



parks & recreation

comprehensive master plan

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PREFACE

Beginning in the late 1990s, Kalispell, Montana began to see significant annual increases in its population, sometimes as high as 4.1% per year. With this growth has come a demand for more parkland, sport facilities and recreation services. Recognizing that the City was not keeping up with this demand and that potential park sites were being lost to other development, a decision was made to develop a long-range strategy to meet future park and recreation needs. This document is the result of that planning effort. It is Kalispell's first Park and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan, and addresses the city's anticipated needs until the year 2020.

This study identified a number of planning issues related to park and recreation services. Some of these are discussed below.



Condition of the Park System: For some time, major park maintenance needs have been under-funded. While basic maintenance such as mowing, trash pickup and similar daily activities are being addressed, major repairs and other significant rehabilitation projects have been deferred. A park system can sustain deferred maintenance temporarily, but the long term result is often complete facility replacement. To address this issue, the Plan recommends the formation of a Park Maintenance District similar to the Urban Forestry Maintenance District now in place. This assessment district will provide an increase in revenue to help address park system maintenance needs.

Public Buy-in to Park Enhancement: Many of the needs in existing parks are minor improvements. While more staff could be hired to address these needs, the Plan encourages volunteer participation from local neighborhoods. Acting as a granting agency, the City should provide resources in the form of either small cash grants or supplies for local neighborhood work forces to plant trees, install benches, etc. While this work effort will still require some city staff involvement, it is preferable to having maintenance staff perform all park rehab activities, as it increases public involvement and support for park and recreation services, as well as a sense of public "ownership" for parks.

Park Land Acquisition: Kalispell is rapidly losing quality park sites to other development. As the City grows, this issue will become even more critical. Of utmost importance is the need to preserve parkland that is within the City's urban growth boundary but currently outside the city limits. With land use decisions in these areas being made by Flathead County, Kalispell may not have the opportunity to determine where parkland should be preserved. It is hoped that with this plan, the City and County can work together to preserve parkland where it is most needed. The Plan identifies where new park

sites should be acquired. In the near term, two neighborhood parks and one community park will need to be obtained.

Trail Development: The results of the recreation survey revealed very high rates of interest in trail development. The City is fortunate in that it has a number of creek and greenway corridors that would make excellent routes for paved trails and unpaved pathways. The trails plan located herein illustrates a potential trail system for Kalispell.

Natural Open Space: The master plan public workshop held in April 2006, as well as the results of the 2006 Recreation Survey, showed considerable interest in acquiring natural open space for recreation and preservation purposes. While natural open space exists around Kalispell, little exists within the city. The Whitefish and Stillwater Rivers, as well as Ashley Creek, could become excellent greenways in support of recreation and preservation-related use. The Park Layout Plan herein illustrates these potential open space corridors.

Funding Improvements: The Plan identifies \$59.5 million of park and facility improvements needed over the life of the Plan. This is, of course, more than what the City can afford at one time. Recognizing the limited resources for capital development, a short term (six year) capital facilities plan has been developed. This plan identifies projects of highest priority and a revenue source to fund them. While the Capital Facility Plan is small in comparison to overall need, it is a start. A key to future funding of improvements will be Park Impact Fees. While not in place at the current time, it is hoped that the City will adopt these fees in the near future.

Financing Strategy: Two financing strategies have been proposed. The first option is to rely only on existing resources plus park impact fees. This option will produce about \$3.7 million in revenue over the next six years and fund the acquisition of one park site, development of one park site and rehabilitation of a number of existing park sites. The concern with this option is that it funds very little park acquisition. While park impact fees could eventually achieve this, it will take time to build up an adequate account. In the meantime, potential parkland is being lost. This then, illustrates the need for the second alternative which is an open space bond that will fund only land acquisition. While the bond will require voter approval, it does assure adequate land will be preserved.

This Plan presents specific recommendations and strategies to address park and recreation issues in the Kalispell Planning Area, as summarized above. Public perceptions, recreation interests, and community needs were carefully considered in developing these recommendations. When adopted by the City Council, the Plan will provide policies and guidelines to make informed decisions about recreation services until 2020.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special thanks are also due to the citizens of Kalispell who participated in the recreation survey and community workshop to provide input for this plan.

We sincerely appreciate the efforts of City staff, including Mike Baker, Lisa Simmer and Nona Kazlauskas, who played critical roles in providing data for this plan.

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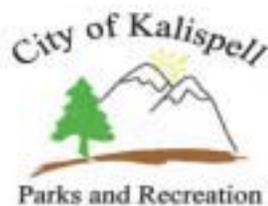
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PARKS AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

Kalispell is the largest city in northwest Montana and a regional provider of park and recreation services. Rapid population growth has increased the demand for parks, recreation facilities, and programs community-wide. The City needs a plan to maintain its existing resources and expand its recreation opportunities that can work with its daily and long-term financial constraints.

At present, the City has a park system that meets its needs geographically, with most neighborhoods serviced by at least one park facility. In addition, daily maintenance (tree care, turf maintenance, litter pickup and restroom cleaning) is adequate to excellent for the entire park system. A funding deficit has discouraged rehabilitation of major park facilities as needed, however. Several significant deferred maintenance projects now exist. In addition, several middle-aged and newer parks are underdeveloped. Youth and seniors are in need of more recreation programs and services, as well.

As Kalispell continues to grow and the City looks to the future, this plan will address community needs and provide direction for the development of parks and recreation services. The City has an excellent foundation for a thriving park system and the potential to provide comprehensive recreation programming for the entire community. However, to provide a higher level of service to residents, the existing system needs improvement, and new parkland should be acquired while the opportunity exists to do so.

EXISTING RESOURCES

The Kalispell park system consists of both active and passive recreational areas, including a variety of park types, pathways, and facilities. The City of Kalispell manages approximately 406 acres of parkland, including 138 acres leased from the State of Montana for the Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex. The parkland inventory includes 321 acres of active parkland and 73 acres of natural open space. Kalispell also owns 12 acres of undeveloped land. The City maintains several beautification areas, including roadway greens and annual plantings, via its Parks Department.

The City of Kalispell is a significant provider of recreation and sport facilities. Additional facilities are provided by other entities, such as the County, Kalispell Public Schools, and private agencies. However, some sport fields suffice as practice fields only because they are inadequate in size or condition for games. Other facilities have scheduling restrictions. The City has one outdoor pool well-suited and heavily used for recreation by youth. Adult pool needs are filled privately.

The following facilities in Kalispell are counted as part of its restricted inventory, meaning they are considered adequate (by definition) for games or their intended use:

- 3 adult baseball fields
- 7 adult softball fields
- 22 youth softball/baseball fields
- 10 soccer fields
- 5 football fields
- 17 tennis courts
- 8 gymnasiums
- 1 outdoor swimming pool

COMMUNITY INPUT

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan included a community workshop and a city-wide recreation survey to gain valuable public input into the Plan.

The community workshop was held on April 4, 2006, at Kalispell's City Hall. Issues deemed important by workshop participants included:

Trails – Participants expressed strong interest in developing linear corridors for trails, particularly rail corridors. Specific features desired included trailhead parking at appropriate locations and soft-surface trails.

Open space opportunities – Participants expressed strong interest in procuring open space and natural areas, particularly wetlands. Support was expressed for the installation of low maintenance, native plantings and the provision of amenities to encourage wildlife viewing.

Performing Arts/Community Center – Support was shown for three community facility types: a performing arts center, a flexible space with meeting rooms, and a YMCA-type indoor athletic facility. Participants were unsure as to how this facility should be funded.

Partnering with artists – Partnering with local/visiting artists was a priority for some participants; movies-in-the-park and other inclusive artistic events were also mentioned. Considerable activity is already underway within the growing art community in Kalispell; Thompson Field was identified as a good location for outdoor art-oriented events.

Teen programming – Service learning/teen work programming was identified as a priority for Kalispell's youth, as were interactive, "hip" activities such as skate camps.

Maintenance of existing sports infrastructure – Maintenance of existing sport fields and courts was important to many; development of new sports facilities was less important. Tennis courts were noted to be in poor condition at certain locations throughout the city.

A city-wide survey of public attitudes, recreation interests, and recreation participation was conducted in Spring 2006. Completed surveys were obtained from 363 randomly selected households, resulting in a 28% return ratio. Key findings included:

Of all park and recreation services, residents want City focus and effort put toward:

- Maintenance of existing parks
- Upgrades to existing parks
- Land acquisition for future parks
- New major facility construction

Capital development priorities are relatively similar across all age groups:

- Trails and linear corridors
- Open space acquisition
- Multi-use park development

There is a need for more teen and senior programming. A desire for more outdoor programming and cultural programming exists.

Participation in trails and open-space related activities dominated the top-ten list of preferred activities in Kalispell. This is above average for most communities.

Participants repeatedly expressed a lack of knowledge about park and recreation services: facility and trail locations and programming opportunities, most notably.

PARK LAND AND FACILITY NEEDS

The Plan raises the demand standard for neighborhood parks, community parks, linear parks and greenways as current provisions are insufficient.

The Plan lowers the demand standard for mini parks, large urban parks, and special use areas, as current provisions are adequate.

Based on the recommended level of service, eleven additional neighborhood parks and five community parks are needed to meet parkland needs by year 2020.

There are opportunities to develop greenways and linear parks along creeks, rail corridors and roadways. For its trail system to maximize these eligible spaces, the City of Kalispell will need to acquire approximately 230 acres of greenway, and support non-profit groups and the County in acquiring about 120 acres of abandoned rail corridor. Support for the Hwy 93 Bypass path should be expressed as well.

The decreased level of service for special use areas does not mean that no development of these facilities should occur. In fact, 25 acres of special use area are required by 2020 to adequately provide for future needs. The 25 acres will accommodate sport fields, among

other facilities. The forecasted net needs for sport facilities in 2020 include:

- 5 adult softball fields
- 21 youth softball/baseball fields
- 7 soccer fields
- 841 square feet of swimming pool

Development of sport fields could coincide with development of a new community park.

FACILITIES PLAN

The Park and Recreation Plan includes a facilities plan that sets forth recommendations for existing parks, proposed new parks, and new facilities.

Key points of the facility plan include:

Improvements to many neighborhood parks, and the acquisition and development of eleven additional neighborhood park sites. At least four acres of parkland per neighborhood site is recommended to meet anticipated need.

Improvements to Kalispell's one community park, Lawrence Park, and the acquisition and development of five additional community park sites. It is recommended that at least 15 acres of park land per site be acquired to meet anticipated need. It is further recommended that one site be larger than fifteen acres to accommodate a sport field complex.

The acquisition and development of three greenway corridors to support an intra- and inter-community trail system and to fulfill an expressed need for open space and natural areas. Acreage amounts should depend upon site opportunities; estimates are provided.

Significant rehabilitation of certain features at Kalispell's large urban park, Woodland Park, and one of its special use areas, Depot Park.

Encouragement of Flathead County to reserve parkland for the City in unincorporated areas, and to dedicate parkland in annexed areas to the City. All land preserved and/or dedicated should meet site selection guidelines, outlined herein.

Selling of surplus property sites that are not suitable for park use. These sites include Helen O'Neil Park and Eagle Park (which has the potential for use as a trailhead if parking can be found).

Development of the Willow Glen Site as a new neighborhood park, using a strong public involvement program to gain input during the design process.

Development of a multi-use facility for use as a community center: This facility could serve a variety of purposes – athletic, general use, teen and senior programming – thus, the center's design should be flexible in nature.

TRAILS PLAN

A trails plan identifies potential routes for trails, pathways, and bikeways to provide a safe trail network that links neighborhoods, parks, schools, recreation sites, and other community attractions. Far-reaching trail corridors provide for extensive recreational efforts. Several in-town trail loops are noted to allow for smaller cycling or walking ventures. Key points of the trails plan include:

The development and replacement of trail signage and trailheads to demarcate safe pathways and bikeways.

The development and widespread distribution of trail maps to encourage use.

Public support of non-profits and Flathead County in their efforts to further develop the Ashley Creek Rails-to-Trails.

Public support of the Highway 93 Bypass to provide substantial off-road commuter and recreational trail opportunities.

The acquisition and development of three greenway corridors to support an intra- and inter-community trail system.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementation of park and facility design standards to assure the development of quality facilities.

An increase in certain recreation programs and services such as outdoor and interpretive programs, cultural programming, and teen and senior programs.

The recreation survey demonstrated that a significant number of people had limited awareness of basic park and recreation services offered by the City. As a result, more effort to market services and facilities is recommended. The website, in particular, is recommended for interactive use.

The average minimum maintenance cost per acre should be increased to improve the maintenance level of service for Kalispell parks and recreation facilities.

The City should consider all sources of

funding, including levies, grants, donations, impact fees and bonds, to address existing financial shortages. Three new sources of revenue are recommended: a maintenance district to generate additional revenue for park maintenance; impact fees to pay for park development costs; and a general obligation bond to raise money for parkland acquisition.

donations, which are the only two revenue sources currently established, can generate approximately \$930,000 in revenue in six years. It is recommended that park impact fees be established and that the City seek grants in support of tree planting, water quality improvements, and other improvements. With these additional revenue sources, about \$3,750,000 can be appropriated for use in capital outlay.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The total cost to develop and improve the parks and facilities identified in the Park and Recreation Master Plan is approximately \$59.5 million. This is more than the City can finance in the near term. To be able to direct funding toward those projects most significant to the community, recommended projects were prioritized on a scale of 1-3. Projects identified as Priority 1 are to be implemented in a 1-6 year time frame. Priority 2 projects are to be implemented in a 7-12 year time frame. Priority 3 projects should be developed as funding becomes available.

This revenue would be sufficient to pay for a small but balanced park improvement package that features:

Listed below is cost estimate of Priority 1 projects, divided by project type.

Cost Estimate of Highest Priority Projects

Item	Cost
1) Land Acquisition	\$4,530,000
2) New Park/Park Feature Development	\$2,757,750
3) Park Rehabilitation	\$297,250
4) Trails	\$165,000
TOTAL	\$7,750,000

land acquisition for one new neighborhood park site, the location to be determined (recommendations are provided herein)

development of the Willow Glen Park site at the east edge of the city, affordable as the City already owns the parkland and the acreage is sizeable

minor park upgrades in many existing parks, carried out via a neighborhood grant program administered by the Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department

park enhancement in several highly-utilized parks, such as basketball courts at Spring Prairie Tree Park and Sunset Park and expanded parking at Lawrence Park

most major facility rehabilitation expenses, including a portion of water quality improvement expenses at Woodland Park

trail signage and trailhead construction throughout the City

As shown in the table above, the City needs \$7.8 million to fund its highest priority capital projects. Estimates indicate that the City has approximately \$930,000 available for park and recreation facility development over the next six years via general fund revenue and donations. With this level of funding, the City will need to address a significant financial deficit to implement Priority 1 projects.

Option B is a more aggressive financing plan that will provide for land acquisition in addition to all items in Option A. The major source of additional funding for this alternative is a general obligation bond. The estimated cost of the bond to the taxpayer is \$0.40 / \$1,000 assessed valuation.

In order to address this deficit, two short-term (six-year) capital facilities plans are proposed:

At a cost of \$7,750,000, Option B will provide for all of the expenses noted in Option A. In addition, Option B will provide funding for the acquisition of one additional neighborhood park, two community parks, and a portion of one greenway. Funding for development of these sites is not included in Option B and will need to occur in the next 7-12 year time frame.

Option A is a basic pay-as-you-go approach involving expenditures from the General Fund, supplemented with donations, grants and impact fee revenue. As mentioned, general fund revenue for capital expenditures and



Chapter 1: Introduction

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

INTRODUCTION

In the winter of 2005, the City of Kalispell initiated this Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan to address park, recreation, and service needs until the year 2020. This plan describes a strategy for meeting these future community needs. It assesses the public demand for park and recreation facilities, establishes guidelines and standards for park planning and development, identifies the general location of future parks and trails, recommends improvements to existing facilities, and describes a financing strategy to implement priority recommendations.

Plan Development:

1. *Inventory and Analysis*
2. *Needs Assessment*
3. *Recommendations*
4. *Implementation Strategy*

At present, the City has a park system that meets its needs geographically, with most neighborhoods serviced by at least one park facility. In addition, daily maintenance (tree care, turf maintenance, litter pickup and restroom cleaning) is adequate to excellent for the entire park system. A funding deficit has discouraged rehabilitation of major park facilities as needed, however. Several significant deferred maintenance projects exist. In addition, several middle-aged and newer parks are underdeveloped.

As Kalispell continues to grow and the City looks to the future, this plan will address community needs and provide direction for the development of parks and recreation services. The City has an excellent foundation for a thriving park system and the potential to provide comprehensive recreation programming for the entire community. However, to provide a higher level of service to residents, the existing system needs improvement, and new parkland should be acquired while the opportunity exists to do so.

1.1 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The planning process for this Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan was made up of four phases, illustrated in Figure 1.1:

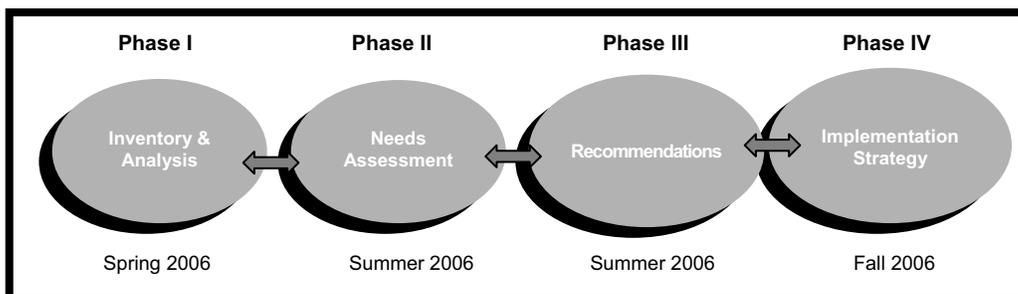


Figure 1.1: Planning Process



- § **Phase I:** To establish a framework for the plan, Phase I included an inventory and analysis of existing recreation resources in the Kalispell planning area. This information included an inventory of the City's existing parks and recreation facilities, and an analysis of park and recreation operations, maintenance, and programs.
- § **Phase II:** A comprehensive assessment of recreation needs in the Kalispell area was generated by measuring public opinion, recreation patterns, and perceived needs through a community workshop and city-wide recreation survey. Future demographic statistics were pulled from a population projection by HDR, Inc. With this information, needs were determined for park land, open space, and recreation facilities from today to 2020.
- § **Phase III:** In Phase III, recommendations were developed for improving existing parks and for acquiring and developing new parks, trails, and recreation facilities. Design guidelines for new park development were also created. Modifications to several aspects of administration, maintenance, and programming were also developed.
- § **Phase IV:** In Phase IV, MIG created a long-term facilities plan to project capital outlay expenditures. As long-term capital financing needs were greater than the currently available budget, a six-year capital improvements plan was developed, as well as a strategy for plan implementation. As a substantial deferred maintenance balance exists in Kalispell, major rehabilitation expenses were analyzed and a plan for addressing such issues was developed.

1.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To develop a solid foundation for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the planning process involved input from several public involvement activities. Kalispell residents contributed to the development of the plan through two public involvement venues:

- § **Recreation Survey:** A city-wide survey of public attitudes, recreation interests, and recreation participation was conducted in Spring 2006. A survey sample of 363 responses was obtained from residences within the existing City limits.
- § **Community Workshop:** Sixteen people attending a community workshop on April 4, 2006, to discuss their vision for parks, recreation facilities, and programs in Kalispell.

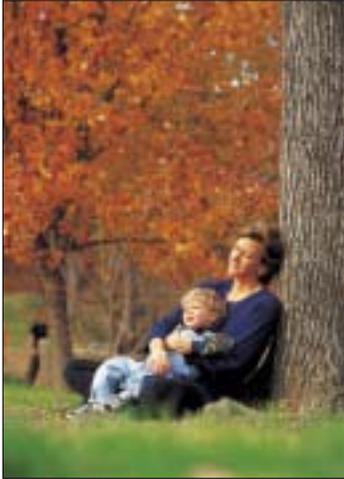
In addition to the public involvement activities, City staff offered input throughout the planning process via facility tours, interviews and brainstorming sessions. This insight was valuable for understanding issues facing the Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department.



1.3 REPORT ORGANIZATION

This Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan is organized into eight chapters and three appendices:

- § **Chapter 1: Introduction** describes the purpose of the report, the planning process, public involvement activities, and document organization.
- § **Chapter 2: Community Profile** discusses the profile of Kalispell that provides the framework for the Plan. This includes a discussion of the planning area and demographic characteristics.
- § **Chapter 3: Existing Parks and Facilities** summarizes the park and facility inventory and analyzes the City's parkland according to a park classification system.
- § **Chapter 4: Needs Assessment** presents the results of the public involvement activities, an overview of needs methodology, and the results of the park and recreation facility needs assessment.
- § **Chapter 5: Planning Conclusions and Guidelines** summarizes the conclusions derived from MIG's assessment, and establishes guidelines for Plan recommendations. Central to this are design development guidelines for new City parks.
- § **Chapter 6: Recommendations: Administration, Maintenance and Programs** includes recommendations for improvements to administrative procedures, maintenance budgeting, and program offerings. It also includes miscellaneous recommendations, designed to address minor issues noted in the recreation survey.
- § **Chapter 7: Recommendations: Park Land, Facilities and Trails** includes recommendations for improvements to existing parks and trails, and for the acquisition and development of new sites and facilities.
- § **Chapter 8: Financing and Implementing Improvements** identifies potential funding sources and financing strategies for priority capital improvements, programs, and projects, as well as deferred maintenance expenditures. An implementation strategy for the Plan is also provided.



- § **Appendix A: Park System Resources** provides a summary description of existing City parks, along with their facilities. This detailed inventory provides acreage and park setting information and a summary of site conditions, as well.
- § **Appendix B: Public Involvement Materials** contains a photo of the wallgraphic generated during the April 4, 2006 public workshop, and the full results of the 2006 Recreation Survey.
- § **Appendix C: Cost Estimates** includes preliminary cost estimates for full build-out of all plan recommendations. As financing for this build-out is not available, a cost estimate of all top priority expenditures is given in the form of a six-year capital facilities plan. A list of deferred maintenance projects and their associated expenses is also offered.



Chapter 2: Community Profile

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The City of Kalispell is a major provider of park and recreation services in the Flathead Valley. This chapter profiles those characteristics of Kalispell that impact park and recreation services. The profile includes a description of the region, definition of the Planning Area, and a discussion of natural features and relevant population characteristics.

Key Elements of the Community Profile:

1. Regional Context
2. Planning Area
3. Natural Features
4. Demographics

2.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Kalispell is located in west-central Flathead County in the State of Montana. Kalispell is one of only three incorporated cities in Flathead County and is bordered by open land, much of which is undergoing development. The City of Whitefish is 15 miles north and the City of Columbia Falls is 16 miles northeast of Kalispell. Several unincorporated communities are in close proximity to Kalispell, including Evergreen, a large unincorporated urban area directly northeast of the city.

Kalispell is connected to Flathead County by State Highways 93 and 2. Highway 93 runs north-south from Canada to Missoula and beyond. Highway 2 connects Kalispell to many small towns east and west of the city.



Figure 2.1: Regional Context – Source: Data & Maps 2005 United States CDs, ESRI

2.2 PLANNING AREA

In 2001, the City of Kalispell initiated revisions to a 1997 growth policy first drafted by the Kalispell City-County Planning Board. The revised Plan, adopted in 2003, was entitled “Kalispell Growth Policy 2020,” and delineated a growth boundary for the year 2020.

Rapid annexation during development of the Plan prompted near-immediate revisions. The projected growth boundary was extended in 2006, as shown in Figure 2.2. The 2006 growth boundary is the basis for this Park and Recreation Plan, as well as several other plans under concurrent development. The revised growth area, as projected for 2020, is now 78.10 square miles and includes a significant amount of land outside of Kalispell’s current city limits.

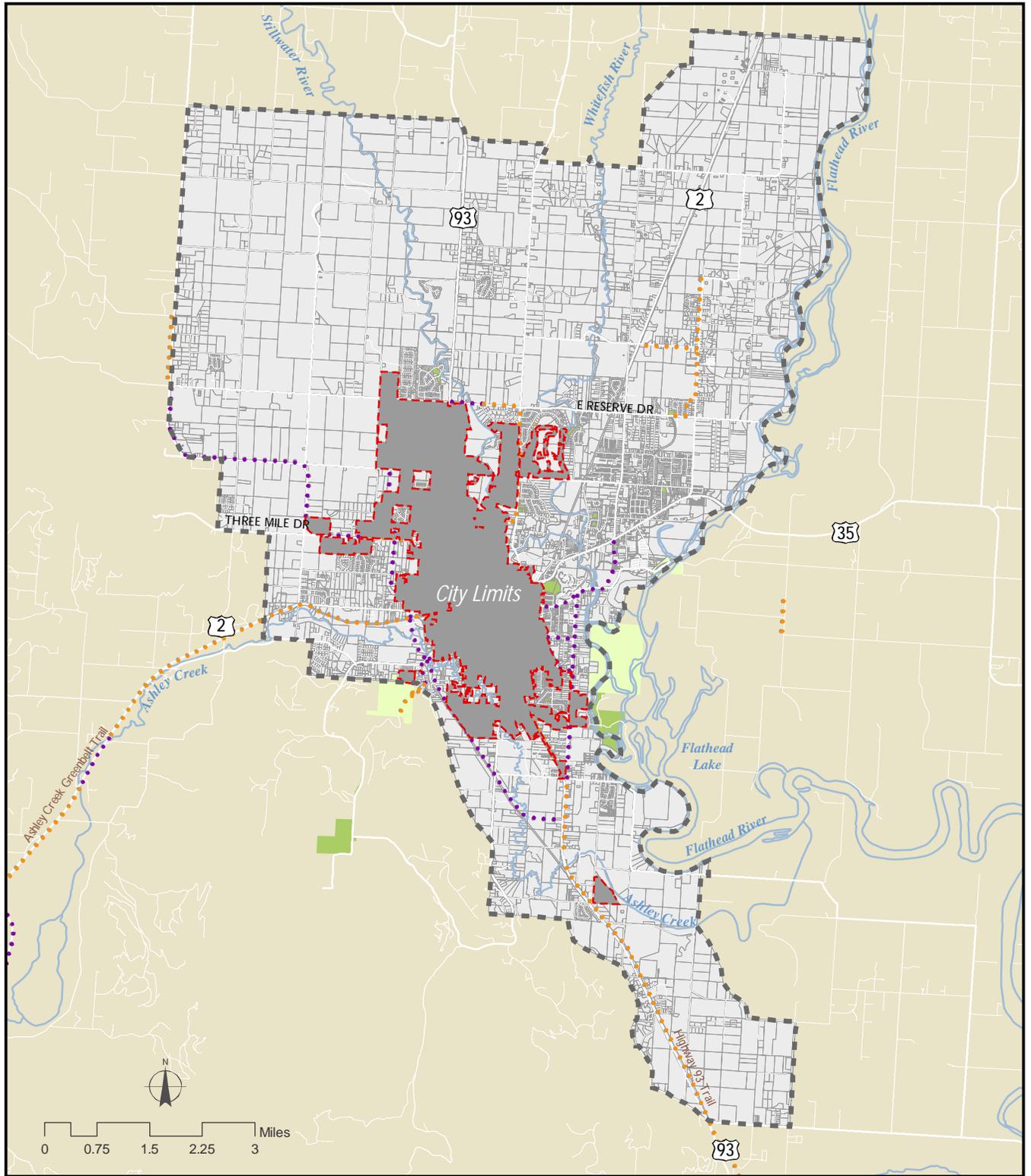
2.3 NATURAL FEATURES

Kalispell is located in the Upper Flathead Valley, an agricultural zone nestled within the Rocky Mountain range. At 2,959 feet above sea level, Kalispell is surrounded by rugged mountains that vary in elevation from 3,500 to more than 10,000 feet. These include the foothills of Lone Pine State Park (southeast of Kalispell), Big Mountain (north of the city), and the peaks of Glacier National Park (northeast of the city), among others.

