- Need a trail from Academy Park to academy woods.
- A Frisbee golf course in Gahanna.
- Need a sports facility that has baseball and soccer fields in a central location.
- Coordination between the City and the community with volunteers in the youth leagues needs to become a reality.
- More effort on maintenance of the golf course.
- The department needs to figure out a permanent funding source for parks and recreation, and continue to upkeep facilities that are already owned.
- More leadership from the parks department and the Mayor's office on park issues and facilities for the future.

#### Focus Group Meeting 7

- Coordination of current facilities must improve.
- Protecting open space and green space should be a priority.
- The overall quality of the parks system needs to be enhanced.
- The Rocky Creek area needs to be preserved.
- The bicycle plan needs to be implemented.
- An active multigenerational center should be constructed that keeps people in the Gahanna.
- The City has the courage to raise the funding source to pay for the vision outlined.

- Improve marketing through improved programming and the general operation source to maintain the parks at a reasonable level.
- Buy some significant open space, and the parks need to be maintained.

#### Focus Group Meeting 8

- The parks and recreation need their independent funding.
- An indoor recreation center that is good size.
- A master plan that speaks to the facility needs of the community.
- Family driven customer friendly parks and better maintenance.
- A master plan needs to incorporate the visual arts in design of parks and facilities.
- More accessibility to shelters and restrooms in the parks.
- A multi-generational center should be constructed.
- The parks administration needs to be aggressive and going after money from the City council.

#### Focus Group Meeting 9

- Improved maintenance standards.
- The park system is one of the few departments that interface with the community, and they need to have a larger role in the development of the City in the minds of the other departments.
- Better communication with the public on services and programs provided.
- More parking is needed in the City at parks.
- Bring balance to the system and provide better coordination between all service providers.
- Quality over quantity is needed in the system.
- More partnerships are needed.
- Improved signage for the parks.
- There is a need for a field house in the City with a functional meeting space for a lot of different activities and would not compete with the YMCA.
- The staffing levels need to be enhanced in the City to meet the community needs.
- The continued growth of the department is good and it needs to continue.
- The policy of rather we are going to accept fees versus the land.

#### Focus Group Meeting 10

- Would like to see the construction of a recreation center/civic center with a signature park in the next five years.
- Would like to see parks and recreation take a visible role and make them a go to organization.
- Parks and Recreation is positioned to promote the City and promote its identity.
- The existing parks need to be updated and improved.
- The recreation center is truly needed in the community. The recreation center really appeals to me and life skill classes are needed.
- We need the civic center and we need to invest in the parks by improving them through maintenance needs.
- We need an adopt a park type program.

#### Focus Group Meeting 11

- We have a lot of activities for Gahanna. We need to make sure people are aware of what the City offers.
- More staff that is focused on specialty sports and leagues to help manage the program and the schedule.
- A representative from each sport is needed.
- An indoor recreation center is needed or turn the volleyball program to the YMCA.

- Need bike trails and an indoor recreation facility.
- Need bike trails that are safe.
- There is a lot of activity going in the City and marketing really needs to be improved.
- They try not to duplicate with the other programs.

#### Focus Group Meeting 12

- The zoning department needs to work with park and recreation to keep the density levels down and that parks and recreation areas need to be established.
- Parks and recreation should not be the lowest funded department in the City.
- Parks and recreation is the most visible and financial help is needed.
- More parks that were designated in the Heartland area should be purchased even though there are useless parcels.
- Parks and Recreation should not be on the bottom of the funding list.
- More flowers along street corridors, but the community and businesses need to pay for it.
- Better communication through newsletters and the website need make the public aware of events.
- Walking paths that link parks and destinations together is needed.

#### Focus Group Meeting 13

- Enhance the bike path systems and walking paths through the City.
- Gahanna parks need to be a complete jewel of the City, and if taken care of, it will enhance livability, education, natural beauty.
- The department needs to be a magnet for people the growth of Gahanna.
- Educational facility for nature awareness.
- Parks and recreation needs to be a much stronger part of he community.
- Meeting and educational space for civic groups.
- Use the money raised by the golf course to reinvest in the golf course. They should separate from the City and have their own budget.

A multi generational facility.

# Appendix C: Parks and Recreation Survey Report

# CITY OF GAHANNA

## 2005 Parks and Recreation Survey



### **Strategic Visioning, Inc.**

2745 South Smithville Road  
Dayton, Ohio 45420  
(937) 256-8666

## INTRODUCTION

Strategic Visioning, Inc. is pleased to present the following report on the findings of the CITY OF GAHANNA 2005 PARKS AND RECREATION SURVEY.

## SAMPLING ERROR RATE

Six hundred (600) telephone interviews were conducted with a random sampling of registered voters living in the city of Gahanna, Ohio. A gender quota was in place to control for the fact that men are less likely to answer the telephone in homes that also include a female resident. The interviews were conducted from May 5 through 27, 2005.

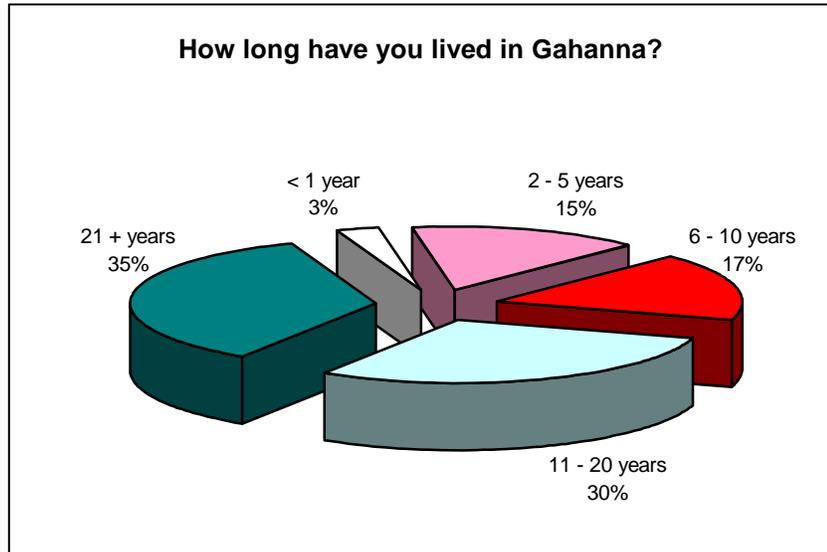
A sample of six hundred has a sampling error rate within 4.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval. This means that, had every household in Gahanna that includes at least one registered voter been contacted, there is a 95 in 100 probability that the findings would differ from those quoted here by not more than 4.1 percentage points in either direction.

It is important to remember that these figures refer only to the overall sample. If subsets are considered separately (i.e., the results from men vs. those from women), the sampling error rate is higher. For example, error rate for each of the city's four wards is approximately 9 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval.

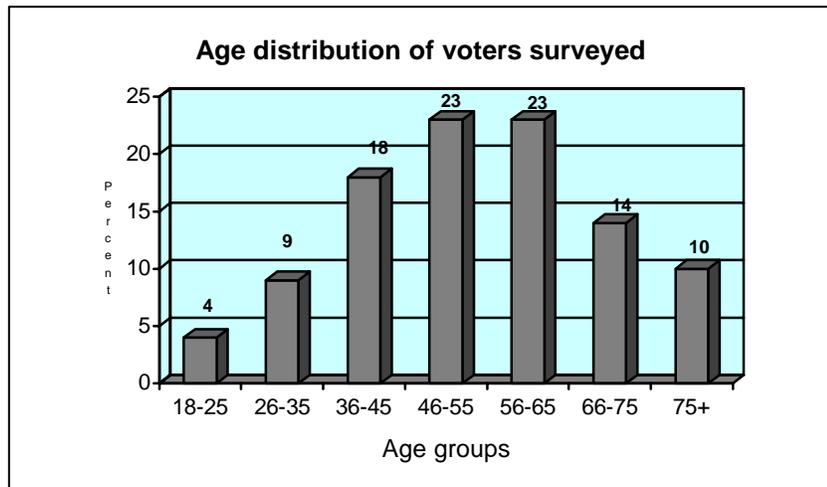
In some instances, table and chart data will total over 100 percent due to rounding.

# GAHANNA REGISTERED VOTER PROFILE

The city of Gahanna has a strong core of long-term residents and shows steady growth over the years. Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of the people interviewed have lived in the city longer than twenty years, while one voter in five (18 percent) arrived during the past five years.



Many Gahanna residents have lived in the city most of their lives. The age distribution of the residents who took part in this study bells at the midpoint. Nearly half (46 percent) of the people interviewed are between the ages of forty-six and fifty-five.



Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of the residents under the age of forty-five are likely to live with children. Only five percent of their older neighbors live with anyone under the age of eighteen.

Half of the people over fifty-five years of age have lived in the city longer than twenty years.

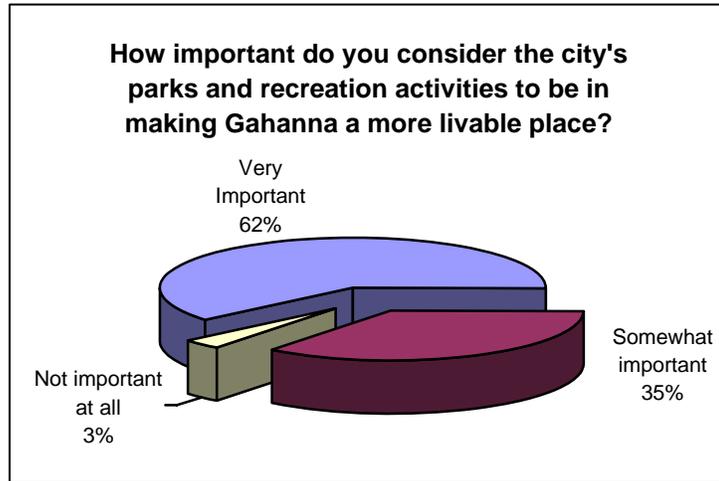
Gahanna is divided into four voting wards. The 1<sup>st</sup> Ward is the oldest section of the city, reflected in the fact that forty-five percent of its residents have lived in Gahanna for more than twenty years. Conversely, the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward is the more recently developed area, with only twenty-one percent having lived in the city longer than twenty years.

3<sup>rd</sup> Ward residents are more likely to live with children (42 percent) than are the residents of the other three wards (35 percent).

### Importance of Gahanna Parks

There is agreement among residents that the city's parks, recreational activities and recreational facilities are important to the overall quality of life in Gahanna. Respondents were asked to rate the impact of the parks on the city's quality of life as "very important, somewhat important or not important at all." Nearly all (97 percent) residents consider the parks "very important" (62 percent) or "somewhat important" (35 percent) in this regard.

The contribution of the parks to the overall quality of life in Gahanna is evident to the majority of all age groups, but particularly to those between the ages of twenty-six and thirty-five.



How important do you consider the city's parks, recreation facilities and programs to be in making Gahanna a more livable place?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Very important	52%	72%	61%	62%	61%	60%	59%
Somewhat important	48%	28%	35%	38%	34%	32%	36%
Not important at all	0%	0%	4%	1%	4%	7%	5%

Parks play a particular role with residents who have small children. People who live with children more often consider the parks "very important" (67 percent) than do those who do not have children in their households (58 percent), but both groups clearly understand the contribution the parks make to the overall livability of Gahanna.

How important do you consider the city's parks, recreation facilities and programs to be in making Gahanna a more livable place?	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Very important	67%	58%
Somewhat important	32%	37%
Not important at all	2%	5%

When asked about their use of city parks over the past year, respondents reported that the most frequently visited were Creekside Park (40 percent), Friendship Park (31 percent), Woodside Green Park (16 percent), Academy Park (14 percent) and Headley Park (10 percent).

One Gahanna resident in five (22 percent) did not visit any municipal parks during the year before the study. Few of those non-visitors live with children under the age of eighteen (15 percent), perhaps because the majority (65 percent) are over the age of fifty-five. Forty-two percent of that group has lived in Gahanna more than twenty years.

Creekside Park attracts a wide variety of residents in all age groups.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Creekside Park	36%	42%	40%	41%	44%	40%	32%

Interestingly enough, people who moved to Gahanna in the past one to ten years are particularly likely to have visited Creekside Park during the past year.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?				
	Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	Longer than 20 years
Creekside Park	29%	44%	43%	39%	39%

There is an interesting geographical trend. Creekside Park is located in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward, but residents of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wards are more likely to have visited the park.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Creekside Park	35%	35%	45%	45%

About one third (31 percent) of those polled have visited Friendship Park. This park is particularly popular with Gahanna's long-term residents, but is not one of the parks new residents are likely to frequent.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?				
	Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	Longer than 20 years
Friendship Park	6%	23%	28%	28%	42%

Residents of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wards, which border the park, are more likely to have visited Friendship Park than are those who live in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wards.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Friendship Park	31%	34%	39%	22%

Parents are more likely to visit Friendship Park (39 percent) than are people who do not live with children (27 percent). Interestingly enough, parents of school age children are far more likely to have been to the park than those who children are preschool age.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Friendship Park	30%	48%	49%	41%

Sixteen percent of Gahanna's registered voters visited Woodside Green Park at some time during the year before this study. Visits are much more common with residents under the age of fifty-five than with older people, which is likely a reflection of the activities and facilities available there.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Woodside Green Park	20%	30%	23%	22%	8%	11%	3%

Once again, people who live with children are more likely to have been to Woodside Green Park (26 percent) than are residents who do not share their homes with young people (11 percent). Those who have children younger than high school age are the more common visitors.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Woodside Green Park	29%	30%	34%	20%

Located in the northwestern sector of the city, it is understandable that residents of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward are more likely to have visited this park than those who live elsewhere in Gahanna.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Woodside Green Park	29%	19%	10%	8%

Only fourteen percent of Gahanna's residents went to Academy Park. Parents are three times more likely to have visited Academy Park (23 percent) than those who do not live with children (7 percent). This park is particularly popular with the parents of preschool age children.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Academy Park	30%	25%	27%	22%

Academy Park draws visitors from all wards except the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward, whose residents are much less likely to visit.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Academy Park	18%	13%	7%	16%

One in ten (10 percent) Gahanna residents visited Headley Park in the year prior to this interview. As in the above case of Academy Park, parents are three times more likely to have visited this park (17 percent) than are those who do not have children (5 percent). With its soccer fields and baseball diamonds, this park is particularly likely to attract the parents of children in elementary and middle school.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Headley Park	11%	27%	23%	15%

The draw of Headley Park remains fairly consistent across the four wards of the city.

During the past year, which Gahanna parks have you personally visited?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Headley Park	9%	7%	12%	9%

No other Gahanna park had been visited by at least ten percent of the city's residents during the year preceding this survey, which precludes any in-depth analysis, but the parks are listed below with the percent of Gahanna's voters who reported visiting each one.

Gahanna Park	Percent
Shull Park	6%
Gahanna Golf Course	6%
McCorkle Park	3%
Pizzurro Park	3%
Rathburn Woods	3%
Hunters Ridge Pool Park	2%
Bryn Mawr Woods	2%
Bryn Mawr Park	2%
Taylor Road Reserve	2%
Hannah Farms Park	2%
Woodside Green South Park	2%
Memorial Park	1%
Trapp Park	1%
McKenna Creek Park	1%
Geroux Herb Gardens	1%
Ashburnham Park	1%
Historical Park	1%
Foxboro Basin	1%
Ambassador Commons Park	1%
Woodmark Woods	1%
Clarenton Green Park	<1%
Fleetrunk Park	<1%
Agler Road Park	<1%
Royal Gardens Park	<1%
Northeast School Fields	<1%
Price Road Park	<1%
Community Gardens	<1%
Rice Avenue Basin	<1%
Galloway Reserve	<1%
Pipers Glen Basin	<1%
Caroway Park	<1%
St. Matthew Fields	<1%
Helmbright Woods	<1%

"Y" Park	<1%
Gramercy Park	<1%
Senior Center	<1%
Foxwood Park	0%

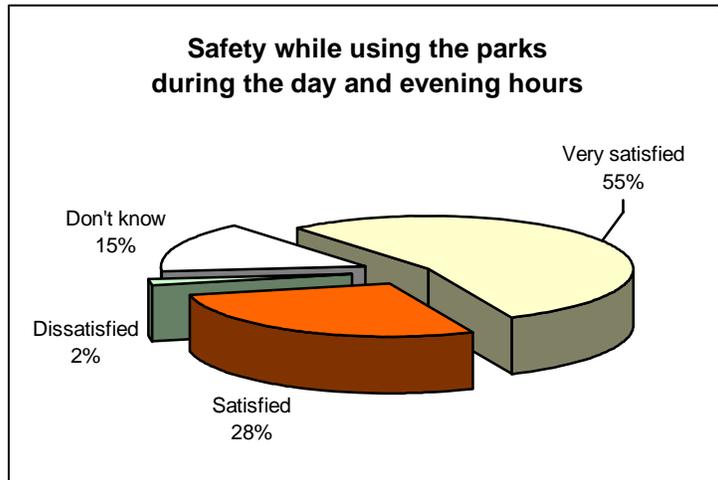
### Satisfaction with the Parks

Further investigation of the community's perception of the parks shows a level of satisfaction with many aspects of the parks.

#### Satisfaction with Park Safety

Feeling safe in municipal parks is critical if the community is to benefit from their use.

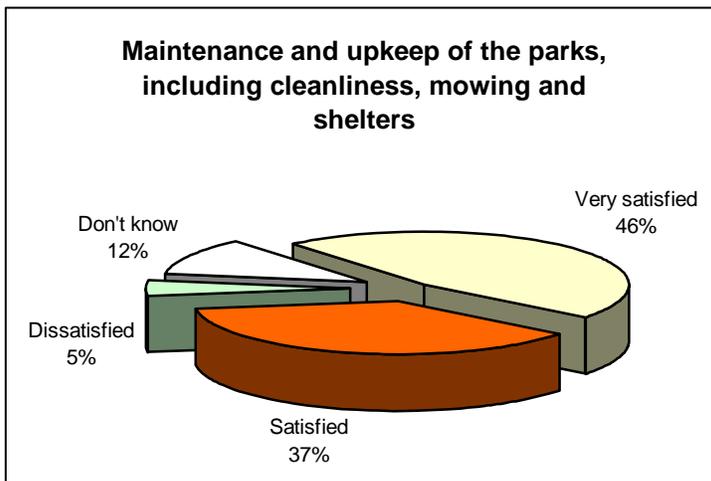
Gahanna residents believe people are very safe when visiting their local parks or attending a recreational program. Respondents were asked if they are "very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied" with their feelings of "safety while using the parks during the day and evening hours." The great majority (83 percent) said they are "very satisfied" (55 percent) or "somewhat satisfied" (28 percent) with safety in the parks.



There are no statistical differences in the opinions of residents of the city's four wards.

#### Satisfaction with Park Maintenance

Residents are also satisfied with the "maintenance and upkeep of the parks, including cleanliness, mowing and shelters." Only five percent of the respondents reported dissatisfaction with park appearance.

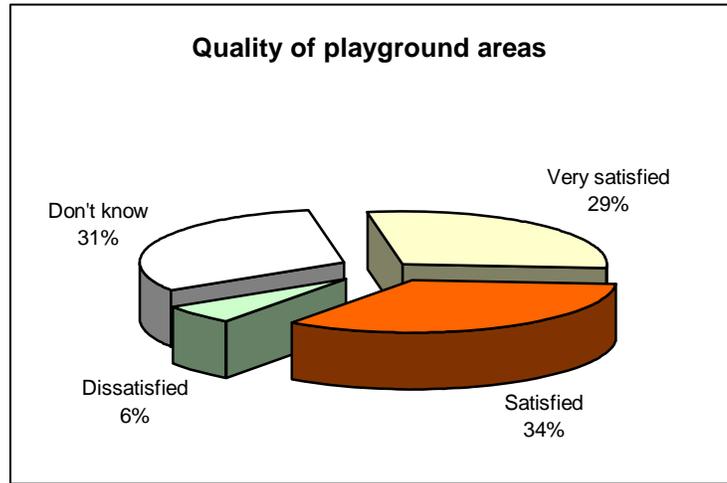


As in the above discussion of the parks' safety, there is no statistical difference in the perceptions of park maintenance across the city.

Satisfaction with the Quality of Playground Areas

Sixty-three percent of Gahanna's voters are satisfied with the quality of playground areas in Gahanna's municipal parks. A significant share (31 percent) of the people interviewed did not know how to respond, indicating a lack of familiarity with playgrounds in the city.

People who live with children are much more likely to offer a rating of the playgrounds than are those who do not live with young people. Among those who live with children, the majority (74 percent) is satisfied with the city's playgrounds, while eleven percent is dissatisfied.

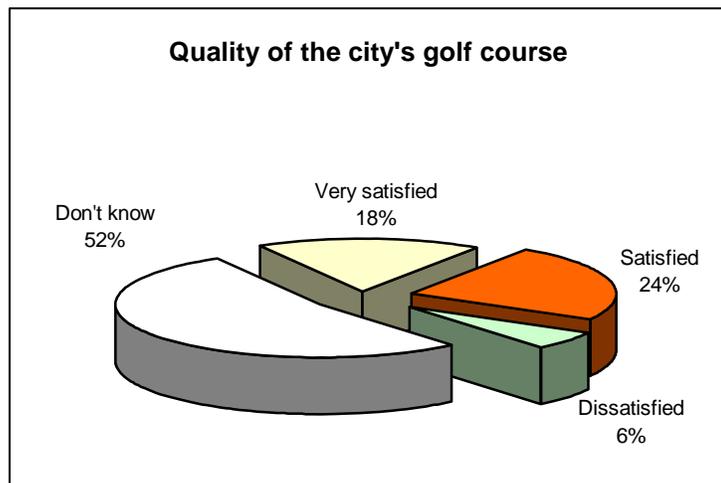


How satisfied are you with the quality of playground areas?	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Very satisfied	32%	27%
Satisfied	42%	29%
Dissatisfied	8%	3%
Very dissatisfied	2%	1%
Don't know	15%	40%

Satisfaction with the Quality of the City's Golf Course

The city's golf course is unfamiliar to more than half (53 percent) of those interviewed. However, people who did rate the course were satisfied with its quality.

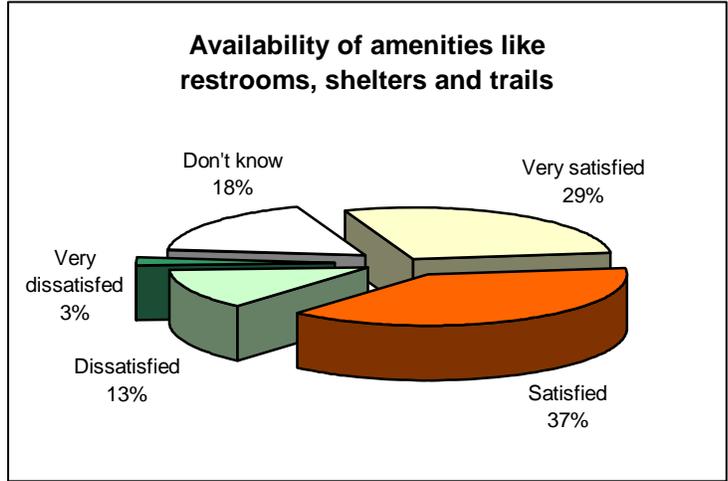
Looking only at the responses from the forty-eight percent of those who did rate the quality of the golf course, the great majority (88 percent) is either "very satisfied" (37 percent) or "somewhat satisfied" (51 percent) with the course's quality, while only twelve percent is "somewhat dissatisfied" (9 percent) or "very dissatisfied" (3 percent) with the quality of the golf course.



Satisfaction with the Availability of Park Amenities

Gahanna residents are generally satisfied with the availability of amenities in their city parks. Two thirds (66 percent) of the respondents said they are "very satisfied" (29 percent) or "somewhat satisfied" (37 percent) with the availability of restrooms, shelters, trails and other amenities in the parks. Sixteen percent are "dissatisfied" (13 percent) or "very dissatisfied" (3 percent).

People who live with children are more likely to express dissatisfaction with the availability of park amenities (20 percent) than are those who do not have children (13 percent). The ages of the children are not particularly influential.

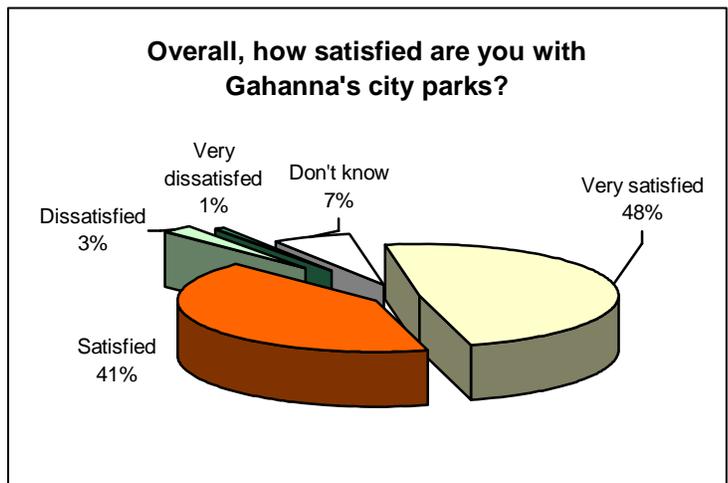


How satisfied are you with the availability of amenities like restrooms, shelters and trails?	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Very satisfied	33%	26%
Satisfied	42%	36%
Dissatisfied	16%	11%
Very dissatisfied	4%	2%
Don't know	5%	25%

Overall Satisfaction with Gahanna's City Parks

With the overall favorable ratings and high level of satisfaction with the parks, it is understandable that the great majority (89 percent) of the respondents said they are, overall, either "very satisfied" (48 percent) or "satisfied" (41 percent) with their parks.

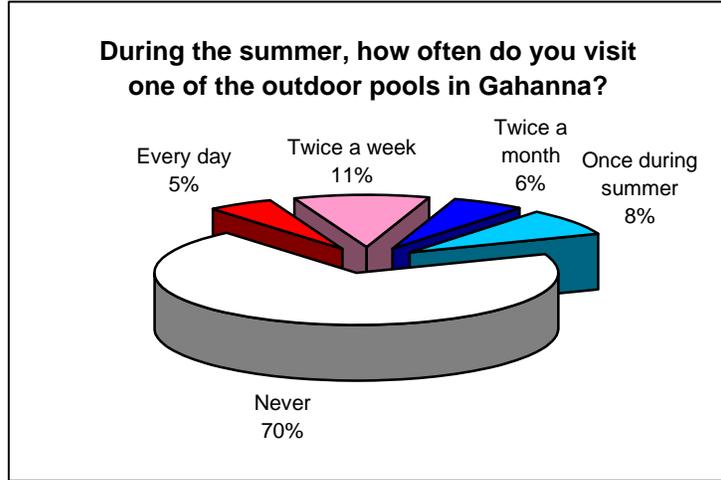
The level of satisfaction remains high across demographic groupings.



Gahanna's Swimming Pools

There are three swimming pools in Gahanna, but only thirty percent of those surveyed visits even one of the pools during the summer months. A small segment of city residents (16 percent) visits one of the pools weekly.

Children are the primary reason people visit Gahanna's outdoor pools. While eighty-five percent of the people who do not live with children said they never visit the pools, only forty-three percent of the people who live with children reported no visits. In fact, one-third (31 percent) of the people with children visit one of the pools at least twice a week during the summer.



During the summer months, how often do you or a member of your household visit one of the outdoor pools in Gahanna?	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
About every day	11%	2%
At least twice a week	20%	5%
At least twice a month	9%	3%
At least once during the summer	16%	4%
Never	43%	86%

The children's ages further influence visits to swimming pools. People whose children attend elementary or middle school are the most frequent visitors.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
During the summer months, how often do you or a member of your household visit one of the outdoor pools in Gahanna?	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
About every day	3%	11%	20%	13%
At least twice a week	9%	28%	30%	24%
At least twice a month	6%	3%	13%	9%
At least once during the summer	27%	22%	11%	13%
Never	55%	36%	25%	40%

There are some differences in the use of the pools among residents of the four wards, with those who live in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward the least likely to frequent Gahanna's pools.

During the summer months, how often do you or a member of your household visit one of the outdoor pools in Gahanna?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
About every day	8%	9%	12%	2%
At least twice a week	12%	11%	13%	7%
At least twice a month	6%	5%	5%	6%
At least once during the summer	7%	7%	11%	8%
Never	68%	70%	63%	77%

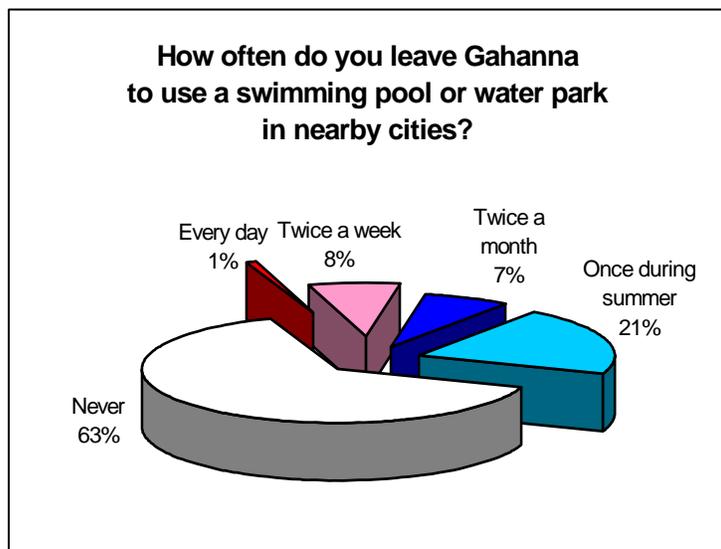
Even when children are factored into the equation, people who live in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward are least likely to visit one of the city's pools.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
During the summer months, how often do you or a member of your household visit one of the outdoor pools in Gahanna?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
About every day	13%	12%	15%	5%
At least twice a week	20%	24%	23%	13%
At least twice a month	9%	10%	10%	9%
At least once during the summer	16%	12%	19%	16%
Never	41%	39%	34%	56%

Fewer people leave Gahanna to use a swimming pool or water park in nearby cities than visit in Gahanna. However, nine percent of Gahanna's residents do leave the city at least once a week to visit swimming pools elsewhere.

Once again, the presence of children in the home impacts visits to swimming pools in neighboring cities. Fifty-five percent of the people who live with children visit a nearby city at least once during the summer to go swimming. Only twenty-five percent of Gahanna's residents who do not have children reported such a trip.

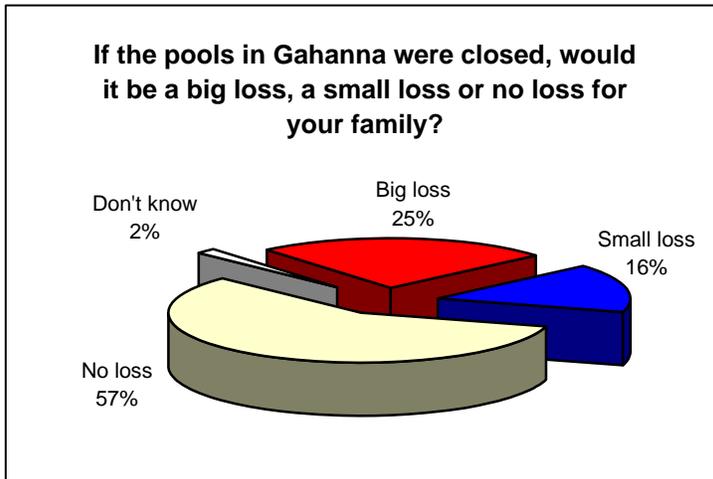
Although people who live in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward are unlikely to visit Gahanna's swimming pools, they are more likely than many of their neighbors to leave the city to visit one.



During the summer months, how often do you or a member leave Gahanna to visit a swimming pool or water park in a nearby city?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
About every day	1%	1%	1%	1%
At least twice a week	7%	5%	6%	12%
At least twice a month	8%	7%	6%	7%
At least once during the summer	25%	18%	21%	19%
Never	58%	68%	65%	60%

With the limited use of the city's pools, it is not surprising that more than half (57 percent) of the respondents said that closing the pools would be "no loss" for their family.

Understandably, those who visit one of the pools at least weekly during the summer are most likely to miss the pools if they should close. Sixty-nine percent of those frequent visitors feel the closing of the pools would be "a big loss" for their family. Another twenty-one percent would describe it as "a small loss."



People who visit the pool less often than monthly would find the pools closing a "small loss" (44 percent) more often than a "big loss" (31 percent).

Interestingly enough, some people like having the pools in the city even if they do not use them. Thirty-eight percent of the people who said the loss of the pools would be "a big loss" to their families never visit the pools during an average summer.

In light of the heavier use of the pools by families with children, it is understandable that those families would be more likely to find the pools' closing a "big loss" (36 percent) or "a small loss" (25 percent). Sixty nine percent of the residents who do not have children are likely to consider the closing of the pools "no loss at all."

If the pools in Gahanna were closed down due to lack of maintenance and funding, would you consider it to be a big loss, a small loss or no loss for your family?	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
A big loss	36%	18%
A small loss	25%	10%
Not loss at all	39%	69%
Don't know	1%	2%

Understandably, there is a difference in the perceptions of people who live in the city's four wards. Residents of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward would be most likely to miss the pools, while those who live in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward would be least disturbed by the pools' closing.

If the pools in Gahanna were closed down due to lack of maintenance and funding, would you consider it to be a big loss, a small loss or no loss for your family?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
A big loss	22%	25%	38%	15%
A small loss	20%	15%	10%	18%
Not loss at all	58%	58%	51%	64%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	3%

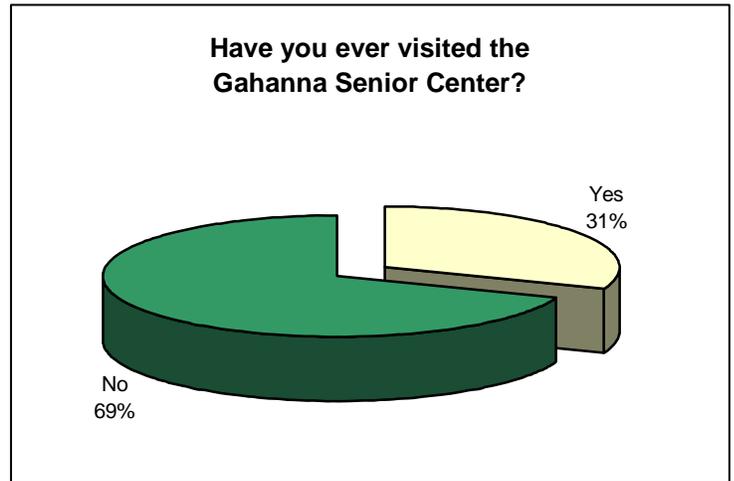
## Gahanna's Senior Center

One-third (31 percent) of Gahanna's residents have visited the city's Senior Center.

If senior citizens are defined as those over fifty-five years of age, about half (49 percent) of the targeted population has visited the center at least once.

The table below clearly shows that residents over seventy-five years of age are most likely to have visited Gahanna's Senior Center.

Interestingly enough, one-fourth (24 percent) of the people in the youngest age group has visited the center, possibly with older relatives.



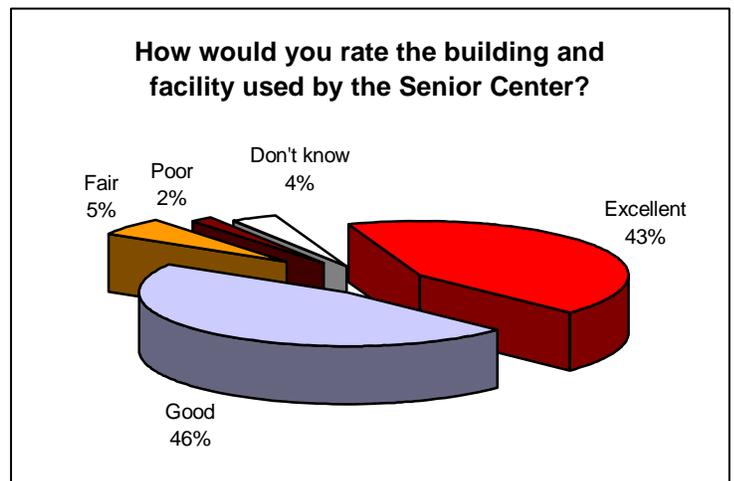
Have you ever visited the Gahanna Senior Center?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Yes	24%	6%	13%	22%	38%	48%	69%
No	76%	94%	87%	78%	61%	52%	31%

People who live in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wards are most likely to have visited the Senior Center.

Have you ever visited the Gahanna Senior Center?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Yes	28%	40%	36%	21%
No	72%	61%	64%	79%

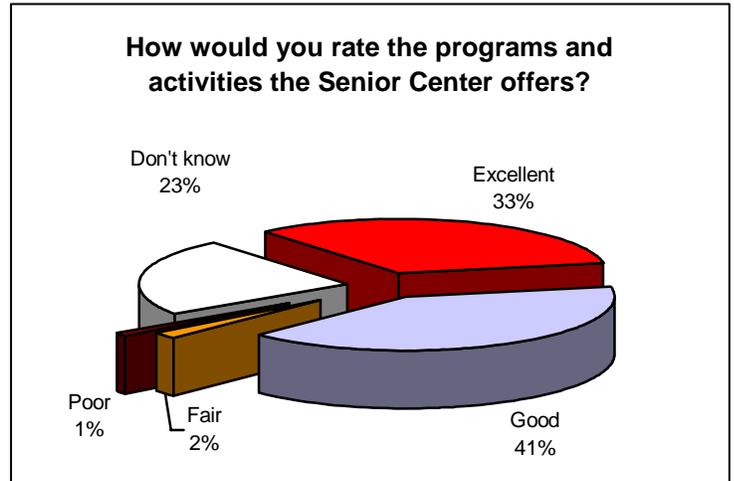
Everyone who has visited the center at least once was asked to rate the building and facility used by the Senior Center. Consequently, this question was asked of thirty-one percent of the people interviewed, or one hundred eighty-five people.

The great majority (89 percent) of the people polled consider the facility "excellent" (43 percent) or "good" (46 percent).



Although most of the people who have visited the Senior Center felt comfortable rating the facility, when asked to rate the programs and activities offered there, a significant share (23 percent) selected the "don't know" response. Even with the large number of "don't know" responses, three-fourths (74 percent) consider the programs and activities "excellent" (33 percent) or "good" (41 percent).

There are some differences in the views of people across the age groups. It seems that people between fifty-six and sixty-five find the activities less favorable than do their older neighbors.



Asked of those who have visited the Senior Center [n=185]							
How would you rate the programs and activities the Senior Center offers?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Excellent	0%	0%	36%	23%	29%	44%	39%
Good	0%	0%	36%	35%	50%	41%	32%
Fair	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%	5%	0%
Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	5%
Very poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don't know	0%	0%	29%	39%	17%	10%	24%

## Programs and Activities in Gahanna's City Parks

Gahanna's Department of Parks and Recreation offers a wide variety of programs for all ages and is interested in learning the groups that the public feels are well served and those groups that could benefit from additional programming. In the table below, it is evident that significant shares of Gahanna's voters "*don't know*" about the city's recreational programs.

The programs in the table below are listed in descending order by the share of voters who believes the targeted population is well served by current programs. For example, more than half (51 percent) of the people polled believe there is the "*right amount*" of sports programming for children between six and sixteen years of age. At the end of the list are "*programs other than sports for young adults between seventeen and thirty*," where twenty-eight percent of the people polled would like to see additional programming developed.

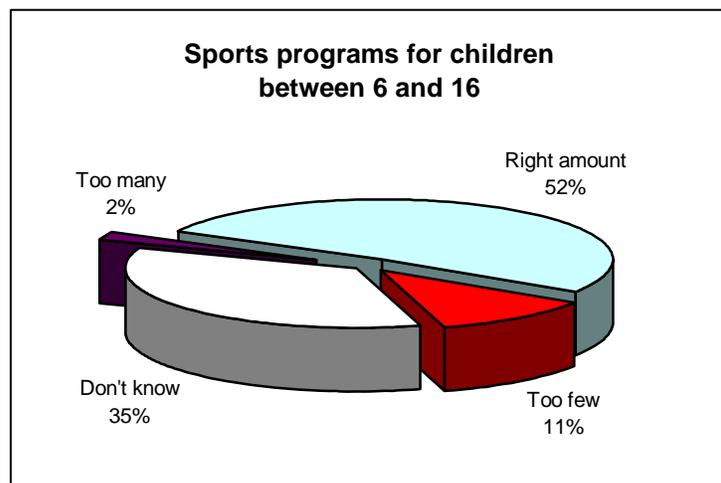
	Too many	Right amount	Too few	Don't know
Sports programs for children between 6 and 16	2%	51%	11%	35%
Sports programs for adults 17 and older	1%	30%	17%	53%
Programs, other than sports, for adults	1%	30%	26%	44%
Programs for families	0%	30%	26%	44%
Programs for preschool age children	1%	27%	14%	58%
Programs, other than sports, for children between 6 and 16	1%	26%	23%	50%
Programs, other than sports, for young adults between 17 and 30	1%	17%	28%	55%

### Sports programs for children between six and sixteen

Sports programs for young people from elementary school through high school are meeting the needs of Gahanna residents. When asked if there are "*too many activities and programs of this kind, the right amount or too few*," more than half (52 percent) of those interviewed feel that there is adequate programming of this kind. Another eleven percent thinks there are "*too few*" sports programs for this age group.

Parents of children under eighteen are twice as likely (16 percent) as those who do not live with children (8 percent) to think there are "*too few*" sports programs for children between ages six and sixteen.

Yet, overall, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of the parents think there is the "*right amount*" of these sport programs.

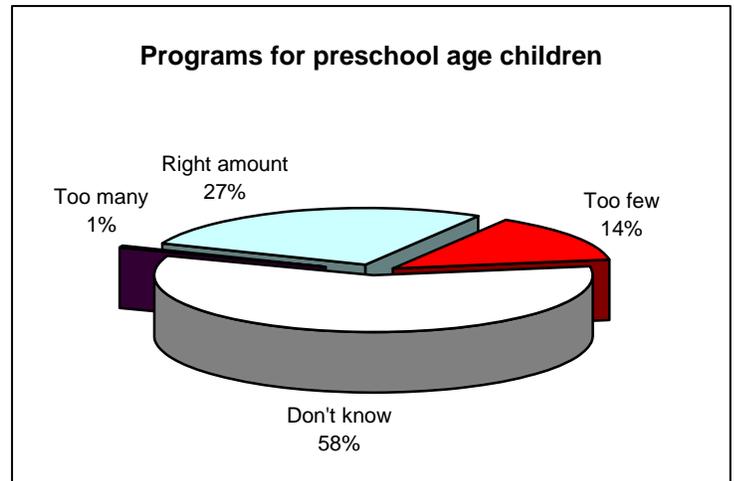


Sports programs for children between six and sixteen years of age	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Too many	3%	2%
Right amount	64%	44%
Too few	16%	8%
Don't know	17%	46%

### Programs for preschool age children

Programming for preschool children is unfamiliar to many Gahanna residents. When asked to rate these programs, fifty-eight percent of the residents selected the "don't know" response. Among the people who did rate these programs (those who did not select the "don't know" response), two-thirds feel there is the "right amount" of preschool programs.

Although parents are more likely to have rated the number of preschool programs, even among the people who live with children, forty-one percent selected the "don't know" response. Understandably, people who do not live with young people selected the "don't know" response in the majority (68 percent) of cases.



Programs for preschool age children	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Too many	1%	1%
Right amount	37%	21%
Too few	21%	10%
Don't know	41%	68%

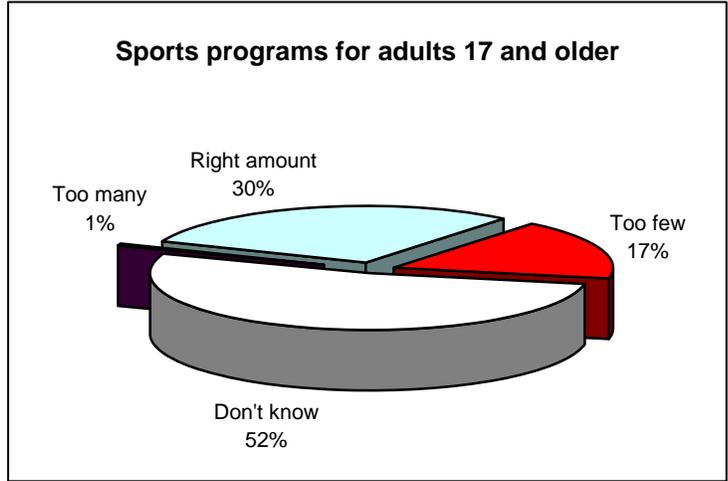
Thirty percent of the people who have children have at least one preschool age child. Among the parents of preschool children, more than one-third (36 percent) feels there are "too few" programs for their children.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
Programs for preschool age children	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Too many	0%	0%	0%	2%
Right amount	39%	43%	43%	34%
Too few	36%	20%	11%	14%
Don't know	24%	37%	46%	49%

Sport programs for adults 17 and older

When asked to rate the number of sports programs for adults age seventeen and older, half (52 percent) of the respondents selected the "don't know" response. Among those who did evaluate the number of adult sports programs (i.e., did not choose the "don't know" response), thirty-six percent feels there are "too few" programs, while sixty-two percent thinks there is the "right amount."

Interest in additional sports programs is strongest among adults under twenty-five years of age, where forty-four percent selected the "too few" option.



Sport programs for adults 17 and older	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Too many	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Right amount	32%	32%	32%	30%	31%	22%	25%
Too few	44%	23%	19%	22%	18%	6%	3%
Don't know	24%	45%	47%	46%	51%	72%	71%

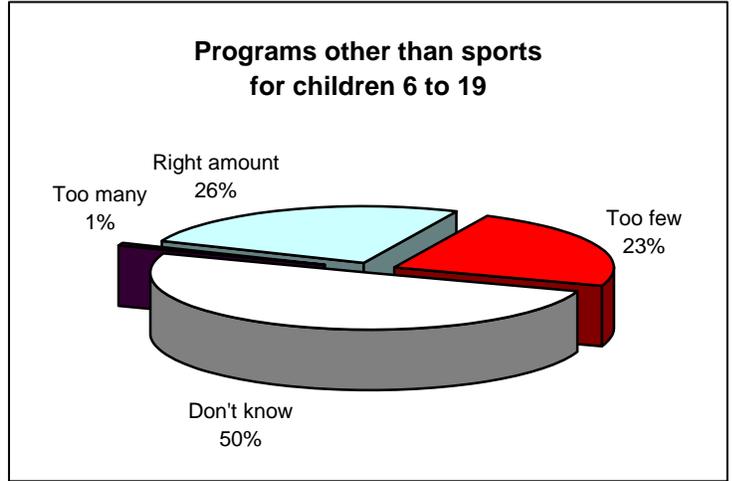
Interestingly enough, people who live in the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward are particularly likely to want additional adult sports programs.

Sport programs for adults 17 and older	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Too many	0%	0%	1%	2%
Right amount	34%	34%	30%	20%
Too few	24%	15%	16%	16%
Don't know	43%	51%	54%	62%

Programs other than sports for children 6 and 19

Recreational programming for school age children is unknown to half (50 percent) of those interviewed. Those who know enough about these programs to rate them (i.e., did not choose the "don't know" response), are divided between thinking there is the "right amount" (52 percent) of programming other than sports for children, and the belief that there are "too few" (47 percent) other programs.

In this case, there is a direct relationship between the respondents' ages and the perceived need for more children's programming that is not sports related. The younger the respondent, the more likely he or she is to feel there are too few of these programs. Conversely, the older the respondent, the more likely it is that the "don't know" response was selected.



Programs other than sports for children ages 6 to 16	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Too many	4%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Right amount	28%	23%	33%	27%	26%	16%	24%
Too few	48%	25%	32%	31%	18%	14%	3%
Don't know	20%	51%	34%	41%	55%	70%	73%

Parents are more familiar with the programs for school age children and are likely to feel there are not enough of these programs.