Water resources are also prevalent in and around Kalispell. Flathead Lake, eight miles southeast of the city, covers almost 200 square miles and hosts a number of public recreational facilities, such as Wayfarers, West Shore, Finley Point, Big Arm and Yellow Bay State Parks. The Hungry Horse Reservoir, Lake Mary Ronan and Whitefish Lake, each within 15 miles of Kalispell, offer additional recreational opportunities to the public.

Kalispell has two rivers running through its northeast quadrant – the Stillwater and Whitefish Rivers – with the Flathead River located directly east of the city. Spring Creek and Ashley Creek are smaller water resources located at the west and southern edges of Kalispell. At present, the Stillwater River and Ashley Creek are the only water resources within Kalispell that have been developed for their recreational potential. Lawrence Park features a 1.1-mile segment of paved trail along the Stillwater, and Ashley Creek lines a paved rails-to-trails pathway that extends west from Kalispell for a considerable distance.

The terrain in Kalispell is generally level and consists of gentle to moderate slopes. The exception to this is a bluff at the north end of town, the slope of which separates Buffalo Hill Golf Course from Lawrence Park and the Stillwater River.



Comprehensive Park & Recreation Master Plan



City of Kalispell, Montana

- City Park
- County Park
- State Park
- Open Space
- Golf Course
- Existing Trails
- Proposed/Possible Connector
- City Limits
- Planning area
- Schools

Figure 2.2:
Planning Area

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November 2006

2.4 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic characteristics and trends are important to note because they influence recreational interests and participation. The demographic characteristics of Kalispell that are most relevant to this Plan are population growth and age. Growth creates new demands for park and recreation services; age heavily impacts an individual's ability to and interest in pursuing recreational pastimes, as well as level of participation.



Population and Growth

With 2005 population of 17,381, the City of Kalispell is the largest city in Flathead County and the eighth largest city in Montana. According to the U.S. Census, the city's 2000 population was 14,223 persons. Thus, Kalispell's annual growth for the first half of the decade has been approximately 4.1% per year.

Since Kalispell is the service center for Flathead County, which has over 5,000 square miles of land, the city's facilities draw users from throughout the region.¹ The U.S. Census recorded 74,471 people in Flathead County in 2000. Of this, 31,694 (42.6%) were from the Kalispell Census County Division (CCD), which includes the communities of Kalispell and Evergreen, as well as rural lands reaching approximately 10 miles north toward Whitefish and Columbia Falls, and five miles west and south of Kalispell. The 2005 population of Flathead County was 83,172 persons, reflecting approximately 2.2% annual growth in the total county population.

Table 2.1 illustrates population growth for the City of Kalispell and Flathead County since 1990. The existing population base, as well as the city's rapid growth, creates a sizable demand for park and recreation opportunities.

Table 2.1
Population Growth 1990-2005
City of Kalispell and Flathead County

Year	City of Kalispell	Annual Increase (%)	Flathead County	Annual Increase (%)
1990	11,917	N/A	59,218	N/A
2000	14,223	1.9%	74,471	2.3%
2005	17,381	4.1%	83,172	2.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Kalispell Planning Department

¹ The Kalispell Park & Recreation Department estimates that 30% of users of its recreation programs are non-residents.

Population Projections

New population growth is a basic reason for increased demand for park and recreation services. Both Kalispell and Flathead County’s rapid growth will place pressure on Kalispell’s existing recreational resources and create a demand for new facilities, programs, and services.

Table 2.2 shows a population forecast for the City of Kalispell and the Kalispell Planning Area through the year 2020, using the revised growth boundary established by the Kalispell Planning Department in its 2006 revision of the City’s Growth Policy.² According to projections, Kalispell will have a population of approximately 29,600 in 2020, and the Planning Area will have a population of approximately 59,000. These figures are based upon a 3% annual population increase, a rate developed by HDR, Inc. for use in its 2006 Utility Master Plan for the City as well as all other 2006 City-sponsored master plans.



Table 2.2
Population Projections
 City of Kalispell and Kalispell Planning Area

Year	Kalispell Population	Planning Area Population
2007	20,133 (estimated)	40,166 (estimated)
2010	22,000	43,891
2015	25,504	50,881
2020	29,566	58,986

Sources: Kalispell Planning Department (2007); HDR, Inc. (2010-2020)

Age

Age is a significant factor in determining recreational interests. Youths tend to participate in recreation activities more frequently than any other age group and favor activities that are more active and competitive in nature. Young adults (ages 18-35) are also active and form the core of adult competitive sports. Older adults (ages 35-65) typically have less time to devote to recreational activities and tend to be more concerned about maintaining a home and a job. For these individuals, recreational time is at a premium and often limited to weekends and occasional evenings. However, younger members of this age bracket often participate in parent/child programs. Seniors (age 65+) typically participate in health maintenance activities, such as walking and pool use, as well as cultural and educational programming.

² Note: the Kalispell Planning Area is similar to, but does not directly correlate with the Kalispell CCD noted earlier.

Table 2.3 offers an age breakdown for Kalispell for the year 2000. This data is useful for formulating park and recreation policies and programs that are relevant to the city's demographic profile.

Table 2.3
Age by Category 2000
 City of Kalispell

Category	Population	Percentage
0-9	1899	13.3%
10-18	1750	12.3%
19-24	1190	8.4%
25-34	1733	12.2%
35-44	2077	14.6%
45-54	1902	13.4%
55-64	1069	7.5%
65+	2603	18.3%
TOTAL	14,223	100.0%
Median Age: 37.7		

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau



Chapter 3: Existing Parks and Facilities

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

The Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department is the primary provider of parkland and recreation facilities for city residents. This chapter provides a summary of existing city parks and other recreation resources in the Kalispell Planning Area. Section 3.1 describes the parkland classification system used to categorize and analyze specific park sites. Section 3.2 provides a detailed account of city-owned, city-leased, and selected county-owned parks and facilities. Section 3.3 summarizes sports facilities in the Kalispell Planning Area.

A one-page summary of all of Kalispell's parkland and facilities, noting site deficiencies and planned improvements, is included as Appendix A.

3.1 PARK LAND CLASSIFICATIONS

The most effective park system is one made up of different types of parks, open space areas, and recreational venues, each designed to provide a specific type of recreation experience and opportunity. When classified and used properly, they are easier to maintain, create fewer conflicts between user groups, and have less impact on adjoining neighbors. A good park classification system also helps assess what facilities are available for current use and what types of parks will be needed to serve the community in the future. In order to assess the park system in Kalispell and to address specific park land needs, parks have been divided into the following categories:

Mini parks: Mini-parks, tot lots, and children's playgrounds are small, single-purpose play lots designed primarily for use by small children. Facilities in a mini park are usually limited to a small open grass area, a children's playground, and a picnic area. Park View Terrace Park is an example of a mini park in Kalispell.

Neighborhood parks: Neighborhood parks are a combination playground/park designed primarily for unsupervised, non-organized recreation activities. Located within walking and bicycling distance of most users, they are generally moderate in size (about 3-10 acres) and serve people living within approximately one-half mile of the park. Neighborhood parks provide access to basic recreation opportunities for nearby residents, enhance neighborhood identity, and preserve open space. Facilities typically found in neighborhood parks include playgrounds, picnic tables and benches, trails, open grass areas/informal play areas, and outdoor basketball courts. When neighborhood park sites are designed in conjunction with school sites, a small site may be possible. Hawthorne Park and Gallagher Park are examples of neighborhood parks.

Park Classifications:

1. *Mini Parks*
2. *Neighborhood Parks*
3. *Community Parks*
4. *Large Urban Parks*
5. *Regional Parks*
6. *Special Use Areas*
7. *Linear Parks*
8. *Natural Open Space/
Greenways*
9. *Undeveloped Sites*

Community parks: A community park is a larger park that provides active and structured recreation opportunities primarily for young people and adults. These parks serve a much larger area, roughly 1-2 miles from the park. Community parks typically include facilities to support large group activities, and most often include sports fields. Also, they are large enough to allow for passive recreation opportunities as well as individual and family use. Community parks may provide swimming pools, community gardens, or indoor facilities to meet a wider range of recreation interests. As a result, they require support facilities, such as parking and restrooms. Lawrence Park is an example of a community park.



Large urban parks: Large urban parks provide features and facilities that attract a wide variety of users from throughout the entire community. They usually exceed 50 acres in size and are designed to accommodate large numbers of people. Generally, they include a wide variety of specialized facilities, such as children's play areas, sports fields, group picnic areas/shelters, skateboarding facilities, amphitheaters, dog parks, interconnected paths and trails, and even indoor recreation facilities. Because of their size and facilities offered, they require substantial support facilities such as off-street parking, restrooms, and site lighting. Woodland Park is an example of a large urban park.

Regional parks: Regional parks are recreational areas that serve the city and beyond. They are usually large sites, which often include one specific use, cultural amenities, or natural feature that makes them unique. Typically, uses focus on a mixture of active and passive types of recreational activities. Regional parks located within urban areas sometimes offer a range of facilities and activities. No city-owned regional parks exist in Kalispell; county-owned Herron Park is an example, however.

Special use areas: Special use areas are sites most often occupied by a specialized facility. Uses that fall into this category include boat ramps, botanical gardens, memorials, community gardens, single purpose sites used for a particular field sport, or sites occupied by buildings. The Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex and Depot Park are examples of special use areas.

Linear Parks: Linear parks are developed landscaped areas and other lands that follow corridors such as abandoned railroad right-of-ways, creeks, canals, power lines, and other linear, elongated features. This type of park usually contains trails, landscaped areas, viewpoints, and seating areas. When constructed as part of an elongated corridor, linear parks are often quantified in acres, and included in parkland calculations. Trails running through linear parks are quantified in miles. While Kalispell does not own any linear parks, the county-maintained Ashley Creek rails-to-trails

corridor – which begins at the western edge of the Kalispell city limits – is a good example of a linear park.

Natural open space areas/greenways: Natural open space is undeveloped land left in its natural form, often secondarily managed for recreational use. These areas are frequently owned or managed by a governmental agency and may or may not have public access. This type of land may include wetlands, steep hillsides, or other similar spaces. In some cases, environmentally sensitive areas are considered open space and can include wildlife habitats, stream and creek corridors, or unique and/or endangered plant species. Natural open space areas can provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, such as wildlife viewing, environmental education, and nature photography. Dry Bridge Park and Heritage Park are considered natural open spaces.

Undeveloped sites: Undeveloped sites are sites owned by a city, designated for future park use. Undeveloped sites typically have not had a specific park type assigned to them. Western Park and the Willow Glen are undeveloped sites in Kalispell.

3.2 CITY-OWNED PARK LAND AND OTHER FACILITIES

The City of Kalispell manages 406.15 acres of parkland, including 268.10 acres owned by the City and 138.05 acres leased from the State of Montana for the Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex (KYAC). Combined, the acreage supports 6 mini parks, 12 neighborhood parks, 1 community park, 1 large urban park, no regional parks, 5 special use areas, no linear parks, 4 natural open space areas and 2 undeveloped sites. Note that Lawrence Park's acreage is divided between the community park and natural open space classifications, as a large section of this park is inaccessible to the public and maintained as open space. A summary of this data is provided in Table 3.1.



While the City is the primary provider of parkland in Kalispell, the city's unique pattern of development has rendered several county parks to be of significance to this Plan. Relevant county-owned parks occupy 59.30 acres of parkland, supporting 7 neighborhood parks and 1 linear park. These parks are also summarized in Table 3.1, and are discussed in more depth in Chapter 7.

Other public agencies and private organizations – including the State of Montana, Kalispell Public Schools, and private clubs – provide park and recreation facilities in the Kalispell vicinity as well. These facilities are described in more detail where appropriate.

Table 3.1
Summary of City and County Park Land by Owner/Classification
 Kalispell Planning Area

Park Land Areas	Acreage	# of Sites
City of Kalispell Park Land		
Mini-Parks	3.90	6
Neighborhood Parks	36.99	12
Community Parks ¹	79.90	1
Large Urban Parks	42.81	1
Regional Parks	0.00	0
Special Use Areas ²	157.80	5
Linear Parks	0.00	0
Natural Open Space/Greenways ¹	72.56	4
Undeveloped Park Land	12.19	2
Flathead County Park Land (Selected)		
Neighborhood Parks	27.40	7
Linear Parks	31.90	1
TOTAL	465.45	39

¹ Note that the acreage of Lawrence Park has been divided between the community park and natural open space classifications.

² The City of Kalispell leases 138.05 of this acreage from the State of Montana for KYAC.

Table 3.2 details site acreages for all city-owned and selected county-owned parks in the Kalispell Planning Area by owner and park classification.

Table 3.2
Detail of City and County Park Land by Owner/Classification
 Kalispell Planning Area

CITY PARK LAND SUMMARY	
Classification/Park	Acreage
Mini Parks	
Buffalo Head Park	1.15
Central School Park/Museum	0.42
Courthouse Park	1.66
Eagle Park	0.25
Helen O'Neil Park	0.10
Park View Terrace Park	0.32
TOTAL	3.90

(Table 3.2 continued)

Neighborhood Parks	
Begg Park	6.24
Cottonwood Park	1.69
Empire Estates Park	1.75
Gallagher Park	0.98
Greenbriar Park	2.17
Hawthorne Park	2.34
Meridian Park	2.63
Northridge Park	9.56
Spring Prairie Tree Park	2.05
Sunset Park	4.27
Thompson Field	2.20
Washington Park	1.11
TOTAL	36.99
Community Parks	
Lawrence Park	79.90
TOTAL	79.90
Large Urban Parks	
Woodland Park	42.81
TOTAL	42.81
Regional Parks	
None	0.00
TOTAL	0.00
Special Use Areas	
Depot Park	3.66
KYAC (<i>leased from State of Montana</i>)	138.05
Laker & Archie Roe Park	10.50
Lions Park	2.21
Tennis Court Complex	3.38
TOTAL	157.80
Natural Open Space/ Greenway	
Dry Bridge Park	26.92
Grandview Drive Park	4.56
Heritage Park	3.47
Lawrence Park	37.61
TOTAL	72.56
Undeveloped Park Land	
Western Park	1.72
Willow Glen Site	10.47
TOTAL	12.19
TOTAL CITY PARK LAND	406.15 acres

(Table 3.2 continued)

COUNTY PARK LAND SUMMARY (SELECTED SITES)	
Classification/Park	Acreage
Neighborhood Parks	
Camelot Estates Park	3.6 acres
Country Estates Park	4.0 acres
Evergreen Lions Park	3.2 acres
Green Acres Park	2.7 acres
Hillcrest Park	7.3 acres
Kings Loop Park	5.0 acres
Mission Village Park	1.6 acres
Linear Parks	
Ashley Creek Rails-to-Trails	31.9 acres
TOTAL COUNTY PARK LAND	59.3 acres

The existing recreation facilities listed in Table 3.2 are depicted in Figure 3.1.

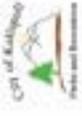
Existing Trails and Pathways

Existing trails within Kalispell include on-street bike lanes, off-road pathways, and pathways in parks. Low and medium-volume roads are relied upon heavily by cyclists and pedestrians for park access and for transit through the downtown area.

A Burlington Northern Santa Fe short-track rail line runs 14.5 miles from Columbia Falls to Kalispell, cutting through Kalispell’s downtown. This line terminates just west of Kalispell, with the remaining abandoned line running approximately 4.5 miles southwest of Kalispell. This latter route has been converted into the Ashley Creek rails-to-trails corridor. Several organizations, most notably Rails to Trails of Northwest Montana, aspire to convert the remaining BNSF rail line into a regional trail that will run from Kila to Columbia Falls, through downtown Kalispell.

Existing and proposed trail facilities are depicted in Figure 3.1.

Comprehensive Park & Recreation Master Plan



City of Kalispell, Montana

- City Park
- County Park
- State Park
- Open Space
- Golf Course
- Existing Trails
- Proposed/Possible Connector
- City Limits
- Planning area
- Schools

City Parks

1. Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex
2. Spring Prairie Tree Park
3. Park View Terrace Park
4. Buffalo Head Park
5. Grandview Drive Park
6. Northridge Park
7. Eagle Park
8. Sunset Park
9. Empire Estates Park
10. Cottonwood Park
11. Hawthorne Park
12. Greenbriar Park
13. Washington Park
14. Four Corners* Depot Park
15. Lawrence Park
16. Heritage Park
17. Woodland Park
18. Helen O'Neil Park
19. Thompson Field
20. Dry Bridge Park
21. Lions Park
22. Begg Park/Laker & Archie Roe Park
23. Courthouse Park
24. Western Park
25. Meridian Park
26. Gallagher Park
27. Central School/Museum
28. Tennis Court Complex
29. Willow Glen Site
30. Northridge Park

County Parks

- A. Country Estates Park
- B. Mission Village Park
- C. Kings Loop Park
- D. North Haven Park
- E. Hillcrest Park
- F. Conrad Complex
- G. Green Acres Park
- H. Foy's Lake Community Center / Boat Access
- I. Camelot Estates Park
- J. Evergreen Lions Park
- K. Leisure Island
- L. Herron Park

State Parks

- M. Kivans' Old Steel Bridge Parks
- N. Owen Sowerwine Natural Area
- O. Lone Pine State Park

* Beautification Area

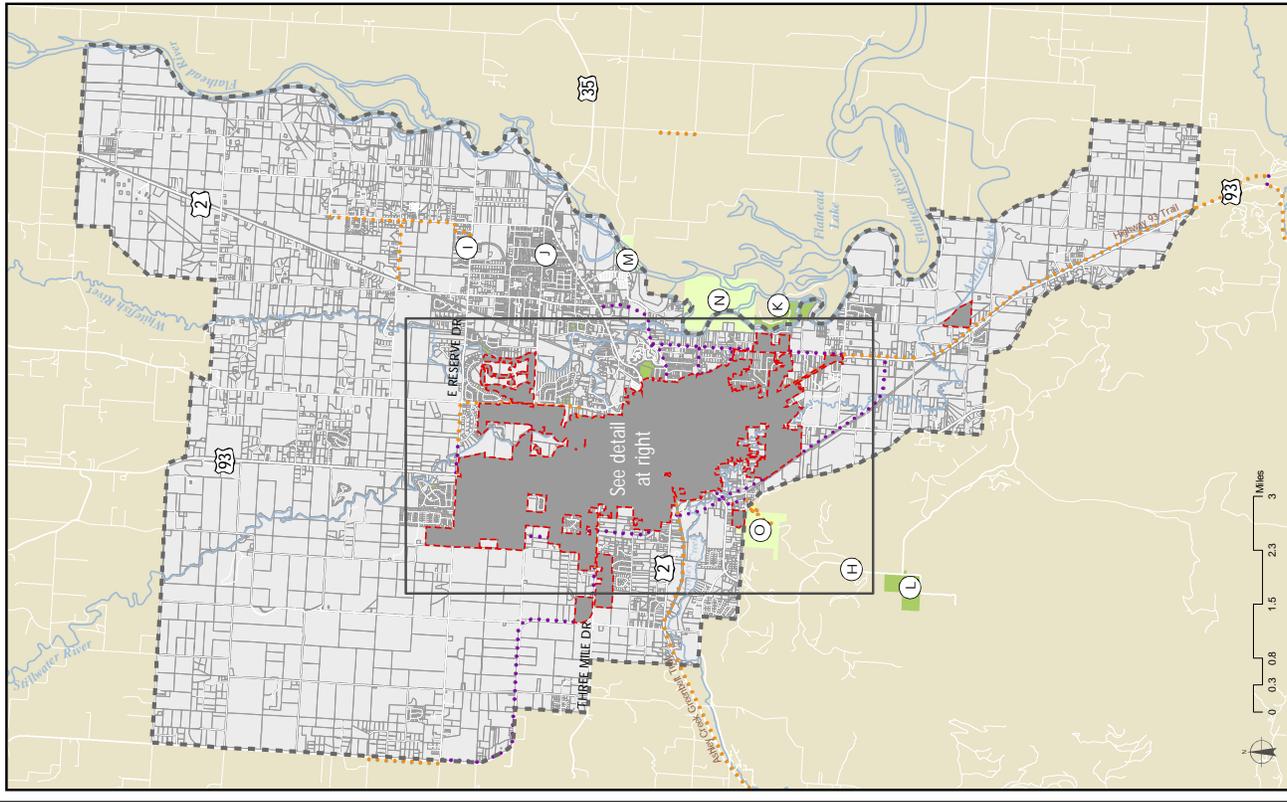
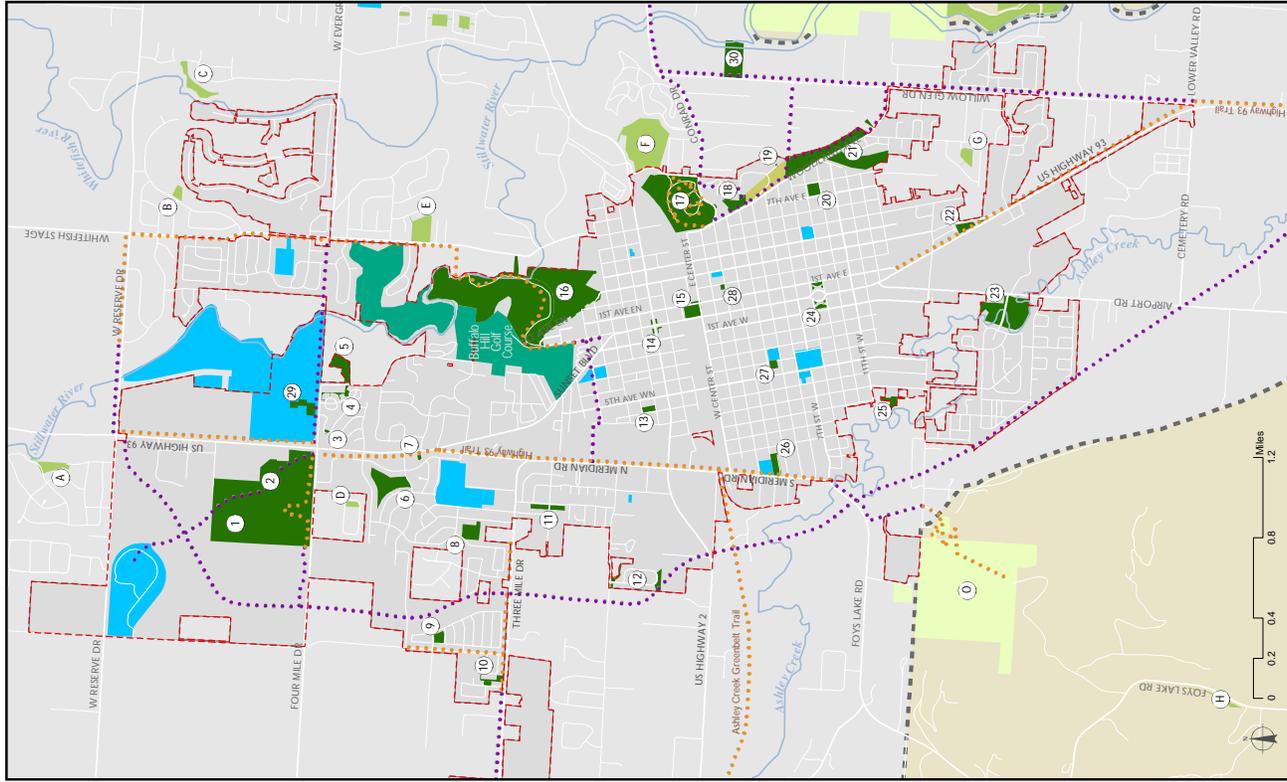


Figure 3.1: Existing Recreation Facilities

3.3 SPORTS FACILITIES

The City of Kalispell, Flathead County, Kalispell Public Schools and others provide sports facilities throughout the Kalispell Planning Area. Existing sports facilities open to the public include:

- § Adult baseball fields
- § Adult softball fields
- § Youth baseball/softball fields
- § Soccer fields (youth and adult)
- § Football fields
- § Basketball courts
- § Tennis courts
- § Gymnasiums (indoor courts)
- § Swimming pools



Criteria for Evaluating Sport Fields

A number of factors influence the playability of a field or the ability to schedule games and/or practices. These factors include:

- § **Size limitations:** Field sizes determine whether or not a facility can be used for official play or practice only.
- § **Overlays/multi-use fields:** Fields are often developed as overlays (multi-use fields). While this can be cost-effective, conflicts can arise between uses in certain seasons.
- § **School ownership/control:** Sport fields and gymnasiums owned by Kalispell Public Schools are controlled by the school district, not Kalispell Parks & Recreation. Thus, these facilities have restricted use, although they are often open to the public.

Kalispell’s facility inventory includes all facilities in the Kalispell Planning Area that are available or potentially available for use as game or practice facilities. Facilities that are very deteriorated and those with substandard dimensions were excluded from this inventory. Table 3.3 summarizes number of sports facilities in the Kalispell Planning Area according to facility inventories.

Table 3.3
Summary of Sports Facilities
 Kalispell Planning Area

Facility	Total Number of Facilities
Adult baseball fields	3
Adult softball fields	7
Youth baseball/softball fields	22
Soccer fields	10
Football fields	5
Basketball courts	14
Tennis courts	17
Gymnasiums	8
Swimming Pools	1



Chapter 4: Needs Assessment

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This chapter discusses public demand and quantified need for parks and facilities in the City of Kalispell. It contains a summary of the public involvement process from the community workshop and recreation survey, as well as a summary of the park and facility needs assessment. A photograph of the workshop's graphic recording and full survey results and are presented in Appendix B.

Recreation Demand and Needs Assessment:

1. *Community Workshop*
2. *Recreation Survey*
3. *Analysis of Park Land Needs*
4. *Analysis of Facility Needs*

4.1 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP FINDINGS

On April 4, 2006, the Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department held a community workshop designed to solicit direct public input on behalf this Master Plan. Sixteen people attended the meeting.

The following topics were discussed:

- § What improvements are most needed in the park system?
- § What services and programs should be offered by the City?
- § What role should the City play in organized sports?
- § What expansions or improvements should be made to the existing trail system?

Residents were divided into four separate “breakout groups” to discuss the topics above. Each group was given one hour for discussion. Recorders shared the groups’ results with meeting attendees in a concluding, all-group discussion. In addition, an interactive display allowed individual participants to make public their priorities for park and facility development.