Programs other than sports for children ages 6 to 16	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Too many	1%	1%
Right amount	33%	21%
Too few	35%	16%
Don't know	31%	62%

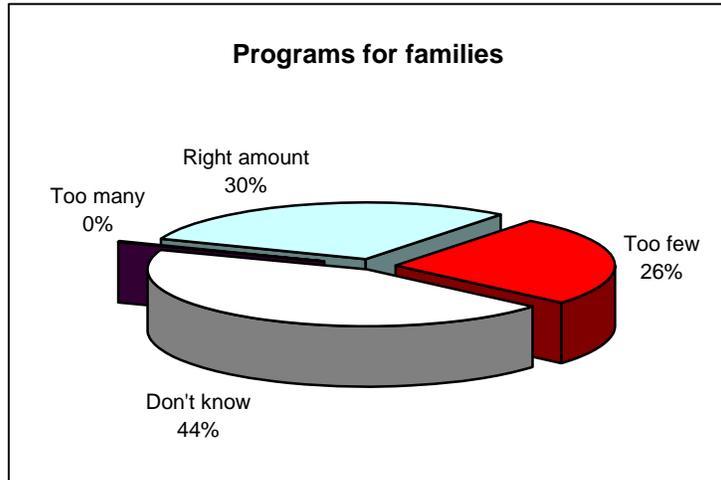
A significant share of the parents of students in each grade level would support additional non-sports programming for Gahanna's children.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
Programs other than sports for children ages 6 to 16	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Too many	2%	0%	1%	2%
Right amount	29%	41%	37%	32%
Too few	26%	41%	36%	38%
Don't know	44%	19%	26%	28%

Programs for families

More than one in four (26 percent) Gahanna residents feel there are "too few" programs for families offered by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Across age groups, people under thirty-six are very likely to feel there are "too few" family programs, but even in the oldest group, ten percent feel there are "too few" of these programs.



Programs for families	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Too many	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Right amount	40%	19%	34%	31%	32%	25%	25%
Too few	40%	47%	34%	27%	21%	14%	12%
Don't know	20%	34%	31%	41%	47%	62%	63

Understandably, people who live with children are more likely to evaluate the number of family programs offered than those who do not have children. Parents are also more than twice as likely (40 percent) as those who do not have children (18 percent) to feel that there are "too few" family programs.

Programs for families	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Too many	0%	0%
Right amount	30%	29%
Too few	40%	18%
Don't know	30%	53%

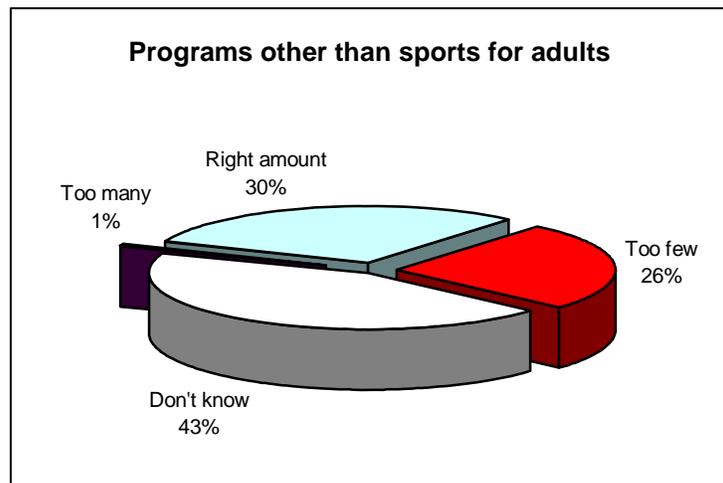
Among parents, those who have preschool age children are most likely to want additional programs for families.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
Programs for families	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Too many	0%	0%	0%	1%
Right amount	24%	30%	34%	31%
Too few	48%	39%	29%	38%
Don't know	27%	30%	37%	30%

#### Programs other than sports for adults

Twenty-six percent of the adults interviewed would like Gahanna's Department of Parks and Recreation to offer more adult programming that is not sports related.

Women (62 percent) are more likely than men (49 percent) to rate the number of adult programs. Twenty-nine percent of the women would like to see more adult programming that is not sports related.



Adult programs other than sports	Gender	
	Male	Female
Too many	0%	1%
Right amount	27%	33%
Too few	21%	29%
Don't know	51%	38%

People under sixty-five would like to see additional adult programming. It may be that older residents would rely on the Senior Center for programs.

Adult programs other than sports	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Too many	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Right amount	24%	23%	29%	28%	34%	36%	29%
Too few	48%	36%	25%	32%	29%	7%	10%
Don't know	28%	42%	45%	38%	37%	57%	61%

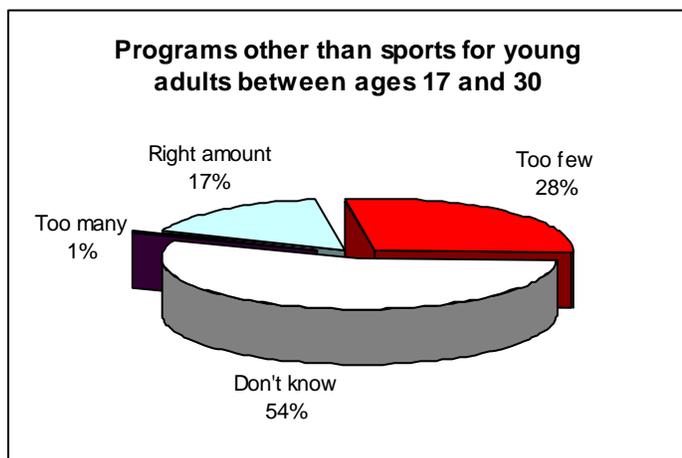
Residents of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward are more likely than other Gahanna residents to feel there are too few adult programs that are not sports related.

Adult programs other than sports	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Too many	1%	0%	0%	1%
Right amount	30%	36%	25%	29%
Too few	32%	26%	27%	17%
Don't know	37%	38%	48%	53%

Programs other than sports for young adults between ages 17 and 30

Programming for young adults is the area that the largest share of Gahanna residents feels has "too few" programs. More than one resident in four (28 percent) would like to see additional programs developed for this population.

Women are more likely (32 percent) than men (24 percent) to feel there are too few young adult programs that are not sports related.



Programs other than sports for young adults between ages 17 and 30	Gender	
	Male	Female
Too many	1%	0%
Right amount	17%	16%
Too few	24%	32%
Don't know	58%	52%

More than half (52 percent) of the group of people between eighteen and twenty-five believes there are *"too few"* programs for their age group. There is also a second peak of interest in the middle age group of forty-six to fifty-five. Members of this older group are often parents of high school or college students looking for ways their children can remain engaged in the community.

Programs other than sports for young adults between ages 17 and 30	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Too many	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Right amount	24%	15%	20%	15%	15%	17%	14%
Too few	52%	32%	27%	41%	30%	9%	10%
Don't know	24%	53%	52%	42%	55%	74%	76%

Residents of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Wards are more likely than their neighbors in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wards to believe there are *"too few"* programs for young adults.

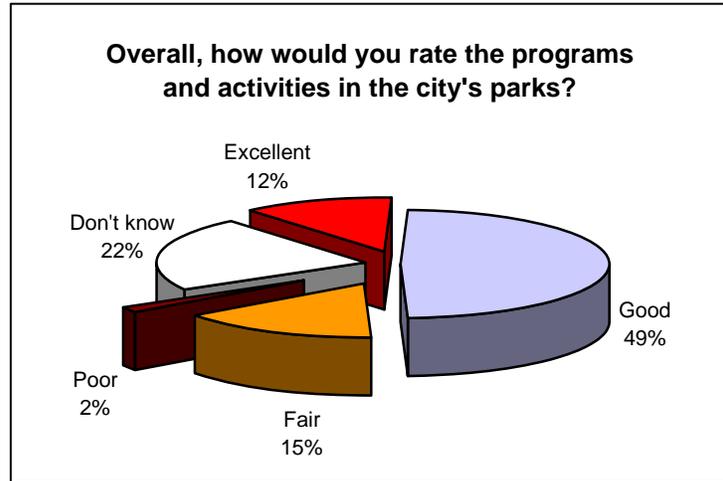
Programs other than sports for young adults between ages 17 and 30	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Too many	1%	0%	0%	1%
Right amount	17%	18%	16%	14%
Too few	33%	31%	27%	23%
Don't know	49%	50%	57%	62%

Overall rating of Gahanna's programs and activities

Gahanna's residents are generally well pleased with the programs and activities offered by the city's Department of Parks and Recreation. When asked to rate the programs overall on a scale of "excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor" a majority (61 percent) selected the "excellent" (12 percent) or "good" (49 percent) responses.

The most significant variation in responses is reflected in familiarity with the programs, or the number of "don't know" responses.

For example, the difference in perceptions across the age spectrum is most strongly impacted by the increase in the "don't know" responses after age forty-five.



Overall, how would you rate the programs and activities in the city's parks?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Excellent/Good	60%	68%	65%	58%	65%	55%	49%
Fair	28%	17%	23%	19%	11%	9%	7%
Poor/Very poor	0%	4%	2%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Don't know	12%	11%	10%	20%	23%	36%	42%

People who live with children were much more likely to offer an overall rating of the parks' programs, and to be more positive in their evaluation, than were those who do not have children.

Overall, how would you rate the programs and activities in the city's parks?	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Excellent/Good	68%	56%
Fair	19%	13%
Poor/Very poor	2%	1%
Don't know	10%	29%

Parents of preschool age children are particularly favorable in their opinion of the programming, although the parents in all age groups are more favorable in their evaluation than are people who do not live with children.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
Overall, how would you rate the programs and activities in the city's parks?	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Excellent/Good	73%	70%	71%	60%
Fair	18%	20%	17%	26%
Poor/Very poor	2%	4%	4%	1%
Don't know	8%	6%	7%	12%

## Recreational facility needs

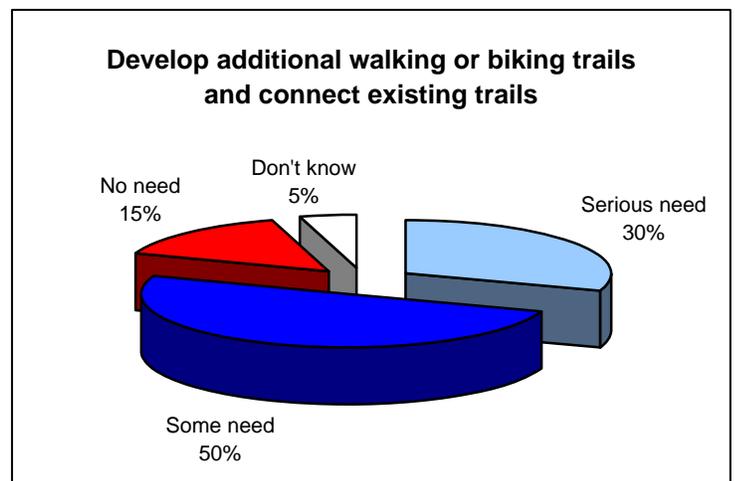
The facilities available to the Department of Parks and Recreation strongly impact the programming that is possible. Twelve facility options were presented to respondents who were asked if they perceive a *"serious need, some need but not serious, or no need"* for each option.

It is quite evident from the table below that the community sees the greatest need to be the development of additional walking or biking trails. The column headed "TOTAL NEED" is the combination of *"serious need"* and *"some need but not serious"* responses. Eighty-one percent of the people polled see a need to develop more trails that could link existing trails. This is thirteen percentage points higher than the next perceived need in the community.

	Serious need	Some need	TOTAL NEED	No need	DON'T KNOW
Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails	30%	51%	81%	15%	5%
Provide additional restroom facilities at the city's parks	33%	35%	68%	18%	14%
Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds	20%	44%	64%	25%	12%
Build a community recreation center	28%	35%	63%	30%	7%
Provide additional indoor recreation space	19%	43%	62%	28%	11%
Provide additional parking around current parks	21%	35%	56%	32%	12%
Provide meeting rooms for use by community groups	16%	38%	51%	30%	17%
Build a complex for softball or baseball	12%	34%	46%	44%	11%
Provide additional outdoor basketball courts	11%	34%	45%	37%	18%
Build an indoor swimming pool	15%	29%	44%	53%	3%
Expand and renovate space for the Senior Center	13%	29%	42%	16%	42%
Provide additional gymnasiums	13%	27%	40%	47%	15%

### Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails

Eighty-one percent of the Gahanna residents contacted for this study believes there is *"a serious need"* (30 percent) or *"some need"* (51 percent) to develop additional walking or biking trails and to connect existing trails.



Walking trails are of greater interest to women than to men. Women are more likely to see a need for developing additional trails (83 percent) than are their male counterparts (77 percent).

Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails	Gender	
	Male	Female
Serious/Some need	77%	83%
No need	19%	11%
Don't know	4%	5%

There is some variation in the perceived need across age groups, with people between the ages of twenty-six and fifty-five more likely to see a need for an improved trail system.

Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	76%	92%	88%	84%	79%	73%	66%
No need	20%	6%	11%	14%	18%	16%	22%
Don't know	4%	2%	1%	2%	4%	11%	12%

Since women perceive a greater need for walking trails, it is not surprising that in each age group, except the twenty-six to thirty-five year olds, women were more inclined to believe that there is a need for additional walking trails.

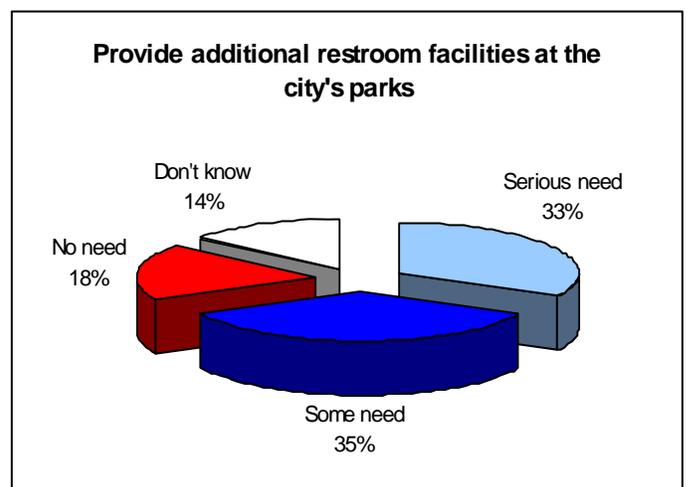
Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails: <i>Serious need or some need, but not serious</i>	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Women	100%	88%	90%	92%	78%	75%	65%
Men	63%	100%	85%	75%	79%	70%	62%

Provide additional restroom facilities at the city's parks

The convenience of restroom facilities in city parks is something many residents would like to see expanded. Two-thirds (68 percent) of the Gahanna residents interviewed believe there is a "serious need" (33 percent) or "some need" (35 percent) for additional restroom facilities in the city parks.

Women are more likely (73 percent) than men (62 percent) to see a need for additional restrooms in the parks.

The presence of children in the household also increases the perceived need for restroom facilities. Three-fourths (73 percent) of the respondents who live with children would like



additional facilities, while only sixty-four percent of the people who do not live with children share that view.

Parents of preschool and elementary school age children are more likely to want additional restrooms in the park than the parents of older children.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
Provide additional restroom facilities at the city's parks	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Serious/Some need	83%	76%	66%	63%
No need	11%	20%	30%	19%
Don't know	6%	4%	4%	8%

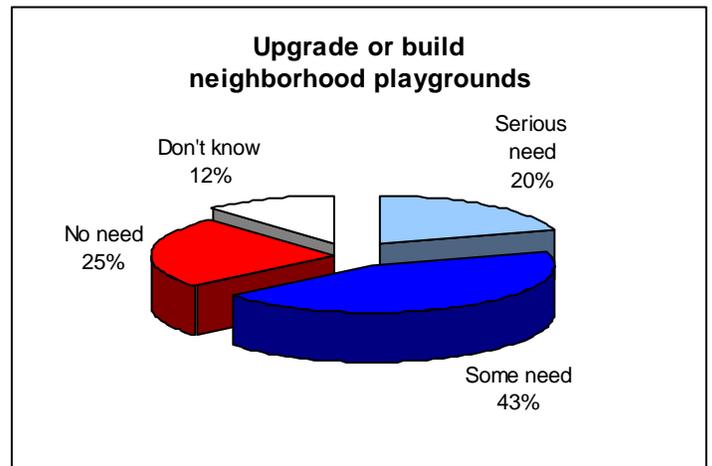
Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds

Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of the Gahanna voters interviewed feel there is a "serious need" (20 percent) or "some need" (44 percent) to upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds.

In this instance, there is no difference in the need seen by men (64 percent) and women (64 percent).

Two variables strongly influence the perceived need for neighborhood playgrounds, the ward in which the respondent lives and the presence of children in the home.

People who live in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward (an area with many apartments and condominiums) are most likely to want neighborhood playgrounds.



Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Serious/Some need	60%	64%	72%	59%
No need	30%	26%	15%	28%
Don't know	11%	10%	13%	13%

The other influence on response is the presence of children in the home. More than three-fourths (76 percent) of the people who live with children see a need for more or upgraded playgrounds. Only fifty-seven percent of the respondents without children share that view and twenty-eight percent feel there is "no need" to build additional playgrounds.

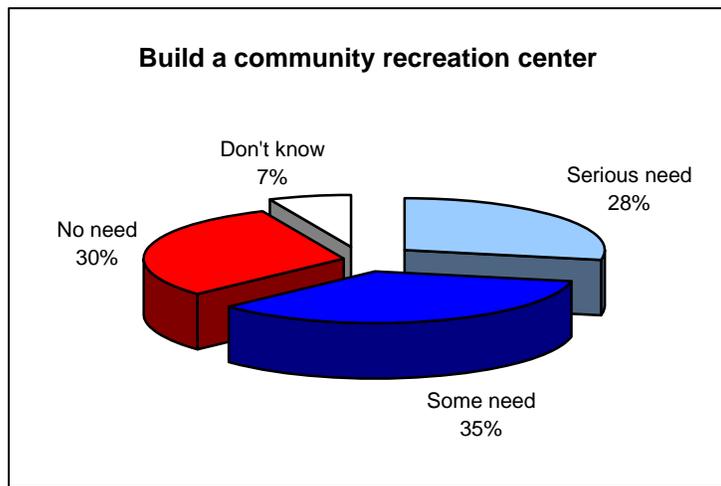
Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Serious/Some need	66%	57%
No need	18%	28%
Don't know	6%	15%

Build a community recreation center

Sixty-three percent of Gahanna's residents believe that there is a need to build a community recreation center, and twenty-eight percent believe it is a "serious need."

Interestingly enough, women are more likely to see a need for a community recreation center (67 percent) than are men (59 percent).

Support for the construction of a community center is strongest among people age thirty-five and younger, but at least half of every age group sees at least some need for the facility.



Build a community recreation center	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	72%	72%	68%	65%	63%	50%	54%
No need	20%	23%	29%	28%	34%	41%	24%
Don't know	8%	6%	3%	7%	2%	9%	22%

Children have a strong influence on the perceived need for a multigenerational community recreation center. Parents are considerably more likely to see a need for a community recreation center (71 percent) than are voters who do not live with children (58 percent).

The age of those children is also influential. If the children are in elementary school or are preschool age, the perceived need is greater than when the children are older.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
Build a community recreation center	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Serious/Some need	77%	73%	64%	65%
No need	20%	23%	33%	32%
Don't know	3%	4%	3%	3%

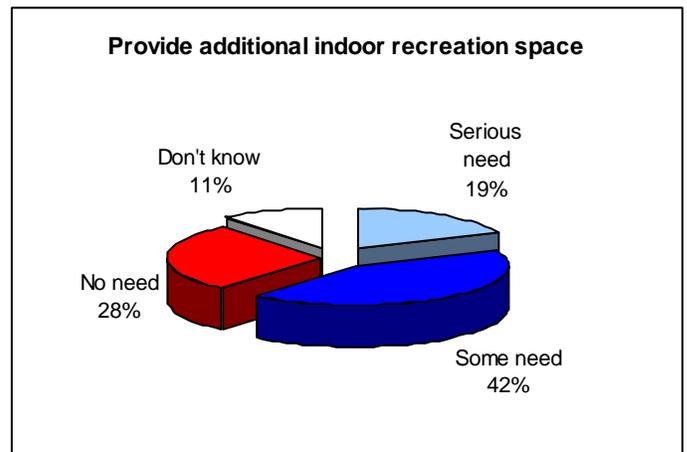
Once again, there is a geographic influence. Two thirds of the voters in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wards see a need for a recreation center, while only fifty-five percent of those in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward share that view.

Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Serious/Some need	66%	66%	66%	55%
No need	28%	27%	27%	39%
Don't know	6%	7%	7%	7%

Provide additional indoor recreation space

Three voters in five (62 percent) believe there is a need for additional indoor recreation space in Gahanna, but fewer than one in five (19 percent) would say there is a "serious need."

There is an interesting trend across age groups, with a direct negative correlation between the age of the respondent and the perceived need for additional indoor recreation space through the oldest group, where voters again see a need for more space.



Provide additional indoor recreation space	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	80%	73%	70%	68%	58%	34%	54%
No need	16%	15%	27%	25%	33%	42%	22%
Don't know	4%	11%	3%	7%	9%	23%	24%

Again, parents are more likely to identify a need (73 percent) than are people who do not have children (55 percent) and the younger the child, the greater the perceived need.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
Provide additional indoor recreation space	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Serious/Some need	82%	76%	71%	70%
No need	11%	20%	29%	27%
Don't know	8%	4%	0%	3%

Residents of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward are less likely to see a need for additional indoor recreational spaces. Yet, more than one half (54 percent) of the voters in that ward see a need for additional indoor recreation space.

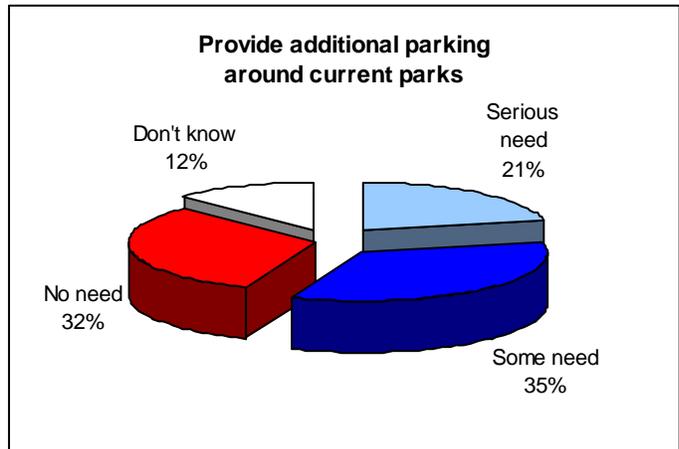
Provide additional indoor recreation space	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Serious/Some need	60%	67%	63%	55%
No need	29%	23%	28%	32%
Don't know	11%	9%	9%	14%

Provide additional parking around current parks

Parking during special events can be a problem around some Gahanna parks. However, when asked about the need for additional parking around Gahanna's parks, only one in five (21 percent) residents considers it a "serious need."

Interestingly enough, gender is the only indication of the perceived need. Women are more likely to see a need to expand parking (60 percent) than are men (52 percent).

The perceived need for additional parking is fairly consistent across the city's four wards.



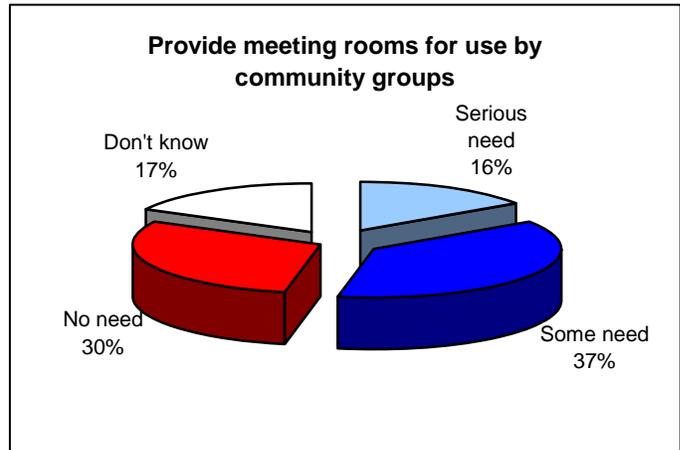
Provide additional parking around current parks	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Serious/Some need	59%	59%	52%	54%
No need	30%	29%	34%	34%
Don't know	11%	13%	14%	11%

Provide meeting rooms for use by community groups

About half (53 percent) of Gahanna voters see a need for additional meeting rooms to serve community groups, and only sixteen percent consider it a "serious need."

Women (56 percent) are more likely than men (49 percent) to feel there is a shortage of meeting rooms.

Only in the two oldest age groups do fewer than half of the voters surveyed feel that there is not a need for community meeting space.

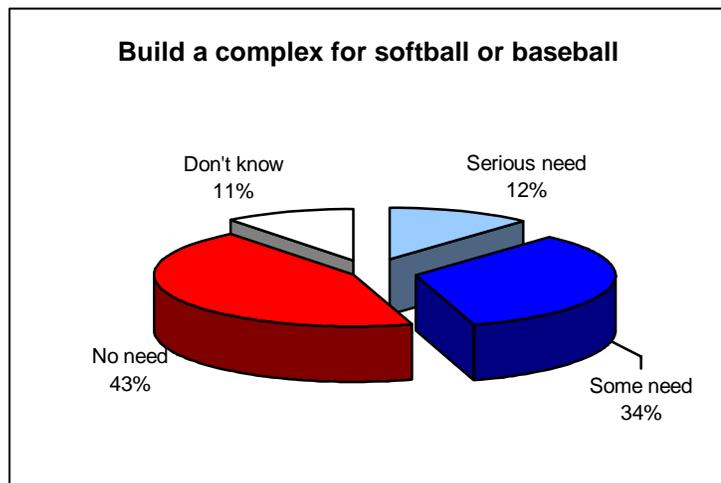


Provide meeting rooms for use by community groups	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	52%	56%	55%	58%	55%	45%	43%
No need	32%	25%	26%	27%	35%	32%	29%
Don't know	16%	19%	18%	15%	9%	23%	29%

Build a complex for softball or baseball

Fewer than half (46 percent) of the people interviewed see a need for a new softball/baseball complex in Gahanna, while forty-three percent say there is "no need".

Support for a new ball complex is highest among the youngest voters, while fewer than one in three people over age sixty-five see a need for such a complex.



Build a complex for softball or baseball	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	72%	51%	43%	51%	47%	30%	35%
No need	28%	34%	51%	41%	45%	57%	36%
Don't know	0%	15%	6%	8%	9%	12%	29%

There is an interesting trend seen with the length of time a person has resided in Gahanna. Voters who moved into the city during the past ten years are more likely to see a need for a softball/baseball complex than are more long-term residents.

People who have been Gahanna residents for longer than ten years, a group that accounts for sixty-five percent of the people interviewed, are more likely to feel there is "no need" for a ball complex (50 percent) than to see a need for this facility (39 percent).

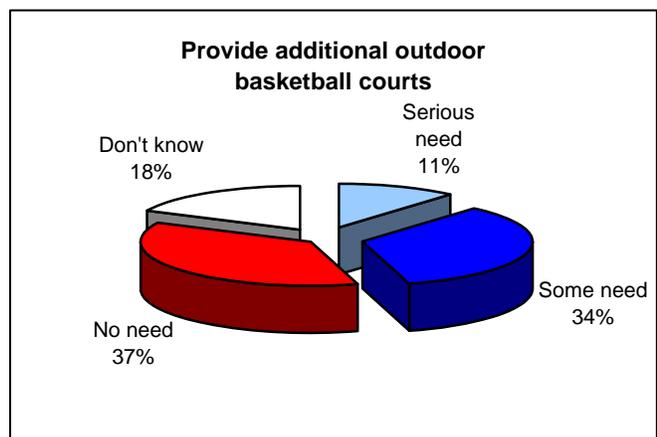
Build a complex for softball or baseball	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?				
	Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	Longer than 20 years
Serious/Some need	53%	57%	55%	45%	36%
No need	35%	28%	36%	46%	54%
Don't know	12%	14%	9%	10%	11%

Once again, people who live with children are more likely to see a need for a softball or baseball complex (52 percent) than are residents who do not share their homes with children (41 percent). In this case, the age of the children is not particularly influential.

Provide additional outdoor basketball courts

Forty-five percent of Gahanna's registered voters would like to have additional outdoor basketball courts available. Thirty-seven percent see "no need" for more courts.

The desire for more courts is likely driven by personal interest in playing basketball rather than any other factor. There is no geographic influence that relates to the courts' current availability.



Age is influential in broad terms. People under the age of forty-five are more likely than their older neighbors to think that Gahanna would benefit from additional outdoor basketball courts.

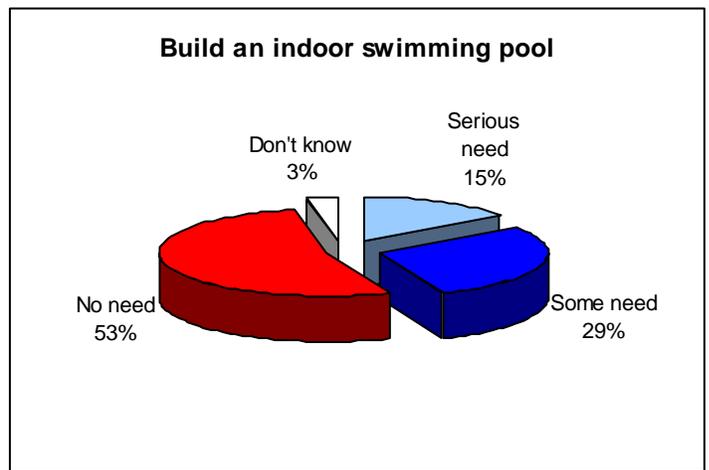
Provide additional outdoor basketball courts	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	52%	59%	54%	43%	46%	35%	36%
No need	36%	21%	38%	40%	36%	40%	37%
Don't know	12%	21%	8%	17%	18%	26%	27%

Build an indoor swimming pool

Only forty-four percent of Gahanna's residents see a need for a community indoor swimming pool while more than half (53 percent) feel there is "no need."

Women are a bit more likely to see a need for a pool (47 percent) than are men (41 percent).

There is a direct correlation between residents' ages and their opinion regarding the need for an indoor pool. More than three-fifths (63 percent) of the people age thirty-five or younger believes there is a need for an indoor pool, as compared to only one-third (34 percent) of people over sixty-five.



Build an indoor pool	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	68%	60%	46%	43%	44%	33%	36%
No need	32%	38%	54%	57%	55%	59%	51%
Don't know	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	9%	14%

Only in the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward do more than half of the voters polled feel there is a need for a community indoor pool. In the other wards, a majority sees "no need."

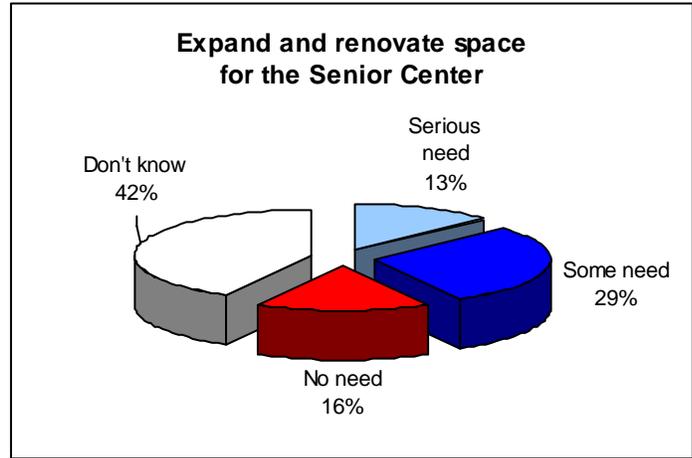
Build an indoor swimming pool	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Serious/Some need	53%	43%	40%	40%
No need	43%	52%	56%	59%
Don't know	3%	4%	4%	1%

Fewer than half (47 percent) of the people who currently use Gahanna's outdoor pools at least once each week during the summer (16 percent of the voters interviewed) sees a need for an indoor pool.

Expand and renovate space for the Senior Center

As already discussed, fewer than one-third of Gahanna's registered voters have ever visited the city's Senior Center. When asked about the need to "expand and renovate space for the Senior Center" forty-two percent of the people interviewed selected the "don't know" response. A like share (42 percent) believes the Senior Center should be expanded and renovated.

Interestingly enough, there is not a direct link between age and perception of the need for a renovated Senior Center. It is interesting to note that people over age sixty-six are most likely to say there is "no need" for additional improved space.



Expand and renovate space for the Senior Center	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	56%	27%	27%	42%	51%	49%	44%
No need	12%	8%	15%	17%	12%	22%	27%
Don't know	32%	66%	58%	41%	36%	28%	29%

Fifty-nine percent of the people who have visited the Senior Center believe there is a need to expand and renovate the center's space. Those who have not visited the center are likely to select the "don't know" response (55 percent).

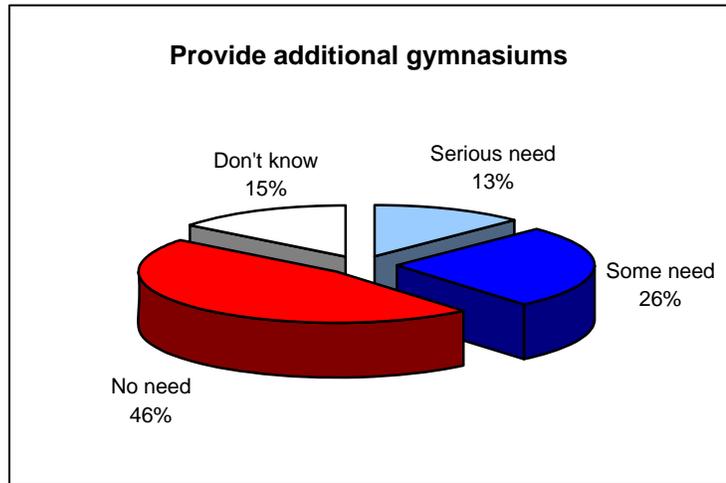
Expand and renovate space for the Senior Center	Have you ever visited the Senior Center?	
	Yes	No
Serious/Some need	59%	35%
No need	27%	11%
Don't know	14%	55%

Provide additional gymnasiums

Two fifths (39 percent) of the residents who took part in this study think that there is a "serious need" (13 percent) or "some need" (27 percent) for additional gymnasiums in Gahanna, while forty-

seven percent feels there is "no need" for these facilities.

People who live with children are more likely to see a need for more gymnasiums (48 percent) than are those who do not (34 percent). This is more understandable in light of the direct correlation with age. The younger the voter, the more likely he or she is to see a need for additional gymnasiums.



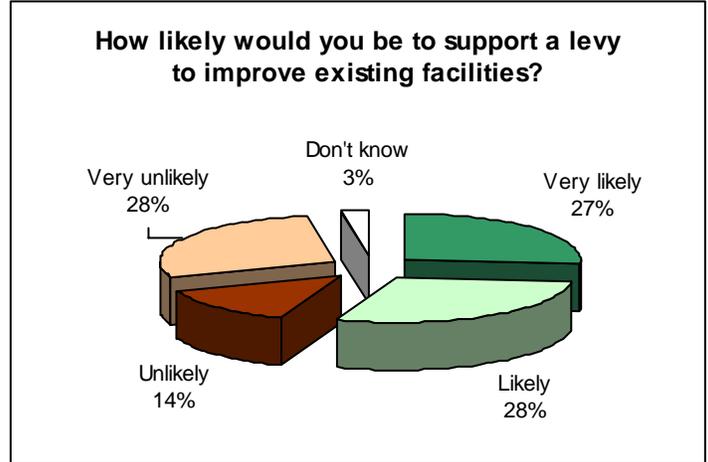
Provide additional gymnasiums	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	60%	51%	44%	44%	41%	24%	17%
No need	24%	28%	48%	46%	47%	60%	47%
Don't know	16%	21%	8%	10%	12%	16%	36%

## What voters will support

Gahanna's parks are appreciated as an important element of the city's overall quality of life. To maintain and enhance the quality of those parks is an ever-increasing challenge for limited municipal budgets. Voters were asked a variety of questions concerning their willingness to increase taxes in order to sustain and improve the city's recreational facilities.

The first option presented to respondents is a tax increase to improve the city's current park facilities and to enhance the city's trails and bike paths. The estimated cost for those improvements may require \$15 million, in addition to the parks' current budget. Voters were asked if they would be willing to support an increase in taxes, which would raise their monthly tax bills by approximately \$10 per month, to improve Gahanna's parks. Fifty-five percent of the voters polled would be willing to support a tax increase to improve the city's current park facilities and to expand the bike paths.

There is a direct negative correlation between the age of the respondent and his or her willingness to increase taxes to improve the city's parks. More than half of the people under sixty-five years of age are willing to increase taxes to enhance the parks, with the strongest support coming from people under age forty-five.



How likely would you be to support a levy to improve existing facilities?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Very/Somewhat likely	76%	71%	66%	56%	54%	34%	44%
Very/Somewhat unlikely	24%	28%	30%	42%	43%	64%	48%
Don't know	0%	0%	4%	3%	3%	1%	8%

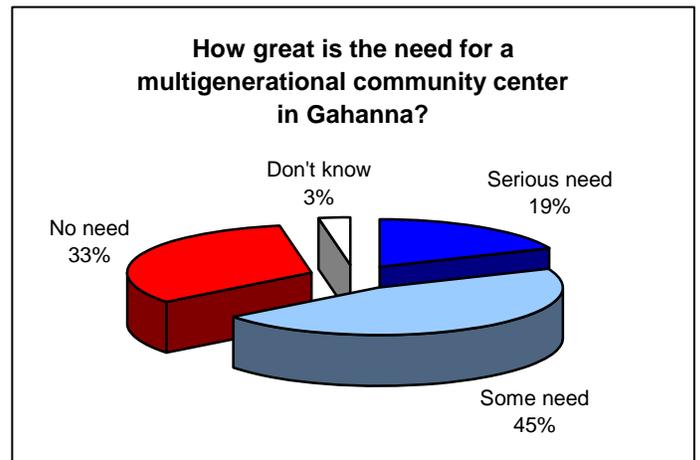
A similar influence on support for a parks levy is the length of time a person has lived in Gahanna. People who moved into the city during the past five years (a group that accounts for 18 percent of the city's voters) are far more supportive of the passing of a tax levy to enhance the parks than are those who have lived in the city longer.

How likely would you be to support a levy to improve existing facilities?	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?				
	Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	Longer than 20 years
Very/Somewhat likely	76%	70%	59%	54%	57%
Very/Somewhat unlikely	12%	26%	38%	42%	52%
Don't know	12%	3%	3%	4%	1%

Across the four wards of the city, voters in the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward are least likely to support a tax levy (51 percent) and residents of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward are most likely (61 percent).

How likely would you be to support a levy to improve existing facilities?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Very/Somewhat likely	51%	56%	61%	54%
Very/Somewhat unlikely	47%	41%	34%	44%
Don't know	1%	3%	5%	3%

Some people have suggested that the city of Gahanna should build a multigenerational community recreation center similar to the one in Westerville, Ohio. The building could include areas for senior citizens, community meeting rooms, an indoor pool and a fitness facility. Voters were asked if they personally see a "serious need, some need but not serious or no need" for such a facility. Two-thirds (65 percent) of the people polled see a need for such a center but only nineteen percent consider it "a serious need." One voter in three (33 percent) sees "no need" for a community center.



Newly arrived residents may have expected to find a recreation center. People who moved to Gahanna during the past five years are more likely to see a need for a community center (77 percent) than are those who have been residents six to twenty years (66 percent) or longer than twenty years (56 percent).

The perceived need for a community center is stronger among voters under fifty-six years of age than with their older counterparts.

How great is the need for a multigenerational community center in Gahanna?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Serious/Some need	76%	80%	72%	64%	59%	59%	52%
No need	24%	17%	28%	33%	38%	37%	42%
Don't know	0%	4%	0%	3%	3%	3%	6%

Parents of children under the age of eighteen are much more likely to see a need for a recreation center (72 percent) than people who do not have children (59 percent). Among the parents, those whose children are younger than high school age are more likely to perceive a need for a community center.

People who live with children under the age of 18				
How great is the need for a multigenerational community center in Gahanna?	What grade level do those children attend?			
	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Serious/Some need	83%	78%	79%	63%
No need	14%	23%	21%	35%
Don't know	3%	0%	0%	2%

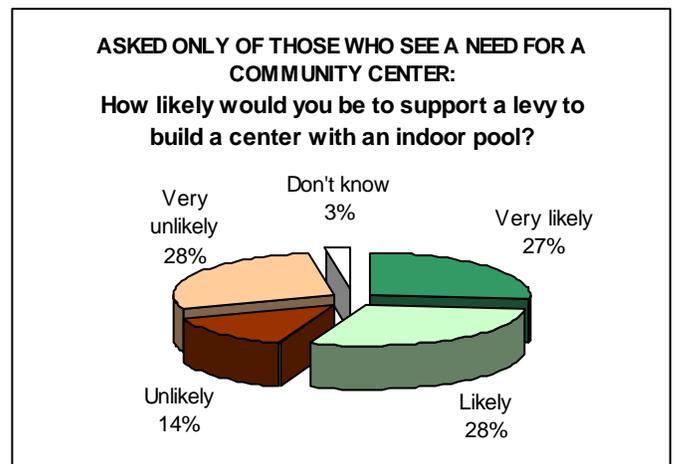
4<sup>th</sup> Ward residents are the least likely to see a need for a community recreation center, but even among those voters, a majority does see a need.

How great is the need for a multigenerational community center in Gahanna?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Serious/Some need	68%	65%	66%	60%
No need	30%	33%	31%	38%
Don't know	2%	2%	4%	3%

The four hundred people who believe there is a need for a multigenerational community center in Gahanna were asked if they would be willing to pay an additional \$14 on their monthly tax bills to raise the \$18 million necessary to build a center with new space for the Senior Center, a fitness area, meeting space, gyms and an indoor pool. Two-thirds (65 percent) of those voters would be willing to support such a community center.

This means that forty-three percent of all Gahanna's voters would support a levy to build a community center with an indoor pool.

Support is strongest among voters under forty-five years of age.



Share likely to support a levy to build a multigenerational community center with an indoor pool.	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Share of those who see a need for a community recreation center	79%	69%	71%	64%	66%	52%	48%
Share of all voters	60%	57%	51%	43%	41%	32%	27%

With the younger profile, it is not surprising that people who live with children are more likely to say they would support a levy to build the community center as described.

Share likely to support a levy to build a multigenerational community center with an indoor pool.	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Share of those who see a need for a community recreation center	71%	60%
Share of all voters	52%	37%

Geographically, support for building a community center with a pool is strongest in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Wards and weakest among voters in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward.

Share likely to support a levy to build a multigenerational community center with an indoor pool.	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Share of those who see a need for a community recreation center	64%	66%	69%	58%
Share of all voters	45%	44%	47%	36%

People who believe there is a need for a new multigenerational community center, but would not support a levy to raise the necessary \$18 million, were asked if they would be willing to support a levy to raise \$10 million to build a center *without* a swimming pool. Forty-four percent agreed that they would pay an additional \$7 each month to support the construction of this type of center.

If it can be assumed that people who would build an \$18 million center would also be willing to support a levy to raise \$10 million, slightly more than half (53 percent) of the city's voters would support a bond issue to build a community center without a swimming pool.

While there was a direct, negative correlation between age and support for a center with an indoor pool, when the pool is removed from the equation, support shifts to a more middle age profile.

Would you support a community center without an indoor pool?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
Share of those who see a need for a community recreation center and would not support a center with an indoor pool	0%	50%	36%	52%	62%	25%	14%
Share of all voters	60%	57%	51%	43%	41%	32%	27%

The city of Gahanna would like to improve its current park facilities and enhance its trails and bike paths. To do that, as well as to build a community center, would cost the average taxpayer additional taxes of between \$17 and \$24 per month. Everyone who said there is a need for a community center was asked if they would be willing to support the cost of improving current facilities as well as building a multigenerational community recreation center. Consequently, this question was asked of four hundred Gahanna voters. Just over half (53 percent) said they would be willing to support the cost of both projects.

Support for both proposals is strongest among residents who have lived in the city two to ten years, but drops considerably among more long-term residents.

Would you support both the improvement of the city's park facilities and trails as well as building the multigenerational community recreation center at a cost to taxpayers of between \$17 and \$24 per month?	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?				
	Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	Longer than 20 years
Share of those who see a need for a community center	50%	67%	61%	44%	48%
Share of all voters	47%	53%	40%	31%	27%

Support for improving current recreational options and the construction of a new community center is much stronger with parents (63 percent) who see a need for a community center than with those respondents who do not live with children but who also see a need for a new center (46 percent).

Would you support both the improvement of the city's park facilities and trails as well as building the multigenerational community recreation center at a cost to taxpayers of between \$17 and \$24 per month?	Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
	Yes	No
Share of those who see a need for a community recreation center	63%	46%
Share of all voters	47%	28%

Residents of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wards are more likely to support both projects than are those from the 1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Wards.

Would you support both the improvement of the city's park facilities and trails as well as building the multigenerational community recreation center at a cost to taxpayers of between \$17 and \$24 per month?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Share of those who see a need for a community recreation center	47%	55%	59%	49%
Share of all voters	33%	36%	40%	31%

To understand the overall support for the various projects, the table below shows the share of all voters willing to support each.

Construction Priorities and Levy Support	Percent of all people interviewed
Share of public who sees a need for a multigenerational recreation center	65%
Share of voters likely to support a tax levy to improve the city's park facilities and enhance the trails and bike paths, at a cost of \$15 million	56%
Share of voters likely to support a tax levy to build a multigenerational recreation center with no indoor pool, at a cost of \$10 million*	53%
Share of voters likely to support a tax levy to build a multigenerational recreation center with an indoor pool, at a cost of \$18 million	43%
Share of voters likely to support a tax levy to improve the city's park facilities and enhance the trails and bike paths AND to build a multigenerational recreation center, at a cost to taxpayers of between \$17 to \$24 each month	35%

\* Assumes those who would support a community center with a pool would also support a center without a pool

### Communicating with the public

All survey participants were asked how they receive information about Gahanna Department of Parks and Recreation programs and activities. Although at least fourteen different methods were offered, four methods account for communication about the parks with the majority of voters.

How do you receive most of your information about the Department of Parks and Recreation and the programs they offer?	Percent*
<i>The Gateway</i> – the Parks and Recreation newsletter and other mailings from the city	55%
<i>Gahanna News</i>	38%
<i>Rocky Fork Enterprise</i>	17%
Word of mouth	11%

\* Totals over 100% due to the acceptance of multiple responses

#### *The Gateway*

Gahanna's Parks and Recreation newsletter is the most common way for people to learn about the department. More than half (55 percent) of the people polled said that they rely on *The Gateway*.

Women are more likely to name *The Gateway* (62 percent) as a source of information than are men (46 percent).

This newsletter becomes a recognized source of city information as soon as people move to Gahanna. Forty-one percent of the people who moved into Gahanna during the past year said that *The Gateway* is the way they find out about Parks and Recreation activities.

How do you receive most of your information about the Department of Parks and Recreation and the programs it offers?	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?				
	Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	Longer than 20 years
<i>The Gateway</i>	41%	52%	48%	57%	59%

This is the dominant source of information in all four wards.

*Gahanna News*

Thirty-eight percent of the people polled rely on the *Gahanna News* for information about the city's parks and recreation activities.

As is common for most newspapers, people who use the *Gahanna News* as a resource tend to be older.

How do you receive most of your information about the Department of Parks and Recreation and the programs it offers?	What is your age?						
	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66 to 75	76 and older
<i>Gahanna News</i>	20%	17%	38%	39%	43%	42%	41%

Residents of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Wards are more likely than people who live in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wards to read *Gahanna News*.

How do you receive most of your information about the Department of Parks and Recreation and the programs it offers?	WARD			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Gahanna News</i>	40%	43%	37%	31%

*Rocky Fork Enterprise*

*Rocky Fork Enterprise* newspaper is the source of information seventeen percent of the respondents looks to for information about the park system.

Like the *Gahanna News*, people under the age of forty-five are much less likely to read this newspaper (10 percent) than are their older neighbors (20 percent).

The longer the person has lived in Gahanna, the more likely they are to look to the *Rocky Fork Enterprise* for news about the city's parks.