Key themes that emerged from this public workshop included:

- § Trails – Participants expressed strong interest in developing linear corridors for trails, particularly rail corridors. Specific features desired included trailhead parking at appropriate locations and soft-surface trails.
- § Connections – Creating connections was a priority, particularly between schools and sport facilities; and rural areas and Kalispell. Other connection points included Woodland and Meridian Roads along the downtown railroad corridor; Highway 93/ Somers and downtown Kalispell; and Willow Glen/Creston. A bike path or lane on the proposed bypass was also a significant need.
- § Enhance open/natural space opportunities – Participants expressed strong interest in improving/procuring open and natural space, particularly wetlands. Support was expressed for the installation of low maintenance, native plantings and the provision of amenities that encourage wildlife viewing.



- § Performing Arts/Community Center – Many participants were interested in the topic of a community center – and what type of center should be built, if any. Support was shown for a performing arts center, a space with meeting rooms, and a YMCA-type indoor athletic facility. Participants were not certain if this facility should be privately or publicly-funded.
- § Partnering with artists – Considerable activity is underway within the growing art community in Kalispell; discussions are in progress regarding construction of a performing arts center. During the workshop, Thompson Field was identified as an ideal location for art-oriented events. Partnering with local/visiting artists was a priority for some; movies-in-the-park and other inclusive artistic events were also mentioned.
- § Teen programming – Service learning/teen work programming was identified as a priority for Kalispell’s youth. Support was expressed for skate camps for youth.
- § Maintain the existing sports infrastructure – Although new development was not a priority for most, maintenance of existing sport fields and courts was important to many. Several tennis courts in the central city were noted to be in poor condition; several participants called for them to be improved.

4.2 RECREATION SURVEY RESULTS

A survey of public attitudes, recreation interests, and recreation participation characteristics was conducted in the City of Kalispell during February, March and April of 2006. Using census tract data to obtain current addresses, surveys were randomly mailed to 1,600 households within the city limits.

The survey was designed to achieve a statistically reliable sample of the population, including youth, adults, and seniors. Each household surveyed received two surveys in their mailing: one for adults and one for youth. Recipients were asked to complete surveys individually, effectively limiting participation to one adult and one youth per household.

Of the 402 surveys returned, 363 were adult surveys and 39 were youth. The 363 responses for adults achieved a margin of error of 5.1% at the 95% confidence level.

A summary of the survey process is illustrated in Table 4.1. Key findings are articulated below. Full survey results are provided in Appendix B.



Table 4.1
Survey Summary
 City of Kalispell

Survey Summary	Number
Households Surveyed	1600
Adult Surveys Distributed ¹	1275
Adult Surveys Returned	363
Return Ratio	28%

¹ "Surveys Distributed" is the total number of adult surveys originally mailed minus those with bad addresses (305), those refused (10), or recipients reported as deceased (10).



Development Priorities Findings:

- § Enjoying and protecting natural open space is a top priority of many respondents, particularly long term residents and those 45 years of age and older:
 - Ø 22.3% of respondents said enjoying/protecting the natural environment is the most important benefit of parks and recreation
 - Ø 53.4% of respondents said preserving natural open space is very important

- § Strong interest was expressed in creating parks with river or creek frontage and linear trail corridors. Support for these facilities was strong across all age groups, and seemed to be based in an interest in enhanced recreational opportunity as opposed to environmental sentiments:
 - Ø 20.7% of respondents said natural open space is the type of park most needed in Kalispell
 - Ø 18.8% of respondents said linear trail corridors are most needed in Kalispell
 - Ø 17.1% of respondents said parks with river or creek frontage are most needed in Kalispell

- § Younger residents, particularly those 25-34, felt that improving health and wellness and promoting youth development are more important benefits of park and recreation services than the enjoyment and protection of natural open space:
 - Ø 25.5% of respondents age 25-34 said youth development is the most important benefit of parks and recreation
 - Ø 21.8% of respondents age 25-34 said health and wellness is the most important benefit of parks and recreation
 - Ø 16.7% of respondents age 25-34 said enjoying and protecting natural open space is the most important benefit of parks and recreation



- § Respondents age 25-44 supported the construction of multi-use parks and new major recreation facilities in Kalispell, more than older residents. However, this age group also supported the construction of trail corridors:
 - Ø 21.2% of respondents age 25-34 said large, multi-use parks that serve the whole community are the park type most needed in Kalispell
 - Ø 25.7% of this age group said linear trail corridors are the park type most needed in Kalispell
 - Ø 16.8% of this age group said natural areas are the park type most needed in Kalispell
 - Ø 13.8% of this age group said parks with river frontage are the park type most needed in Kalispell

- § Strong support was demonstrated for a community center of some type. Within such a facility, support was shown for a teen center, gym, indoor pool, and senior center:
 - Ø 53.3% of respondents said a multi-purpose indoor recreation center is needed in Kalispell

- § Development priorities across age groups appear to be clear – trail and linear corridor development, open space acquisition, and multi-use park development.

- § Respondents did not favor the general idea of land acquisition and development when asked generic questions about facility priorities, however. When asked in which area the city should focus its park and recreation efforts, respondents supported maintaining and upgrading existing facilities over procuring land, developing new parks or building facilities.
 - Ø 32.2% supported maintenance
 - Ø 22.8% supported upgrading existing parks/facilities
 - Ø 13.0% supported acquiring land for future parks
 - Ø 13.0% supported building new major facilities
 - Ø 10.7% supported providing rec programs/activities
 - Ø 8.3% supported new park development

Voting and Taxes Findings:

- § Strong support was expressed for seeking voter approval to purchase and maintain natural open space.
 - Ø 66.6% of respondents said the City should seek voter approval to purchase/maintain natural open space

- § Strong support was expressed for a tax measure to maintain, improve, acquire and develop parks, trails and facilities, depending upon the tax amounts and projects proposed. Respondents also supported the creation of a Park District.

- Ø 25.6% of respondents would support any tax measure for park maintenance, improvement, acquisition and development. An additional 55.0% would support a tax measure with conditions. Respondents would pay \$25-\$50 on average, annually per household, in taxes.
- Ø 43.2% of respondents support the idea of a Park District.



Other Findings:

- § Most respondents felt that parks maintenance is adequate to excellent (44.6%). Top maintenance priorities included improving general cleanliness and cleanliness in bathrooms, and maintaining walking/biking trails and basketball hoops.
- § Strong support for performance-based cultural programs was demonstrated. According to the survey, the City should offer:
 - Ø 31.2% of respondents said concerts in the park
 - Ø 19.4% of respondents said community art festivals
 - Ø 19.3% of respondents said performing arts programs
- § Participants repeatedly expressed a lack of knowledge about various park and recreation services: facility and trail locations, program opportunities, and the benefits/drawbacks of several political and developmental park and recreation issues.
- § Very few respondents access park and recreation information over the internet.

Recreation Participation Findings:

The recreation survey also measured participation rates for indoor and outdoor recreation activities for residents in Kalispell. These results were compared to the NORTHWEST AVERAGE, which is the average of the last 15 communities surveyed by MIG, to see what activities are above or below the norm.

- § The top five activities in order of frequency of participation were: 1) reading for pleasure, 2) computers, 3) walking for pleasure, 4) exercising/aerobics, and 5) gardening.
- § Six of the top ten activities involved trails, greenways, and open space areas: walking for pleasure, bicycling for pleasure, dog walking (where appropriate), bird watching and feeding, nature walks, and wildlife watching.
- § Rankings for participation in organized sports were as follows: basketball (23), baseball (33), softball (34) and soccer (35). Basketball and soccer participation rates were comparable to those of other northwest communities, baseball participation was somewhat low, and softball participation was high.

- § Respondents would like to spend more time participating in the following activities: bicycling for pleasure, attending concerts, walking for pleasure, fishing, hiking and backpacking, nature walks, reading for pleasure, swimming, golfing and doing arts and crafts (ranked in order of preference). Five of these preferred activities are related to greenways and open space, as well as linear trail corridors.

4.3 SUMMARY OF PARK LAND NEEDS



Quantifying park and recreation facility needs is difficult because many variables influence recreation needs. Community values, participation patterns, and the willingness to pay for services vary widely from one community to the next. Consequently, what is appropriate for one community may not be suitable for another. One of the problems associated with determining need is that overstating demand can result in the development of underutilized facilities. Conversely, under-estimating need can result in overused facilities and a lack of usable park land and open space.

Methodology

Developing a statement of need for parks and open space depends upon localized values, the availability of land, financial resources, and desired service levels. To determine specific park land needs for the Kalispell Planning Area, several analytical methods were used. These include:

- § Recreation demand (public input);
- § National trends and standards;
- § Land availability; and
- § Geographical deficiencies for parks and open space areas.

In synthesizing this information, parkland standards were developed for each park classification. These standards are expressed as a ratio of park acres to population (expressed in terms of a number of acres per 1,000 people). The standard indicates a level of service desired by the Kalispell community, or in other words, how many acres of parks the City should provide to meet the needs of all current and future residents of Kalispell.

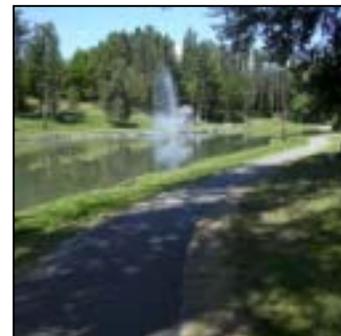
The analysis looked at the existing ratio of park land in comparison to the city's existing population. A demand standard was then calculated based upon the anticipated needs of the population at build-out, when the city is fully developed within the growth area. This new demand standard was then used to assess current and future community needs for specific types of park land.

Table 4.2 summarizes the data used in the analysis:

Table 4.2
Population Data Used in Forecasting Need
 City of Kalispell

Year	Population	Area
2005	17,381	City Limits
2020	29,600	City Limits
2020	59,000	Planning Area

Source: HDR, Inc. and Kalispell Planning Department



The following terms are used in the analysis:

- § **Existing ratio** is the amount of existing park land divided by the city’s confirmed 2005 population of 17,381. The existing ratio is expressed in terms of acres per 1,000 people.
- § **Proposed demand standard** is the desired amount of park land at the time of build-out, expressed in terms of acres per 1,000 people. The standard is a ratio of the anticipated acreage needed for each park type divided by the build-out population for the Planning Area.
- § **Total current need** is the number of acres needed in Kalispell today to meet the needs of all city residents.
- § **Net current need** takes into account Kalispell’s existing park sites and determines if more acreage is needed to meet current community needs. If additional parks are needed, the number of acres and sites needed are noted in the table.
- § **Total need at build-out** is the park acreage that will be needed in Kalispell at build-out (the year 2020) to serve the city’s future population.
- § **Net need at build-out** is the number of additional park sites and acres that will be needed in 2020.

Table 4.3 summarizes existing and future park land needs for the Kalispell Planning Area for each park type. These needs are based upon a proposed demand standard, listed in Column 2 of Table 4.3B.

Summary of Park Land Needs

According to calculations from Tables 4.3 A-C, the City of Kalispell will need to develop an additional eleven neighborhood parks, five community parks, two special use areas, one linear park and three greenways to meet its needs in 2020.

Table 4.3A
Existing Acreages and Ratios
 Kalispell Planning Area

Park Land Classification	Total Land (# of sites)	Total Exist. Land (Ac)	Exist. Ratio (Ac/1000 people)
Mini Parks	6	3.9 ac	0.22
Neighborhood Parks	12	37.0 ac	2.13
Community Parks	1	79.9 ac	4.60
Large Urban Parks	1	42.8 ac	2.46
Regional Parks	0	0.0 ac	0.00
Special Use Areas	5	157.8 ac	9.08
Linear Parks	1	31.9 ac	1.84
Open Space/Greenway	4	72.6 ac	4.18

This chart includes existing developed city park land and the non-profit-owned/ County-maintained Ashley Creek Greenbelt. City-owned undeveloped sites and all remaining county parks, as noted in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, are not included herein.

Table 4.3B
Summary of Park Land Needs: Current Acreages and Ratios
 Kalispell Planning Area

Park Land Classification	Prop. Dem. Stand. (Ac/1000 people)	Total Current Need (Ac)	Net Current Need (Ac)	Net Current Need (Sites)
Mini Parks	0.13	2.3 ac	(1.6 ac)	0
Neighborhood Parks	2.74	47.6 ac	10.6 ac	2
Community Parks	5.23	90.9 ac	11.0 ac	1
Large Urban Parks	1.45	25.1 ac	(17.7 ac)	0
Regional Parks	0.00	0.0 ac	0.0 ac	0
Special Use Areas	6.18	107.3 ac	(50.5 ac)	0
Linear Parks	5.19	90.2 ac	58.3 ac	1
Open Space/Greenway	10.2	177.3 ac	104.7 ac	2

Table 4.3C
Summary of Park Land Needs: Build-Out Acreages and Ratios
 Kalispell Planning Area

Park Land Classification	Total Need at Build-Out (Ac)	Net Need at Build-Out (Ac)	Net Need at Build-Out (Sites)
Mini Parks	3.9 ac	0.0 ac	0
Neighborhood Parks	81.0 ac	44.0 ac	11
Community Parks	154.9 ac	75.0 ac	5
Large Urban Parks	42.8 ac	0.0 ac	0
Regional Parks	0.0 ac	0.0 ac	0
Special Use Areas	182.8 ac	25.0 ac	2
Linear Parks	153.7 ac	121.8 ac	1
Open Space/Greenway	301.6 ac	229.0 ac	3

Statistically, the City needs to acquire 3-4 acres of land per year to meet its neighborhood park needs in 2020, and 5-6 acres of land per year to meet its community park needs in 2020. Given Kalispell's rapid rate of outward expansion, however, acquisition may need to be "front-loaded" so as to acquire sites suitable to park development before such land is lost to other ventures.



A need is also anticipated for two City-owned special use areas, including five acres for a multi-use community center and twenty acres for adult sport fields. Land for these sites could be bought and assembled by parcel, or purchased outright if the opportunity arises.

Development of approximately 8-10 acres of linear park land per year along the BNSF/Ashley Creek rails-to-trails corridor is recommended to meet 2020 linear park needs. This task may or may not be carried out by the City, as both the County and private organizations have initiated efforts to acquire this rail corridor.

Development of greenways at a rate of approximately 15-18 acres of land per year is also recommended.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the findings of the neighborhood park and community park service area analysis, indicating which areas are currently underserved for these park types.

4.4 SUMMARY OF RECREATION FACILITY NEEDS

Similar to the discussion of park land needs, community needs for recreation facilities are described in terms of a ratio of the number of existing facilities to the city's current population. This ratio is expressed in terms of one facility to the number of people served. The suggested demand standard is based on the desired level of service and the anticipated number of facilities needed at build-out. By applying this standard to the existing and future population forecast, recreation facility needs are assessed.



Methodology

The need for sport fields, swimming pools, and trails was calculated using several analytical approaches. Methodology included an analysis of present recreation participation levels, facility needs expressed in the public input processes, play and practice time requirements for sports leagues, and mathematical models developed over the years from other studies.

Because sport team information for all Kalispell area teams was not available, MIG relied upon a database representing seventy-two communities to generate probable team participation and use statistics. First, an estimation of teams was generated based upon Kalispell's population. Team inventory information was then used to forecast facility needs.

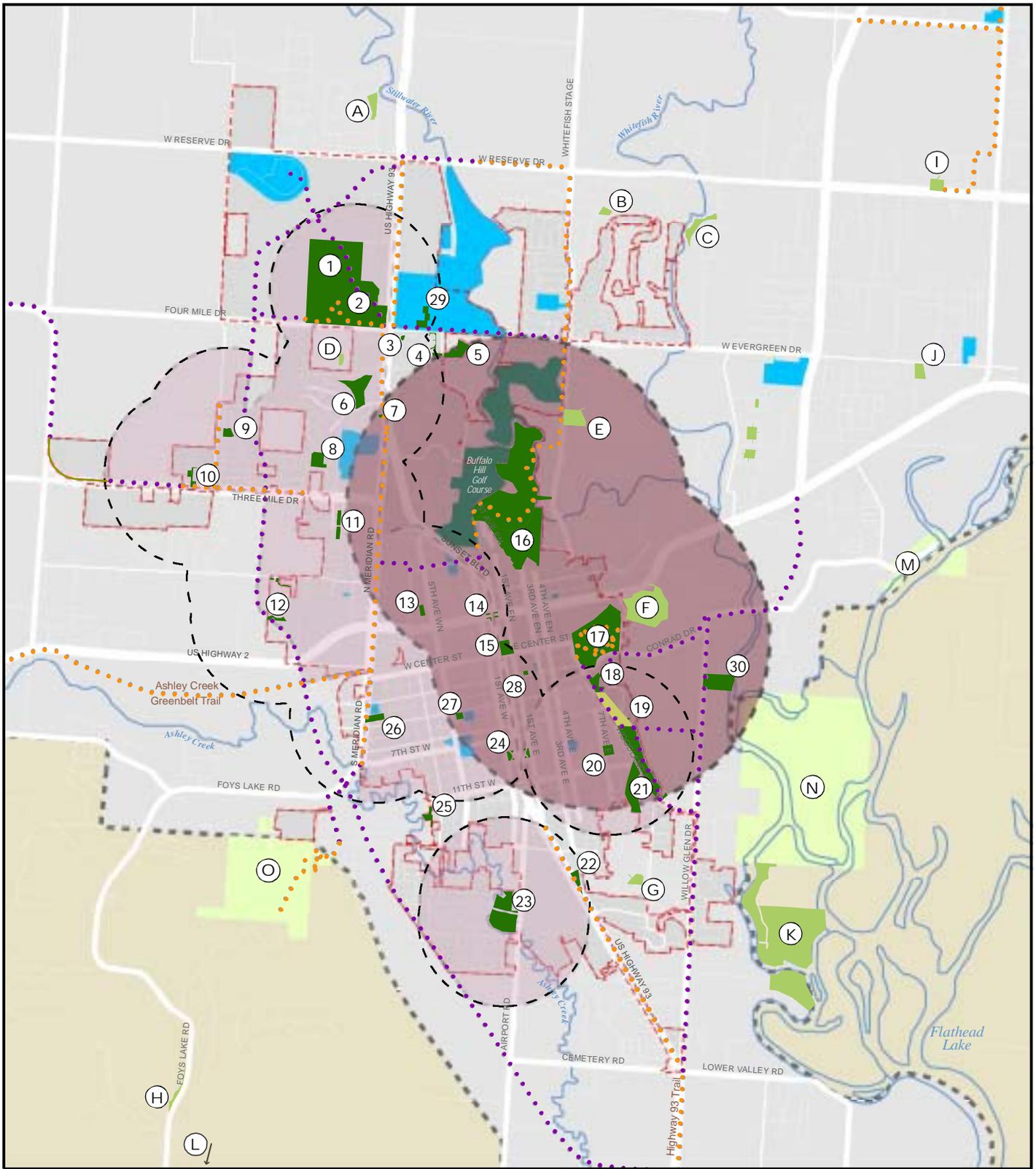


Figure 4.1: Existing Recreation Facility Service Areas

- 1/2 Mile Access
- 1 Mile Access
- Existing Trails
- Proposed/Possible Connector
- City Limits
- Planning area
- City Park
- County Park
- State Park
- Open Space
- Golf Course
- Schools

City Parks

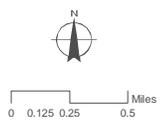
1. KallsPELL Youth Athletic Complex
2. Spring Prairie Tree Park
3. Park View Terrace Park
4. Buffalo Head Park
5. Grandview Drive Park
6. Northridge Park
7. Eagle Park
8. Sunset Park
9. Empire Estates Park
10. Cottonwood Park
11. Hawthorne Park
12. Greenbriar Park
13. Washington Park
14. Four Corners
15. Depot Park
16. Lawrence Park
17. Woodland Park
18. Heritage Park
19. Helen O'Neil Park
20. Thompson Field
21. Dry Bridge Park
22. Lions Park
23. Begg Park/Laker & Archie Roe Park
24. Courthouse Park
25. Western Park
26. Meridian Park
27. Gallagher Park
28. Central School/Museum
29. Tennis Court Complex
30. Willow Glen Site

County Parks

- A. Country Estates Park
 - B. Mission Village Park
 - C. Kings Loop Park
 - D. North Haven Park
 - E. Hillcrest Park
 - F. Conrad Complex
 - G. Green Acres Park
 - H. Foys Lake Community Center / Boat Access
 - I. Camelot Estates Park
 - J. Evergreen Lions Park
 - K. Leisure Island
 - L. Herron Park
- (out of map's extent)*

State Parks

- M. Kiwanis/ Old Steel Bridge Parks
- N. Owen Sowerwine Natural Area
- O. Lone Pine State Park



Tables 4.4A and 4.4B summarize existing and future needs for recreation facilities. These needs are based upon a proposed demand standard (ratio) listed in Column 4 of Table 4.4A.

Table 4.4A
Summary of Facility Needs: Ratios and Standards
City of Kalispell

Facility	Existing Facility	Existing Ratio	Proposed Ratio
Baseball/Girls Softball Fields	25	1 field/695 persons	1 field/640 persons
Adult Softball Fields	7	1 field/2,483 persons	1 field/2,480 persons
Soccer Fields	10	1 field/1,738 persons	1 field/1,783 persons
Swimming Pools	1,675 sf	96 sf/1,000 persons	85 sf/1,000 persons
Trails	11.3 miles	.65 mi/1,000 persons	1.05 mi./1,000 persons

Table 4.4B
Summary of Facility Needs: Current and Future Needs
City of Kalispell

Facility	Total Current Need	Net Current Need	Year 2020 Need	Year 2020 Net Need
Baseball/Girls Softball Fields	27	2	46	21
Adult Softball Fields	7	0	12	5
Soccer Fields	10	0	17	7
Swimming Pools	1,477 sq ft	(198 sf)	2,516 sq ft	841 sq ft
Trails	18.3 miles	7.0 miles	31.1 miles	19.8 miles

Needs Assessment

According to these calculations, the City of Kalispell has a current need for the following recreation facilities: youth baseball/softball fields and trails. In the year 2020, the need for all types of recreational facilities will have grown, some substantially. The City will need to maximize opportunities to develop these facilities if community needs are to be met.



Chapter 5: Planning Conclusions and Guidelines

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

PLANNING CONCLUSIONS AND GUIDELINES

The conclusions listed below summarize key observations regarding park and recreation services in Kalispell; guidelines outlined herein offer a framework for the development of park and recreation services. All of these elements were derived via discussions with City staff, community members and other local service providers, and follow commonly accepted standards for park provision, design and development.

Planning Guidelines:

1. *Significant Planning Conclusions*
2. *Guidelines for Site Selection and Development*

5.1 SIGNIFICANT PLANNING CONCLUSIONS

The following are conclusions drawn from the analysis of existing facilities and operations, public involvement activities, and the community needs assessment. These conclusions provide a foundation for the guidelines and recommendations presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

1. Kalispell's population is growing rapidly, as is the population of Flathead County. This increase is and will continue to create a high demand for park and recreation services and facilities.
2. Kalispell's tendency to grow outward rather than upward, as well as its rapid rate of growth, necessitates the immediate acquisition of open space and new land to fulfill future park needs, particularly for neighborhood and community parks.
3. The City must adopt and enforce park development standards that fully address issues of quantity (acreage) and quality (site location and design). Strong enforcement of these standards will ensure that new residents receive an equivalent level of park and recreation service as do current residents.
4. The City will face financial challenges when seeking to acquire new park land and maintain existing facilities if new sources of funding are not found. More funding for park land acquisition, as well as operations and maintenance, must be secured.
5. The underlying concept of the proposed park system is to assure that every neighborhood in Kalispell is served by a neighborhood or community park. Eleven additional neighborhood parks and five community parks will be needed to meet community needs by the year 2020.
6. Kalispell has very high participation levels in outdoor, trail- and nature-related activities when compared to other Northwest cities. This participation warrants an expansion of the linear park and greenway inventories of the existing park system. Statistically, Kalispell is projected need an additional 19.8 miles of trails by the year 2020.

5.2 GUIDELINES FOR SITE SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT

The following design guidelines apply to the acquisition and/or development of parks within each park classification. Each park classification includes a description of the park type, site selection and development guidelines, features to consider, and features to avoid.



Mini Parks

Description:

- § Mini parks may provide recreation opportunities where high property costs or a shortage of available land interfere with the acquisition of larger parks. Mini parks also may be considered when they are privately developed and maintained.
- § The typical mini park user:
 - § Comes from within a quarter mile or half mile of the park.
 - § Arrives on foot or by bicycle.
 - § Visits the park on a short time basis.

Site Selection and Development Guidelines:

- § Typical size is 1 to 2 acres. The City may give consideration to developing mini parks where opportunities for land acquisition within proposed service areas do not provide enough property to meet neighborhood park needs.
- § Access to the site should be provided via a local street with sidewalks. Mini parks fronting on arterial streets should be discouraged.
- § The site should have 100-150 feet of street frontage.
- § Parking Requirements: On-street parking should be provided as street frontage allows.

Features and Amenities to Consider:

- § Open turf area for unstructured play
- § General landscape improvements (including tree plantings)
- § Children's playground or tot-lot
- § Pathway connecting park elements
- § Picnic tables and/or small picnic shelter

Features to Avoid:

- § Permanent restrooms
- § Horticultural or annual plantings, unless sponsored and maintained by a neighborhood or community group

- § Indoor recreation facilities
- § Wading pools and similar types of amenities that require staff supervision or highly specialized maintenance
- § Tennis or basketball courts

Neighborhood Parks

Description:

- § Neighborhood parks provide nearby residents with access to basic recreation opportunities. These parks should be designed to enhance neighborhood identity, preserve or provide neighborhood open space, and improve the quality of life of nearby residents. They are designed for passive and unstructured activities.
- § The typical neighborhood park user:
 - § Comes from within a half mile of the park.
 - § Arrives on foot or by bicycle.
 - § Visits the park on a short time basis.

Site Selection and Development Guidelines:

- § Optimum size is 3 to 5 acres, but can vary depending upon the availability of land. Where park sites are adjacent to schools they may be smaller in size. Under no circumstances should neighborhood parks be less than three acres.
- § At least 50% of site should be relatively level and usable, providing space for both active and passive uses.
- § The site should have at least 200 feet of street frontage.
- § Access to the site should be provided via a local street with sidewalks. Neighborhood parks fronting on arterial streets should be discouraged.
- § Parking Requirements: A minimum of three spaces per acre of usable active park area. Generally, if on-street parking is available in front of the park, this guideline can be reduced by one car per 25 feet of street frontage.
- § Active and noise producing facilities, such as tennis and basketball courts, should be located at least 100' from nearby homes or property zoned for a residential use.