How do you receive most of your information about the Department of Parks and Recreation and the programs it offers?	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?				
	Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	Longer than 20 years
<i>Rocky Fork Enterprise</i>	6%	11%	16%	16%	20%

Word-of-Mouth

One in ten (11 percent) Gahanna residents receives information about the parks by word-of-mouth. Men are more likely to rely on news from family and friends (14 percent) than are women (9 percent).

People over seventy-five years of age are more likely to get their news about the parks by word-of-mouth (20 percent) than are those under age forty-five (14 percent) or between forty-six and seventy-five (9 percent).

APPENDIX A: Percentage and frequencies on all questions

# GAHANNA PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

## Community Survey: Preliminary Data

June 7, 2005

ASKED ALL:

Q. 1	How long have you lived in the city of Gahanna?		
		Count	Percentage
	Less than one year	17	3%
	2 to 5 years	91	15%
	6 to 10 years	104	17%
	11 to 20 years	177	30%
	Longer than 20 years	211	35%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 2	How important do you consider the city parks, recreation facilities and programs to be in making Gahanna a more livable place?		
		Count	Percentage
	Very important	369	62%
	Somewhat important	211	35%
	Not important at all	19	3%
	Don't know	1	0%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 4	Satisfaction: Maintenance and upkeep of the parks including cleanliness, mowing and shelters		
		Count	Percentage
	Very satisfied	280	47%
	Somewhat satisfied	224	37%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	21	4%
	Very dissatisfied	6	1%
	Don't know	69	12%
			600 Total Respondents
			3.465 Mean
			4.000 Median

ASKED ALL:

Q. 5 Satisfaction: Safety while using the parks during the day and evening hours

	Count	Percentage
Very satisfied	326	54%
Somewhat satisfied	170	28%
Somewhat dissatisfied	10	2%
Very dissatisfied	2	0%
Don't know	92	15%

600 Total Respondents

3.614 Mean

4.000 Median

ASKED ALL:

Q. 6 Satisfaction: Availability of amenities like restrooms, shelters and trails

	Count	Percentage
Very satisfied	171	29%
Somewhat satisfied	230	38%
Somewhat dissatisfied	77	13%
Very dissatisfied	16	3%
Don't know	105	18%
Refused	1	0%

600 Total Respondents

3.126 Mean

3.000 Median

ASKED ALL:

Q. 7 Satisfaction: Quality of playground areas

	Count	Percentage
Very satisfied	173	29%
Somewhat satisfied	203	34%
Somewhat dissatisfied	31	5%
Very dissatisfied	7	1%
Don't know	185	31%
Refused	1	0%

600 Total Respondents

3.309 Mean

3.000 Median

ASKED ALL:

Q. 8	Satisfaction: Quality of the city's golf course		
		Count	Percentage
	Very satisfied	106	18%
	Somewhat satisfied	143	24%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	26	4%
	Very dissatisfied	8	1%
	Don't know	315	53%
	Refused	2	0%
		600 Total Respondents	
		3.226 Mean	
		3.000 Median	

ASKED ALL:

Q. 9	Overall, how satisfied are you with Gahanna's city parks?		
		Count	Percentage
	Very satisfied	291	49%
	Somewhat satisfied	250	42%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	15	3%
	Very dissatisfied	5	1%
	Don't know	39	7%
		600 Total Respondents	
		3.474 Mean	
		4.000 Median	

ASKED ALL:

Q. 10	During the summer months, how often do you or a member of your household visit one of the outdoor pools in Gahanna?		
		Count	Percentage
	About every day	33	6%
	At least twice a week	64	11%
	At least twice a month	34	6%
	At least once or twice during the summer	50	8%
	Never	416	69%
	Don't know	3	1%
		600 Total Respondents	

ASKED ALL:

Q. 11	How often do you leave Gahanna to use a swimming pool or water park in nearby cities?		
		Count	Percentage
	About every day	5	1%
	At least twice a week	45	8%
	At least twice a month	44	7%
	At least once or twice during the summer	123	21%
	Never	378	63%
	Don't know	5	1%
		600 Total Respondents	

ASKED ALL:

Q. 12 If the pools in Gahanna were closed down due to lack of maintenance and funding, would you consider it to be a big loss, a small loss, or no loss for you and your family?

	Count	Percentage
Big loss	149	25%
Small loss	94	16%
No loss at all	347	58%
Don't know	10	2%

600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 13 Have you ever visited the Gahanna Senior Center?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	185	31%
No	415	69%

600 Total Respondents

ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO HAVE VISITED THE GAHANNA SENIOR CENTER:

Q. 14 How would you rate the building and facility used by the Senior Center?

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	80	43%
Good	85	46%
Fair	10	5%
Poor	3	2%
Very poor	0	0%
Don't know/Don't remember	7	4%

185 Total Respondents

4.360 Mean

4.000 Median

ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO HAVE VISITED THE GAHANNA SENIOR CENTER:

Q. 15 How would you rate the programs and activities the Senior Center offers?

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	61	33%
Good	75	41%
Fair	4	2%
Poor	2	1%
Very poor	0	0%
Don't know/Don't remember	43	23%

185 Total Respondents

4.373 Mean

4.000 Median

ASKED ALL:

Q. 16	Programs for preschool age children		
		Count	Percentage
	Too many	4	1%
	Right amount	164	27%
	Too few	84	14%
	Don't know	348	58%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 17	Sports programs for children between 6 and 16		
		Count	Percentage
	Too many	14	2%
	Right amount	308	51%
	Too few	68	11%
	Don't know	210	35%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 18	Sports programs for adults 17 and older		
		Count	Percentage
	Too many	4	1%
	Right amount	177	30%
	Too few	104	17%
	Don't know	315	53%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 19	Programs other than sports for children between 6 and 19		
		Count	Percentage
	Too many	5	1%
	Right amount	154	26%
	Too few	140	23%
	Don't know	301	50%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 20	Programs other than sports for young adults between 17 and 30		
		Count	Percentage
	Too many	3	1%
	Right amount	99	17%
	Too few	170	28%
	Don't know	328	55%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 21	Programs other than sports for adults		
		Count	Percentage
	Too many	3	1%
	Right amount	180	30%
	Too few	153	26%
	Don't know	264	44%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 22	Programs for families		
		Count	Percentage
	Too many	2	0%
	Right amount	178	30%
	Too few	155	26%
	Don't know	265	44%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 23	Overall, how would you rate the programs and activities in the city's parks?		
		Count	Percentage
	Excellent	70	12%
	Good	294	49%
	Fair	92	15%
	Poor	8	1%
	Very poor	2	0%
	Don't know/Don't remember	134	22%
			600 Total Respondents
			3.906 Mean
			4.000 Median

ASKED ALL:

Q. 24	Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	181	30%
	Some need	303	51%
	No need	89	15%
	Don't know	27	5%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 25	Build an indoor swimming pool		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	90	15%
	Some need	174	29%
	No need	317	53%
	Don't know	19	3%
600 Total Respondents			

ASKED ALL:

Q. 26	Build a complex for softball or baseball		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	70	12%
	Some need	202	34%
	No need	264	44%
	Don't know	64	11%
600 Total Respondents			

ASKED ALL:

Q. 27	Build a community recreation center		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	169	28%
	Some need	210	35%
	No need	181	30%
	Don't know	40	7%
600 Total Respondents			

ASKED ALL:

Q. 28	Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	121	20%
	Some need	261	44%
	No need	148	25%
	Don't know	70	12%
600 Total Respondents			

ASKED ALL:

Q. 29	Expand and renovate space for Senior Center		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	79	13%
	Some need	173	29%
	No need	97	16%
	Don't know	251	42%
600 Total Respondents			

ASKED ALL:

Q. 30	Provide additional parking around current parks		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	128	21%
	Some need	208	35%
	No need	191	32%
	Don't know	73	12%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 31	Provide meeting rooms for use by community groups		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	93	16%
	Some need	226	38%
	No need	177	30%
	Don't know	104	17%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 32	Provide additional restroom facilities at the city's parks		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	197	33%
	Some need	209	35%
	No need	109	18%
	Don't know	85	14%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 33	Provide additional gymnasiums		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	75	13%
	Some need	159	27%
	No need	279	47%
	Don't know	87	15%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 34	Provide additional outdoor basketball courts		
		Count	Percentage
	Serious need	68	11%
	Some need	206	34%
	No need	219	37%
	Don't know	107	18%
			600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 35 Provide additional indoor recreation space

	Count	Percentage
Serious need	112	19%
Some need	255	43%
No need	168	28%
Don't know	65	11%

600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 36 There has been some discussion about improving the city's park facilities and enhancing the trails and bike paths. The estimated cost for the improvements under discussion may require \$15 million in addition to the parks' current budget. If the city were to place a bond issue on the ballot or seek an increase in the income tax to raise those funds, the cost to an average taxpayer would be about \$10 per month. How likely would you be to support such a tax to improve existing park facilities?

Would you be:

	Count	Percentage
Very likely	160	27%
Somewhat likely	172	29%
Somewhat unlikely	82	14%
Very unlikely	168	28%
Don't know	15	3%
Refused	3	1%

600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 37 Some people have suggested that the city of Gahanna should build a multigenerational community recreation center similar to the one in Westerville. This building could include areas for senior citizens, community meeting rooms, an indoor pool and a fitness facility.

Do you think there is a:

	Count	Percentage
Serious need	112	19%
Some need, but not serious	274	46%
No need	198	33%
Don't know/Undecided	14	2%
Refused	2	0%

600 Total Respondents

ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A "SERIOUS NEED" OR "SOME NEED" FOR A MULTIGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER IN GAHANNA:

Q. 38 To build a multigenerational community recreation center like the one in Westerville would cost approximately \$18 million. This center would have new space for the senior center, a fitness area, meeting space, gyms and an indoor pool. If the city were to seek funding to build the center, the cost to an average taxpayer would be about \$14 a month. How likely would you be to support such a tax to build a new community recreation center with the features just listed?

Would you be:

	Count	Percentage
Very likely	107	27%
Somewhat likely	150	38%
Somewhat unlikely	79	20%
Very unlikely	50	13%
Don't know	12	3%
Refused	2	1%

400 Total Respondents

ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO ARE "SOMEWHAT UNLIKELY" OR "VERY UNLIKELY" TO SUPPORT A LEVY TO BUILD A MULTIGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER WITH AN INDOOR POOL IN GAHANNA:

Q. 39 Another option would be to build a center like the one I just described, but with no indoor swimming pool. The cost of a center of this kind would be approximately \$10 million. If the city were to seek funding to build a center like that, the cost to an average taxpayer would be about \$7 per month. How likely would you be to support such a tax to build that new community recreation center?

Would you be:

	Count	Percentage
Very likely	5	4%
Somewhat likely	56	40%
Somewhat unlikely	41	29%
Very unlikely	32	23%
Don't know	7	5%

141 Total Respondents

ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A "SERIOUS NEED" OR "SOME NEED" FOR A MULTIGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER IN GAHANNA:

Q. 40 What if voters are asked to support both the improvement of the city's park facilities, enhancing the trails and bike paths as well as building the multigenerational community recreation center, at a total cost to an average taxpayer of between \$17 and \$24 per month?

Would you be:

	Count	Percentage
Very likely	78	20%
Somewhat likely	132	33%
Somewhat unlikely	83	21%
Very unlikely	85	21%
Don't know	22	6%

400 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 41 How do you receive most of your information about the Department of Parks and Recreation and the programs it offers?

	Count	Percentage
<i>The Gateway</i> and other mailings	329	55%
<i>The Columbus Dispatch</i>	13	2%
<i>Gahanna News</i>	225	38%
Network TV news	7	1%
Local radio	1	0%
Word-of-mouth	71	12%
City employees	12	2%
Internet/Web site	31	5%
<i>Rocky Fork Enterprise</i>	98	16%
Parks and recreation newsletter	6	1%
Senior Center	11	2%
Library	6	1%
<i>Suburban News</i>	8	1%
Visiting the parks	9	2%
Through the schools	5	1%
Other	29	5%
Receive no information	25	4%
Don't know	4	1%
Refused	2	0%

600 Total Respondents

892 Total Responses

ASKED ALL:

Q. 42 What is your age?

	Count	Percentage
18 to 25	25	4%
26 to 35	53	9%
36 to 45	106	18%
46 to 55	138	23%
56 to 65	137	23%
66 to 75	81	14%
Over 75	59	10%
Refused	1	0%

600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 43 Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	222	37%
No	377	63%
Refused	1	0%

600 Total Respondents

ASKED ALL:

Q. 44 What are the ages of the children in your household?

	Count	Percentage
Preschool	66	30%
Elementary	79	36%
Middle School	70	32%
High School	97	44%

222 Total Respondents

312 Total Responses

ASKED ALL:

Q. 45 Gender

	Count	Percentage
Male	276	46%
Female	324	54%

600 Total Respondents

312 Total Responses

ASKED ALL:

Ward

	Count	Percentage
1 <sup>st</sup>	148	25%
2 <sup>nd</sup>	153	26%
3 <sup>rd</sup>	147	25%
4 <sup>th</sup>	152	25%

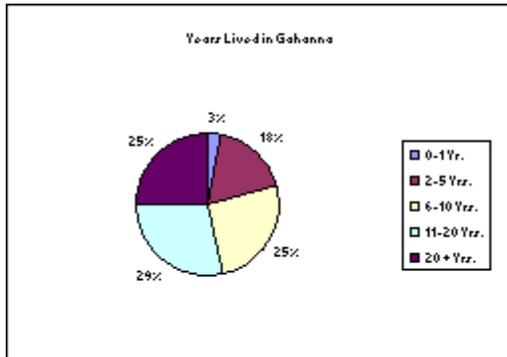
600 Total Respondents

## Appendix D: Write-in Survey Report

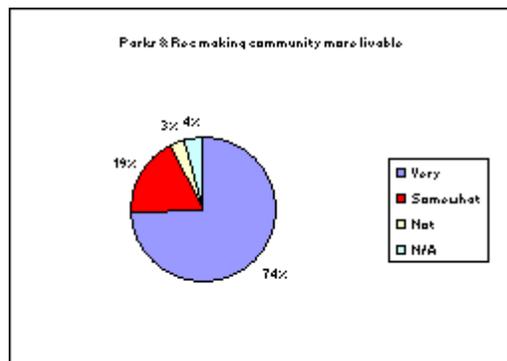
## GAHANNA SELF-ADMINISTERED PARKS AND RECREATION SURVEY

**TOTAL CITIZENS THAT RESPONDED = 96**

Years Lived in Gahanna	0-1 Yr.	2-5 Yrs.	6-10 Yrs.	11-20 Yrs.	20 + Yrs.
	3	17	24	27	24

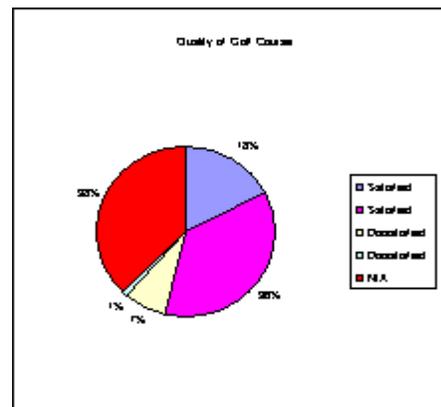
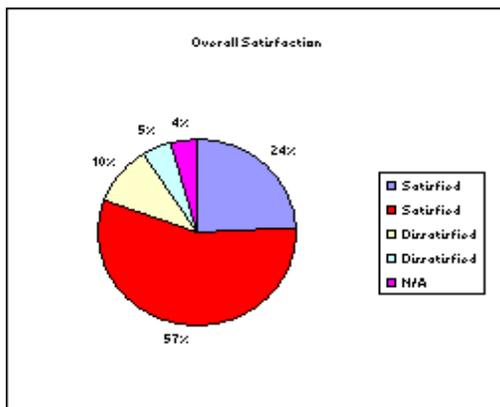
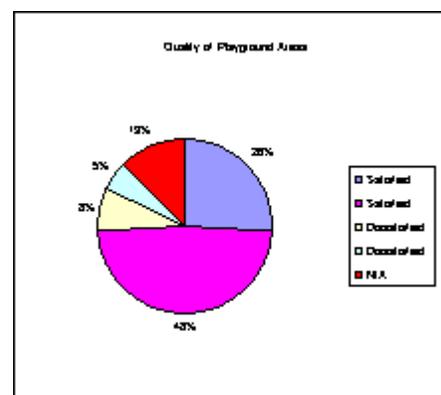
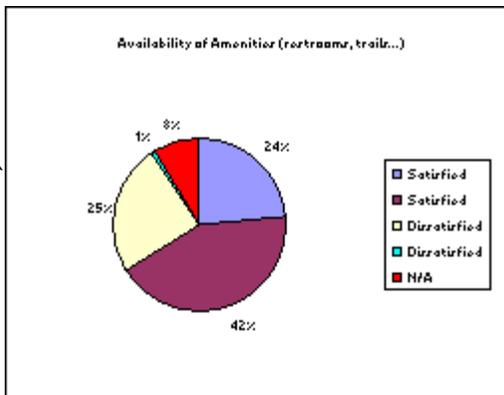
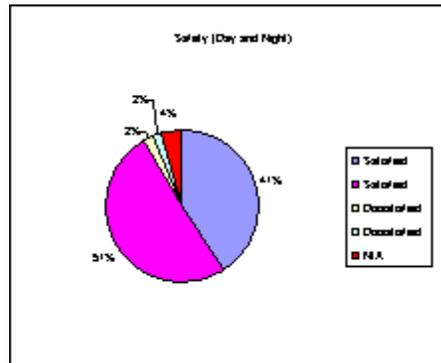
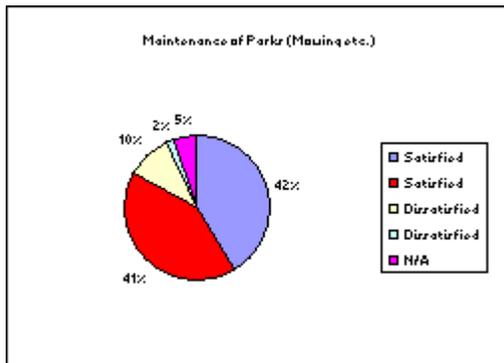


Parks & Rec making community more livable	Very	Somewhat	Not	N/A
	71	18	3	4

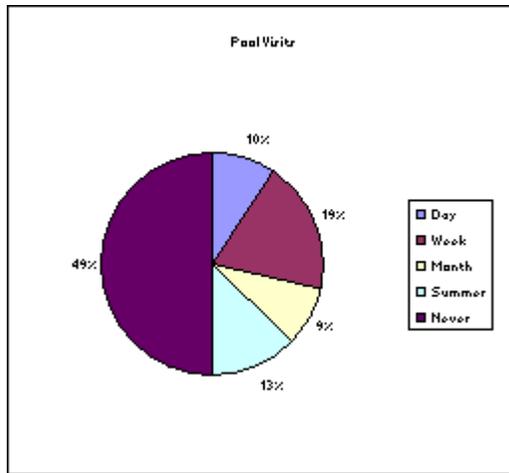


**Parks Maintenance and Upkeep**

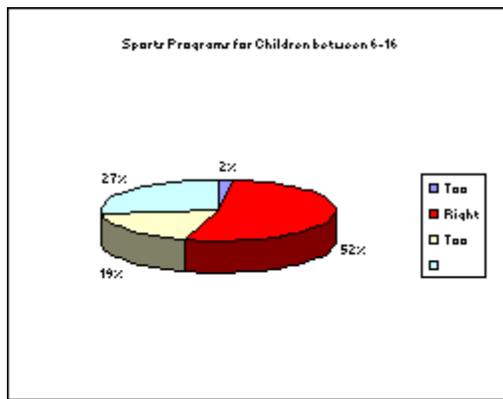
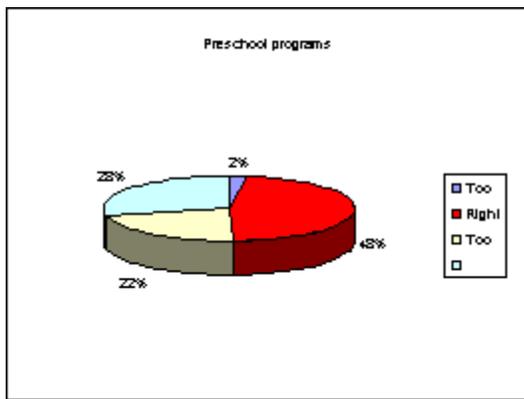
	Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	N/A
<b>Maintenance of Parks (Mowing etc.)</b>	41	41	10	2	5
<b>Safety (Day and Night)</b>	39	49	2	2	4
<b>Availability of Amenities (restrooms, trails...)</b>	23	40	24	1	8
<b>Quality of Playground Areas</b>	25	46	8	5	12
<b>Quality of Golf Course</b>	17	34	7	1	36
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	24	55	10	5	4

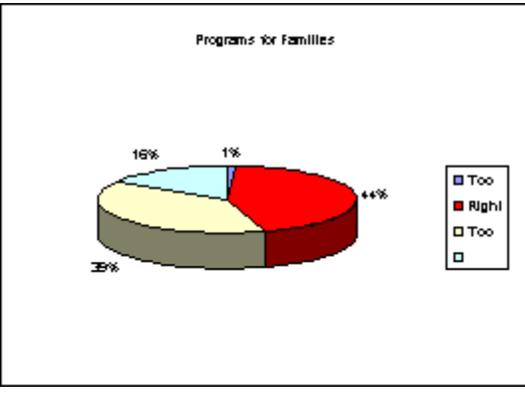
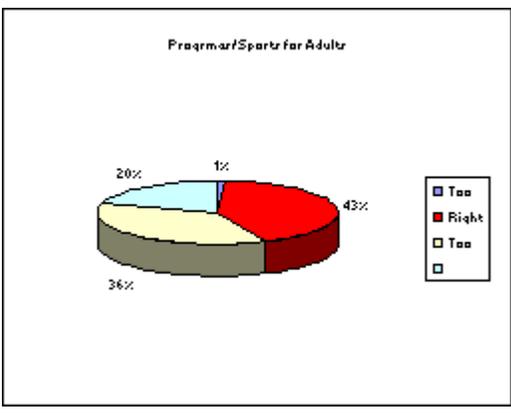
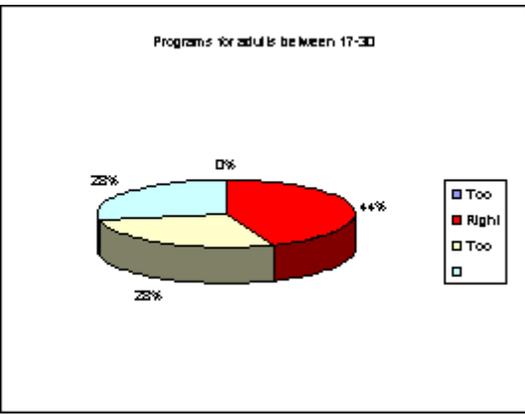
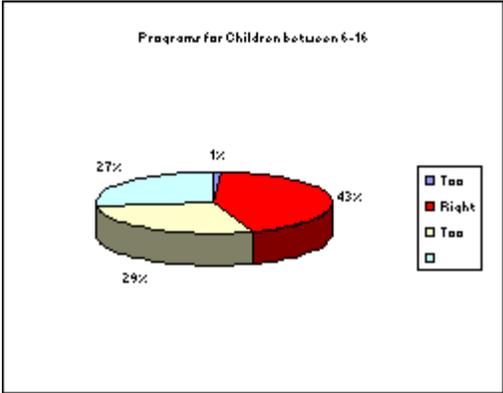
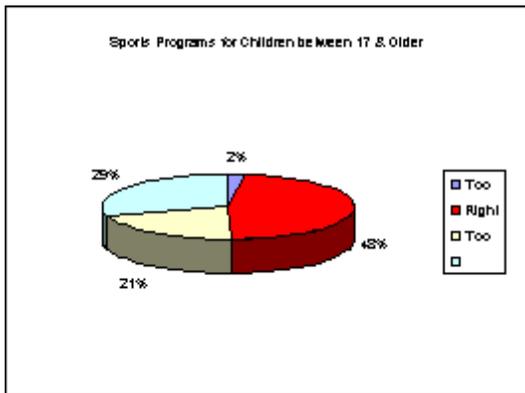


	Every Day	Twice a Week	Twice a Month	Twice a Summer	Never
<b>Pool Visits</b>	9	18	8	12	47