Features and Amenities to Consider:

- § Open turf area for unstructured play
- § General landscape improvements (including tree plantings)
- § Children's playground



- § Basketball (full or half) court
- § Pathway connecting park elements
- § Picnic tables
- § Small picnic shelter
- § Volleyball court
- § Multi-use fields for practice
- § Interpretive signage
- § Natural area/greenspace

Features to Avoid:

- § Horticultural or annual plantings, unless sponsored and maintained by a neighborhood or community group
- § Indoor recreation facilities
- § Wading pools and similar types of amenities that require staff supervision or highly specialized maintenance

Additional Considerations for School Parks:

- § The school park concept is primarily associated with elementary schools and should be planned and designed as a composite unit whenever possible.
- § Because of the potential of jointly developing school sites, facilities on the site itself should be a mixture of active and passive uses. This could include:
 - § Pathway systems
 - § Picnic areas/facilities
 - § Multi-purpose paved court
 - § A small piece of playground equipment
 - § Baseball and soccer fields
- § Because these sites are adjacent to school grounds, landscaping should address safety and security issues. Facilities generating crowd noise should be located in a manner so as not to disturb adjoining residential areas.
- § When sport fields utilized for league play are located on school grounds, the City should assist in maintaining these fields.

Community Parks

Description:

- § Community parks provide visitors with active and passive recreation opportunities. These parks often accommodate large group activities and include major recreation facilities, such as sports fields. Community parks should be designed to enhance neighborhood and community identity, preserve open space, and enhance the quality of life of community residents.

- § Typical community park users:
 - § Come from within one mile of the park.
 - § Arrive by auto, bus, bicycle or foot.
 - § Visit the park for 1 to 3 hours.



Site Selection and Development Guidelines:

- § Minimum site size should be 15 acres with the optimum at 20-30 acres.
- § Due to their size requirements, the acquisition of community park sites should occur far in advance of need. Park development should occur when the area it serves becomes 50% developed.
- § Whenever possible community parks should be located adjacent to schools.
- § At least two-thirds of the site should be available for active recreation use. Adequate buffers or natural open space areas should separate active recreation areas from nearby homes.
- § The site should be visible from adjoining streets and have a minimum of 400' of street frontage.
- § Parking Requirements: Dependent upon facilities provided. Generally, 50 off-street spaces per ballfield are required, plus 5 spaces per acre of active use areas.
- § Permanent restrooms are appropriate for this type of park.
- § Access to the site should be provided via a collector or arterial street with sidewalks and bicycle lanes.

Facilities and Amenities to Consider:

- § Tot and youth playground
- § Designated sports fields for baseball, softball, and soccer. Fields may be in a complex within the park
- § Open turf area for unstructured play
- § General landscape improvements
- § Looped pathway system
- § Picnic shelters, including at least one capable of accommodating groups of 25 to 50 people
- § Permanent restrooms
- § Volleyball courts
- § Tennis courts
- § Basketball courts
- § Horseshoe pits

- § Other sporting facilities (lawn bowling, croquet, bocce court)
- § Field lighting
- § Community scale skate park
- § Water playground
- § Off-leash dog area or designated dog park
- § Community gardens
- § Concessions or vendor space
- § Interpretive signage
- § Natural area/greenspace
- § Indoor recreation center or other indoor recreation space



Large Urban Parks

Description:

- § Large urban parks provide visitors with access to special features or facilities that will attract visitors from throughout the community. Generally, they include a wide variety of specialized facilities and can accommodate large group activities, such as special events and festivals. Large urban parks enhance the quality of life of city residents.
- § Typical large urban park users:
 - § Come from throughout the city.
 - § Arrive by auto, bus, bicycle or foot.
 - § Visit the park for 2 to 4 hours or more.

Site Selection and Development Guidelines:

- § The site generally exceeds 50 acres and should be sufficient to accommodate the park's unique features or amenities.
- § At least 75% of the site should be developable.
- § Access to the site should be provided via a collector or arterial street.
- § The site should follow the general guidelines listed in community parks.

Facilities and Amenities to Consider:

- § Tot and youth playground
- § Open turf area for unstructured play
- § General landscape improvements
- § Event space for large group gatherings
- § Expanded utility/electric service to support community events
- § Extensive pathway system
- § Large picnic shelters
- § Permanent restrooms
- § Off-street parking will depend upon facilities/programs offered

- § Children's play environment (unique or custom-designed)
- § Volleyball courts
- § Basketball courts
- § Tennis courts
- § Horseshoe pits
- § Water playground
- § Other sporting facilities (lawn bowling, croquet, bocce courts)
- § Designated sports fields for baseball, softball, and soccer.
Fields may be located in complexes within the park and should include lighting
- § Community or regional-scale skate park
- § Concessions, vendor space, or commercial lease space
- § Water features
- § Public art
- § Dog park
- § Performance space, such as a stage area or bandshell
- § Special facilities such as an indoor recreation center or pool
- § Interpretive signage
- § Natural area/greenspace
- § Storage or maintenance buildings. If visible, these should be architecturally compatible with other park elements and any exterior work areas should be screened from view

Special Use Areas

Description:

- § Special use areas are unique sites often occupied by a specialized facility. Some uses that fall into this category include waterfront parks, boat ramps, botanical gardens, memorials, community gardens, single purpose sites used for a particular field sport, or sites occupied by buildings.
- § Typical users of special use areas:
 - § May come from throughout the city or beyond.
 - § Arrive by auto, bus, bicycle or foot.
 - § May visit the park for one hour to more than three hours.



Site Selection and Development Guidelines:

- § Siting criteria depend on the type of facility proposed.
- § Prior to the development of any specialized recreation facility, such as a pool, recreation center, sports complex, etc., the City should prepare a detailed cost/benefit analysis and maintenance impact statement.
- § Size will depend upon the facilities provided.
- § Site should front on a public street.

- § Parking Requirements: Depends on facilities provided.

Facilities and Amenities to Consider:

- § Facilities and amenities will depend on the proposed activities and site use.



Linear Parks

Description:

- § Linear parks are developed or landscaped areas and other lands that follow linear corridors such as railroad rights-of-way, creeks, canals, power lines, and other elongated features. This type of park usually contains trails, landscaped areas, viewpoints, and seating areas. Activities are generally passive in nature, such as walking, biking, wildlife watching, etc.
- § Typical linear park users:
 - § May come from throughout the city (depends on site).
 - § Arrive by auto, bus, bicycle, or foot.
 - § May visit the park for one or more hours.

Site Selection and Development Guidelines:

- § Linear parks should generally follow continuous special feature strips. They should have a minimum setback of 200' from stream centerlines; additional setbacks may be required depending upon floodplain elevations.
- § Due to the shape, configuration, and potential for user noise in linear parks, user impacts on adjoining neighbors should be considered. Fences, walls, or landscaping may be used to provide some privacy for neighbors, but the provision of these features should consider user safety.
- § Paved pathways should be designed to accommodate maintenance and patrol vehicles.

Facilities and Amenities to Consider:

- § Paved pathways
- § Landscaped areas
- § Maintained natural vegetation
- § Picnic tables
- § Orientation and information signage
- § Trailhead or entry/ kiosk
- § Turf areas
- § Ornamental plantings

- § Fences, landscaping, or other features to control access near adjoining residential areas
- § Viewpoints
- § Seating areas
- § On-street or off-street parking at trailheads. Amount depends on facilities and anticipated use of the trails

Facilities to Avoid:

- § Active use areas (sport fields, paved courts, etc.)

Natural Open Space/Greenways

Description:

- § Natural open space/greenways are publicly owned or controlled natural resources that are managed for conservation, environmental education, and passive recreational use, such as walking and nature viewing. This type of land may include wetlands, steep hillsides, or other similar spaces. Environmentally sensitive areas are considered open space and can include wildlife habitats, stream and creek corridors, or areas with unique and/or endangered plant species.
- § Typical open space/greenway users:
 - § Come from throughout the city.
 - § Arrive by auto, bus, bicycle or foot.
 - § Visit the park for one or more hours.



Site Selection and Development Guidelines:

- § Site size should be based on natural resource needs. Acreage should be sufficient to preserve or protect the resource. Greenways should have a minimum setback of 200' from stream centerlines; additional setbacks may be required depending upon floodplain elevations.
- § The City should consider alternative ways of preserving natural open space besides outright purchase, such as acquiring conservation easements, encouraging donations of land, land trades, etc.
- § Emphasis for acquisition should be on lands offering unique features or have the potential to be lost to development.
- § Areas difficult or impossible to develop should have a lower priority for acquisition.
- § An analysis should be made to determine if unique qualities and conditions exist to warrant acquisition.

- § Development and site improvements should be kept to a minimum, with the natural environment, interpretive and educational features emphasized.
- § Natural open space areas should be managed and maintained for a sense of solitude, separation, or environmental protection.
- § Parking and site use should be limited to the numbers and types of visitors the area can accommodate while still retaining its natural character and the intended level of solitude.
- § Where feasible, public access and use of these areas should be encouraged, but environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from overuse.

Facilities and Amenities to Consider:

- § Interpretive signage
- § Off-street parking if a trail is located within the site
- § Picnic shelters
- § Picnic areas
- § Trail and pathway system
- § Trailhead or entry/ kiosk
- § Viewpoints or viewing blinds
- § Interpretive or educational facilities

Facilities and Amenities to Avoid:

- § Turf areas
- § Ornamental plantings
- § Active use areas



Recreation Pathways and Trails

Description:

- § Recreation pathways and trails, as described here, provide off-street bicycle and pedestrian links to parks, with recreation emphasized. These include paths within greenways and linear parks. Guidelines are not presented for on-street bikeways or accessways intended mainly for transportation.
- § Typical pathway users:
 - § May come from throughout the city (depends on site).
 - § Arrive by auto, bus, bicycle, or foot.

Site Selection:

- § The primary purpose of recreation pathways and trails is to provide a recreation experience. However, pathways many also provide important transportation links for bicyclists.
- § Trails should be developed to provide linkages to parks, schools, and other destination points.
- § Whenever possible, recreation pathways and trails should be located outside street rights-of-ways.
- § Paths that are within street rights-of-way but separated should be designed, when possible, along continuous features, so that they do not pose hazards when crossing driveways and intersections.
- § Pathways and trails may need to utilize street rights-of-way in order to complete a segment link.
- § Since trails are so difficult to provide after an area has been developed, advanced detailed trail planning for developing areas is essential.

Facilities and Amenities to Consider:

- § Staging areas for trail access
- § Picnic sites
- § Seating areas
- § Trailhead or entry/ kiosk
- § Interpretive signage
- § Orientation and information signage
- § Amenities should be site specific

*Additional Trail Guidelines:*

- § Trail alignments should take into account soil conditions, steep slopes, surface drainage and other physical limitations that could increase construction and/or maintenance costs.
- § Trail alignments should avoid sensitive environmental areas such as wetlands, riparian vegetation, large trees, etc.
- § Trails should be planned, sized, and designed for non-motorized multiple uses, except for dedicated nature trails, and/or areas that cannot be developed to the standard necessary to minimize potential user conflicts.
- § Centralized and effective staging areas should be provided for trail access. Trailheads should include parking, orientation

and information, and any necessary specialized unloading features.

- § Trails should be looped and interconnected to provide a variety of trail lengths and destinations. They should link various parts of the community, as well as existing park sites.
- § Recreation trails should be interesting to the user and maximize the number and diversity of enjoyable viewing opportunities.
- § Trails should be located and designed to provide a diversity of challenges. Enhance accessibility wherever possible.
- § Linkages and trail location and orientation should encourage users to walk or bicycle to the trail, depending upon the expected and desired level of use.
- § Whenever possible, recreation pathways and trails should be separated from the street right-of-way. Where routes use street rights-of-way, the street should be designed to minimize potential conflicts between motorists and pedestrians and bicyclists. If possible, trail crossings by streets should occur at signalized intersections.
- § Developers should be encouraged to provide public pathways through proposed developments, where such improvements would provide needed linkages between trail routes and access to public destinations.



Chapter 6: Recommendations for Administration, Maintenance and Programs

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS:

ADMINISTRATION, MAINTENANCE, PROGRAMS

This chapter provides recommendations for managing and maintaining Kalispell's comprehensive park and recreation program. These recommendations were developed from staff input and a comprehensive analysis of administration, operations, maintenance and programs.

Section 6.1 summarizes recommendations for administration, management and marketing. Recommendations about financing and budgeting are located in Section 6.2. Recommendations for acquisition efforts are outlined in Section 6.3. Maintenance recommendations are found in Section 6.4, and Section 6.5 contains recommendations for programs and services.

Recommendations:

1. *Administration and Management*
2. *Financing and Budgeting*
3. *Acquisition and Design*
4. *Ongoing Maintenance*
5. *Recreation Programming*

6.1 ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Departmental Organization

A. Add Necessary Management to Improve Operations.

Create a level of separation between the Department Director and the Maintenance Division to allow Maintenance easier, daily access to a managerial contact. Create a superintendent position within the Recreation division of the department. Figure 6.1 depicts the recommended organization of the department.

Public Involvement and Marketing

A. Use Interactive Marketing Techniques.

Continue interactive methods of increasing departmental awareness, such as community open houses, presentations to neighborhood groups, booths at community events, and television segments. Involve the public in fundraising, new park development or redevelopment projects via visioning workshops and design charettes. Reference the website in all marketing efforts, if the website is allowed for interactive use by the City.

B. Provide Necessary Information to the Public.

Publish the updated park system map. Improve park signage and provide printed maps at trail heads and public counters. Include a map and information about trails, pathways, and bike lanes in the seasonal Activity Guide. Place all maps and geoinformation on the Department website, if allowed.

C. Allow for Individual Involvement in Department.

Continue to allow for private involvement in the Department's funding and operations via the gift catalog, volunteer opportunities and Adopt-A-Park program. Encourage direct neighborhood investment in local park facilities through the establishment



and administration of a neighborhood grant program for local park improvements, which could make maintenance efforts more affordable (as no labor costs are incurred), and increase a sense of local ownership for parks.

6.2 FINANCING AND BUDGETING

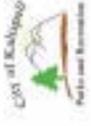
A. Investigate a New Park District. It is estimated that approximately 30% of those who use Kalispell's parks and recreation programs are people who live outside the city limits. While these participants pay about 20% more for participating in a recreation program, they do not pay for construction of the facilities they use.

To address this issue, the City and County should consider creating a park district that includes the City and the surrounding urban area. The formation of this new agency would then have the responsibility of all park and recreation services within the district area. An elected board would be responsible for managing the agency. While the City would be giving up its park and recreation service responsibilities to another organization, it would have the option of what facilities and services it would turn over to the District. This proposal would require a positive vote of all people within the District. This District could be formed to finance and manage a specific facility or the entire park system in Kalispell. One advantage of a District is that it would serve a broad population base. A disadvantage is that the City could be giving up management of its park system to another political agency.

B. Create a Park Maintenance District. Because of the lack of adequate funding for park maintenance, it is recommended that the City create a park maintenance district similar to the Urban Forestry Maintenance District that is now in place. Revenue from this source would be used for increased park maintenance and to address many of the deferred park maintenance conditions that now exist.

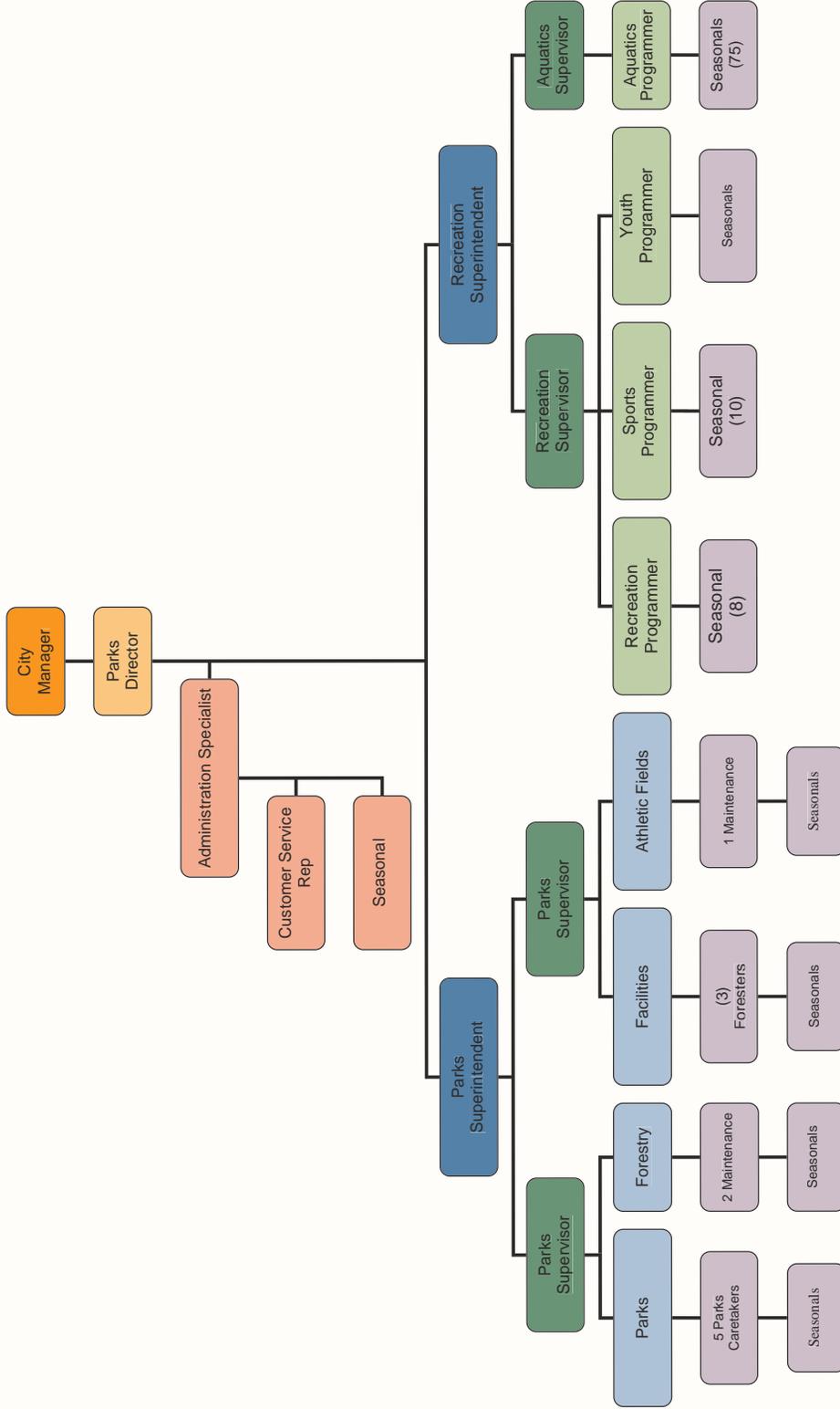
C. Establish Park Impact Fees. Park Impact Fees have the ability to generate substantial, necessary revenue to pay for park development costs. It is recommended that an Impact Fee Schedule be developed that can be reevaluated in future years if an increase in fees is warranted.

D. Refer an Open Space Acquisition Bond to Voters. Park development priorities appear to be clear given the 2006 Recreation Survey results - open space acquisition, trail and linear park development, and multi-use park development.



Flow Chart for Employee Functions

Figure 6.1: Proposed Organizational Structure



Kalispell is growing at a rate that suitable land for parks is being lost to other forms of development. While park impact fees may be a new funding source for land acquisition, it will take time to generate enough revenue for allowable acquisition purposes. As a result, an open space bond should be placed before the voters to acquire land while it is still available.



- E. Evaluate Existing Revenue Agreements.** At present, the City-owned Buffalo Hill Golf Course is leased to a private organization for the sum of \$15,000 per year. The 27-hole course has a clubhouse that can host a variety of events. The course generates approximately 40,000 rounds of golf per year. The City performs no facility maintenance with the exception of a moderate level of tree care. The private organization that runs the course is in charge of all remaining maintenance as well as capital expenditures, but collects all of the revenue generated.

The current lease terminates in 2008. It is recommended the City reassess the value of the course and study the course's rate of return. If it is determined that additional revenue could be generated without deterring current or future play or associated tourism revenue, the City may want to renegotiate the terms of the lease or take over its operation.

6.3 ACQUISITION AND DESIGN

Lay the Groundwork for Future Development

- A. Seek Public Support.** Generate excitement about the future of City parks, recreation facilities, programs and services via neighborhood visioning workshops and interactive design charrettes; allow the public a role in conceptual design, with discussions focused on redevelopment of local neighborhood parks as well the growth of the park system as a whole; use these conceptual events to personalize park development and to generate excitement about public investment in parks.
- B. Educate on Economic Benefits of Park Development.** The City should increase public awareness about the economic benefits of parks through a sustained information campaign that explains development economics. Reference the visions for parks voiced during community workshops and design charrettes when possible; demonstrate mathematically what is required for initial outlay, and detail the community-wide benefits that could result. Explain other benefits of parks and recreation - community health, enhanced recreation and open space preservation - in informational materials as well.



- C. Build Development Partnerships when Possible.** Form coalitions with developers and the County to come to a consensus on issues such as Park Impact Fees and Park Design Standards. If coalitions are not possible, such interactions could at least allow insight into the opinions of other parties.
- D. Push for Action.** Building upon public support for Kalispell's parks, ask for the creation of a Park Maintenance District to meet future and current maintenance needs, request a Council-wide vote on Impact Fees, refer an Open Space Acquisition Bond to the voters to acquire capital funding, and push for passage of Development Design Standards to ensure the development of high-quality facilities.

Acquire New Land and Develop to Approved Standards

- A. Seek New Land.** Acquire park land and natural open space in advance of need to reduce land acquisition costs and protect critical resources.
- B. Work with the County.** When possible, work with Flathead County to reserve parkland that is within the Kalispell Planning Area but outside of the city limits; all reserved land should meet the Site Selection Guidelines outlined in Chapter 5.

When an area is annexed to the City that contains a County park site, it is recommended that the County dedicate that park site to the City. Development goals for the park site should be determined on a case-by-case basis upon annexation.

- C. Consider Maintenance Costs in Acquisition/Design.** Consider maintenance costs, including transportation and loading/unloading of equipment, before acquiring small park sites to meet neighborhood park needs. Involve maintenance staff in all park and facility designs. Conduct a maintenance impact analysis for each new site acquired and developed; include projected costs for maintenance in design proposals
- D. Implement Design Standards.** Develop master plans for all new and redeveloped parks to create a park system that is in line with Design Development Standards. Encourage public participation in the park design process to ensure that facilities have features that meet local needs, and to encourage ongoing public investment in parks.

Recreation Facilities

- A. Seek Profitability.** Evaluate current and proposed parks and facilities for opportunities to support specialized programming and events. Conduct feasibility studies to determine the revenue generating potential of these facilities.
- B. Seek Partnerships.** Consider all potential partnerships for large-scale facility development efforts, such as a community center or adult sport field complex. Partner to offer programs at easily accessible facilities throughout the community, such as schools, churches, etc.

6.4 ONGOING MAINTENANCE

- A. Track Park Maintenance Costs:** Develop an overall maintenance management plan that includes standards, specific tasks, task frequencies, and budget. Create a facility assessment matrix that is updated monthly, ranking the “health” of significant park features (e.g. restrooms, turf, trees, tennis courts, etc.) at each of Kalispell’s park sites. Use this spreadsheet to predict upcoming maintenance expenditures; use this spreadsheet during the annual budgeting process as well to validate known park maintenance costs.
- B. Track Equipment Use.** Create an equipment assessment matrix and update it monthly to rank the “health” of each piece of equipment owned by Kalispell Parks & Recreation (mileage, significant maintenance measures, etc.). Use this spreadsheet to predict upcoming equipment needs; also use this spreadsheet during the annual budgeting process to push for investment in Parks & Recreation equipment.
- C. Acknowledge and Fund Deferred Maintenance Issues.** Create a fund for deferred maintenance projects, including irrigation and drainage, tree pruning and dead tree removal, pathway repair and overlays, restroom repairs, landscaping, and resurfacing projects. Review ADA access requirements for all existing and future parks and fund these improvements.
- D. Separate Maintenance Budgets.** Track expenditures for specialized types of maintenance (beautification areas, KYAC) so their expense can be determined. Contract out work in specific areas, such as fencing, tree maintenance, street beautification, and construction when it is beneficial to do so. Create a separate budget for beautification areas and KYAC so that funds are not taken from general parks maintenance.
- E. Plan for Future Maintenance Costs.** Allocate an average minimum maintenance cost per acre annually for maintenance of each park type. Increase maintenance funds using this



guideline as new parks are added to the system. Extend the existing adopt-a-park program as each new park and facility comes “on line” to support their maintenance.



6.5 RECREATION PROGRAMMING

General Programming

- A. Respond to the Recreation Survey.** Expand recreation programs in the following areas:
- § Outdoor/interpretative programs
 - § Cultural arts programming
 - § Teen programs
 - § Senior programs
- B. Expand Outdoor/Interpretive Programming.** Continue designing outdoor programs that utilize existing facilities in the area. Promote programs and activities to encourage trail use. Develop walking programs and activities such as “First Saturday Park Walks,” naturalist hikes, or a children’s scavenger hunt to encourage movement and exercise and to increase awareness of Kalispell’s parks and natural areas.
- C. Enhance Cultural Arts Programming.** Strong interest was expressed in the 2006 Recreation Survey for cultural arts programming, particularly the existing Concerts in the Park events. Seek ways to partner with existing arts organizations for both programming and facilities so as to benefit the public.

Age-Group Programming

- A. Look at Teen Issues with a Wider Scope.** A community-wide feeling exists in Kalispell that teens have nothing to do. Thus, teen needs extend beyond what parks and recreation services can provide alone. Consider solutions that address teen lifestyle needs comprehensively, such as the creation of a teen-run coffee shop (a social as well as job-training outlet) or space in a multi-use community center (a social and athletic venue). Form partnerships to fund these ventures when possible.
- B. Teen Sports.** Develop facilities reflecting current trends in teen sports such as Skateboarding, In-line Skating, Freestyle BMX, and Freestyle Mountain Biking.
- C. Senior Needs.** Partner with existing senior center services to develop a senior services strategy for the community.

Volunteer Programs

- A. Encourage Public “Ownership” of Parks.** Establish a volunteer patrol program where adults volunteer to be present in parks to deter inappropriate activities, such as vandalism, and to report issues or problems.

Continue the Adopt-a-Park program to promote maintenance of significant park, recreation, and open space facilities.

Encourage direct neighborhood investment in local park facilities through the establishment and administration of a neighborhood grant program for local park improvements, which could make maintenance efforts more affordable (as no labor costs are incurred), and increase a sense of ownership for parks.

- B. Encourage Public Assistance.** Increase and publicize volunteer opportunities related to programs and services, such as during City-wide special events and youth sporting events.



Program Revenue/Recreation Fees

- A. Serve All Community Members.** Continue to offer programs at a range of costs (free, low-cost, etc.) so all members of the community can benefit from park and recreation services. Continue to provide individual scholarships and discounted program fees for families in need.
- B. Seek Revenue when Possible.** Establish more revenue-generating programs to increase program funding. Seek to subsidize or expand programs through business sponsorships. Set and periodically reevaluate revenue targets for core program areas.



Chapter 7: Recommendations for Park Land, Facilities and Trails

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS:

PARKLAND, FACILITIES AND TRAILS

This chapter provides recommendations for the ongoing physical development of Kalispell's park system. These recommendations were developed from staff input, public input, and the needs assessment findings, which included a comprehensive analysis of existing parkland and potential resources.

Section 7.1 presents recommendations for parks and facilities, including a summary of the planning concept that underlies the proposed park and facility system. Section 7.2 presents a trails plan, along with specific recommendations for trails, pathways, and bikeways. All recommendations are assuming a 2020 build-out population of 29,600, as detailed in Chapter 4.