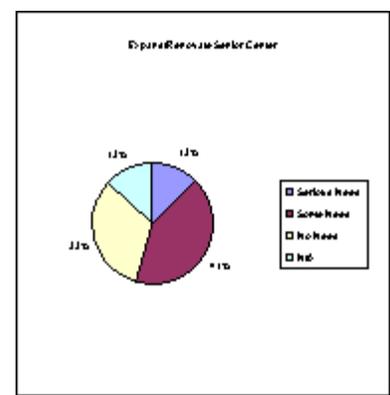
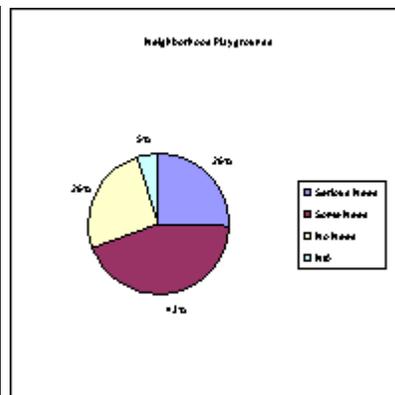
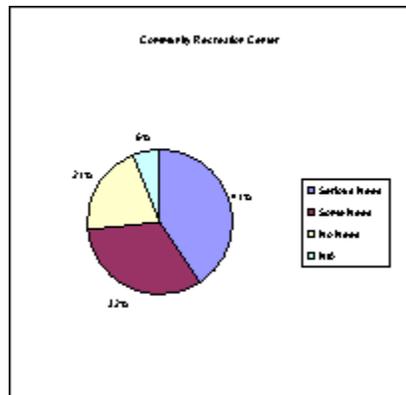
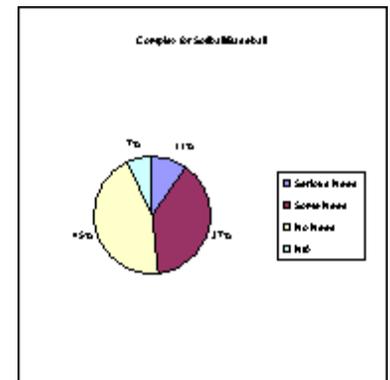
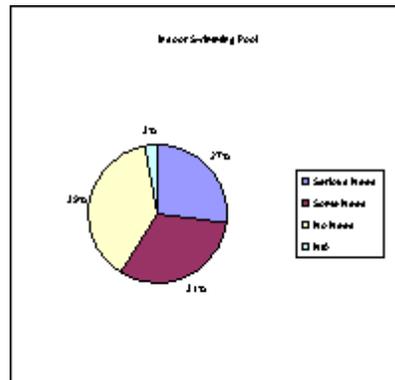
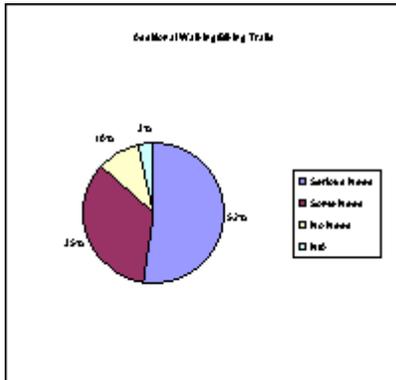
<b>Programs in Parks</b>	<b>Too Many</b>	<b>Right Amount</b>	<b>Too Few</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Preschool programs</b>	2	45	21	27
<b>Sports Programs for Children between 6-16</b>	2	51	18	26
<b>Sports Programs for Children between 17 &amp; Older</b>	2	45	20	28
<b>Programs for Children between 6-16</b>	1	41	27	25
<b>Programs for adults between 17-30</b>	0	44	28	28
<b>Programs/Sports for Adults</b>	1	40	34	19
<b>Programs for Families</b>	1	41	36	15

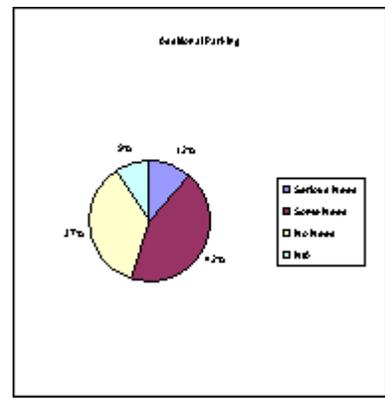
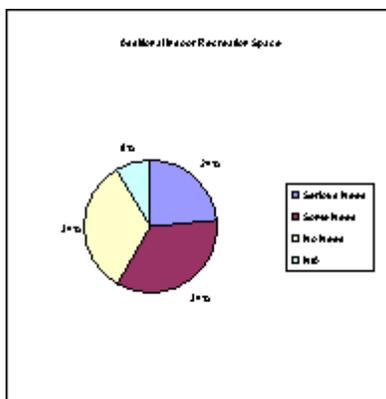
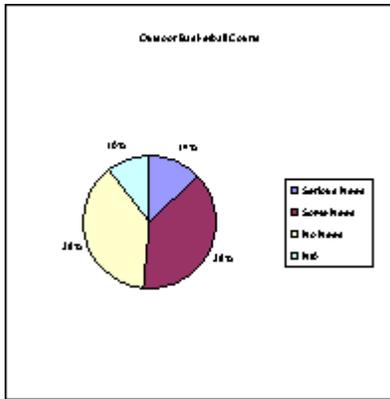
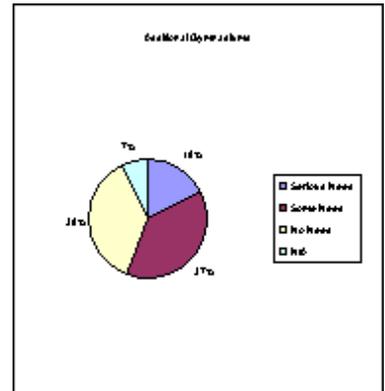
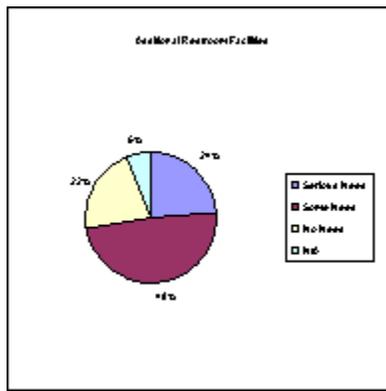
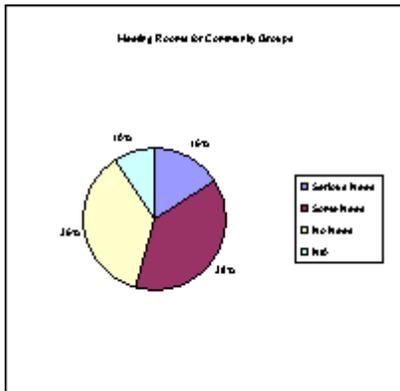




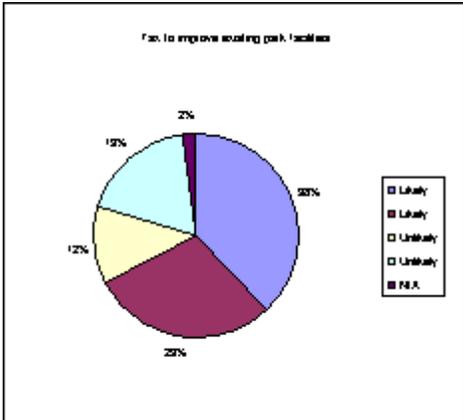
**Recreational Facilities**

	<b>Serious Need</b>	<b>Some Need</b>	<b>No Need</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Additional Walking/Biking Trails</b>	51	34	10	3
<b>Indoor Swimming Pool</b>	28	32	40	3
<b>Complex for Softball/Baseball</b>	11	38	46	7
<b>Community Recreation Center</b>	42	33	22	6
<b>Neighborhood Playgrounds</b>	27	44	27	5
<b>Expand/Renovate Senior Center</b>	13	41	33	13
<b>Additional Parking</b>	12	41	36	9
<b>Meeting Rooms for Community Groups</b>	17	40	38	10
<b>Additional Restroom Facilities</b>	23	46	21	6
<b>Additional Gymnasiums</b>	18	38	38	7
<b>Outdoor Basketball Courts</b>	13	36	37	10
<b>Additional Indoor Recreation Space</b>	23	32	32	8

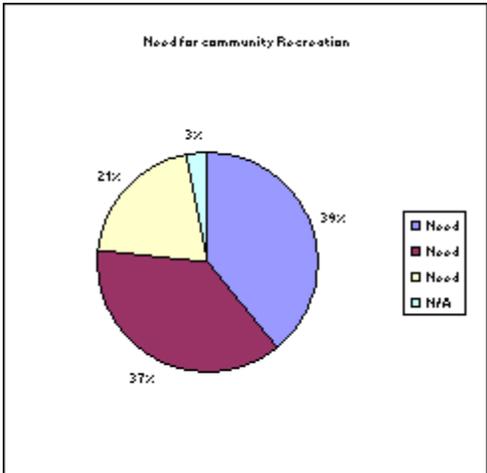




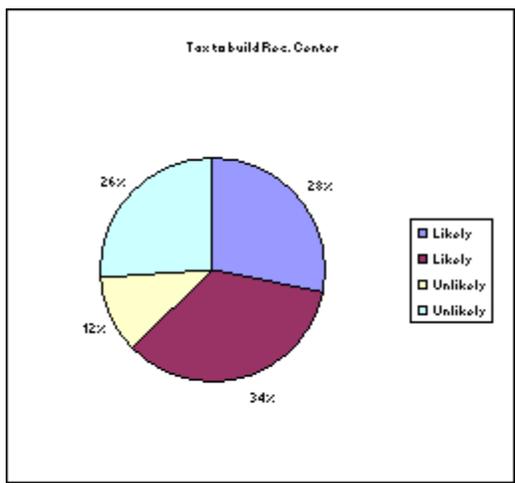
	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely	N/A
<b>Tax to improve existing park facilities</b>	37	28	12	18	2



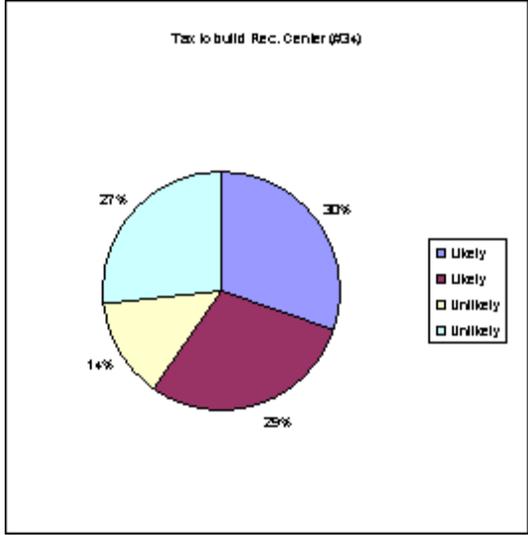
	<b>Serious Need</b>	<b>Some Need</b>	<b>No Need</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Need for community Recreation Center</b>	38	36	20	3



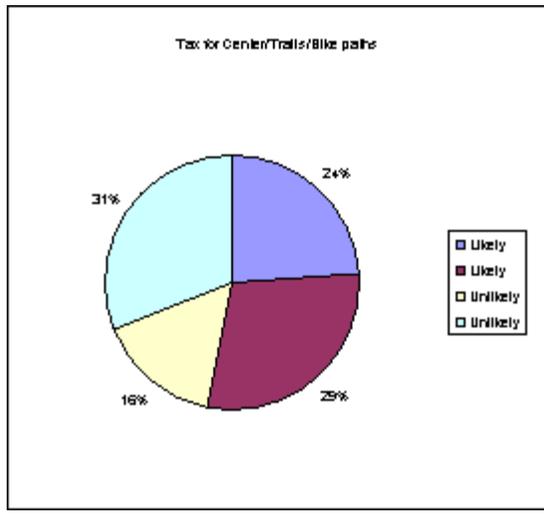
	<b>Very Likely</b>	<b>Somewhat Likely</b>	<b>Somewhat Unlikely</b>	<b>Very Unlikely</b>
<b>Tax to build Rec. Center w/ features (#33)</b>	27	32	11	25



	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
<b>Tax to build Rec. Center (#34)</b>	29	28	13	26



	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
<b>Tax for Center/Trails/Bike paths</b>	23	28	15	30



## GAHANNA SELF-ADMINISTERED PARKS AND RECREATION SURVEY

Please circle the number corresponding to your response.

1. How long have you lived in the City of Gahanna?
  1. Less than one year
  2. 2 to 5 years
  3. 6 to 10 years
  4. 11 to 20 years or
  5. Longer than 20 years?
  
2. How important do you consider the city parks, recreation facilities and programs to be in making Gahanna a more livable place? Would you say they are:
  1. Very important
  2. Somewhat important
  3. or not important at all?

Please rate your satisfaction with the following by circling the number corresponding to your attitude: circle 1 if you are <b>very satisfied</b> , 2 if you are <b>somewhat satisfied</b> , 3 if you are <b>somewhat dissatisfied</b> and 4 if you are <b>very dissatisfied</b> .		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
3.	Maintenance and upkeep of the parks including cleanliness, mowing and shelters.	1	2	3	4
4.	Safety while using the parks during the day and evening hours	1	2	3	4
5.	Availability of amenities like restrooms, shelters and trails	1	2	3	4
6.	Quality of playground areas	1	2	3	4
7.	The quality of the city's golf course	1	2	3	4
8.	Overall, how satisfied are you with Gahanna's City Parks?	1	2	3	4

9. During summer months, how often do you or a member of your household visit one of the outdoor pools in Gahanna? Is it:
  1. About every day
  2. At least twice a week
  3. At least twice a month
  4. At least once or twice during the summer
  5. Or never?
  
10. If the pools in Gahanna were closed down due to lack of maintenance and funding, would you consider it to be a big loss, a small loss, or no loss for you and your family personally?
  1. Big loss
  2. Small loss
  3. No loss at all

Now a few questions about programs and activities in Gahanna's city parks. Please tell us if you think there are <b>too many</b> activities and programs for the group listed, the <b>right amount</b> of activities and programs or <b>too few</b> programs and activities.		Too many	Right amount	Too few
11.	Programs for preschool age children	1	2	3
12.	Sport programs for children between 6 and 16	1	2	3
13.	Sport programs for adults 17 and older	1	2	3
14.	How about programs other than sports for children between 6 and 16	1	2	3
15.	Programs, other than sports, for young adults between 17 and 30	1	2	3
16.	Programs, other than sports, for adults	1	2	3
17.	Programs for families	1	2	3

18. Overall, how would you rate the programs and activities in Gahanna's parks?
1. Excellent
  2. Good
  3. Fair
  4. Poor
  5. Very poor

Below is a list of recreational facilities that some people say should be available in Gahanna. Please tell us if you think there is a <b>serious need</b> for the facility, <b>some need, but not serious</b> or <b>no need</b> .		<b>Serious need</b>	<b>Some need</b>	<b>No need</b>
19.	Develop additional walking or biking trails and connect existing trails	1	2	3
20.	Build an indoor swimming pool	1	2	3
21.	Build a complex for softball or baseball	1	2	3
22.	Build a community recreation center	1	2	3
23.	Upgrade or build neighborhood playgrounds	1	2	3
24.	Expand and renovate space for the Senior Center	1	2	3
25.	Provide additional parking around current parks	1	2	3
26.	Provide meeting rooms for use by community groups	1	2	3
27.	Provide additional restroom facilities at the city's parks	1	2	3
28.	Provide additional gymnasiums	1	2	3
29.	Provide additional outdoor basketball courts	1	2	3
30.	Provide additional indoor recreation space	1	2	3

31. There has been some discussion about improving the city's park facilities and enhancing the trails and bike paths. The estimated cost for the improvements under discussion may require \$15 million dollars in addition to the parks current budget. If the city were to place a bond issue on the ballot or seek an increase in the income tax to raise those funds, the cost to an average taxpayer would be about \$10 per month. How likely would you be to support such a tax to improve existing park facilities? Would you be:
1. Very likely
  2. Somewhat likely
  3. Somewhat unlikely, or
  4. Very unlikely
32. Some people have suggested that the City of Gahanna should build a Multigenerational Community Recreation Center similar to the one in Westerville. This building could include areas for Senior Citizens, community meeting rooms, an indoor pool and a fitness facility. Do you think there is a:
1. Serious need for a community recreation center in Gahanna
  2. Some need, but it's not serious
  3. Or no need at all?
33. To build a Multigenerational Community Recreation Center, like the one in Westerville, would cost approximately \$18 million dollars. This center would have new space for the Senior Center, a fitness area, meeting space, gyms and an indoor pool. If the city were to seek funding to build the center, the cost to an average taxpayer would be about \$14 a month. How likely would you be to support such a tax to build a new Community Recreation Center with the features just listed? Would you be:
1. Very likely
  2. Somewhat likely
  3. Somewhat unlikely, or
  4. Very unlikely
34. Another option would be to build a Center like I just described, but with no indoor swimming pool. The cost for a center of this kind would be approximately \$10 million dollars. If the city were to seek funding to build a center like that, the cost to an average taxpayer would be about \$7 per month. How likely would you be to support such a tax to build that new Community Recreation Center? Would you be:
1. Very likely
  2. Somewhat likely
  3. Somewhat unlikely, or
  4. Very unlikely

35. What if voters are asked to support both the improvement of the city's park facilities, enhancing the trails and bike paths as well as building the Multigenerational Community Recreation Center at a total cost to an average taxpayer of between \$17 and \$24 per month? Would you be
1. Very likely
  2. Somewhat likely
  3. Somewhat unlikely, or
  4. Very unlikely to support both issues?

**The following questions are for classification only.**

36. Into which of the following groups does your age fall?
- |             |             |             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. 18 to 25 | 2. 26 to 35 | 3. 36 to 45 | 4. 46 to 55 | 5. 56 to 65 |
| 6. 65 to 75 | 7. Over 75  |             |             |             |
37. Are there any children under the age of 18, living in your household?
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| 1. YES | 2. NO |
|--------|-------|
38. Gender?
- |         |           |
|---------|-----------|
| 1. MALE | 2. FEMALE |
|---------|-----------|

## Appendix E: Parks Photo Record

## Photographic Record – Academy Park

---



Grass infield in one of the baseball fields



Baseball field



Light fixture at baseball field



Looking north at shelter from baseball field



Deteriorating batting cage



Path connecting parking to ball fields then leading to Woodside Green Park

Photographic Record – Academy Park Cont.

---



Looking south at path leading to Woodside Green Park



Wetland adjacent to path



Sludge field at south end of park



Sludge field at south end of site constructed into BMX course by local children



View of path into woods



Concession/restroom building

## Photographic Record – Academy Park Cont.

---



Playground structure near parking lot



Basketball court



Parking lot with residences in background to north



Parking lot

## Photographic Record – Ashburnham Park

---



Detention basin near entrance to park



Half basketball court



Play structure



Entry sign

## Photographic Record – Caroway Park

---



View into park from Caroway Boulevard



Looking north from access point



Looking south from access point



Lawn area

## Photographic Record – Creekside Park

---



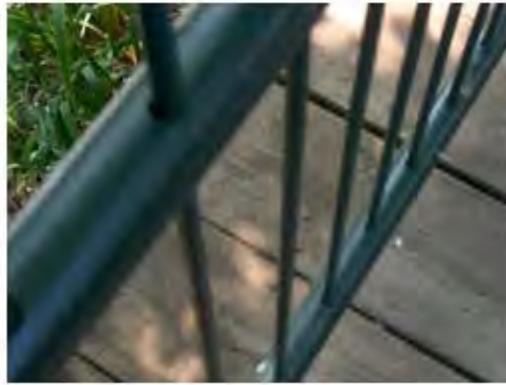
Access to park from behind Wendy's



Access to park from behind Wendy's



Visitors wading in creek



View of railing and boardwalk



Vehicular bridge across creek



View of vehicular bridge across creek

## Photographic Record – Creekside Park Cont.

---



Visitors sitting by the creek



Close up of concrete detail



Visitors sitting by the creek



Visitors enjoying the creek access



Bikers stop to wade in the creek



Pedestrians swimming in creek

## Photographic Record – Creekside Park Cont.

---



Big Walnut Creek access



Seating area



Seating area



Big Walnut Creek



Seating area



Memorial sign on Harry Bauer Island

## Photographic Record – Creekside Park Cont.

---



Big Walnut Creek



Access to Big Walnut Creek



Access to Big Walnut Creek



Boardwalk along Big Walnut Creek



Bridge across Big Walnut Creek



Mulch trail

## Photographic Record – Creekside Cont.

---



Wetland area



View of path connecting Creekside with Gahanna Golf Course



Gahanna Golf Course parking lot



Vegetation

## Photographic Record – Fleetrun Park

---



Deteriorating basketball court



Lawn area



Looking south from basketball court



Looking east from basketball court



Standing water in lawn area



View of relationship between park and adjacent residences

Photographic Record – Fleetrun Park Cont.

---



Looking west from playground



Adjacent residences



Old playground equipment



Looking west from playground



Looking into park from east access point

## Photographic Record – Friendship Park

---



Lighted tennis courts in floodplain



View of open air picnic shelter



Full court basketball



Gazebo near parking lot



Restroom building with city maintenance facility in background



Playground structure adjacent to tennis court located in floodplain

## Photographic Record – Friendship Park Cont.

---



Swing and seating area



Looking south from tennis courts



Fire pit built by boy scouts

## Photographic Record – Gahanna Woods

---



View south across open lawn to trail head from parking lot



View of trailhead leading to the west



Parking lot



View of access drive to storage area and water tower



Trail head leading south



Trailhead sign

## Photographic Record – Gahanna Golf Course

---



View of course from clubhouse



View of first tee and ninth green from clubhouse



Entrance to pro shop



Parking lot



Cart path leading from clubhouse

## Photographic Record – Hannah Farms Park

---



Parking near baseball field



Baseball field



Entrance drive



Creek crossing through property



Drainage problems near baseball field



Wooded edge

## Photographic Record – Hannah Farms Park Cont.

---



Fence around baseball field



Erosion of gravel drive



Erosion of gravel drive



Wooded edge



Looking north from south field area



Drainage creek entering site

## Photographic Record – Hannah Farms Park Cont.

---



View of subdivision to north



View south from entrance drive near cricket pitch



View of neighbor to east



View of neighbor to east



Trash and dumping in some areas



View of subdivision to north

## Photographic Record – Hannah Farms Park Cont.

---



Dumpster near cricket pitch



View south from entrance drive near cricket pitch



View of cricket pitch



View of paved cricket pitch



View of cricket pitch



View of drive entering park

# Photographic Record – Headley Park

---



Entrance sign



View of entrance sign at corner of Challis Springs Drive and Clark State Road



View west down entrance drive



Field in southeast corner of site looking south from entrance drive



Looking west down entrance drive



View of second field along entrance drive

## Photographic Record – Headley Park Cont.

---



View of new playground equipment from entrance drive



New restroom/concession building



New restroom/concession building



View southwest of lower parking lot from upper parking lot



View west of lower parking lot from upper parking lot



View northwest of lower parking lot from upper parking lot

## Photographic Record – Headley Park Cont.

---



View east of playground from upper parking lot



Looking east at playing field and screen plantings along east boundary



View of adjacent residences along east boundary



View of east playing field



New playground equipment



View of concession/restroom building from playground structure

## Photographic Record – Headley Park Cont.

---



View of walk along concession/restroom building



View north at playing field from concession/restroom building



View northwest at west field from concession/restroom building



View north of grade change between east and west fields



View west of field and electrical facility in background



View west of field and electrical facility in background

## Photographic Record – Headley Park Cont.

---



View north of grade change between east and west fields with residences in background



View of northeast corner of site



Looking back at concession/restroom from north end of site



View of split rail fence along north end of lower parking lot



Access to play area construction



Construction of play area

## Photographic Record – Headley Park Cont.

---



View of sand volleyball court in good shape



View of sand volleyball court that needs net and more sand



Looking south at small hill from lower parking lot



Looking east at entrance drive and playground from lower parking lot



View of concession/restroom building from lower parking lot



View of storage shed in southeast corner of upper parking lot

## Photographic Record – Hunters Ridge Pool Park

---



Basketball court



View of relationship between park and adjacent residences



View of concession restroom building



Pool



View of open lawn behind pool



View of rentable picnic area

## Photographic Record – Hunters Ridge Pool Park Cont.

---



Looking west at open lawn from parking lot



Looking west at open lawn from parking lot



Parking lot and entry from Rocky Fork Boulevard

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park

---



Parking lot along Old Ridenour Road



Looking north at parking lot and Old Ridenour Road



Looking east at soccer field across Old Ridenour Road from parking lot



Looking east at soccer field across Old Ridenour Road from parking lot



Birdhouse and split rail fence along Old Ridenour Road



Looking south at split rail fence on east side of Old Ridenour Road

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



View of split rail fence along Old Ridenour Road



Looking northeast into woods along edge of soccer field



View of edge of east edge of soccer field



Site furniture along edge of soccer field



Looking into woods east of soccer field



Looking back at field and parking lot from northeast corner of field

Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



Looking back at field and parking lot from east edge of field



View into woods east of field



View into woods east of field



View into woods east of field



Riparian area in woods



Riparian area in woods

Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



View into woods east of field



Earthen dam through riparian area



Primitive trails



View of relationship of field to surrounding vegetation



Looking south into Gahanna Golf Course from southeast corner of field



Looking back at field and parking lot from southeast corner of field

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



View north into field



View north into field



Looking west into parking lot from Old Ridenour Road



View of split rail fence and field from Old Ridenour Road



Access to western portion of park



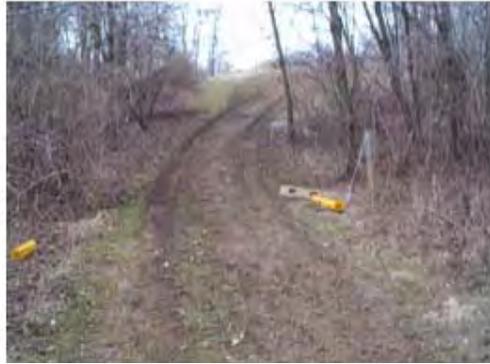
Split rail fence along west edge of parking lot

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



Mowed area west of parking lot



Trail leading to western portion of park



Trail leading from western portion of park to eastern parking lot



View of entrance drive to western portion of park from Old McCutcheon Road



Looking northwest at parking lot from entrance



View of entrance sign

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



View of adjacent residences along west border



Looking north along edge of parking lot



Looking west back up entrance drive



View of pedestrian walk looking north



View east of pedestrian walk leading to concession/restroom building



Looking northeast from southwest corner of west playing field

Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



View of pedestrian walk looking north



East side of concession/restroom building



North side of concession/restroom building



Looking east at north side of restroom building and scoreboard



View of lacrosse goal and media booths



East side of concession/restroom building with dumping in background along south boundary

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



Dumping along south boundary behind concession/restroom building



Looking north from concession/restroom building



View west of field lighting, goal, booths and parking lot in background



View of relationship between field and southern boundary



Looking east at towards possible connection to parking lot and soccer field in east portion of park



View of field and residences in background

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



View of media booths



View of field and location of possible connection to east portion of park



Looking northwest from southeast corner of east field



Looking northwest from concession/restroom building



View of field and residences along north boundary



View of bleachers

## Photographic Record – McCorkle Park Cont.

---



View east of fence and residences along north boundary



Looking west at tot lot and fence along north boundary



View of fields from tot lot



Tot lot



Looking west at pedestrian connection to Marjoram Drive



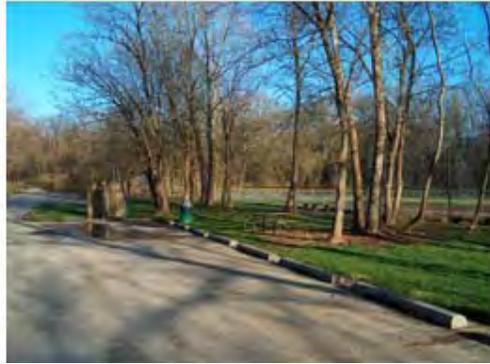
View of parking lot with entry in background

## Photographic Record – Pizzurro Park

---



View of entrance drive from parking area



View of mature trees near parking area



View of baseball field behind mature trees



View to end of drive from parking area



Baseball field



Bench near creek

## Photographic Record – Pizzurro Park Cont.

---



View of entrance drive from parking area



Unstable picnic shelter



Entrance drive



Parking area near entry



Entry drive



## Photographic Record – Rathburn Woods Park

---



Tar and chip path between woods and open lawn area



Newly planted trees used as screen



Playground structure near main entry



Entry sign



Trails through woods



Pedestrian access to adjacent residences

## Photographic Record – Rathburn Woods Park Cont.

---



Open lawn area and woods



Newly planted trees used as screen

## Photographic Record – Shull Park

---



View of skatepark from parking lot



View of open field from parking area



Inline hockey rink



Open field

## Photographic Record – Woodside Green Park

---



View of picnic shelter across pond



Improved walking trails



Playground structure



Large boulder near playground structure



Looking south at large open field from playground



Restroom/concession building

## Photographic Record – Woodside Green Park Cont.

---



Looking south at baseball field from restroom building



Looking north at picnic shelter from restroom building



Softball field



Standing water near parking lot

## Appendix F: Recommended Core Recreation Services

## Core Recreation Services Criteria

The following criteria were developed to guide both current and future recreation programs provided by the City of Gahanna:

1. The program has been provided by the City for a long period of time and is expected by the community.
2. The program consumes a large portion (5 percent or more) of the Department's overall budget and has revenue sustainability.
3. The program is offered three to four program seasons per year and continues to fill 80 percent of its program capacity each season.
4. The program has wide age segment and demographic appeal.
5. The program includes tiered levels of skill development.
6. The program is supported by full-time staff that are dedicated and responsible for its success.
7. The program has recreation facilities designed specifically to support it.
8. The Department retains a significant portion of the local program market (20 percent or more).
9. The program produces long-term participation appeal with high numbers of people involved, and has been in a growth or mature stage of its lifecycle for a long period of time.
10. The program requires high levels of customer interface.
11. The program has a strong social value that addresses part of a solution to a community problem.
12. The program has strong economic appeal, benefits community residents, and creates a strong return on investment for the City.
13. The program has high partnering capability.

## Core Recreation Services

Core services are a range of program services such as sports, aquatics, senior services, camps, and special events that the Department offers to respond to residents' expressed needs. These are services that the public expects to be provided and that the Department can manage well. There are usually few other local service providers already offering the program. Core services are based on what the market will support. Key issues identified by the community focus on Gahanna's core services. The recreation program services provided by the City of Gahanna include Adult Programs, Active Older Adult Programs, Youth and Teen Programs, and Family Programs, among others.

The Core Recreation Service areas focus on the following range of program offerings:

### Adult Programs

The key recommendations for Adult Programs center on building a wider depth of programs to strengthen this Core Service.

- Create a program work plan and establish a consistent site for classes.
- Create an overall pricing strategy and cost recovery goal.
- Establish new partnerships with local businesses in many of the programs listed.
- Target programs to young single adults and middle age adults with no children living at home.
- Add consistent program standards and performance measures.
- Develop working agreements for existing partnerships.

- Expand programs and long-term planning for the sustainability of the Ohio Herb Education Center.
- Implement strong marketing of programs, with a specific area in *The Gateway* dedicated to adult programs.

### Active Older Adult Programs

The key recommendations for Active Older Adult Programs include the following to strengthen this Core Service.

- Expand the active older adult program to focus on programs for younger active older adults, working active older adults, and weekend programs.
- Establish program standards for all classes with measurable outcomes.
- Expand the Senior Center hours to include evenings and weekends to allow access to working seniors, which would require an additional staff person as well as volunteers to work approximately 40 hours per week.
- Convert the Senior Center into a multigenerational recreational space.
- Define a target level of cost recovery for senior programs, based on the existing level of exclusivity and entitlement.
- Develop additional new programs to create energy and to encourage younger seniors to get involved, which could include aquatics, sports, fitness and wellness, lifestyle programs, life skill programs, environmental programs, outdoor recreation programs, and additional trips.
- Reach out to other service providers to help in the delivery of services to active older adults, which could include churches, schools, YMCA, and Franklin County.
- Strengthen marketing efforts to attract younger active older adults and more males into the program.
- Add user feedback methods to include focus groups and citizen surveys.
- Enhance staff and volunteer training.

### Youth and Teen Programs

#### Youth Camps

The City offers a nice selection of summer camps. The following recommendations should be considered by the staff and incorporated into its planning efforts:

- Add fall break, spring break, and holiday camps for three to five days to the camp schedule as a service to the community.
- Consider stronger marketing of camps through the schools along with a camp brochure that can be mailed out in early January with greater details about each camp offered.
- Create a pricing strategy for camps and implement the strategy based on the level of exclusivity and quality of each camp.
- Develop and implement written camp standards with performance measures.
- Consider eliminating camps that fall into the saturated lifecycle level and create new camps to replace them.
- Consider outdoor adventure camps, fitness camps, and environmental camps in the future, as well as specialty camps created around music, movies, and specific themes.
- Add stronger staff training in customer service and camp standards.
- Develop a stronger teen volunteer program to assist in the delivery of camps.
- Develop one-day travel camps for teens.

## Youth and Teen Recreation Programs

The following consideration should be given to youth and teen program expansion:

- Strengthen each program area under youth and teen services and develop them into a stronger program base with tiered levels of service that translate into a long-term user.
- Break down the program areas into three categories for ease of enrollment for parents, such as specialty classes, one-day workshops, and multiple-week life skill programs.
- Combine programs in mature and saturated stages with other service providers in the City to create a quality experience for the users at minimal cost.
- Incorporate program standards and performance measures in classes and workshops.
- Use more formal customer feedback methods to include pre and post evaluations, focus groups, and trailer calls.
- Encourage volunteer development in the delivery of programs where appropriate.
- Establish written agreements for all partnerships in place, including measurable outcomes for the City and partners to meet.
- Develop stronger marketing efforts that include themes and cross promotion with day camp participants and youth sport participants in the City.
- Continue mailing *The Gateway* to every household.
- Track the cost of services to provide the activity including cost per experience for recreation programs.
- Develop a set pricing strategy and cost recovery strategy for youth and teen programs.

## Family Programs

To broaden the family program offerings to include more activities and events in the fall and winter, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Track the economic value of the staffs' efforts in delivery of special events in the community.
- Add programs for parents and children that focus on parent participation with their kids (e.g., fitness classes, tennis, golf, running, skateboarding, bicycling, basketball, and outdoor adventure activities) which would strengthen the program.
- Create and implement program standards and performance measures.
- Develop and implement user feedback tools, such as surveys and focus groups.
- Create strong sponsors for each special event, which would help in adding volunteers and creating earned income to offset operational costs.
- Increase use of the media to promote special events in the City.
- Develop a family program section in *The Gateway*.
- Consider partnering with family advocate groups on programs.
- Establish a day for a family program fair to introduce all the programs and activities for the family to participate.
- Create a formal pricing policy and cost recovery policy.

## Special Events

Special Events in the City need to be expanded to add more events than just downtown Creekside-oriented festivals. Other possibilities include sports tournaments and competitions, such as youth sports tournaments in baseball, softball, basketball, and soccer as well as competitions in 10k runs, triathlons, and adult sporting events. The following recommendations should be considered:

- Track the economic impact on the City and Department costs with the stipulation that the Department is reimbursed for its efforts, time, and resources to support these expanded events.

- Conduct these events in cooperation with the Convention and Visitor Bureau and any other related organization.
- Add Family Program events to the Department program agenda which may include additional holiday events, parent and youth competitions, outdoor adventure, and environmental events.

## Cultural Arts

Recommendations to develop cultural arts programs include the following:

- Offer programs for youth and adults in music, dance, and fine arts for youth and families to provide a broader opportunity for people in the community, which should be coordinated with the local school district.
- Partner with other community providers, such as the Ohio Herb Education Center, to broaden programming as it relates to gardening, cooking, and fine arts.

## Environmental Education Programs

The following recommendations should be considered in order to expand environmental education program offerings:

- Create an outdoor classroom facility in the City for demonstration of programs and classes that teach youth and adults the value of the natural environment and the importance of its protection, especially in Gahanna.
- Develop an indoor nature education center to promote year-round nature education programs and camps for youth and adults to promote the value of the natural areas available in Gahanna.
- Implement supervision of all nature camps as a core recreation responsibility of the Camp Manager in order to coordinate promotion opportunities with other camps the City offers.
- Develop nature-type special events such as Earth Day, bird count, and major bird migration weeks that occur throughout the year..
- Train staff in customer service to build lifetime users of all ages.
- Seek out more volunteers in the nature programs, which would add quality to the experience of youth and adults and draw on the environmental expertise of citizens in Gahanna.
- Develop a pricing and cost recovery policy for environmental education programs.
- Create more partnerships with nature-related agencies to broaden the opportunities available to residents. These would include the Nature Conservancy, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the Metro Parks.

## Wellness

Recommendations to develop wellness programs include the following:

- Facilitate the community's desire to see more programs associated with wellness and fitness for youth, families, adults, and active older adults.
- Address the community's awareness of problems with youth and adult obesity by taking a more active role in providing mind and body programs.
- Include programs such as yoga, fitness, and health-related classes on dieting, nutrition, and self-esteem.
- Develop relationships with outside partners, such as the local hospitals, to assist in health-related programs.
- Create a plan for a future fitness center needed to support cardiovascular programs, free-weight programs, and circuit fitness-related programs.

## Aquatics

The following recommendations should be considered in order to expand aquatics program offerings:

- Provide more aquatic-based programs, such as learn-to-swim classes, aquatic fitness classes, water aerobics, and skill-based programs, to help support the aquatic operations and the pools managed by the City.
- Help create a market that results from these programs which can be extended into other areas such as competitive swimming, lifeguarding, pool management, and aquatic instruction.

## Golf

To maximize the potential of the golf course and increase usage, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Develop a plan to expand services beyond the minimal program services currently provided due to a lack of staff capable of conducting golf skill instructions and clinics for youth and beginner golfers.
- Provide more opportunities for beginners to learn the game to grow the market for use of the nine-hole golf course.
- Hire a part-time teaching pro to create and instruct beginner programs.
- Explore opportunities within national programs, such as the 1<sup>st</sup> Tee program for youth.

## Appendix G: Recommended Maintenance Standards

# Maintenance Standards for Gahanna Parks and Recreation Department

## Level 1 – Maintenance Standards

### Lawn Maintenance

1. Mow a maximum of 1/3 of the grass blade at least once every 7 days.
2. Aerate as required but not less than twice each year.
3. Edge sidewalks, borders, fences, and other appropriate areas every 14 days.
4. Install sod or seed to maintain minimum turf coverage of 98%.
5. Weeds should cover no more than 5% of the grass surface.
6. Inspect thatch layer regularly and remove as needed.
7. Test soil annually and apply fertilizer according to optimum plant requirements.
8. Irrigate with an automated system. Water as species and conditions dictate.
9. Inspect regularly for insects and diseases and respond to outbreaks within 24 hours.

### Tree and Shrub Maintenance

1. Prune/trim trees and shrubs as dictated by species twice annually during spring and fall.
2. Test soil annually to insure application of appropriate nutrients.
3. Apply fertilizer to plant species according to their optimum requirements.
4. Inspect regularly for insects and diseases. Respond to outbreaks within 48 hours.
5. Place 3" of organic mulch around each tree within a minimum 18" ring.
6. Place 3" of organic mulch around shrub beds to minimize weed growth.
7. Remove hazardous limbs and plants immediately upon discovery.
8. Remove dead trees immediately unless located within an environmental area.
9. Remove or treat invasive plants within 5 days of discovery.

### Storm Cleanup

1. Inspect drain covers at least once weekly and immediately after flooding occurs.
2. Remove debris and organic materials from drain covers immediately.
3. Maintain water inlet height at 100% of design standard.

### Irrigation Systems

1. Inspect irrigation systems as necessary, and a minimum of once per month.
2. Initiate repairs to non-functioning systems within 24 hours of discovery.

### Litter Control

1. Pick up litter and empty containers at least once daily or as needed for special events.
2. Remove leaves and organic debris within 24 hours.

### Playground Maintenance

1. Audit each playground to insure compliance with the current version of ASTM Performance Standard F1487 and the Consumer Product Safety Commission "Handbook for Public Playground Safety".

2. Complete low-frequency playground inspections at least bi-monthly or as required. All low-frequency inspections are to be completed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). Complete safety-related repairs immediately. Initiate other repairs within 48 hours of discovery.
3. Complete high-frequency inspections at least weekly.

#### **Hard Surface Maintenance**

1. Remove debris and glass immediately upon discovery.
2. Remove sand, dirt, and organic debris from walks, lots, and hard surfaces every 7 days.
3. Remove trip hazards from pedestrian areas immediately upon discovery.
4. Paint fading or indistinct instructional / directional signs within 10 days of discovery.

#### **Outdoor Court Maintenance**

1. Inspect tennis and basketball courts at least once monthly. Complete all repairs within 48 hours of discovery.
2. Repaint lines at least once each year.
3. Replace tennis nets and center straps at least annually or sooner if necessary. Replace basketball nets when frayed, broken, or removed.
4. Maintain basketball goal posts, backboards, rims, tennis net posts, fencing, and all hardware to original design specifications.
5. Replace windscreens when deterioration is noticeable. Replace broken ties immediately.
6. Maintain lighting systems according to design specifications.

#### **Trail Maintenance**

1. Inspect hard and soft surface trails at least once monthly.
2. Remove dirt, sand, and organic debris from hard surfaces at least once weekly.
3. Remove organic debris from soft surfaces at least once weekly.
4. Maintain a uniform 3-4" depth of compacted material on soft surface trails at all times.
5. Remove overhanging branches within 84" of the trail surface at least twice annually.
6. Inspect signs, benches, and other site amenities at least once monthly. Complete repairs within 10 days of discovery.
7. Inspect and make necessary repairs to lighting systems at least once monthly.
8. Repair / replace bulbs to maintain lighting levels to design specifications at all times.

#### **Site Amenity Maintenance**

1. Inspect benches, trash containers, picnic tables, grills, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, and other site amenities at least monthly. Complete repairs within 24 hours of discovery.

#### **Athletic Field Grounds Maintenance**

1. Reel mow a maximum of 1/3 of the grass blade at least twice weekly.
2. Remove grass clippings if more than 1/3 of the grass blade is removed.
3. Edge sidewalks, borders, fences and other appropriate areas every 5 days.
4. Aerate at least 4 times annually.
5. Install sod or seed to maintain minimum turf coverage of 98%.
6. Weeds should cover no more than 5% of the grass surface.
7. Inspect thatch layer regularly and remove as needed.
8. Test soil annually and apply fertilizer according to optimum plant requirements.

9. Irrigate turf with an automated system. Water as species and conditions dictate.
10. Inspect turf regularly for insects and diseases and respond to outbreaks within 24 hours.
11. Replenish dirt, renovate, and re-grade dirt infields prior to each season. Replenish dirt in worn areas prior to the next game or block of games as required.
12. Renovate dirt surfaces such that the infield is level, free of rocks and debris, appropriately moist, and drains effectively prior to the beginning of each game or block of games.
13. Rake infields and repack base and mound areas prior to each game or block of games.

#### **Athletic Field Facility Maintenance**

1. Maintain sports lighting to original design specifications. Foot-candle levels should be within 5% of standard lighting specifications as follows...
  2. Baseball / Softball: 50 FC infield / 30 FC outfield
  3. Football / Soccer: 30 FC
4. Correct lighting deficiencies before the next scheduled game or event.
5. Inspect light levels, poles, scoreboards, and system components before each season and at least monthly during the season. Complete repairs within 24 hours of discovery.
6. Inspect backstops, fencing, and netting before each season and at least weekly during the season. Complete repairs within 48 hours of discovery.
7. Inspect player's benches, dugouts, bleachers, and all other site amenities before each season and at least weekly during the season. Complete repairs within 24 hours of discovery.
8. Pick up litter and empty containers at least once daily or as needed during the season.
9. Mark or line fields with non-toxic materials according to appropriate specifications prior to the beginning of each game or block of games.
10. Inspect goals, goal posts, soccer nets, and bases before each season and at least weekly during the season. Complete safety-related repairs immediately and game impact repairs prior to the next game or block of games.
11. Secure soccer goals such that they cannot be tipped over.

#### **Fence and Gate Maintenance**

1. Inspect fences, gates, and bollards at least once annually. Complete safety-related repairs immediately. Complete other repairs within 48 hours of discovery.

#### **Sign Maintenance**

1. Inspect sign lettering, surfaces, and posts at least once monthly.
2. Repair / replace signs to maintain design and safety standards within 24 hours of discovery.

#### **Pest Control**

1. In accordance with the Department's Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), inspect appropriate problem areas monthly and complete remediation immediately upon discovery.

#### **Vandalism and Graffiti Removal**

1. Initiate repairs immediately upon discovery. Document and photograph damage as necessary.

#### **Picnic Shelters**

1. Reserved units cleaned and litter removed prior to and after each reserved use
2. Minor repairs are made immediately upon discovery.

3. Non-reserved units are cleaned weekly, based upon need.

### **Lighting Security/Area**

1. Foot-candle levels will be maintained to preserve original design.
2. Inspection to occur monthly.
3. Repairs/bulb replacement will be completed within 24 hours of discovery.

### **Pools**

1. Water chemistry will be tested three times daily, corrective applications as necessary; pH and chlorine levels posted daily.
2. Mechanical, electrical, filtration, pumping, and chlorination system will be inspected prior to season opening, weekly during season.
3. Dressing areas, showers, and restrooms will be cleaned, sanitized and stocked twice a day.
4. Decks, gutters/skimers, drains, entrance and pool surrounds to be policed for trash and swept/cleaned daily prior to opening and twice during the hours of operation.
5. Vacuum/backwashing will be conducted per standards guidelines specific to each pool and mechanical/filtration system.
6. General inspection of pool bathhouse, furniture, safety equipment, and pool surrounds for safety and cleanliness prior to opening and twice during the hours of operation.

### **Recreation/Community Centers**

1. Floors swept, cleaned, mopped, and vacuumed daily. Spills/soiling addressed immediately.
2. General tile floors stripped and waxed not to exceed 4 months, sooner if required.
3. Windows are to be cleaned inside once per week, outside once every two weeks.
4. Dusting/dust removal to be accomplished daily on furniture, wall hangings, and etc.
5. Trash and litter removed daily, sooner if accumulation dictates.
6. Restrooms to be cleaned, sanitized, and stocked daily, more often if conditions needed.
7. Drinking fountains cleaned daily. Filters replaced every 6 months.
8. Interior walls cleaned monthly, sooner if required. Marks and blemishes corrected upon discovery. Base covers cleaned monthly. Paint if applicable every 4 years.
9. Exterior walls cleaned and/or pressure washed monthly. Paint if applicable every 4 years.
10. Ceilings replaced if discolored or broken. Tile and track adjustments made upon discovery.
11. Gymnasium ceilings to be cleaned or dusted every month.
12. Plaster/sheet rock ceilings to be cleaned once per 6 months and painted on a 4 year schedule.
13. HVAC preventative maintenance procedures and inspection done every 6 months and 3 months for gymnasiums.
14. Interior lights general area replace bulbs within 8 hours of discovery. Fixtures to be cleaned once every 6 months.
15. Sports lights bulbs to be replaced within 24 hours of failure.
16. Exterior lights replace bulbs within 8 hours of discovery.
17. Fire/burglar/emergency alarms inspected once every 6 months and repair deficiencies immediately.
18. Kitchen and concessions maintained in compliance with health code.
19. Inspect athletic equipment once a month and maintain within 100% of design standards.
20. Gutter cleaned no less than twice per year, more if conditions warrant.

21. Inspect electrical systems and components on an annual basis, unless hazardous condition occurs, then repair within 24 hours.
22. Inspect plumbing equipment and fixtures annually, unless hazardous condition occurs, then repair within 24 hours.
23. Clean grease traps every 6 months, or as conditions dictate.
24. Maintain bleaches to 100% of design standards. Inspect every 6 months.
25. Interior signs will be maintained at 100% of design and policy standard. No hand-drawn signs allowed.
26. Exterior signs will be permanently affixed and will be maintained at 100% of design and policy standard.
27. A general inspection of the building for safety and cleanliness will be conducted daily.