Recommendations:

1. *Parks and Facilities*
2. *Trails, Pathways, and Bikeways*

7.1 PARKS AND FACILITIES

Planning Concept

The ideal park system for Kalispell is one made up of a hierarchy of various park types, each offering certain types of recreation and/or open space opportunities. Separately, each park type may serve a primary function, but collectively they meet the needs of the entire community. By recognizing this concept, Kalispell can develop an efficient, cost effective, comprehensive park system.

The basic concept of the park facility plan for Kalispell is to assure that every neighborhood is served by either a neighborhood park or a community park. The proposed park system expands on the existing system, providing a neighborhood park or a community park within a half-mile radius of most residents. Park facilities will be situated for easy access by bicycle or foot without the crossing of major barriers, such as arterial streets or waterways.

To achieve this goal, eleven additional neighborhood parks and five community parks will be needed throughout the city, which will fulfill all anticipated need at the western and northern edges of the current Planning Area. Need to the south of the current city limits will be met in areas with residential density, with the majority of resources focused on or near Ashley Creek. Need east of the current city limits is anticipated to be filled by County resources, as the unincorporated community of Evergreen has expressed strong interest in remaining independent of the City of Kalispell.

Neighborhood and community parks will be supplemented by other recreational resources, such as large urban parks, special use sites, mini parks, linear parks, and natural open space areas/greenways. These parks will serve the entire community and need to be conveniently located for most residents.

The planning concept also proposes an enhanced pedestrian and bicycle system that connects parks to neighborhoods in Kalispell.

Recommendations include developing bike lanes and off-road pathways to form a system of interconnected loops within the city, as well as connecting to existing and proposed regional trails.

With twelve neighborhood parks, one community park, one large urban park, and a budding regional trails system, Kalispell has a strong foundation to fulfill this concept. As Kalispell’s population grows, however, the City will need to identify and acquire park sites while land is available. Particularly in northern undeveloped areas of Kalispell, the City should consider acquiring both neighborhood and community park sites. The City should also consider integrating county-owned parks into the city’s system to provide a regional approach to meeting recreation needs.

Proposed Park Facilities Plan



The Proposed Recreation Facilities Plan, Figure 7.1, is a graphic representation of the park system at build-out. It depicts the location of existing facilities and maps the conceptual location of proposed park sites and trails. Figure 7.2 is a Proposed Trail Plan that illustrates trail routes in more detail.

These conceptual plans take into account projected population growth, current land availability and the ability of the City to acquire land in meaningful locations. However, these maps are not intended to pinpoint exact locations for these sites.

Some important notes about Figure 7.1 include:

1. Each site is coded with a letter and a number (such as NP-12). The letter represents the park type, and the number is for site identification. These references are found on Figure 7.1, cross-referenced with recommendations provided in the following text. The coding system is as follows:

MP	Mini Park
NP	Neighborhood Park
CP	Community Park
LUP	Large Urban Park
SUA	Special Use Area
NOS	Natural Open Space

2. On Figure 7.1, colored asterisks show proposed general locations for new parks. The final location of park sites will be determined during the site acquisition process, influenced by land availability, acquisition costs, and property ownership.

Park and Facility Recommendations

Preliminary recommendations for parkland are listed by park classification. Parks are listed in numerical order within each park class. Proposed sites are listed in the order of their identification number and have been named for ease of discussion.

Comprehensive Park & Recreation Master Plan



City of Kalispell, Montana

- Proposed Community Park
- City Park
- County Park
- State Park
- Open Space
- Linear Park
- Natural Open Space
- Proposed Neighborhood Park
- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails
- City Limits
- Planning area
- Schools
- Golf Course

City Parks

- Large Urban Park
- MP-1 Park View Terrace Park
- MP-2 Buffalo Head Park
- MP-3 Eagle Park
- MP-4 Central School
- MP-5 Courthouse Park
- MP-6 Helen O'Neill Park
- MP-7 Western Park
- MP-15 Empire Estates Park
- MP-16 Cottonwood Park
- MP-17 Sunset Park
- MP-18 Sawtooth Park
- MP-23 Washington Park
- MP-24 Meridian Park
- MP-25 Gallagher Park
- MP-26 Willow Glen Site
- MP-27 Thompson Field
- MP-28 Begg Park
- Mini Park
- LP-1 Woodland Park
- Community Park
- CP-5 Lawrence Park
- Neighborhood Park
- NP-13 Spring Prairie Tree Park
- NP-14 Northridge Park
- NP-15 Empire Estates Park
- NP-16 Cottonwood Park
- NP-17 Sunset Park
- NP-18 Sawtooth Park
- NP-23 Washington Park
- NP-24 Meridian Park
- NP-25 Gallagher Park
- NP-26 Willow Glen Site
- NP-27 Thompson Field
- NP-28 Begg Park
- Special Use Areas
- SUA-1 Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex
- SUA-2 Tennis Court Complex
- SUA-3 Depot Park
- SUA-4 Laker & Archie Rose Park
- SUA-5 Lions Park
- Natural Open Space
- NOS-1 Grandview Drive Park
- NOS-2 Heritage Park
- NOS-3 Dry Bridge Park
- NOS-4 Stillwater Greenway
- NOS-5 Whitefish Greenway
- NOS-6 Ashley Creek Greenway
- Linear Park
- LP-1 Ashley Creek Greenbelt
- LP-2 Ashley Creek Greenbelt Extension

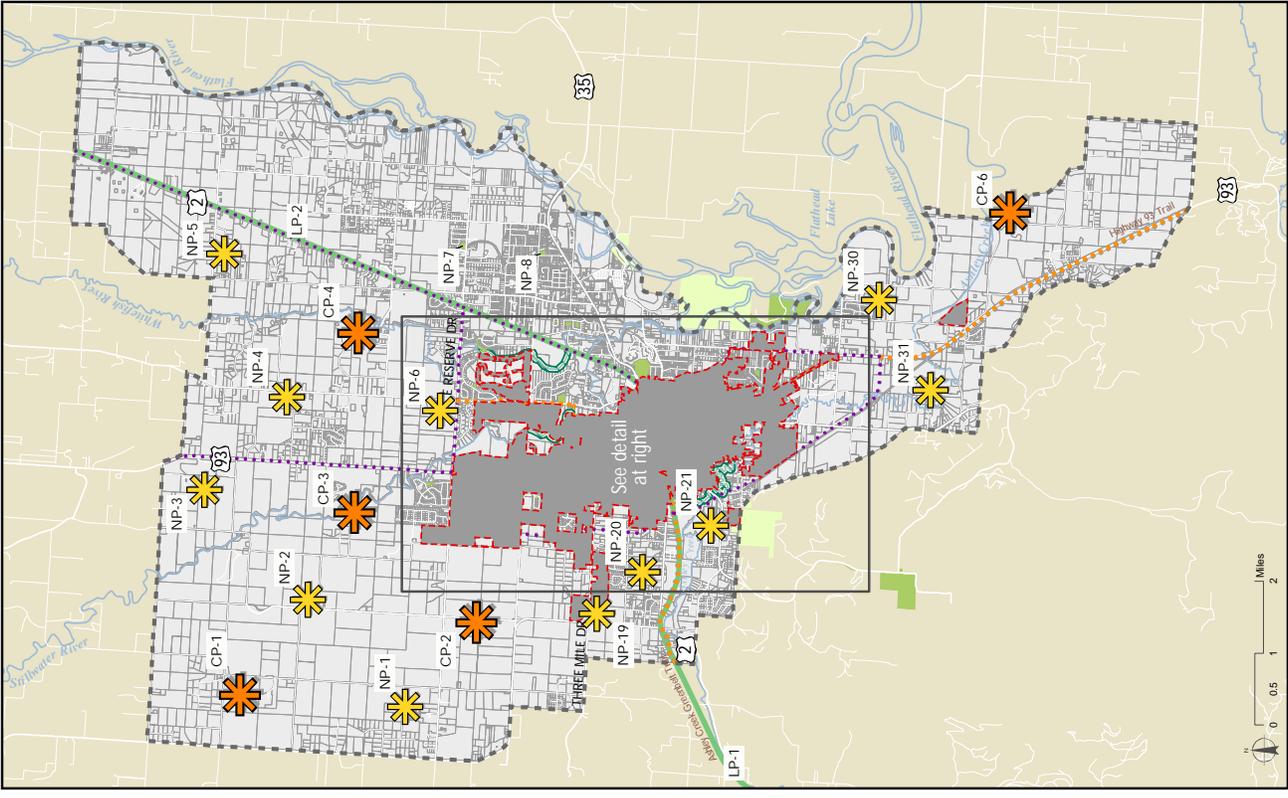
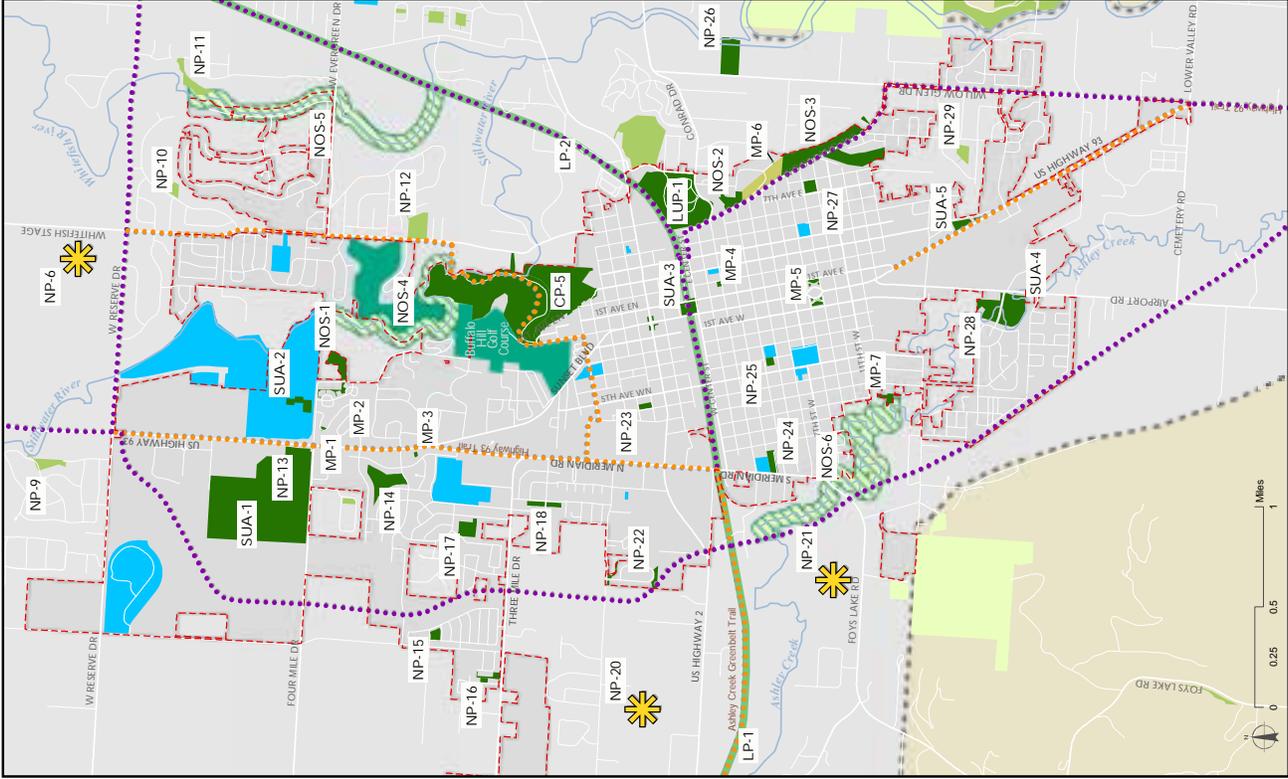
County Parks

- NP-9 Country Estates Park
- NP-10 Mission Village Park
- NP-11 Kings Loop Park
- NP-12 Hillcrest Park
- NP-29 Green Acres Park
- Neighborhood Park
- NP-7 Camelot Estates Park
- NP-8 Evergreen Lions Park

Figure 7.1: Proposed Recreation Facilities



November 2006



Mini Parks

The acquisition of mini parks requires careful consideration. Mini-parks typically have a high maintenance cost per square foot, and their size limits their recreational value. However, where parcels for proposed neighborhood parks cannot be obtained, mini park development may be the best alternative, offering opportunities for recreation where none would otherwise exist.



Recommendations for Kalispell’s existing mini parks include:

Site	Name	Action
MP-1	Park View Terrace Park	No renovations needed
MP-2	Buffalo Head Park	No renovations needed
MP-3	Eagle Park	Sell park
MP-4	Central School Park	No renovations needed
MP-5	Courthouse Park	Add pathways, benches, picnic tables, complete irrigation system
MP-6	Helen O’Neil Park	See Note #1 below
MP-7	Western Park	Develop public access and park

Note #1: Helen O’Neil Park is essentially the center of a turn-around at the end of a dead-end street. Because of its size, the park has no recreation value and is essentially a landscaped area. While an ideal solution would be to give the property to adjacent homeowners, it is doubtful they would accept it. As a result, the best solution is to re-landscape it for minimal maintenance and ask the homeowners to assume maintenance responsibility.

Neighborhood Parks

The optimum size for neighborhood parks is five acres. However, where large parcels are not available due to current development or where land costs prohibit the acquisition of large sites, smaller parks are acceptable. Existing Neighborhood Park Service Areas are identified in Figure 4.1 of Chapter 4. Proposed neighborhood park sites, which will fulfill future demand, are shown in Figure 7.1.

Note that county park sites that are in close proximity to the current city limits are listed in the chart below as ownership may be transferred to the City if annexation of surrounding land occurs. Monies for redevelopment of these sites are not provided in the budget presented in Chapter 8, however, as redevelopment will need to be determined on a case-by-case basis for each park.

Recommendations for neighborhood parks include:



Site	Name	Action
NP-1	West Valley Park *	Acquire and develop
NP-2	Clark Park *	Acquire and develop
NP-3	Prairie View Park *	Acquire and develop
NP-4	Wintercrest Park *	Acquire and develop
NP-5	Tumble Creek Park *	Acquire and develop
NP-6	Whitefish Stage Park *	Acquire and develop
NP-7	Camelot Estates Park	County owned: future ownership and development to be determined
NP-8	Evergreen Lions Park	County owned: future ownership and development to be determined
NP-9	Country Estates Park	County owned: future ownership and development to be determined
NP-10	Mission Village Park	County owned: future ownership and development to be determined
NP-11	Kings Loop Park	County owned: future ownership and development to be determined
NP-12	Hillcrest Park	County owned: future ownership and development to be determined
NP-13	Spring Prairie	Add basketball court
NP-14	Northridge Park	Add additional trees and amenities such as a picnic shelter and picnic tables
NP-15	Empire Estates Park	No renovations needed
NP-16	Cottonwood Park	Continue street-side trail; add additional trees and amenities such as a picnic shelter and picnic tables
NP-17	Sunset Park	Add half basketball court; develop a pathway system; add parking and amenities such as a picnic shelter and picnic table
NP-18	Hawthorne Park	Reconstruct tennis courts and basketball court
NP-19	Three Mile Drive Park *	Acquire and Develop
NP-20	Skyline Drive Park *	Acquire and Develop
NP-21	Ashley Creek Park *	Acquire and Develop: Capitalize on potential linear park development along Ashley Creek
(continued)		

* Proposed parks

(continued)		
Site	Name	Action
NP-22	Greenbriar Park	Add additional trees and amenities such as a picnic shelter and picnic table
NP-23	Washington Park	Add additional trees
NP-24	Meridian Park	Add additional trees and landscaping
NP-25	Gallagher Park	No renovations needed
NP-26	Willow Glen Site	Develop as a neighborhood park
NP-27	Thompson Field	Reconstruct tennis courts; add amenities such as a picnic shelter and picnic table
NP-28	Begg Park	Pave pathways; add picnic shelter; add additional trees
NP-29	Green Acres Park	County owned: future ownership and development to be determined
NP-30	Flathead Park *	Acquire and Develop: Consider siting near Flathead River
NP-31	Ashley Meadows Park *	Acquire and Develop: Consider siting near Ashley Creek

* **Proposed parks**

Community Parks

Kalispell’s one existing community park, Lawrence Park, is well-utilized by the community for a variety of recreational and sporting needs. As Kalispell’s population grows, however, this park is likely to experience overcrowding. In addition, Woodland and Lawrence Parks are in close proximity to one another, and have service areas that largely overlap.



As the city grows and develops, acquisition of land for community parks, particularly at the northern and western edges of the city, will be essential in order to provide residents of these areas with recreational opportunities that are adequate and equal to those of residents of central Kalispell.

If done well, development of new community parks could serve as a catalyst for high-end development. With this in mind, three proposed community parks are adjacent to Kalispell’s rivers and creeks. These water assets can enhance park design, as well as fulfill the public’s interest in parks with river and creek frontage.

Recommendations for community parks include:

Site	Name	Action
CP-1	Lost Creek Park *	Acquire and Develop
CP-2	Spring Creek Park *	Acquire and Develop: Provide enough space for an adult sports complex
CP-3	Hagerman Park *	Acquire and Develop: Consider siting near Stillwater River
CP-4	Rose Crossing Park *	Acquire and Develop: Consider siting near Whitefish River
CP-5	Lawrence Park	See Note #1 below
CP-6	Patrick Creek Park *	Acquire and Develop: Consider siting near Ashley Creek

*** Proposed parks**

Note #1: Lawrence Park is one of the major parks in Kalispell and has many opportunities for additional use. The challenge will be to balance park and facility needs with the open space character it now enjoys. Some of the improvements recommended are:

- § Expand the parking area.
- § Develop a smaller picnic pavilion at the park’s north end.
- § Replace wooden playground with a larger, more low-maintenance facility.
- § Incorporate casual sports amenities, such as horseshoe pits and disc golf.
- § Level the ground at the western edge of the park.
- § Maintain the rustic character of the northern area.
- § Improve ADA access within the park through the construction of paved pathways and modifications to play facilities.
- § Develop a forestry plan. Replace old cottonwoods in the north area with newer, less fragile stock. Install trees along hillside.



Large Urban Parks

Woodland Park is a significant asset in Kalispell, and serves a community park function in addition to a large urban park function. No additional large urban parks are recommended at this time, but recommendations for Woodland Park (LUP-1) include:

- § Replace restrooms.
- § Seek out a northern access route to the park.
- § Initiate a study of water quality in the pond; develop methods to improve water quality.
- § Stabilize the pond bank.

- § Upgrade the horseshoe pits and add fencing around the site.
- § Upgrade camp headquarters to accommodate year-round use.

Special Use Areas

Special use areas are typically single-purpose sites occupied by specialized facilities, or sites recommended for development that do not match other park use types. Recommendations for proposed special use areas include space for a community center and park land for the future development of adult sports fields.



Recommendations for special use areas include:

Site	Name	Action
SUA-1	Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex	Support Kidsports in their effort to add sport fields
SUA-2	Tennis Court Complex	Additional courts will be added via separate committee/financing
SUA-3	Depot Park	Construct new band shell
SUA-4	Laker & Archie Roe Park	Install hard surfacing under dugouts and behind backstop
SUA-5	Lions Park	No renovations needed

Linear Parks

Improving access and connectivity between parks via pedestrian and bike pathways is highly recommended. Recommendations relating to the acquisition and development of existing trail facilities, as well as proposed trails and pathways, are found later in this chapter (Section 7.2). The Ashley Creek rails-to-trails path, comprised of both existing and proposed portions, will incorporate both trails and park frontage.



Recommendations for linear parks include:

Site	Name	Action
LP-1	Ashley Creek Rails to Trails	No renovations needed
LP-2	Ashley Creek Rails to Trails Extension *	Support non-profit/County efforts in the acquisition/development of BNSF track for use as a rails-to-trails facility. This extension will provide trail connectivity through the city and throughout the region.

* Proposed parks (non-profit/County development)

Natural Open Space Areas/Greenways



According to input from the public, the City should acquire and maintain natural open space wherever possible. The acquisition of open space along river and stream corridors can fulfill several public goals: the procurement of natural open space, enhanced public access to Kalispell’s rivers and creeks, and development of trails and pathways.

Recommendations for open space areas/greenways include:

Site	Name	Action
NOS-1	Grandview Drive Park	Add entry sign; add access from Grandview Drive; Develop connection from park to proposed greenway (site # NOS-4); Develop master plan for the site; seek a volunteer group to develop and maintain site.
NOS-2	Heritage Park	Improve connection to Dry Bridge Park, Woodland Park via bike lanes on Woodland Avenue; seek a volunteer group to develop and maintain site
NOS-3	Dry Bridge Park	Develop an internal pathway system; Improve connection to Heritage Park
NOS-4	Stillwater Greenway *	Acquire land along the Stillwater River for open space and pathway.
NOS-5	Whitefish Greenway *	Acquire land along the Whitefish River for open space and pathway.
NOS-6	Ashley Creek Greenway *	Acquire land along Ashley Creek for open space and pathway.

* Proposed parks

Specialized Facilities

Multi-Use Community Center

Interest in a public, multi-use community center was expressed in a variety of forums including the April 4, 2006 community workshop; the 2006 Recreation Survey, and the 2006 Community Center Survey. The Community Center Survey was a specialized telephone survey conducted to assess general interest in multi-purpose community center, as well as specific facilities desired. Facilities in which interest was repeatedly expressed included:

- § A place for cultural programming and performance arts
- § A teen and senior center, providing both “hang out” spaces and age-specific programming
- § Public meeting rooms and reception facilities
- § A publicly accessible, affordable athletic facility

While community support for a flexible facility is clear, funding sources for such a resource are not certain. It is recommended the City examine the feasibility of developing a multi-purpose community center through a focused feasibility study.

Sports Facilities

The need for additional sports fields and facilities was noted in Chapter 4. The following recommendations include suggestions for the development and management of sports facilities:

Development Priorities:

- § Assess existing and proposed sites for the feasibility of developing additional sports fields, particularly adult softball fields and adult soccer fields. Proposed Community Park CP-2 has been noted as a viable location for future fields.
- § Continue to work with partner agencies to help meet demand for indoor and outdoor sports facilities. Maintain inventories and conditions evaluations of shared sports facilities to ensure that maintenance needs are not overlooked.
- § Continue partnering with the school district to ensure access to school gymnasiums, when possible.
- § Consider all-weather field surfaces and outdoor lighting to expand usability and playing seasons in special use facilities and community parks. Consider lighting impacts to nearby residences when developing plans for these facilities.
- § Design sports fields in complexes to facilitate tournament and league play, as well as to improve maintenance and programming efficiencies.

Maintenance and Operations Priorities:

- § Consider a 3-tier maintenance schedule for sport fields with tournament fields receiving the highest level of maintenance and practice fields receiving the lowest level of maintenance.
- § Create a field scheduling committee to maintain the most efficient use of fields. This committee should be headed by City staff, but include representatives of the user groups and school officials.
- § To maintain the fields for quality playing conditions, a rest and rotation schedule should be developed and followed.

7.2 TRAILS, PATHWAYS, AND BIKEWAYS

Planning Concept

An intra-community system of pathways is proposed to provide linkages between parks, community facilities, residential areas, schools, and open space sites, as well as to provide enhanced recreational opportunities for Kalispell residents.

The system is grounded on the provision of east-west linkages to connect existing Highway 93 pathways to the proposed rails-to-trails corridor parallel with Highway 2 at Reserve Drive and through downtown. It also seeks to establish a significant off-road route along the proposed bypass. If greenways can be constructed as proposed and connected to these other facilities, a regional trail system can be created.

While communities typically express a preference for off-street, paved pathways for pedestrian and bicycle use, such trail opportunities are often lost to development before planning and procurement can occur. In addition, the incorporation of bike lanes into roadway widths is less expensive than the development of an entirely off-road trail system. Both of these restrictions exist in Kalispell. Thus, the trail loops and the overall system proposed are a hybrid of on-street and off-road experiences, although much effort has been put into creating trail experiences that will feel safe and enjoyable for all users, whether on- or off-road.

Several of the proposed trails may be developed within linear parks and greenways, where wider corridors can be acquired. This development is recommended to meet stated community needs for open space, greenways, and linear parks.

Some of the proposed trail segments are already owned and maintained by the City. However, most of the system is not in place. The focus of pathway development should be placed on undeveloped areas and the retrofitting of particular trail segments. It also will be necessary to coordinate with Flathead County and the Montana Department of Transportation for those portions of trails that lay outside city limits and the growth boundary area.

Trail Types

The purpose of the Proposed Trail Facilities Plan is to show how recreational experiences can be created through the construction of trail loops and regional connections, and how existing and proposed park and recreation facilities can be connected via a trail system.

Figure 7.2 identifies conceptual routes for pathways and trails, as well as trail types, as physical limitations for much of the system are already in place. Coordination with public and private development projects will be required to achieve this plan.

Paths within Public Street Rights-of-Way

- § The easiest walkways and bikeways to build are those within public street rights-of-way. These paths include three types:
 - § **Sidewalks and on-street bicycle lanes:**
Pedestrian/bicycle ways within public street rights-of-way are typically sidewalks and on-street bicycle lanes.
 - § **Paths within street rights-of-way but separated:**
Paths that are within street rights-of-way but separated have two major concerns: (1) they can be dangerous, as they are not perceived as a sidewalks yet cross many driveways and street intersections; and (2) they result in having to acquire a much wider right-of-way.

Pathways that are along a continuous feature, such as the Highway 93 Pathway, can be safer since there are few intersections. These routes are ideal within linear parks; however, they are unsafe for cyclists because they do not have suitable locations to enter or exit from the street without causing the cyclist to ride against traffic. Additional on-street bicycle lanes are needed when a path abuts a major street to avoid conflicts between walkers and faster cyclists. This results in the need for a very wide right-of-way which can be nearly impossible to acquire in a developed area due to cost and impact. A separated path along a street, such as the proposed Bypass, can be accommodated more easily in undeveloped areas and will need to be coordinated closely with street design engineers.

- § **Accessways:** Accessways are short public paths that serve as connections for non-vehicular travel. They are for access to parks and schools if they do not abut a street, or to provide access between parks.

Paths Not Within Street Rights-of-Way

- § Rights-of-ways for paths that are not within streets are very difficult to acquire unless done at the time of initial land planning and development. Property owners are reluctant to grant or sell easements or land and often object to the public near their property if not on a street. These issues can be reduced if a detailed trail plan is adopted prior to any development. Studies have shown that properties near paths/trails have higher values. Paths should not be crossed frequently by at-grade intersections, so the best locations are along linear features that have few access points or crossings such as creeks, canals, freeways, airports, railroads, etc.

Paths in Greenways

§ Greenways are typically linear open space areas and contain natural habitat or vegetation, and most often, a waterway or wetland. Provision of greenways is less difficult to acquire since they are undevelopable, and property owners may be willing to donate or sell them. Many waterways with as-yet undeveloped parcels still exist in the Kalispell Planning Area. The City should investigate the viability of acquiring such land prior to subdivision by the County.

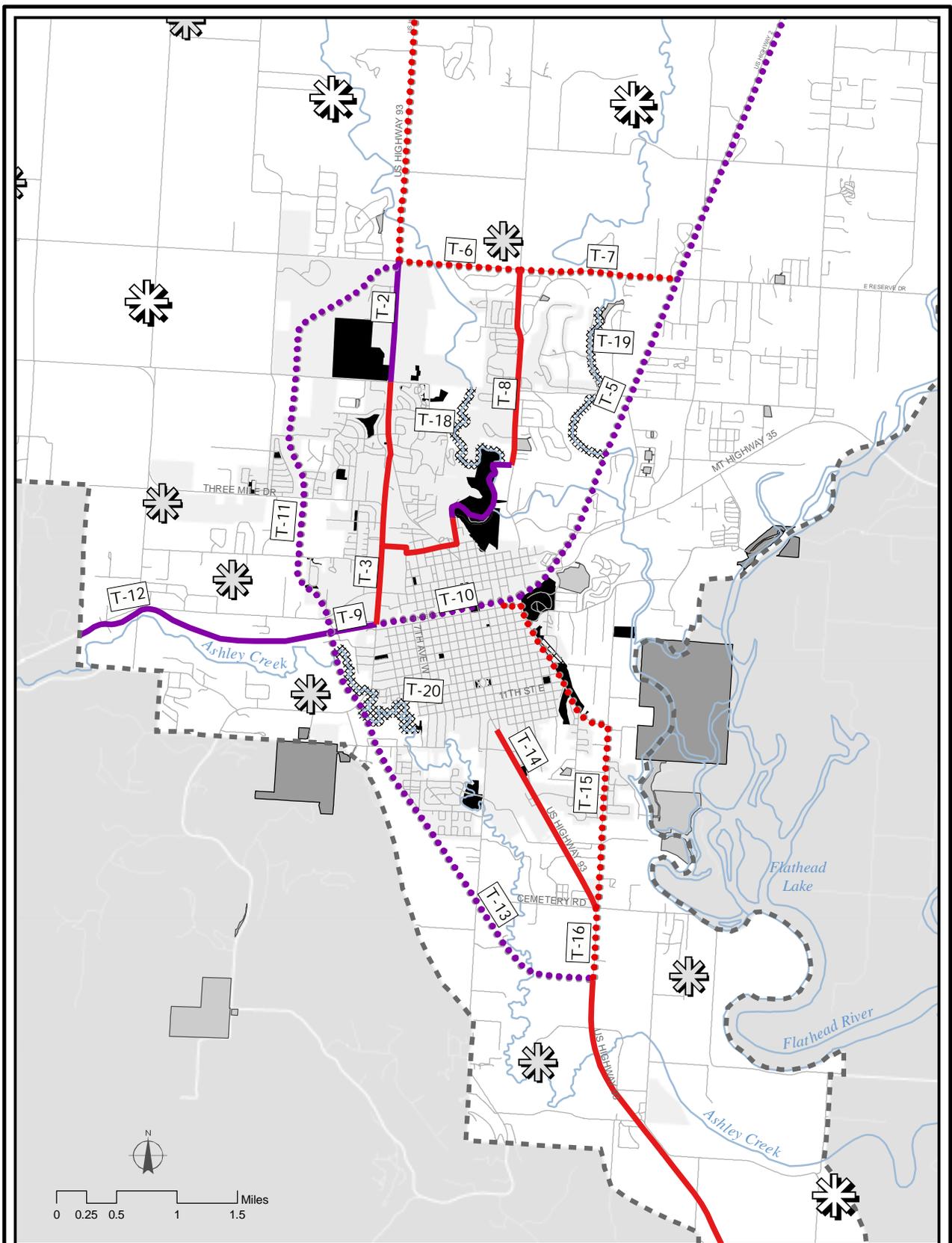
In order to meet community needs for both trails and greenways, it is recommended that the City Council set a policy that seeks to acquire all remaining natural areas that lend themselves to being greenways.

Trails Plan

Table 7.1 lists the proposed trails/pathways that are noted in the Proposed Trail Facilities Plan. Each trail is assessed for its suitability for development as part of a linear park or greenway. Trail types, inferring the type of user experience possible through use of a particular trail segment, are also listed in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1
Proposed Trails
Kalispell Planning Area

#	Segment Length	Surrounding Landscape	Trail Type
T-1	4.0 miles	Heavy Traffic	Bike Lane (Proposed)
T-2	2.4 miles	Off-Road ROW	Paved Path/Bike Lane (Existing)
T-3	0.7 miles	Off-Road ROW	Bike Lane (Existing)
T-4	5.8 miles	Linear Park	Paved Path (Proposed)
T-5	3.0 miles	Linear Park	Paved Path (Proposed)
T-6	1.0 miles	Heavy Traffic	Bike Lane (Proposed)
T-7	1.3 miles	Heavy Traffic	Bike Lane (Proposed)
T-8	3.6 miles	Low Traffic/Park	Bike Lane/ Paved Path (Existing)
T-9	0.4 miles	Linear Park	Paved Path (Existing)
T-10	1.2 miles	Linear Park	Paved Path (Proposed)
T-11	3.6 miles	Off-Road ROW	Paved Path (Proposed)
T-12	2.2 miles	Linear Park	Paved Path (Existing)
T-13	3.8 miles	Off-Road ROW	Paved Path (Proposed)
T-14	1.7 miles	Heavy Traffic	Bike Lane (Existing)
T-15	3.0 miles	Heavy Traffic	Bike Lane (Proposed)
T-16	0.6 miles	Heavy Traffic	Bike Lane (Proposed)
T-17	4.8 miles	Heavy Traffic	Bike Lane (Existing)
T-18	1.3 miles	Greenway	Unpaved Path (Proposed)
T-19	1.6 miles	Greenway	Unpaved Path (Proposed)
T-20	2.0 miles	Greenway	Unpaved Path (Proposed)



Comprehensive Park & Recreation Master Plan



City of Kalispell, Montana

Bike Routes

- Existing On Street Lane
- ⋯ Proposed On Street Lane

Paved Paths

- Existing Off Street Path
- ⋯ Proposed Off Street Path



Proposed Community Park



Proposed Neighborhood Park



State Parks



County Parks



City Parks



Natural Open Space

Figure 7.2: Proposed Trail System



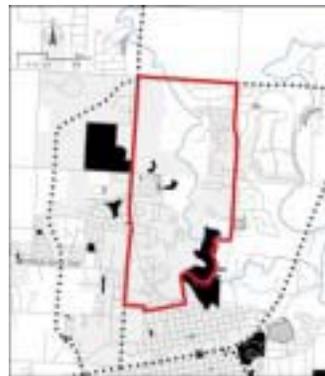
MOORE LADDEN & SUTHERLAND, INC.

November 2006

Table 7.2 explains the trail loops that can be constructed through the development of this trails plan. User experiences are also indicated via table comments and associated diagrams.

Table 7.2
Trail Loop Summaries
 Kalispell Planning Area

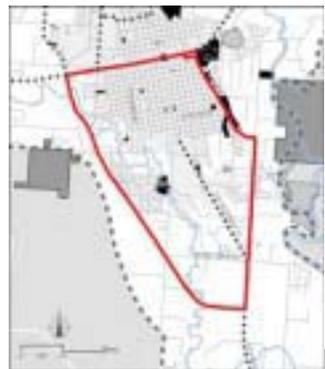
Loop Name	Length	Segments Utilized	User Experience
Loop A	7.0 miles	T6, T8, T2	High-traffic bike lane, low-traffic bike lane, park pathway, off-road path
Loop B	10.5 miles	T6, T7, T5, T10, T9, T11	High-traffic bike lane, linear park, off-road path
Loop C	9.0 miles	T9, T10, T15, T16, T13	Linear park, high-traffic bike lane, off-road path
Loop D	16.3 miles	T6, T7, T5, T15, T16, T13, T11	High-traffic bike lane, linear park, high-traffic bike lane, off-road path



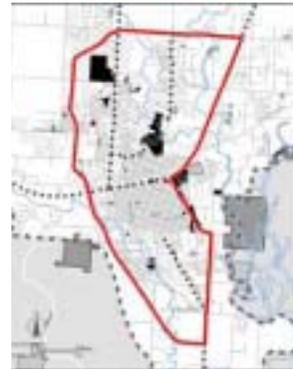
Loop A



Loop B



Loop C



Loop D

Figure 7.2 illustrates the proposed Trails Plan, including existing and conceptual routes for proposed off-road pathways and on-street bicycle lanes. Note that bike lanes not only provide connections where off-street pathways are not possible, but they also support commuter bicycle travel.

Trails, Pathways, and Bikeways Recommendations

Recommendations for trails, pathways, and bikeways include:

- § Provide hiking and bicycle trail maps to facilitate trail use. Post these maps on the Parks & Recreation website, at trailheads, and at public counters.
- § Provide additional trail support facilities, such as trailheads, benches, and signage, where appropriate, to facilitate trail use. Incorporate accessibility and mileage information. Upgrade existing trail support facilities as needed.
- § Join forces with local groups seeking the acquisition of the BNSF/Mission Mountain Railroad alignment along Highway 2, a critical portion of several Kalispell trail loops. Encourage County and non-profit support of these efforts.
- § Partner with Flathead County and the cities of Kila, Whitefish and Columbia Falls in support of a regional trail system.
- § Investigate the viability of acquiring greenway corridors prior to subdivision and development by private entities.
- § Coordinate with Kalispell Public Works, the Flathead County Road & Bridge Department, and the Montana Department of Transportation to ensure that development standards of off-road pathways are high enough to encourage consistent use. Crossings, lighting and wind control can discourage frequent use if not designed properly, for instance.
- § Coordinate with Kalispell Public Works, the Flathead County Road & Bridge Department, and the Montana Department of Transportation to ensure that bike lanes are maintained according to established standards. Debris from winter road maintenance efforts can discourage springtime and summer use if lanes are not maintained properly, for instance.
- § Adopt detailed trails standards and requirements for new developments that wish to be annexed by the City. Plan for key connections and new loops as development spreads outward, particularly north of the city. Inform both County officials and private developers of anticipated design and development standards for trails.



Chapter 8: Financing and Implementing Improvements

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

FINANCING AND IMPLEMENTING IMPROVEMENTS

This chapter provides a financing and implementation strategy for improvements recommended in the Plan. It also provides a six-year capital facilities plan that describes near-term funding for those projects of highest priority. It needs to be emphasized that developing new park and recreation facilities will have an impact on future maintenance costs. It is with this in mind that this chapter also forecasts what these additional costs will be and recommends new funding sources to cover the potential shortfall.

8.1 CAPITAL FINANCING STRATEGY

The total cost to develop the park system as the Plan describes is approximately \$59.5 million, a figure comparable to the projected 15-year build-out costs of many mid-size, growing communities in the Pacific Northwest and the upper Rocky Mountain range. This is more than the City can afford at this time, however. Thus, a financing strategy is presented that balances the financial capacity of the City with the projects of highest priority. This is presented as a six-year capital facilities plan.

Two alternative financing plans are proposed. **Option A** relies upon traditional revenue resources and does not require any additional form of tax assessment. The only new funding source is a park impact fee, imposed on new residential development. This alternative meets only a small portion of the existing park and facility need in Kalispell. Primarily, it provides very limited funds for land acquisition, which is one of Kalispell's greatest needs. While park impact fees could potentially address site acquisition costs, it will take time for sufficient revenue to build. Hence, **Option B** is also proposed which suggests passage of a small general obligation bond to pay for parkland acquisition.

Because Kalispell's needs far outweigh their financial resources, projects were prioritized according to the following criteria:

- § **Existing Park Improvements:** While it is popular to construct new facilities, upgrading Kalispell's existing park system should have a high priority. Deferred maintenance, which has been occurring for some time, will soon result in complete facility replacement. These types of projects include replacement of the aging band shell in Depot Park; sport court resurfacing; and many less-expensive but necessary repairs at neighborhood parks throughout the City.
- § **Land Acquisition:** Due to rapid residential growth and strong growth predictions for the future, acquisition of parkland and open space is very important while land is still available. Needed at the present time is the acquisition of land for at least two neighborhood parks and one community park. Preservation of natural open space along creek corridors is also necessary to maintain an open space environment,

Financing and Implementation:

1. Capital Financing Strategy
2. Capital Funding Options
3. Capital Project Costs
4. Maintenance and Operations Costs
5. Maintenance and Operations Funding
6. Funding Sources for All Improvements
7. Implementation Plan

preserve wildlife habitat and accommodate trail systems.

- § **Park Development:** New park development is of a lesser importance, but will be needed to meet the demand for future facilities.

8.2 CAPITAL FUNDING OPTIONS

Two alternative funding programs are proposed. **Option A** relies upon past funding sources plus revenue from anticipated park impact fees. Because they are not currently in place, an estimate of \$1,200 per household was used. This number will be refined later if and when they are adopted. Option A provides for a limited but balanced park and recreation package including some land acquisition, one new park development, trailhead/signage development and most park rehabilitation expenses. Option A requires \$3,750,000 in revenue over the first six year period.

Option B includes all of the revenue sources from Option A plus a small general obligation bond to pay for land acquisition. The bond would cost tax payers about \$0.40 / \$1,000 assessed value and is based on a 20-year bond with an interest rate of 5.25%.

The revenue sources for both options are detailed in Table 8.1

Table 8.1
Summary of Capital Funding Sources (Six Years) –
Option A and Option B
 Kalispell Park and Recreation Master Plan

Funding Source	Amount
General Fund (\$135,000 annually)	\$810,000
General Grants (\$15,000 annually)	\$90,000
Donations (\$20,000 annually)	\$120,000
Impact Fees (\$150,000 first year; \$516,000 annually thereafter)	\$2,730,000
Total Option A	\$3,750,000
Parks Bond	\$4,000,000
Total Option A and B	\$7,750,000

8.3 CAPITAL PROJECT COSTS

The total cost to develop the park system as the Plan describes is approximately \$59.5 million, as detailed in Appendix C. Because of this large amount, projects were prioritized on a scale of 1 to 3.

Projects identified as Priority 1 should be completed in a 1-6 year time frame. Priority 2 projects should be implemented secondarily, in a 7-12 year time frame. Projects identified as Priority 3 are the lowest priority to fund and should be completed when additional

funding becomes available. Priorities are identified alongside capital expenditures in the spreadsheet provided in Appendix C. Priority 1 projects are summarized in Table 8.2 below and reflect the available financing resources shown in Table 8.1. Note that both Option A and Option B cost items are shown in the table below. The only distinction between the two options is passage of a park bond that would be used for parkland acquisition.

Table 8.2
Project Costs - Options A and B
Kalispell Park and Recreation Master Plan

Park	Site Number	Cost (2006\$)	Expenditure Type			
			ACQUIS.	DEVEL.	REHAB	TRAILS
OPTION A EXPENDITURES						
Mini Parks						
Courthouse Park	MP-5	\$32,000			X	
Neighborhood Parks						
Spring Prairie Tree Park	NP-13	\$40,000		X		
Northridge Park	NP-14	\$18,700		X	X	
Cottonwood Park	NP-16	\$8,500		X	X	
Sunset Park	NP-17	\$60,500		X	X	
Ashley Creek Neighborhood Park (P)	NP-21	\$399,500	X			
Greenbriar Park	NP-22	\$11,000		X	X	
Washington Park	NP-23	\$1,000		X		
Meridian Park	NP-24	\$11,500		X	X	
Willow Glen Park	NP-26	\$2,545,000		X		
Thompson Field	NP-27	\$6,500		X		
Begg Park	NP-28	\$90,300		X	X	
Community Parks						
Lawrence Park	CP-5	\$90,000		X	X	
Large Urban Parks						
Woodland Park	LUP-1	\$120,000			X	
Special Use Areas						
Laker & Archie Roe Park	SUA-4	\$20,000		X		
Trail Amenities						
Pathways and Trailheads	N/A	\$165,000				X
Total Option A Expenditures: \$3,619,500						
OPTION B EXPENDITURES						
Flathead Park (P)	NP-30	\$399,500	X			
Spring Creek Community Park (P)	CP-2	\$1,997,500	X			
Rose Crossing Community Park (P)	CP-4	\$998,750	X			
Ashley Creek Greenway (P)	NOS-6	\$734,750	X			
Additional Option B Expenditures: \$4,130,500						
Total Recommended Priority 1 Expenditures: \$7,750,000						

Table 8.3 summarizes Option A and Option B expenditures by type. Note that Option B expenditures are to be paid only with a parks bond.

Table 8.3
Summary of Probable Cost for Highest Priority Projects by
Project Type – Option A and Option B
 Kalispell Park and Recreation Master Plan

Item	Cost
OPTION A EXPENDITURES	
1) Land Acquisition	\$530,000
2) New Park/Park Feature Development	\$2,757,750
3) Major Park Rehabilitation	\$297,250
4) Trails	\$165,000
OPTION B EXPENDITURES	
1) Land Acquisition	\$4,000,000
TOTAL	\$7,750,000

8.4 PARK MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS COSTS

In 2005, the City’s park maintenance budget was \$538,420, resulting in a maintenance cost per acre of approximately \$1,675 for 321.4 acres of active, developed parkland (not including pool maintenance expenses, which are funded through a separate budget item). Maintenance costs include personal services, equipment, utilities and supplies. They exclude capital expenditures and debt service.

Based on comparisons to other communities and an inspection of conditions within Kalispell’s parks, it is recommended that the maintenance level be increased to \$2,000 per acre. This is a \$325 per acre increase over the current rate. The total new recommended cost for maintenance per year is shown in Table 8.4. Added to this cost should be maintenance of the 10.5 acre Willow Glen Park site, which will be developed in the next six years.

Approximately \$600,000 worth of deferred maintenance repairs exist as well that have not been addressed over the years. This amount will increase unless repairs are made in the very near future. It is recommended that the deferred maintenance costs be phased over the next six years to make them affordable. A park maintenance district, as discussed below, could be formed to provide the funding for deferred maintenance repairs.

Table 8.4
Existing and Proposed Annual Maintenance Costs
 Kalispell Park and Recreation Master Plan

Maintenance Type	Acreage	Cost/Acre per Year	Total Maint. Costs / year
Existing Developed Acres	321.4	\$1,675	\$538,420
Proposed Increase in Costs/Acre	321.4	\$325	\$104,455
New Annual Budget for Maintenance *	331.9	\$2,000	\$663,800

* Includes the 10.5 acres of the proposed Willow Glen Park.

New revenue for the increased cost in maintenance expenses must be generated. As mentioned, an increase in the City's commitment to per acre maintenance expenses is recommended. It also is recommended that a park maintenance district be created that would include all property within the city limits.

A park maintenance district could be used to levee funds for additional maintenance, similar to the existing urban forestry maintenance district. The boundaries of the park maintenance district would be limited to and grow with the Kalispell city limits. The recommended levy for this district is \$0.0027 per square foot of lot area. This would generate an additional \$236,000 in maintenance dollars per year for park maintenance.

This is sufficient to pay for outstanding deferred maintenance repairs over the course of the next six years. In addition, this money could supplement or further enhance the city's general fund revenue for maintenance, ensuring deferred maintenance repairs do not accumulate in the future.

8.5 FUNDING SOURCES FOR ALL IMPROVEMENTS

The following sources are proposed for use in paying for capital expenses and maintenance and operations expenses.

Capital Funding

- 1. General Fund:** This is one of the City's primary sources of capital revenue. Most of this revenue comes from taxes levied on property. During the fiscal year 2005/2006, the City appropriated approximately \$7.9 million from this source. In this same year, the Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department received approximately \$1.5 million of this fund for department expenditures. In 05/06, approximately \$83,500 went toward capital expenses. This amount fluctuates considerably on an annual basis. An annual figure of \$135,000 per year for capital expenses was utilized for the six-year improvement program.

2. General Grants:

2a. Trees: The City of Kalispell already seeks and obtains Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Arbor Day Grants for tree planting through its forestry division. It is recommended that pursuit of these grants continue, as well as pursuit of other grants offered through the Montana DNRC, such as the Urban and Community Forestry and Tree City USA grants. Grants for tree-related expenses could total \$500-\$1500 per year.

2b. Water Conservation: Specialized grants are available that may allow the water quality of Woodland Park Pond to be improved. The FishAmerica Foundation provides grants of up to \$7,500 to conserve and restore local fish habitat. Expenses can include improving the aeration system, silt removal and repair equipment rental, among other things.

The Montana Department of Commerce administers several tourism-related grants to local communities. One of these is the Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP), which has been leveraged several times to make infrastructure improvements at Conrad Mansion. Funds from this program could be sought for pond improvements at Woodland Park as well, given its status as the “jewel” of Kalispell’s park system. Grants are available in a variety of amounts; recent grants for Conrad Mansion have been as high as \$50,000.

2c. Greenbelt/Trail Expenses: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks administers a Recreational Trails Program to encourage the acquisition, construction and maintenance of local trails. \$1.6 million in funding is available over the course of two years. Grants from this source could assist in the acquisition of land for the Ashley Creek Greenbelt or the construction of trailheads, installation of trail signage, or printing of trail maps.

2d. General Expenses: Kalispell has benefited considerably from Land and Water Conservation Funding through Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in the past. While funding has been limited in recent years, applications for general improvements should continue to be submitted.

3. Donations: The donations of labor, land, or cash by service agencies, private groups, or individuals are a popular way to raise small amounts of money for specific projects. Service agencies, such as Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary Clubs, often fund small projects within the community (e.g. playground improvements). Currently, the Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department receives approximately \$20,000 per year in donations. This amount was used as the basis for donations in the six-year capital improvement plan.

4. **Impact Fees** – Impact fees are imposed on new development because of its impact upon City infrastructure. Impact fees are calculated on a per-household basis, and can fund a variety of City infrastructure requirements (parks, emergency services, etc.). Park Impact Fees are proposed to fund park capacity enhancement projects exclusively. As the City does not currently impose impact fees of any type, it is anticipated that legislation in support of this concept will not pass until the latter half of 2007. In addition, the amount to be charged per new household (\$1,200) is substantially lower than the amount charged for parks in similarly-sized communities. If impact fees prove to be a reasonable and appropriate method for gathering capacity enhancement revenue for Kalispell, the fee per household could be reevaluated in future years.
5. **General Obligation Bond:** These are voter-approved bonds with the assessment placed on real property. The money may only be used for capital improvements, such as land acquisition or development. This property tax is levied for a specified period of time (usually 15-20 years). Passage requires a 66% majority approval by voters. Disadvantages of this funding option are the high approval requirement and the high interest costs. However, it has been determined that a general obligation bond is the only method possible to fund the high costs of park land acquisition – a necessity if Kalispell is to maintain its existing level of service as the City grows.

Maintenance Funding

1. **General Fund:** This is one of the City's primary sources of maintenance revenue. Most of this revenue comes from taxes levied on property. During the fiscal year 2005/2006, the City appropriated approximately \$7.9 million from this source. In this same year, the Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department received approximately \$1.5 million of this fund for department expenditures. In 05/06, \$538,420 went toward maintenance. It is suggested that maintenance costs be increased to \$2,000 per acre, which would result in an annual maintenance budget of about \$663,800.
2. **Park Maintenance District:** Montana law allows for the passage of a Park Maintenance District by City Council without voter approval. Such a district could be used to levee funds for additional maintenance, similar to the existing Urban Forestry Maintenance District. The recommended levy for this proposed district is \$0.0027 per square foot of lot area. This would generate an additional \$236,000 dollars per year for the City of Kalispell for park maintenance. The boundaries of this maintenance district would be limited to and grow with the Kalispell city limits.

Other Potential Funding Sources

The funding sources identified below are potential resources for the City of Kalispell. These resources could be utilized to fulfill goals above and beyond Priority 1 expenditures, or be used to substitute funding recommendations for Priority 1 expenditures.

- 1. Surplus Property Sales:** Several existing park sites have limited recreational value and should be considered for surplus property sale. Eagle Park and Helen O'Neil Park are both too small to provide a substantial recreational experience for park users, but draw upon maintenance dollars. Sale of these parks to adjacent businesses and/or homeowners is recommended; if surplus sales are not possible, it is recommended that local improvement districts be formed to pay for their maintenance.
- 2. Reassessment of Current Park Land Leases:** The City-owned Buffalo Hill Golf Course is leased to a private organization for the sum of \$15,000 per year. The 27-hole course has a clubhouse that can host a variety of events; the course sees approximately 40,000 rounds of golf per year. The current lease terminates in 2008. It is recommended the City reassess the value of the course and study the course's rate of return. If additional revenue could be generated without deterring current or future play or associated tourism revenue, the City could renegotiate the terms of the lease.

8.6 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Because minimal funding is available to implement the Plan, a creative approach will be needed to build public support for a park development program, and to leverage the funds now available. The 2006 Recreation Survey revealed a strong desire for a quality park system but less support to pay for one. Phased over the course of six years and implemented strategically, however, the city's goals are achievable.

The underlying principal of the implementation strategy discussed below is to ***build community buy-in to a future development and funding program by carrying out and encouraging visible park improvements today.*** Central to this concept is the involvement of local neighborhoods in minor park improvements, investing general fund dollars and monies generated from a Park Maintenance District to pay for park rehabilitation. A portion of the improvements would occur by local neighborhood volunteer efforts and paid by the administration of a neighborhood park grant program administered by the City.

Phase One

Strategic Goal: Encourage neighborhood investment in local park facilities through the administration of a grant program for local park improvements. Invest general fund money into the upgrade of facilities frequented by heavy park users.

Suggested Steps:

- § Use general fund revenue to establish a Neighborhood Park Grants Program, distributed to local groups for park enhancement using criteria established by Kalispell Parks & Recreation. Advertise this program heavily to the public.
- § Invest remaining general fund dollars into park upgrades that will be noticed by heavy park users, such as increased parking at Lawrence Park.
- § Request that City Council establish a Park Maintenance District at a levy rate of \$0.0027 / square foot of lot area.
- § Apply for grants to pay for tree planting at neighborhood parks, water quality improvement at Woodland Park, and trails acquisition and signage expenses.
- § Institute Park Impact Fees to pay for new park development.

Phase Two

Strategic Goal: Tap into community-wide sentiment for parks by carrying out high-profile improvement projects in downtown and in local neighborhoods. Utilize park maintenance district, grant, and donation money, as well as general fund revenue, to finance improvements.

Suggested Steps:

- § Reconstruct the band shell at Depot Park using maintenance district revenue and donations.
- § Utilize parks maintenance district revenue to repair significant neighborhood assets, such as the tennis and basketball courts at Hawthorne Park and Thompson Field.
- § Utilize grant and matching general fund monies to pay for water quality and bank stabilization at Woodland Park Pond. Supplement these efforts with maintenance district revenue, as is possible.
- § Save impact fee revenue to develop a high-profile new park in the latter half of the six-year capital improvement program.

Phase Three

Strategic Goal: Building on public support and appreciation for parks improvements, invite residents to participate in the new park development process. Lead an extensive public involvement program to gain input on the future of the Willow Glen Park site.

Suggested Steps:

- § Host design charettes for the development of Willow Glen, Kalispell's most easily developed new park site. Make new park design a community-wide event.
- § Use park impact fee revenue to develop the park.

Phase Four

Strategic Goal: Building upon increased community involvement and interest in parks, request passage of a general obligation bond for the acquisition of park land.