## **Level 2 – Maintenance Standards**

### **Lawn Maintenance**

1. Mow at least once every 10 days during the growing season and as necessary at other times.
2. Aerate once each year.
3. Edge sidewalks, borders, fences, and other appropriate areas at least twice monthly.
4. Install sod or seed to maintain minimum turf coverage of 80%.
5. Weeds should cover no more than 10% of the grass surface.
6. Remove grass clippings if coverage impacts the health of the lawn.
7. Apply fertilizer according to optimum plant requirements at least once each year.
8. Irrigate manually or with an automated system. Water as species and conditions dictate.
9. Inspect regularly for insects and diseases and respond to outbreaks within 48 hours.

### **Tree and Shrub Maintenance**

1. Prune/trim trees and shrubs as dictated by species at least once annually.
2. Apply fertilizer to plant species only if plant health dictates.
3. Inspect regularly for insects and diseases. Respond to outbreaks within 48 hours.
4. Place 3" of organic mulch around each tree within a minimum 18" ring.
5. Remove hazardous limbs and plants immediately upon discovery.
6. Remove dead trees and plant material within 30 days of discovery.
7. Remove or treat invasive plants within 5 days of discovery.

### **Storm Cleanup**

1. Inspect drain covers at least once monthly and immediately after flooding occurs.
2. Remove debris and organic materials from drain covers within 72 hours of discovery.
3. Maintain water inlet height at 100% of design standard.

### **Irrigation Systems**

1. Inspect irrigation systems as necessary, and a minimum of once per month.
2. Initiate repairs to non-functioning systems within 48 hours of discovery.

### **Litter Control**

1. Pick up litter and empty containers at least twice weekly or as needed for special events.

2. Remove leaves and organic debris within 5 days of discovery.

### **Playground Maintenance**

1. Audit each playground to insure compliance with the current version of ASTM Performance Standard F1487 and the Consumer Product Safety Commission "Handbook for Public Playground Safety".
2. Complete low-frequency playground inspections at least bi-monthly or as required. All low-frequency inspections are to be completed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). Complete safety-related repairs immediately. Initiate other repairs within 48 hours of discovery.
3. Complete high-frequency inspections at least weekly.

### **Hard Surface Maintenance**

1. Remove debris and glass immediately upon discovery.
2. Remove sand, dirt, and organic debris from walks, lots, and hard surfaces every 30 days.
3. Remove trip hazards from pedestrian areas immediately upon discovery.
4. Paint fading or indistinct instructional / directional signs within 30 days of discovery.

### **Outdoor Court Maintenance**

1. Inspect tennis and basketball courts at least once monthly. Complete repairs within 10 days of discovery.
2. Repaint lines at least once every two years.
3. Replace tennis nets and center straps every 2 years or sooner if necessary. Replace basketball nets within 10 days when frayed, broken, or removed.
4. Maintain basketball goal posts, backboards, rims, tennis net posts, fencing, and all hardware to original design specifications. Complete repairs within 10 days of discovery.
5. Replace windscreens when deterioration is noticeable. Replace broken ties immediately.
6. Maintain lighting systems according to design specifications.

### **Trail Maintenance**

1. Inspect hard and soft surface trails at least once monthly.
2. Remove dirt, sand, and organic debris from hard surfaces at least once monthly.
3. Remove organic debris from soft surfaces at least once monthly.
4. Maintain a uniform 2-4" depth of compacted material on soft surface trails at all times.
5. Remove overhanging branches within 84" of the trail surface at least once annually.
6. Inspect signs, benches, and other site amenities at least once monthly. Complete repairs within 10 days of discovery.

### **Site Amenity Maintenance**

1. Inspect benches, trash containers, picnic tables, grills, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, and other site amenities at least monthly. Complete repairs within 5 days of discovery.

### **Athletic Field Grounds Maintenance**

1. Mow at least once weekly.
2. Edge sidewalks, borders, fences, and other appropriate areas every 10 days.
3. Aerate at least twice annually.
4. Install sod or seed to maintain minimum turf coverage of 90%.

5. Weeds should cover no more than 25% of the grass surface.
6. Inspect thatch layer regularly and remove as needed.
7. Apply fertilizer according to optimum plant requirements in conjunction with aeration.
8. Irrigate turf with an automated system. Water as species and conditions dictate.
9. Inspect turf regularly for insects and diseases and respond to outbreaks within 48 hours.
10. Replenish dirt, renovate, and re-grade dirt infields prior to each season. Replenish dirt in worn areas during the season as necessary.
11. Dirt infields should drain effectively, and be level and free of rocks and debris at all times.
12. Rake and drag infields prior to each game or block of games.
13. Repack batters' boxes, pitching mounds, and base areas as necessary.

#### **Athletic Field Facility Maintenance**

1. Maintain sports lighting to original design specifications. Foot-candle levels should be within 5% of standard lighting specifications as follows...
  2. Baseball / Softball: 30 FC infield / 20 FC outfield
  3. Football / Soccer: 30 FC
4. Correct lighting deficiencies before the next scheduled game or event.
5. Inspect light levels, poles, scoreboards, and system components before each season and at least monthly during the season. Complete repairs within 5 days of discovery.
6. Inspect backstops, fencing, and netting before each season and at least weekly during the season. Complete repairs within 5 days of discovery.
7. Inspect player's benches, dugouts, bleachers, and all other site amenities before each season and at least weekly during the season. Complete repairs within 5 days of discovery.
8. Pick up litter and empty containers at least once daily or as needed during the season.
9. Mark or line fields with non-toxic materials according to appropriate specifications at least once daily on game days.
10. Inspect goals, goal posts, soccer nets, and bases before each season and at least weekly during the season. Complete safety-related repairs immediately and game impact repairs prior to the next game or block of games.
11. Secure soccer goals such that they cannot be tipped over.

#### **Fence and Gate Maintenance**

1. Inspect fences, gates, and bollards at least once annually. Complete safety-related repairs immediately. Complete other repairs within 5 days of discovery.

#### **Sign Maintenance**

1. Inspect sign lettering, surfaces, and posts at least once each 3 months.
2. Repair/replace signs to maintain design and safety standards within 5 days of discovery.

#### **Pest Control**

1. In accordance with the Department's Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), inspect appropriate problem areas monthly and complete remediation immediately upon discovery.

#### **Vandalism and Graffiti Removal**

1. Initiate repairs immediately upon discovery. Document and photograph damage as necessary.

### **Picnic Shelters**

1. Reserved units cleaned and litter removed prior to and after each reserved use.
2. Minor repairs are made immediately upon discovery.
3. Non-reserved units are cleaned bi-weekly, based upon need.

### **Lighting Security/Area**

1. Inspection to occur monthly.
2. Repairs/bulb replacement will be completed within 72 hours of discovery.

### **Pools**

1. Water chemistry will be tested twice daily, corrective applications as necessary; pH and chlorine levels posted daily.
2. Mechanical, electrical, filtration, pumping, and chlorination system will be inspected prior to season opening, monthly during season.
3. Dressing areas, showers, and restrooms will be cleaned, sanitized, and stocked daily.
4. Decks, gutters/skimers, drains, entrance, and pool surrounds to be policed for trash and swept/cleaned daily prior to opening.
5. Vacuum/backwashing will be conducted per standards guidelines specific to each pool and mechanical/filtration system.
6. General inspection of pool bathhouse, furniture, safety equipment, and pool surrounds for safety and cleanliness prior to opening.

### **Recreation/Community Centers**

1. Floors swept, cleaned, mopped, and vacuumed daily. Spills/soiling addressed immediately.
2. General tile floors stripped and waxed not to exceed 6 months, sooner if required.
3. Windows are to be cleaned inside once per week, outside once every two weeks.
4. Dusting/dust removal to be accomplished weekly on furniture, wall hangings, and etc.
5. Trash and litter removed daily, sooner if accumulation dictates.
6. Restrooms to be cleaned, sanitized, and stocked daily, more often if conditions needed.
7. Drinking fountains cleaned daily. Filters replaced every 6 months.
8. Interior walls cleaned bi-monthly, sooner if required. Marks and blemishes corrected upon discovery. Base covers cleaned bi-monthly. Paint if applicable every 6 years.
9. Exterior walls cleaned and/or pressure washed twice per year. Paint if applicable every 6 years.
10. Ceilings replaced if discolored or broken. Tile and track adjustments made upon discovery.
11. Gymnasium ceilings to be cleaned or dusted bi-monthly.
12. Plaster/sheet rock ceilings to be cleaned once per year and painted on a 6 year schedule.
13. HVAC preventative maintenance procedures and inspection done every annually and 6 months for gymnasiums.
14. Interior lights general area replace bulbs within 48 hours of discovery. Fixtures to be cleaned annually.
15. Sports lights bulbs to be replaced within 24 hours of failure.
16. Exterior lights replace bulbs within 48 hours of discovery.
17. Fire/burglar/emergency alarms inspected annually and repair deficiencies immediately.
18. Kitchen and concessions maintained in compliance with health code.
19. Inspect athletic equipment once a month and maintain within 100% of design standards.
20. Gutter cleaned no less than twice per year.

21. Inspect electrical systems and components on an annual basis, unless hazardous condition occurs, then repair within 24 hours.
22. Inspect plumbing equipment and fixtures annually, unless hazardous condition occurs, then repair within 24 hours.
23. Clean grease traps every 6 months or as conditions dictate.
24. Maintain bleaches to 100% of design standards. Inspect every 6 months.
25. Interior signs will be maintained at 100% of design and policy standard.
26. Exterior signs will be permanently affixed and will be maintained at 100% of design and policy standard.
27. A general inspection of the building for safety and cleanliness will be conducted daily.

## **Level 3 – Maintenance Standards**

### **Tree and Shrub Maintenance**

1. Inspect annually for insects and diseases. Respond to outbreaks within 48 hours.
2. Remove hazardous limbs and plants, from human contact zones only, immediately upon discovery.
3. Remove dead trees and plant material which pose a threat to adjacent property or human activity only within 30 days of discovery.
4. Remove or treat invasive plants annually.

### **Litter Control**

1. Pick up litter and empty containers at least quarterly or as needed for special events.

### **Trail Maintenance**

1. Inspect hard and soft surface trails annually.
2. Remove dirt, sand, and organic debris from hard surfaces annually.
3. Maintain a uniform 2-4" depth of compacted material on soft surface trails. Upgrade annually.
4. Remove overhanging branches within 84" of the trail surface at least once biannually.
5. Inspect signs, benches, and other site amenities at least annually. Complete repairs within 30 days of discovery.

### **Site Amenity Maintenance**

1. Inspect benches, trash containers, picnic tables, grills, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, and other site amenities annually. Complete repairs within 30 days of discovery.

### **Fence and Gate Maintenance**

1. Inspect fences, gates, and bollards at least once annually. Complete safety-related repairs immediately. Complete other repairs within 5 days of discovery.

### **Sign Maintenance**

1. Inspect sign lettering, surfaces, and posts at least once every 3 months.
2. Repair/replace signs to maintain design and safety standards within 5 days of discovery.

### **Vandalism and Graffiti Removal**

1. Initiate repairs immediately upon discovery. Document and photograph damage as necessary.

## Appendix H: Recommended Park Landscape Guidelines

## Landscape Guidelines

The use of and relationship between plantings, lawns, walks, signage, park facilities, and other site elements are a major part of the overall appearance of Gahanna's parks and greenways. Appearance and longevity of the parks and facilities are directly influenced by material selection and maintenance. Each park and landscape area within a park will require varying levels of maintenance depending on the desired use and its place in the overall park and park system within Gahanna. Improvements to the landscape appearance in the parks are recommended, especially in the newer parks such as Headley and Shull. Landscape guidelines will assist the Gahanna Parks and Recreation Department in the selection of materials and detailing as the parks are improved and developed over time. Following the guidelines not only creates a consistent appearance and character within the parks, it also anticipates and supports the required level of maintenance for each park or facility. Standardization of materials and products used provides efficiencies for maintenance and operations. As the parks are developed, the Master Plan will guide the overall pattern of development. Landscape guidelines should guide the detailed implementation of improvements in a manner which results in a maintainable facility or landscape. Following is an outline of landscape considerations and design criteria that will guide Gahanna in adopting specific guidelines for the parks.

### Park Category and Level of Maintenance

The type of park or its category within the overall park system influences the intensity of use, development and landscape appearance. Community parks, such as Creekside or Academy Park, experience a higher level of use, and thus will require more attention to maintenance and durability of materials than a natural reserve parcel such as Woodmark Woods Reserve. The categorization of Gahanna's park properties outlined in Chapter 3 of the Master Plan is the first step in assigning levels of maintenance appropriate for each park. The Policies and Standards section of Chapter 5 outlines appropriate maintenance standards for the various categories of parks.

- **Level One maintenance** typically applies to front entrances of community parks, public buildings such as City Hall, a recreation center or pool, golf courses, and sports game fields.
- **Level Two maintenance** is typically applied to neighborhood parks, school parks, some community park areas, along trails, and in regional parks.
- **Level Three maintenance** for park properties is typically applied to undeveloped wooded and flood plain areas and open space reserve parcels.

Characteristics and design principals for the overall development for parks in each category are outlined in Chapter 5 and provide general guidance towards more detailed planning for each park.

While different types of parks can be expected to receive varying levels of development and maintenance, areas within each park can also be broken down according to expected maintenance levels, each with its own appropriate landscape treatment. The following considerations outline the framework for the adoption of landscape guidelines based on the level of expected maintenance required and the type of landscape area or "zone" within a specific park.

### Landscape Zones

#### Park Entrances:

- **Level One** – Entrances to community parks and major public facilities require special identity and attention. Park entry treatments are an opportunity to create a consistent image for Gahanna's parks and to communicate their role in the system via the relative landscape

development. Some level of landscape treatment is appropriate at both vehicular and pedestrian park entrances. Level one park entrances typically include the following:

- Park entrance signage. May be integrated with program boards or other means of communicating events and programs.
  - Coordinated plantings with seasonal interest. Annual flower beds would be included with the highest level of treatment with a mixture of shrubs, trees, and perennials as more typical.
  - Optional entrance monumentation, such as low walls of brick or stone, wood railings, or fencing.
  - Signage lighting and optional ornamental lighting.
- **Level Two** – Park entrances at level two parks may include both vehicular and pedestrian entrance locations or simply consist of visible street frontage. A basic park identity treatment is appropriate for these parks which shares use of material and signage styles with level one park entrance treatments. Level two park entrances may include the following elements.
    - Park entrance signage. Scale appropriate for viewing and compatible with neighborhood context.
    - Landscape plantings with preference to low maintenance shrubs and trees. Planting design criteria may include conveying a park-like character, screening of adjacent land uses, and framing attractive views.
    - Entrance monumentation may consist of map boards at trailheads or specific landscape elements unique to each park or neighborhood.
  - **Level Three** – Depending upon the context of the park, an identifying landscape treatment may or may not be required. In general, if the property supports any programmed uses, such as nature trails or a seating area, identification of Department ownership is appropriate. Some form of identify may also be helpful for those parcels intentionally left in a natural state or are in the process of reverting to such in order to inform and educate the public of the Department's intent and role of the property within the overall system.

#### **Vehicular Circulation and Parking:**

- **Level One** – Clear and appropriate locations for driving and parking cars within parks can be conveyed through pavement alignments and edge detailing. Many park visits at least begin in a car, so the “vehicular park experience” is a consideration at Gahanna’s larger, community-oriented parks. Depending upon the stormwater management technique employed, curbing may or may not be used, but clear and un-eroded drive and parking area edges should be maintained. Development of vehicular pavements in level one parks may include the following elements:
  - Anticipate stormwater management needs and provide appropriate drainage swales and structures for control and containment. Try to locate facilities outside of flood-prone areas to limit clean-up requirements and to extend life of pavements.
  - Consider green technologies for stormwater management such as infiltration basins, filter strips, and permeable pavements.
  - Control vehicular encroachment through physical and enforcement methods. Avoid the use of timbers, steel guardrails or wires, and extensive no parking signs to discourage vehicular encroachment onto lawn areas adjacent to drives and parking lots. Instead use curbing, wheelstops, or landscape materials to maintain edges. Repair damaged areas promptly.

- Plan for maintenance access for park facilities. Size walkway widths and pavement depths to accommodate maintenance vehicles at necessary locations. Control access with hinged bollards or gates that are easy for staff or emergency personnel to use and secure.
  - At prominent facilities, accommodate vehicular drop-off at landscaped and attractive locations. Integrate with entrance signage and monumentation.
  - Provide shade for parking areas and attractive landscape plantings along entrance drives that frame views and provide seasonal interest.
- **Level Two** – Extent of vehicular pavements in level two parks will tend to be less intensive than in level one parks but the majority of level one considerations also apply. Materials may be less durable but the control of edges and stormwater are still primary considerations. The following additional considerations may apply:
    - Accommodation of alternate forms of transportation, such as bicycles and walking connections, should typically take priority over vehicular access for neighborhood and mini parks.
  - **Level Three** – Typically not applicable.

#### Pedestrian Circulation and Trails:

- **Level One** – Walkways and pedestrian plazas in level one parks will typically consist of more durable and substantial materials in order to accommodate higher levels of use and high public visibility. The following considerations may apply:
  - Plan layouts and grading of pedestrian facilities to accommodate anticipated intensity of use and management of stormwater runoff.
  - Provide separation of vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
  - Whenever feasible, consider using concrete for walkways in community parks and major public facilities. A high level of detailing may include scoring patterns, integral color, and pavement inlays or stamps for interpretive features.
  - Unit pavers (concrete or brick) should be reserved for the highest level of park development and prominent public areas, such as the Creekside II plaza, and entrances to facilities such as the golf pro shop or community recreation facility. Install pavers over a concrete base to avoid differential settlement with adjacent walks and building entrances.
  - Consider incorporating seating areas into low-site walls or other durable features such as the stone council rings at Creekside. Locate seating at high use areas and places with unique views or features.
  - Use of consistent “signature” materials and detailing will create identity for the parks within the overall system and the City.
  - Adopt the principal of “one way for all” regarding barrier-free access to facilities whenever possible.
  - Consider the provision of shade at seating areas and the sensory use of plant materials (seasonal interest, smell, and texture).
- **Level Two** – Walkways and trails in level two parks will experience less intense use but share many of the same basic landscape design considerations as level one parks. For facility longevity and ease of maintenance, incorporate the most durable materials that can be afforded whenever possible. The following considerations for level two pedestrian accommodations may also apply:

- Wood boardwalks and bridges are expensive to build and maintain. The existing detailing on Gahanna's boardwalks feature appropriately heavy dimensioned lumber. Railing and guardrail design should incorporate safety features in fall areas exceeding 30" of drop. Limit boardwalk and bridge use to wetland and creek crossings at high priority areas for interpretation or where access cannot be otherwise appropriately accommodated.
  - Recognizing that many of the greenway and trail opportunities in Gahanna are located along the creeks and drainage ways. Where possible, locate trail facilities above the ordinary high water elevation and preferably outside of the 10-year flood plain.
  - Use more durable materials, such as asphalt on trails with slopes exceeding 2% in areas that experience frequent flooding. Stonedust or woodchips are appropriate for use on trails with gentle slopes, low intensity of use, and which are outside of flood prone areas.
  - It is still equally important to pay attention to drainage patterns, even along wood chip trails, and provide swales and culverts at appropriate locations. This will prevent washouts and muddy conditions.
  - Consider a marking system for trails and walking loops within parks that identifies distances to assist users with wayfinding and fitness goals.
- **Level Three** – Typically not applicable.

#### Use Areas and Facilities:

- **General** – The development of use areas and facilities for each park is ideally generated by the anticipated park program and relates to the context and character of each park and the surrounding neighborhood. At the same time, specific detailing and materials used in the parks should also be part of a common family or pallet. Adopting a standardized pallet of materials for the park system and recreational facilities provides a framework for consistent use of materials and products that over time builds identity for the system and simplifies maintenance and replacements. The worst use of this tool results in an "off the shelf" (or out of a catalog) appearance for a park system; therefore, options appropriate for each category of park or district character within the City are important considerations in establishing material guidelines. Application of the guidelines should be within the context of an overall park design that addresses the program, infrastructure, and spatial organization of the park and not as an end in itself. Material selection guidelines may include the following:
  - Benches
  - Trash receptacles
  - Bike racks
  - Signage
  - Drinking fountains
  - Planters
  - Light fixtures
  - Play equipment and safety surfacing
  - Edging techniques
  - Athletic field equipment
  - Restroom building materials and fixtures
  - Monuments, memorials and artwork
  - Fencing
  - Plant materials

## Natural Areas and Reserves

- **General** – Gahanna’s parks and public open space areas include a wide variety of natural features and characteristics which contribute to the overall appearance of the parks and the City. Natural areas are not static and are influenced by patterns of disturbance and maintenance techniques. Landscape guidelines for the treatment of natural areas are maintenance driven for the most part. Establishing appropriate maintenance levels for the different types of natural areas including wood lots, wetlands, open meadows, and creek corridors will assist the Department in determining to what extent maintenance or other interventions are required. Documentation of the existing condition, character, and level of maintenance required for each type of natural area not only assists in the management of existing areas but also will guide the development or restoration of new areas within existing maintained or disturbed park areas. Standards could include:
  - Woods
  - Meadows
  - Herbaceous wetlands
  - Forested wetlands
  - Open water (streams, creeks, ponds)
  - Stormwater management sites
  - Special features (specimen plants, rock features, and etc.)

# Appendix I: Recommended Governmental Policies

# Overview of Chapter 1109

## City of Gahanna Planning and Zoning Code

### Using In-Lieu Fees to Fund Park Development and Maintenance

The City of Gahanna, as part of their Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Master Plan, is examining ways to redefine criteria for new park land dedications and fees in lieu of park land. The existing zoning ordinance currently requires developers of new residential developments to provide an adequate amount of park/public space to the public. The amount of land required is based upon the type of zoning district the development is located. While the current zoning regulations do not explicitly prohibit in-lieu fees being accepted (in fact there is a provision for accepting an in-lieu fee when suitable land is not available); however, it is not clear that developers have a choice in providing either new park land or a fee commensurate with new park lands or under what circumstances the City would opt for fees in lieu of land.

Many cities and towns have been using such in-lieu fees (or exactions) to better fund their existing parks and to supplement maintenance budgets without having to seek increases in local taxes.. Most local governments obtain concessions from developers using a combination of general planning responsibilities, zoning ordinances, and regulations specifically governing subdivisions. To avoid any legal challenges, local governments should ensure that any exaction they require is linked, both in content and cost, to the impact of the proposed development. Three communities that offer examples of using in-lieu fees to supplement park budgets are the City of Dublin, Ohio; the City of Englewood, Ohio; and the Village of Waynesville, Ohio.

The City of Dublin utilizes a standard land dedication of 0.025 acres per residential dwelling unit (not to exceed 25% of the total gross site area) for the proposed development. The City also allows new park areas to be jointly maintained by both the City and the Board of Education. In-lieu fees are utilized when the amount of land necessary for the developer to meet the standard 0.025 acres is unavailable. The fee is calculated based upon a per-unit cost with a minimum fee of \$350 and a maximum fee of \$1,000 per residential unit. The proceeds from all fees are then dedicated to future park acquisition or park maintenance.

Key features of the City of Englewood's ordinances are specific reference to the Parks and Recreation Plan in the zoning code. The amount of park land required is based on the population of the proposed subdivision. The planning commission determines whether the developer will dedicate land, pay an in-lieu fee, or do both based upon the proposed development plan and site characteristics. The City of Englewood does not accept any donation of land under one acre in size. The fee amount paid by the developer in lieu of land dedication is determined by a formula that takes the area of land dedication required and multiplies it by the fair market value per acre. Additional fees may come in the form of park development fees or voluntary dedications made by the developer. Credits are given to developers who provide open space areas that will be privately maintained.

The Village of Waynesville uses a similar method to Gahanna as to the amount of park land to be dedicated. The percentage of land to be dedicated is based upon the type of residential zoning in the subdivision. However, the planning commission of Waynesville (with input from the Park Board) determines if the amount or site characteristics are acceptable as park land dedication. In-lieu fees are acceptable and can be requested by the applicant. The amount of the fee is equal to the assessed value of the acreage that would have been dedicated under the land dedication requirement.

The existing zoning code for the City of Gahanna is sufficient to allow for in-lieu fees rather than developing new park spaces that are difficult for the City to manage and maintain. However, a clarifying resolution to



CITY OF GAHANNA

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