Suggested Steps:

- § Ensure that residents have a clear understanding of the need for new park land before requesting financial support. Host workshops and design charettes to gather input and provide information to both long-term and new residents.
- § If significant time has lapsed since adoption of this Plan and the request for passage of a bond, reevaluate the costs of land acquisition using updated per acre expenses.



Appendix A: Park System Resources

PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

Begg Park

Location: South Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 6.24 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Partially Developed

Neighborhood Character: 20-year residential and light industrial

Park Setting: Open space with few trees; Creek corridor with vegetation on west edge of park

Level of Use: Low

Existing Facilities: Play structure (1); Off-street parking (50 spaces)

Deficiencies: No ADA accessibility - no pathways to play area or through open space

Comments: Parking serves Laker & Archie Roe Park across the street; Creek separates park from residential - no visible pedestrian pathways connecting the two; Limited active and passive use amenities on site; Lack of trees limits shade availability



Buffalo Head Park

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Mini Park

Size: 1.15 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Partially Developed

Neighborhood Character: 20-year residential

Park Setting: Open space

Level of Use: Low

Existing Facilities: None

Deficiencies: None

Comments: Park is meandering, open green space running streetside through neighborhood; Culvert provides access to Grandview Drive Park

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Central School Park/Museum

Location: Downtown Kalispell

Classification: Mini Park

Size: 0.42 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Downtown setting and historic residential

Park Setting: Historic school (now a museum) at north edge of site; small grassy parcel at south edge of site

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Historic school; seating/picnic amenities

Deficiencies: None

Comments:



Cottonwood Park

Location: West Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 1.69 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Under development

Neighborhood Character: New residential

Park Setting: TBD

Level of Use: TBD

Existing Facilities: TBD

Deficiencies: N/A

Comments: Elongated park situated in a gulley with large, attractive willow tree at center; Includes land originally designated to be developed as “Blue Heron Park” - the final developed park will span an active neighborhood street

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Courthouse Park

Location: Downtown Kalispell

Classification: Mini Park

Size: 1.66 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Historic residential, governmental and commercial

Park Setting: Open space with mature trees

Level of Use: Low

Existing Facilities: Bench (1)

Deficiencies: None

Comments: Park is well-situated for passive uses, but lacks pathways and amenities for passive use

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Depot Park

Location: Downtown Kalispell

Classification: Special Use Area

Size: 3.66 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Downtown commercial

Park Setting: Turf with mature foliage, sculpture, structures and pathways

Level of Use: High for events, low at other times

Existing Facilities: Gazebo (1), benches, sculpture, Veterans' Memorial

Deficiencies: Poor ADA access to existing gazebo (see below)

Comments: Public gathering area very popular in summer; Gazebo will soon be remodeled into a public bandshell



Dry Bridge Park

Location: Southeast Kalispell

Classification: Natural Open Space

Size: 26.92 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: 30-year residential and watershed/natural open space

Park Setting: Long, elongated park in a gully with steep to moderately sloping hillsides; pond at edge

Level of Use: Moderate

Existing Facilities: Pathways to pond; Hills cleared and mowed for sledding

Deficiencies: No irrigation; more trees needed for shade

Comments: Considerable open space with patches of trees near pond; Steep, treeless sledding hills are highly used in winter; Adjacent to sizeable watershed/open space corridor that has the potential for trail and connections to Heritage Park and Woodland Park to the north; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks stocks pond with fish in summer and fall - park is popular with kids as a fishing pond



Eagle Park

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Mini Park

Size: 0.25 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Highway 93 on one side; 30-year residential on other

Park Setting: Turf with mature trees; Highway 93 pathway runs adjacent to site; Entrance sign

Level of Use: None

Existing Facilities: Picnic bench (1)

Deficiencies: No parking – pedestrian access only

Comments: Serves as city entrance feature/beautification area; Adjacent to Highway 93 pathway - potential for use as trailhead; Potential as surplus property funding source

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Empire Estates Park

Location: Northwest Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 1.75 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: New residential

Park Setting: Open space with few trees, structures (see below)

Level of Use: Low

Existing Facilities: New play structure (1); New basketball court (1)

Deficiencies: No ADA accessibility - no pathways to play areas or through open space

Comments: Automatic irrigation; Limited active and passive use amenities on site; Trees planted at park in April 2006



Gallagher Park

Location: Central Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 0.98 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Historic residential; Adjacent to Elrod Elementary

Park Setting: Mature trees; Grassy with playground space

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Play structures (1)

Deficiencies: No ADA access to play areas

Comments: After school programs are run at Elrod Elementary; Children's play structure is heavily used and slightly old

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Grandview Drive Park

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Natural Open Space

Size: 4.56 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: 20-year residential; Golf Course; Open space

Park Setting: Natural open space with pathways

Level of Use: Moderate

Existing Facilities: Pathways

Deficiencies: No ADA access to park

Comments: Access by going down culvert at Buffalo Head Park; Kid's stocked fishing pond

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Greenbriar Park

Location: West Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 2.17 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Partially Developed

Neighborhood Character: New residential

Park Setting: Open space with play structure; Creek corridor to east/north edge of park

Level of Use: None

Existing Facilities: New play structure (1)

Deficiencies: No ADA accessibility - no pathways to play areas or through open space

Comments: Limited active and passive use amenities on site; 21 tree seedlings planted in April 2006 for future windbreak and shade; Creek corridor warrants further exploration for potential uses

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Hawthorne Park

Location: Northwest Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 2.34 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: 30-year residential

Park Setting: Multi-use park with active and passive spaces; some trees

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: New play structure (1), Basketball court (1), Tennis courts (2); Community gardens

Deficiencies: No ADA accessibility - no pathways to play areas or through open space. Tennis and basketball courts need new overlay, possible reconstruction.

Comments: City provides irrigation for community gardens



Helen O'Neil Park

Location: East Kalispell

Classification: Mini Park

Size: 0.10 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Minimally Developed

Neighborhood Character: 40-year residential

Park Setting: Small grassy island in a turn-around area

Level of Use: Low

Existing Facilities: None – sign demarcates park

Deficiencies: None

Comments: Used by surrounding homes as community open space/work space

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Heritage Park

Location: East Kalispell

Classification: Natural Open Space

Size: 3.47 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Historic residential and watershed/open space corridor

Park Setting: Open space that is level at western edge of park; Heavily wooded land on slope; Open space that is level at bottom of slope at eastern edge of park

Level of Use: Moderate

Existing Facilities: Restrooms (1)

Deficiencies: Deteriorating, semi-abandoned historic structures at lower, east end of park

Comments: Trail potential to connect Woodland Park to the north and the watershed/ open space corridor and Dry Bridge Park to the south; Trail potential between upper and lower portions of the park



Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex (KYAC)

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Special Use Area

Size: 121.05 acres

Ownership: State of Montana (leased to City of Kalispell)

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: New residential, developing big-box commercial, open space

Park Setting: Athletic fields with Spring Prairie Tree Park nestled in center; Highway 93 trail runs adjacent to site at eastern edge of facility; Additional trail pocket park slated for fiscal year 2006

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Youth baseball/softball fields (12); youth soccer fields (7, with one serving as an ADA accessible field); youth football fields (4); cross country running track; parking (400+ spaces); concessions; pathways

Deficiencies: No field lighting

Comments: Spring Prairie Tree Park is nestled in the center of KYAC, and is categorized as a Neighborhood Park. To the west and north are 502 acres of open space owned by the State of Montana that are marked for development. The Highway 93 Trail runs north-south at the eastern edge of the facility. Flathead Community College is located across Highway 93 to the east.

KYAC is irrigated, and all maintenance is done by a five-man crew stationed at the facility all summer.



Laker & Archie Roe Park

Location: South Kalispell

Classification: Special Use Area

Size: 10.5 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: 20-year residential and light industrial

Park Setting: Athletic fields

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Senior baseball fields (2); concessions; restroom

Deficiencies: One outfield needs upgrading around backstop

Comments: Stadium-like setting for one field; One field with lighting and one without; Parking provided across street at Begg Park



Lawrence Park**Location:** Central Kalispell**Classification:** Community Park**Size:** 79.9 acres of active space; 37.61 acres of natural open space**Ownership:** City of Kalispell**Status:** Developed**Neighborhood Character:** Buffalo Hill Golf Course; open space; scattered, 20-year residential**Park Setting:** Large, steep hill creates a natural boundary for the park at its northern edge; Wooded natural area with creek fills in northern and eastern portions of the park; several open space parcels with structures scattered within wooded area; fields at western edge of park, near the entrance road**Level of Use:** High**Existing Facilities:** Wooden play structure (1); Modular play structure (1); Soccer and disk golf fields (2); Shelters (1 large, 2 small); Parking (75 spaces); Trailhead; Bridge crossing Stillwater River to connect to trail**Deficiencies:** No trailhead signage; No lighting along pathway (day use only)**Comments:** “Friends” group exists for park; Volunteers recently repaired the wooden play structure; Water treatment plant on site at far northern edge of property – in late 1800’s, water utility developed the site to tap artesian springs, and operated the treatment plant through the 1990’s; Former gravel pit at far northern end of site

Lions Park

Location: South Kalispell

Classification: Special Use Area

Size: 2.21 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Commercial

Park Setting: Triangular lot with small play structure and log buildings

Level of Use: Low

Existing Facilities: New play structure (1); Gazebos (2); Restroom (1); Small visitors' center (used as storage for Friends of Library)

Deficiencies: Limited ADA accessibility - pathways exists through open space, but not to play area

Comments: Park is surrounded by heavily-trafficked roads; Limited residential surrounding park; Park also serves as a southern city entrance feature on Highway 93, with notable signage



Meridian Park

Location: Central Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 2.63 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Historic residential; Adjacent to Peterson School

Park Setting: Large, open lot with sizeable play structures and fencing around site

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Play structures (4 – one large, new structure and 3 older structures)

Deficiencies: None

Comments: Sport courts exist on Peterson School site; No parking

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Northridge Park

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 9.56 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: New residential, 10-year residential

Park Setting: Considerable open space surrounded by residential; street parking and amenities are situated at southern edge of park and are accessible by the public

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Tennis courts (2); Basketball court (1), Play structures (one older structure comprised of three pieces, one newer structure); Parking (12 spaces, off-street); Picnic facility

Deficiencies: No ADA accessibility - no pathways to play areas or through open space; Large cracks in tennis courts; No restrooms

Comments: Serves as a large “back yard” for residential housing surrounding park

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Park View Terrace Park

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Mini Park

Size: 0.32 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: 30-year residential

Park Setting: Pocket park/tot lot within a residential neighborhood

Level of Use: Low

Existing Facilities: Older Swings (2); Benches (2); Tables (2); New play structure (1)

Deficiencies: No ADA accessibility - no pathways to play areas or through open space; three sides are unfenced and face the street

Comments: None



Spring Prairie Tree Park

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 2.05 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: New residential, developing big-box commercial, open space

Park Setting: Historic, neighborhood park situated in the middle of Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex

Level of Use: Moderate

Existing Facilities: New play structure (1); Benches (2)

Deficiencies: No ADA accessibility - no pathways to play areas or through open space; No lights

Comments: Historic park, with historic tree on-site



Sunset Park

Location: Northwest Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 4.27 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Partially Developed

Neighborhood Character: New residential

Park Setting: Open space with few structures, trees

Level of Use: Moderate

Existing Facilities: New play structure (1)

Deficiencies: Only partially developed

Comments: Storm drainage ditch located at northern half of park



Tennis Court Complex

Location: North Kalispell

Classification: Special Use Area

Size: 3.38 acres

Ownership: Flathead Community College, City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Flathead Valley Community College; 20-year residential, developing big-box commercial, open space

Park Setting: Sport Courts

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Tennis Courts (8)

Deficiencies: None

Comments: Tennis courts are operated as part of an interlocal agreement



Thompson Field

Location: Central Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 2.20 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: 50-year residential

Park Setting: Open space for fields

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Play Structure (1); Tennis Courts (2, see below); Basketball Court (1); Baseball Field with covered dugout (1)

Deficiencies: Tennis courts and basketball courts are badly cracked and unusable; baseball field has short outfield and no outfield fencing

Comments: None

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Washington Park

Location: Central Kalispell

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 1.11 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: 50-year residential

Park Setting: Open space with play structures, mature trees

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Play structure (1); open field

Deficiencies:

Comments: Basketball court proposed for park



Western Park

Location: West Kalispell

Classification: Undeveloped

Size: 1.80 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Undeveloped

Neighborhood Character: 20-year residential

Park Setting: Moderately wooded

Level of Use: TBD

Existing Facilities: TBD

Deficiencies: TBD

Comments: Park entrance is obscure due to undeveloped status – enter along Western Drive

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Willow Glen Site

Location: East Kalispell

Classification: Undeveloped

Size: 10.47 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Undeveloped

Neighborhood Character: Scattered residential development

Park Setting:

Level of Use: TBD

Existing Facilities: TBD

Deficiencies: TBD

Comments: Park touches upon major arterial – Willow Glen Drive

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

Woodland Park

Location: East Kalispell

Classification: Large Urban Park

Size: 42.81 acres

Ownership: City of Kalispell

Status: Developed

Neighborhood Character: Historic residential

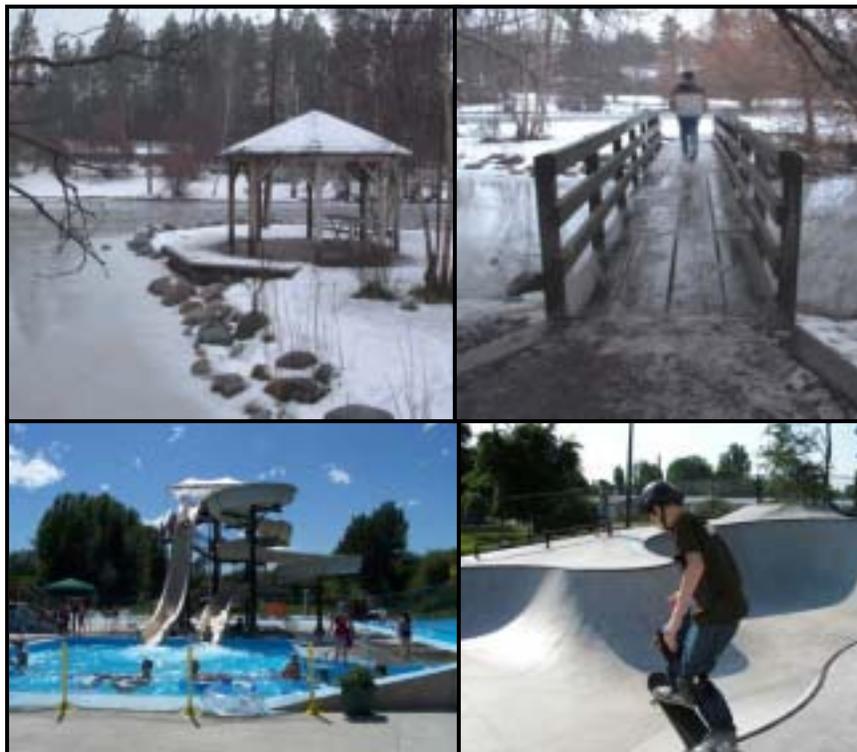
Park Setting: Historic, landscaped park

Level of Use: High

Existing Facilities: Aquatic Park with slides, lazy river; Skatepark; Small wading pool; Formal gardens (2); Older bathhouse converted to a day camp center; Pond; Warming Hut; Open Space/Sledding Hills; Pathways; Large Shelters (2); Small Shelters (4); Play Structures (2); Restrooms (2); Well House; Lighting throughout Park

Deficiencies: Well house in poor condition, needs restoration; water quality deficiencies; restroom

Comments: None



APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

RECREATION SURVEY

A survey of public attitudes, recreation interests, and recreation participation characteristics was conducted in the City of Kalispell during February, March and April of 2006. Using census tract data to obtain current addresses, surveys were randomly mailed to 1,600 households within the city limits by Northwest Survey and Data Services, a subconsultant to MIG.

The survey was designed to achieve statistical reliability for a broad spectrum of the population, including youth, adults, and seniors. Each household surveyed received two surveys in their mailing: one for adults and one for youth. Recipients were asked to complete surveys individually, effectively limiting participation to one adult and one youth per household.

A postage-paid envelope was included with each survey mailing to facilitate and encourage return. Several weeks after the initial mailing, a follow-up of 1083 surveys was sent to households for which no response had been received. A third mailing of 150 surveys was sent to non-respondents near the end of the survey period. At the close of the survey on May 2, 2006, a total of 402 surveys had been returned. Of the original mailing, 305 had bad addresses, 10 surveys were refused, and 10 people were reported as deceased.

Of the 402 surveys returned, 363 were adult surveys and 39 were youth. The 363 responses for adults achieved a margin of error of 5.1% at the 95% confidence level. A summary of the survey process is illustrated below:

Survey Results Summary, Kalispell Planning Area

Survey Summary	Number
Households Surveyed (Total Initial Mailing)	1,600
Adult Surveys Successfully Distributed	1285
Adult Surveys Returned	363
Return Ratio	28.2%

Calculating Results

When interpreting survey results, response tallies are frequently divided into the total number of responses given by all participants for a particular question (termed “N”). At times, “N” is greater than the actual number of survey respondents (363), indicating that respondents could select more than one answer for that question. At times, “N” is less than 363, indicating not everyone responded to a question.

To gain an understanding of how many participants answered a given question when multiple answers were allowed, one should look at the total number of responses – for questions in which respondents were directed to provide two responses, “N” should be less than or equal to 726. For questions with three responses allowed, “N” should be less than or equal to 1089, and so forth. For questions in which an infinite number of responses is allowed, “N” can be as high as N x the number of responses possible.

In general, respondents to this survey answered the majority of questions, and selected the appropriate number of answers for given questions. This response pattern is very good for respondents to this type of survey.

For some questions, calculating percentages is most meaningful when done by individual response groups (those 65 years and older, for instance), rather than by the entire survey sample. Questions analyzed in this manner are denoted in the text.

Demographic Results

1. What is your age? / Is this an adult or youth survey?

This question is used primarily as a means to cross-tabulate responses to other questions by age category or age group.

Table 3.1
Age Distribution
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent							
		10-14	15-18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	402	23	16	4	27	36	85	93	118
Adult	363 90.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 1.0%	27 6.7%	36 8.9%	85 21.0%	93 23.0%	118 29.1%
Youth	39 9.7%	23 5.7%	16 4.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%

Observations:

- § Over 70% respondents to this survey are age 45 or older. This high percentage of middle-age and senior participants skews “overall” interpretation results (but not results by age group), as many more of these individuals offered their input.
- § Responses for those age 18-24 are notably low (1.0%), a fact that should also be considered when interpreting results for this age group. Not only is this group underrepresented in “overall” interpretations, but interpretations specific to this age group may lack validity due to the small sample size.

2. Male or Female?

Table 3.2
Gender Distribution
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent							
		10-14	15-18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	390	23	16	4	27	36	84	90	110
Male	197 50.5%	15 65.2%	5 31.3%	1 25.0%	7 25.9%	16 44.4%	43 51.2%	48 53.3%	62 56.4%
Fem.	193 49.5%	8 34.8%	11 68.8%	3 75.0%	20 74.1%	20 55.6%	41 48.8%	42 46.7%	48 43.6%

Observations:

- § Response rates from men and women were almost equal for this survey. Compared to the 2000 U.S. Census, this sample achieved a slightly higher response rate for male respondents (50.5%) than is present in the overall population (46.7%).

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

3. How long have you resided in Kalispell?

Table 3.3
Years-in-Residence Distribution
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent							
		10-14	15-18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	362	1	0	4	26	36	85	93	117
3 years or less	37 10.2%	1 100.0%	0 0.0%	1 25.0%	7 26.9%	5 13.9%	8 9.4%	5 5.4%	10 8.5%
4-6 years	29 8.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 25.0%	9 34.6%	4 11.1%	4 4.7%	4 4.3%	7 6.0%
7-10 years	34 9.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 11.5%	4 11.1%	13 15.3%	8 8.6%	6 5.1%
11-19 years	45 12.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 25.0%	3 11.5%	7 19.4%	13 15.3%	11 11.8%	10 8.5%
20+ years	217 59.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 25.0%	4 15.4%	16 44.4%	47 55.3%	65 69.9%	84 71.8%

Observations:

- § The majority of respondents (59.9%) have lived in the City for 20+ years – a very high percentage.
- § A significant number of respondents (18.2%) have lived in the City six years or less. As the City's estimated annual growth rate is approximately 3%, this survey represents the percentage of those residents who have resided in the City six years or less very well.
- § Older respondents tend to have lived in the City the longest; respondents age 18-34 are more recent residents of Kalispell.

General Opinions on Parks, Recreation and Open Space

4. Which of the following benefits of parks, recreation services, and open space are most important to you? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.4
Perceived Benefits of Parks, Recreation and Open Space
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	629	8	48	62	154	161	196
Promote youth development	110 17.5%	3 37.5%	12 25.0%	16 25.8%	18 11.7%	30 18.6%	31 15.8%
Improve health and wellness	106 16.9%	1 12.5%	12 25.0%	12 19.4%	29 18.8%	21 13.0%	31 15.8%
Enjoy/protect the natural environment	140 22.3%	0 0.0%	8 16.7%	8 12.9%	42 27.3%	36 22.4%	46 23.5%
Provide opport. for lifelong learning	22 3.5%	1 12.5%	2 4.2%	1 1.6%	6 3.9%	5 3.1%	7 3.6%
Provide cultural opportunities	16 2.5%	1 12.5%	1 2.1%	2 3.2%	6 3.9%	3 1.9%	3 1.5%
Help seniors/ disabled remain active	77 12.2%	1 12.5%	0 0.0%	2 3.2%	13 8.4%	17 10.6%	44 22.4%
Connect people, build strong families/ neighborhoods	98 15.6%	1 12.5%	8 16.7%	14 22.6%	24 15.6%	33 20.5%	18 9.2%
Enhance comm. Image/ sense of place	60 9.5%	0 0.0%	5 10.4%	7 11.3%	16 10.4%	16 9.9%	16 8.2%

Observations:

- § Enjoying/protecting the natural environment is the most important benefit of parks, recreation services and open space according to all respondents. This is particularly true for those 45 and older.
- § Promoting youth development is the next greatest benefit of parks, recreation services and open space according to all respondents. This is particularly true for those 18-44.
- § Improving health and wellness, and connecting people/ building strong families and neighborhoods are the third and fourth greatest benefits of park and recreation services according to all respondents.
- § A significant percentage of respondents age 65 years of age and older (22.4%) feel that helping senior and disabled people remain active is an important benefit of parks, recreation services and open space.

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

5. How important are parks, recreation services, and open space to Kalispell's quality of life? *Please check the box that best reflects your opinion.*

Table 3.5
Perceived Importance of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	322	4	23	34	77	85	97
Not important	6 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 5.2%	0 0.0%	2 2.1%
Not important - Important	6 1.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	2 2.6%	0 0.0%	3 3.1%
Important	41 12.7%	1 25.0%	1 4.3%	3 8.8%	6 7.8%	6 7.1%	24 24.7%
Important - Very important	39 12.1%	0 0.0%	5 21.7%	5 14.7%	8 10.4%	13 15.3%	8 8.2%
Very important	223 69.3%	3 75.0%	16 69.6%	24 70.6%	55 71.4%	65 76.5%	58 59.8%
No opinion	7 2.2%	0 0.0%	1 4.3%	1 2.9%	2 2.6%	1 1.2%	2 2.1%

Observations:

- § 94.1% of respondents feel that parks, recreation and open space are important to Kalispell's quality of life.
- § 69.3% of respondents indicated that parks are "very important" to Kalispell's quality of life.

Use of Local Park Land and Facilities

6. How often in the last 12 months have you used the following parks and community facilities in Kalispell?
Please check 1 column for each park or facility.

Table 3.6
Frequency of Park Facility Use
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Base	4436	56	371	534	1090	1211	1144
Neigh. Park (e.g. Washington Park, Thompson Field)	12.6%	12.5%	13.5%	11.6%	13.1%	12.2%	12.3%
Comm. Park (e.g. Depot, Woodland, Lawrence Park)	21.0%	21.4%	19.4%	17.2%	21.5%	21.0%	22.8%
Woodland Water Park	12.2%	8.9%	12.1%	14.4%	11.0%	12.1%	12.8%
Kalispell Youth Sports Complex	10.7%	14.3%	10.5%	12.5%	10.0%	11.0%	10.3%
Trails	15.8%	14.3%	16.7%	14.8%	15.0%	17.3%	15.2%
School Grounds	11.4%	16.1%	11.6%	13.7%	12.5%	10.6%	10.1%
Private Rec. Facility (KAC, The Summit)	16.2%	12.5%	16.2%	15.7%	17.0%	15.8%	16.5%

Observations:

- § A significant number of respondents from all age groups use parks such as Depot, Woodland and Lawrence more frequently than other park facilities in Kalispell.
- § Private recreation facilities, such as the Kalispell Athletic Club and The Summit, experience the next highest level of use for all respondents when evaluated together. Use percentages for private facilities are relatively equivalent across all age groups, with those 18-24 using private facilities slightly less than others.
- § Trails are the third most-used type of park land or facility in Kalispell. Again, the use of trails is relatively equivalent across all age groups.

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

7. If you seldom use or do not use the parks in Kalispell, what are your reasons? *Check the top 2 choices.*

Table 3.7
Reasons for Infrequent Park Use
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	245	4	26	23	58	53	80
Not interested/no time	79 32.2%	1 25.0%	5 19.2%	8 34.8%	21 36.2%	23 43.4%	21 26.3%
Feel unsafe	14 5.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 6.9%	1 1.9%	9 11.3%
Lack of facilities	26 10.6%	1 25.0%	5 19.2%	6 26.1%	4 6.9%	7 13.2%	3 3.8%
Poorly maintained	14 5.7%	0 0.0%	1 3.8%	1 4.3%	3 5.2%	3 5.7%	6 7.5%
Too far away; not conveniently located	30 12.2%	1 25.0%	5 19.2%	3 13.0%	6 10.3%	3 5.7%	12 15.0%
Do not have transportation	9 3.7%	0 0.0%	1 3.8%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 3.8%	6 7.5%
Do not know where they are	14 5.7%	0 0.0%	2 7.7%	1 4.3%	5 8.6%	2 3.8%	4 5.0%
Do not know what is available	35 14.3%	0 0.0%	6 23.1%	2 8.7%	9 15.5%	7 13.2%	11 13.8%
Too crowded	24 9.8%	1 25.0%	1 3.8%	2 8.7%	6 10.3%	5 9.4%	8 10.0%

Observations:

- § The vast majority of respondents indicated that they seldom use or do not use parks in Kalispell because they are not interested or do not have time. This is more true for those 35-64 in age, and less true for those 18-34.
- § Those 18-44 also indicate that a lack of facilities is why they do not use parks in Kalispell.
- § Outliers include those 18-34 and those 65 years and older indicating that Kalispell's parks are too far away or not conveniently located, and a number of respondents age 25-34 indicating they do not know what is available in Kalispell's park system.

Park and Recreation Priorities, Maintenance & Improvements

8. In which area should the city focus its park and recreation efforts? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.8
 Facility Priorities
 City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	569	8	42	59	142	152	162
Acquire land for future parks	74 13.0%	1 12.5%	4 9.5%	6 10.2%	24 16.9%	27 17.8%	12 7.4%
Develop new parks	47 8.3%	0 0.0%	4 9.5%	6 10.2%	18 12.7%	9 5.9%	10 6.2%
Upgrade existing parks	130 22.8%	2 25.0%	10 23.8%	16 27.1%	24 16.9%	30 19.7%	46 28.4%
Maintain existing parks / facilities	183 32.2%	1 12.5%	8 19.0%	10 16.9%	48 33.8%	55 36.2%	59 36.4%
Provide recreation programs/activities	61 10.7%	1 12.5%	7 16.7%	6 10.2%	12 8.5%	20 13.2%	15 9.3%
Build new major facilities (e.g. comm. center, indoor aquatic center, ice arena)	74 13.0%	3 37.5%	9 21.4%	15 25.4%	16 11.3%	11 7.2%	20 12.3%

Observations:

- § Maintaining existing parks and facilities is a clear priority of 32.2% of survey respondents.
- § Upgrading existing parks is a clear second priority of 22.8% of survey respondents.
- § A large percentage of those 18-44 feel that upgrading parks is more of a priority than maintaining existing parks. This trend is reversed for those 45 and older.
- § Notable percentages of those 18-44 also feel that building new major facilities is a priority. This statistic correlates with the percentage of those age 18-44 in Table 3.8 who indicated that they do not use parks because of a lack of facilities.

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9. How would you rate the level of park and facility maintenance in Kalispell? *Please check the box that best reflects your opinion.*

Table 3.9
Opinion: Park Maintenance
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	357	4	27	36	84	88	115
Poor	6 1.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 2.4%	2 2.3%	2 1.7%
Poor - Adequate	32 9.0%	0 0.0%	4 14.8%	3 8.3%	8 9.5%	5 5.7%	12 10.4%
Adequate	134 37.5%	3 75.0%	10 37.0%	22 61.1%	34 40.5%	32 36.4%	31 27.0%
Adequate - Excellent	122 34.2%	1 25.0%	10 37.0%	9 25.0%	27 32.1%	35 39.8%	39 33.9%
Excellent	37 10.4%	0 0.0%	3 11.1%	1 2.8%	8 9.5%	10 11.4%	15 13.0%
Don't Know	26 7.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 2.8%	5 6.0%	4 4.5%	16 13.9%

Observations:

- § A significant percentage of respondents rate Kalispell's park maintenance as "adequate" (37.5%) or "adequate to excellent" (34.2%).

10. What specific improvements are needed in Kalispell's parks?

This response was offered as a write-in box only – no chart data is available. Responses are offered by park.

Top responses for all parks:

- § Cleanliness/maintenance
- § Bathrooms
- § Walking/biking trails
- § Dog doo and leashing laws
- § Basketball hoops

Top responses for Woodland Park:

- § Clean up bird dung/pond algae
- § Cleaner restrooms
- § More/improved trails
- § Enhance security
- § Additional Landscape maintenance desired

Top responses for Lawrence Park:

- § More parking
- § Picnic Tables
- § Enhance Security
- § Clear Walks
- § Better children's equipment
- § Better markings/map
- § Enforce leash laws

Top responses for KYAC:

- § More bathrooms
- § Better parking

Top responses for Thompson Park:

- § Fix tennis courts
- § Clean grounds
- § Upgrade baseball diamond

Other responses for parks:

- § Begg: better playground
- § Washington: sidewalks, trees, tables/benches, play equipment
- § Northridge: landscaping, better foot path
- § Buffalo Head: better landscaping
- § Depot: more benches and tables

11. What type of park is most needed in Kalispell? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.10
Desired Construction by Park Type
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	580	6	41	60	138	150	183
Small parks in my neighborhood	75 12.9%	1 16.7%	7 17.1%	6 10.0%	14 10.1%	24 16.0%	23 12.6%
Large multi-use parks that serve the whole community	107 18.4%	1 16.7%	7 17.1%	15 25.0%	22 15.9%	24 16.0%	38 20.8%
Natural areas	120 20.7%	0 0.0%	7 17.1%	10 16.7%	34 24.6%	31 20.7%	37 20.2%
A park consisting primarily of sports fields	16 2.8%	2 33.3%	0 0.0%	3 5.0%	2 1.4%	2 1.3%	7 3.8%
Parks with river or creek frontage	99 17.1%	2 33.3%	6 14.6%	8 13.3%	25 18.1%	27 18.0%	30 16.4%
Linear trail corridors	109 18.8%	0 0.0%	11 26.8%	15 25.0%	27 19.6%	29 19.3%	27 14.8%
No additional parks or natural areas are needed	54 9.3%	0 0.0%	3 7.3%	3 5.0%	14 10.1% 2.4%	13 8.7%	21 11.5%

Observations:

- § Four park types were closely ranked when respondents were asked what type of park is most needed in Kalispell: large, multi-use parks that serve the whole community; natural areas; parks with river or creek frontage; and linear trail corridors. These priorities correlate with the high percentage (22.3%) of those who feel that enjoying and protecting the natural environment is the most important benefit of parks, recreation and open space, in Table 5.5.
- § When grouped conceptually – and when considering actual park land opportunities in the Kalispell area – a large number of respondents may support the acquisition of natural open space along river or creek frontages, particularly when done as a linear trail corridor.

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Trails: Use and Development

12. What are the primary reasons to develop more trails in Kalispell? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.11
Perceived Importance of Trails
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	599	8	47	62	150	145	185
Increase non-motorized trans. options	134 22.4%	4 50.0%	8 17.0%	11 17.7%	40 26.7%	32 22.1%	39 21.1%
Experience nature	96 16.0%	0 0.0%	8 17.0%	7 11.3%	25 16.7%	24 16.6%	32 17.3%
Improve children's access to schools	47 7.8%	3 37.5%	2 4.3%	5 8.1%	10 6.7%	9 6.2%	18 9.7%
Exercise	181 30.2%	0 0.0%	19 40.4%	18 29.0%	35 23.3%	53 36.6%	55 29.7%
Recreation	109 18.2%	1 12.5%	9 19.1%	20 32.3%	25 16.7%	22 15.2%	31 16.8%
No additional trails are needed	32 5.3%	0 0.0%	1 2.1%	1 1.6%	15 10.0%	5 3.4%	10 5.4%

Observations:

- § A large percentage (30.2%) of respondents feel that exercise is the primary reason to develop more trails in Kalispell. This is particular true for those 55 and older.
- § Increasing non-motorized transportation options is also a primary reason to develop more trails, according to 50% of those 18-24 and 26.7% of those 45-54 surveyed.
- § Very few respondents feel that no additional trails are needed.
- § Exercise/recreation are the biggest reasons for respondent support of trails, with 48.4% of respondents indicating this is why more trails should be developed. Environmental reasons are second in importance; increasing non-motorized transportation options and experiencing nature gained 38.4% of respondent votes.

13. If you do not currently use pathways or trails in Kalispell, what are your primary reasons? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.12
Reasons for Infrequent Trail Use
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	291	4	30	37	73	55	92
Too far away, not conveniently located	66 22.7%	0 0.0%	7 23.3%	12 32.4%	14 19.2%	10 18.2%	23 25.0%
Lack of trails and connections	67 23.0%	0 0.0%	9 30.0%	10 27.0%	18 24.7%	14 25.5%	16 17.4%
Feel unsafe	30 10.3%	1 25.0%	1 3.3%	3 8.1%	9 12.3%	4 7.3%	12 13.0%
Poorly maintained	5 1.7%	0 0.0%	1 3.3%	0 0.0%	2 2.7%	2 3.6%	0 0.0%
Conflicts w/ other types of trail users	7 2.4%	0 0.0%	1 3.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 5.5%	3 3.3%
Don't know where they are located	56 19.2%	2 50.0%	9 30.0%	9 24.3%	12 16.4%	11 20.0%	13 14.1%
Not interested in using trails	60 20.6%	1 25.0%	2 6.7%	3 8.1%	18 24.7%	11 20.0%	25 27.2%

Observations:

- § Respondents offered four primary reasons for not using pathways and trails in Kalispell: a lack of trails and connections; trails are too far away or inconveniently located; respondents don't know where they are located, or respondents are not interested in using trails. These observations are consistent across all age groups.
- § A relatively high percentage of respondents indicated they are not interested in using trails (20.6%); few respondents (5.3%) in Table 3.12 felt that no additional trails are needed. This may indicate a heightened perception amongst respondents that trails are necessary for the community, although the use may not be there to support a build-up. It may also indicate a willingness of respondents to support facilities they envision the community needing that they themselves would not use.
- § Responses regarding location, connections, and knowledge of trail locations may indicate a need for a build-out of significant connectors, repositioning of major trails, and enhanced mapping of existing resources.

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Open Space: Importance and Future

14. How would you rate the importance of preserving natural open space in Kalispell? *Please check the box that best reflects your opinion.*

Table 3.13
Opinion: Importance of Natural Open Space
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	354	4	27	34	83	91	112
Not important	6 1.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 8.8%	2 2.4%	0 0.0%	1 0.9%
Not important - Important	13 3.7%	0 0.0%	1 3.7%	3 8.8%	4 4.8%	3 3.3%	2 1.8%
Important	83 23.4%	2 50.0%	7 25.9%	11 32.4%	16 19.3%	14 15.4%	32 28.6%
Important - Very Important	52 14.7%	1 25.0%	4 14.8%	4 11.8%	14 16.9%	12 13.2%	17 15.2%
Very Important	189 53.4%	1 25.0%	14 51.9%	12 35.3%	46 55.4%	59 64.8%	55 49.1%
No Opinion	11 3.1%	0 0.0%	1 3.7%	1 2.9%	1 1.2%	3 3.3%	5 4.5%

Observations:

- § 53.4% of respondents indicated that preserving natural open space is “very important.” Only 5.4% of respondents indicated that preserving natural open space is “not important,” or “not important - important.”
- § Support for preserving open space is highest among those 55-64 in age but is very high for those 45 -54 and those 65 years of age and older, as well. This trend is consistent with results derived from Table 3.5, in which those 45 years of age and older feel that enjoying and protecting the natural environment is the most important benefit of parks and recreation.

15. Should the City seek voter approval to purchase and maintain natural open space areas?

Table 3.14
Opinion: Purchasing and Maintaining Natural Open Space
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	353	4	26	36	83	88	114
Yes	235 66.6%	1 25.0%	21 80.8%	23 63.9%	60 72.3%	63 71.6%	67 58.8%
No	62 17.6%	0 0.0%	5 19.2%	7 19.4%	15 18.1%	13 14.8%	22 19.3%
Don't Know	56 15.9%	3 75.0%	0 0.0%	6 16.7%	8 9.6%	12 13.6%	25 21.9%

Observations:

- § Exactly two-thirds of respondents feel the City should seek voter approval to purchase and maintain natural open space areas. Of those who do not support this notion, 15.9% do not know if the City should seek voter approval for such an idea.
- § Respondents age 18-24 are the least certain regarding this decision, with 75% of respondents indicating they do not know what the City should do regarding natural open space.
- § Support for such an idea is very high among those age 25-34, 45-54, and 55-64.
- § With such a large percentage of respondents indicating they do not know if the City should seek voter approval to purchase and maintain open space, an information campaign regarding the benefits and drawbacks of such an option may be useful.

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Special Topics for Parks & Recreation

16. Do you own a dog?

Table 3.15
Dog Ownership
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	362	4	27	36	84	91	117
Yes	142 39.2%	1 25.0%	11 40.7%	21 58.3%	44 52.4%	43 47.3%	21 17.9%
No	220 60.8%	3 75.0%	16 59.3%	15 41.7%	40 47.6%	48 52.7%	96 82.1%

Observations:

§ 60.8% of Kalispell respondents do not own a dog.

17. How should dogs be accommodated in public spaces? *Please check 1 only.*

Table 3.16
Dog Accommodation in Public Spaces
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	338	4	23	34	80	83	111
Create off-leash areas for dogs	38 11.2%	2 50.0%	4 17.4%	5 14.7%	12 15.0%	11 13.3%	4 3.6%
Enforce current laws requiring dogs to be leashed in parks	132 39.1%	0 0.0%	6 26.1%	14 41.2%	26 32.5%	29 34.9%	55 49.5%
Create off-leash areas and enforce current leash laws	138 40.8%	1 25.0%	13 56.5%	13 38.2%	37 46.3%	33 39.8%	41 36.9%
Do not allow dogs in parks	30 8.9%	1 25.0%	0 0.0%	2 5.9%	5 6.3%	10 12.0%	11 9.9%

Observations:

§ Equal support was voiced by respondents for the enforcement of current laws requiring dogs to be leashed in parks, and the notion of creating off-leash areas for dogs while still enforcing current leash laws.

18. Is a public multi-purpose indoor recreation center needed in Kalispell?

Table 3.17
Opinion: Importance of Indoor Recreation Center
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	351	4	27	36	81	88	113
Yes	187 53.3%	3 75.0%	17 63.0%	23 63.9%	37 45.7%	49 55.7%	57 50.4%
No	93 26.5%	1 25.0%	5 18.5%	8 22.2%	28 34.6%	22 25.0%	29 25.7%
No Opinion	71 20.2%	0 0.0%	5 18.5%	5 13.9%	16 19.8%	17 19.3%	27 23.9%

Observations:

§ A majority of respondents feel that an indoor recreation center is needed in Kalispell. A remaining 20.2% have no opinion on such a center. Support is strongest among those 18-44: those who also support the notion that new, major facilities should be built in Kalispell (Table 3.9).

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19. If you answered yes, what types of spaces are most needed in this center? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.18
Spaces Desired for Indoor Recreation Center
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	331	6	30	43	72	87	92
Multi-use gymnasium	84 25.4%	1 16.7%	9 30.0%	14 32.6%	16 22.2%	25 28.7%	19 20.7%
Weight room/fitness room	14 4.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 4.7%	5 6.9%	4 4.6%	3 3.3%
Aerobics/exercise rooms	15 4.5%	0 0.0%	3 10.0%	0 0.0%	4 5.6%	4 4.6%	4 4.3%
Indoor swimming pool	86 26.0%	3 50.0%	5 16.7%	13 30.2%	19 26.4%	28 32.2%	18 19.6%
Large multi-purpose/reception room	29 8.8%	1 16.7%	2 6.7%	5 11.6%	6 8.3%	5 5.7%	10 10.9%
Space for teen activities	51 15.4%	1 16.7%	4 13.3%	7 16.3%	12 16.7%	9 10.3%	17 18.5%
Space for senior activities	30 9.1%	0 0.0%	2 6.7%	1 2.3%	4 5.6%	7 8.0%	16 17.4%
Childcare area	11 3.3%	0 0.0%	5 16.7%	1 2.3%	2 2.8%	1 1.1%	2 2.2%
Meeting rooms/classrooms	11 3.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 5.6%	4 4.6%	3 3.3%

Observations:

- § If a public indoor recreation center is built in Kalispell, residents indicated that an indoor swimming pool, multi-use gymnasium, and a space for teen activities are most needed.
- § These sentiments are relatively consistent across all age groups, with diminished interest in a pool and gymnasium on the part of those 65 and older.
- § **SPECIAL NOTE:** A Community Center Survey conducted by MIG in Kalispell in March 2006 revealed opinions somewhat consistent with these survey results. In the Community Center Survey, 79.2% of those surveyed supported the notion of a “community center.” Within such a facility, 64.5% of respondents demonstrated support for the construction of a teen center; 62.4% of respondents demonstrated support for a senior center, and only 46.6% of respondents demonstrated support for an indoor swimming pool.

The differences in percentages can potentially be attributed to the lack of definition regarding such a facility in this Recreation Survey. In this survey, the facility is only described via the list of potential site amenities provided in the question. The March 2006 Community Center Survey, in contrast, included a brief narrative about the flexibility of such a facility, highlighting both its athletic and non-athletic potential.

As the Community Center Survey was dedicated solely to the community center concept and thus was far more descriptive regarding this potential facility, and as the Community Center Survey reached 250 participants to achieve a +/- 6% margin of error at the 95% confidence level, MIG recommends that the results of the Community Center Survey take precedence over the results of Questions 18 and 19 in this survey when both are examined for interpretation and guidance.

20. Which groups are underserved by current recreation services? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.19
Perception of Underserved Populations
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	425	6	41	49	93	100	134
Preschoolers	34 8.0%	2 33.3%	12 29.3%	3 6.1%	9 9.7%	5 5.0%	3 2.2%
Elementary youth	15 3.5%	0 0.0%	2 4.9%	1 2.0%	3 3.2%	4 4.0%	5 3.7%
Middle school youth	42 9.9%	0 0.0%	3 7.3%	3 6.1%	13 14.0%	7 7.0%	16 11.9%
High school youth	74 17.4%	1 16.7%	7 17.1%	12 24.5%	17 18.3%	19 19.0%	17 12.7%
Adults	48 11.3%	1 16.7%	5 12.2%	8 16.3%	14 15.1%	10 10.0%	10 7.5%
Seniors	85 20.0%	0 0.0%	3 7.3%	5 10.2%	14 15.1%	25 25.0%	38 28.4%
Families	37 8.7%	2 33.3%	1 2.4%	7 14.3%	10 10.8%	7 7.0%	9 6.7%
People from diverse cultures	18 4.2%	0 0.0%	2 4.9%	1 2.0%	2 2.2%	7 7.0%	6 4.5%
People with disabilities	72 16.9%	0 0.0%	6 14.6%	9 18.4%	11 11.8%	16 16.0%	30 22.4%

Observations:

- § When asked which groups are underserved by recreation services, response percentages for this survey tend to correlate with response groups. For instance, those 55 years of age and older overwhelmingly feel that seniors are the group most underserved by recreation services. Likewise, those 35-54 – individuals most likely to have high-school age children – feel that high school youth are most underserved. Those 34 years of age and younger feel that preschoolers are those most underserved.
- § Noticeably high percentages of all age groups feel that high school youth are underserved by current recreation services. This may correlate with other observations made regarding the need for a teen center (a common opinion voiced in this survey, as well as MIG's 2006 Community Center Survey).
- § The perception that those with disabilities are underserved by current park and rec efforts should receive more analysis – it has been noted that many playgrounds and parks lack ADA accessibility. Program offerings should be examined as well.

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Park and Recreation Programming

21. Do you participate in recreation, cultural, senior or sports programs offered by Kalispell Parks & Recreation? *If your answer is "No," please skip to Question 22.*

Table 3.20
Participation in P&R Programs
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	338	4	26	35	81	85	104
Yes	115 34.0%	1 25.0%	15 57.7%	17 48.6%	27 33.3%	32 37.6%	23 22.1%
No	223 66.0%	3 75.0%	11 42.3%	18 51.4%	54 66.7%	53 62.4%	81 77.9%

Observations:

§ 66.0% of respondents do not participate in programs offered by Kalispell P&R. The percent of respondents indicating they do not participate in programs rises as respondents get older.

22. If you do not participate in programs offered by Kalispell P&R, what are your reasons? *Please check all that apply.*

Table 3.21
Reasons for Non-Use of P&R Programs
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	687	10	51	73	180	168	201
Not aware of programs	342 49.8%	6 60.0%	25 49.0%	36 49.3%	85 47.2%	81 48.2%	109 54.2%
Do not have activities I'm interested in	70 10.2%	0 0.0%	4 7.8%	6 8.2%	22 12.2%	19 11.3%	19 9.5%
Poor quality of programs	13 1.9%	0 0.0%	1 2.0%	0 0.0%	7 3.9%	3 1.8%	1 0.5%
Held at inconvenient times	33 4.8%	0 0.0%	3 5.9%	4 5.5%	8 4.4%	12 7.1%	6 3.0%
Held at inconvenient locations	6 0.9%	0 0.0%	1 2.0%	1 1.4%	1 0.6%	2 1.2%	1 0.5%
Classes or programs are full	8 1.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 1.4%	2 1.1%	1 0.6%	3 1.5%
Need child care to participate	9 1.3%	1 10.0%	6 11.8%	1 1.4%	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Too busy; no time	123 17.9%	1 10.0%	7 13.7%	16 21.9%	32 17.8%	35 20.8%	31 15.4%
Lack of transportation	46 6.7%	1 10.0%	3 5.9%	4 5.5%	10 5.6%	8 4.8%	19 9.5%
Too expensive	37 5.4%	1 10.0%	1 2.0%	4 5.5%	12 6.7%	7 4.2%	12 6.0%

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Observations:

- § The vast majority of respondents who do not participate in Kalispell P&R programs indicated they do not do so because they are not aware of what programs are offered. This holds true for respondents of all age groups.
- § This response indicates a need for greater public education regarding available opportunities. Note that a large number of respondents also indicated they do not know about existing park facilities (Table 3.8), and that they do not know where trails are located (Table 3.13).

23. If you participated in services and programs offered by Kalispell P&R, how did you learn about them?
Please check all that apply.

Table 3.22
Methods of Learning about P&R Programs
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	327	3	34	48	68	88	83
From the City's schedule of programs/activities	82 25.1%	1 33.3%	10 29.4%	11 22.9%	16 23.5%	22 25.0%	22 26.5%
From the local newspaper	85 26.0%	1 33.3%	4 11.8%	8 16.7%	16 23.5%	31 35.2%	24 28.9%
From friends or word of mouth	63 19.3%	0 0.0%	8 23.5%	11 22.9%	14 20.6%	14 15.9%	16 19.3%
From TV / radio advertisements	40 12.2%	1 33.3%	3 8.8%	2 4.2%	6 8.8%	13 14.8%	13 15.7%
Posters/Flyers	24 7.3%	0 0.0%	1 2.9%	4 8.3%	8 11.8%	6 6.8%	5 6.0%
Information distributed at schools	28 8.6%	0 0.0%	6 17.6%	11 22.9%	8 11.8%	2 2.3%	1 1.2%
Website	5 1.5%	0 0.0%	2 5.9%	1 2.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 2.4%

Observations:

- § The City's schedule of programs and activities, the local newspaper, and from friends or word of mouth are the top three methods that those who participate in park and rec programs learn about them. Very few respondents indicate they learn about programs via the Kalispell website.
- § While the methods noted above are successfully attracting some participants, the large percentage of those who indicated they are unaware of park programming opportunities (Table 3.22), as well as facility and trail resources (Tables 3.8 and 3.13) may demonstrate a need for a greater variety of advertisement and education mechanisms.
- § All available advertising methods – particularly those that do not appear to be working – should be evaluated to determine reasons for their success or failure (e.g. – is any information available on the website?).

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24. What types of cultural arts programs should Kalispell offer? *Please check your top 3 choices.*

Table 3.23
Cultural Arts Programming Priorities
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	818	9	64	83	207	210	242
Concerts in the parks	255 31.2%	3 33.3%	18 28.1%	26 31.3%	59 28.5%	64 30.5%	85 35.1%
Performing arts programs (theatre, dance, music, etc.)	158 19.3%	3 33.3%	14 21.9%	17 20.5%	39 18.8%	43 20.5%	42 17.4%
Visual arts classes (drawing, painting, photography, etc.)	59 7.2%	0 0.0%	6 9.4%	7 8.4%	11 5.3%	21 10.0%	13 5.4%
Community art festivals and special events	159 19.4%	0 0.0%	9 14.1%	16 19.3%	48 23.2%	43 20.5%	43 17.8%
Literary arts (reading groups, lectures)	19 2.3%	0 0.0%	1 1.6%	1 1.2%	5 2.4%	8 3.8%	4 1.7%
Multi-cultural activities and programming	61 7.5%	2 22.2%	6 9.4%	5 6.0%	17 8.2%	10 4.8%	21 8.7%
Art in public spaces, such as murals and sculptures	51 6.2%	1 11.1%	6 9.4%	5 6.0%	15 7.2%	10 4.8%	13 5.4%
Other:	7 0.9%	0 0.0%	1 1.6%	1 1.2%	2 1.0%	1 0.5%	2 0.8%
I do not support the City providing cultural arts programs and services	49 6.0%	0 0.0%	3 4.7%	5 6.0%	11 5.3%	10 4.8%	19 7.9%

Observations:

- § Concerts in the park are clearly a cultural art program that respondents enjoy and support. Other types of performance- or festival-based events, such as theatre, dance, and music performances or community art festivals and events, receive strong support as well. This is true across all age groups.
- § The strong interest in performance-based arts events is in line with similar sentiments voiced during the public workshop held for this Park and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan (see pp. 2 and 6 of this report).

25. What are the most convenient program times for you and others in your household? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.26
Convenient Program Times
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	546	7	46	61	135	135	159
Weekday mornings	50 9.2%	0 0.0%	6 13.0%	2 3.3%	4 3.0%	16 11.9%	21 13.2%
Weekday afternoons	55 10.1%	0 0.0%	4 8.7%	3 4.9%	1 0.7%	14 10.4%	33 20.8%
Weekday evenings	129 23.6%	3 42.9%	15 32.6%	19 31.1%	35 25.9%	36 26.7%	21 13.2%
Weekend mornings	48 8.8%	0 0.0%	4 8.7%	12 19.7%	16 11.9%	6 4.4%	10 6.3%
Weekend afternoons	110 20.1%	2 28.6%	9 19.6%	8 13.1%	35 25.9%	25 18.5%	30 18.9%
Weekend evenings	72 13.2%	0 0.0%	3 6.5%	12 19.7%	19 14.1%	21 15.6%	16 10.1%
Drop-in formats, rather than ongoing activities	82 15.0%	2 28.6%	5 10.9%	5 8.2%	25 18.5%	17 12.6%	28 17.6%

Observations:

- § Weekday evenings and weekend afternoons are the most convenient program times for respondents to this survey.
- § Those 65 and older feel that weekday afternoons are the most convenient program times.

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Governmental and Policy Issues

26. Would you support the creation of a Park District that covers an area larger than the City of Kalispell and provides a wide range of park and recreation services?

Table 3.25
Opinion: Support for a Park District
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	354	4	26	34	85	92	110
Yes	153 43.2%	2 50.0%	16 61.5%	12 35.3%	43 50.6%	47 51.1%	32 29.1%
No	78 22.0%	1 25.0%	2 7.7%	5 14.7%	16 18.8%	21 22.8%	33 30.0%
Don't Know	123 34.7%	1 25.0%	8 30.8%	17 50.0%	26 30.6%	24 26.1%	45 40.9%

Observations:

- § The majority of respondents (43.2%) would support the creation of a Park District, however a large percentage of respondents indicated they would not (22.0%).
- § A significant number of respondents indicated they don't know if they would support the creation of a Park District (34.7%). This shows a need for greater education regarding the benefits and drawbacks of such a notion.

27. In general, would you support a tax measure to maintain and improve existing parks and trails, acquire more parks and natural areas, or develop more trails, parks, and recreation facilities? *Please check 1 only. If your answer is "No," please skip to Question 29.*

Table 3.26
Opinion: Tax Measure to Maintain, Improve, Acquire Parks/Facilities
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	344	4	27	35	84	90	103
Yes, I would support it	88 25.6%	1 25.0%	11 40.7%	6 17.1%	20 23.8%	29 32.2%	21 20.4%
I would support it depending upon the amount	36 10.5%	1 25.0%	5 18.5%	6 17.1%	11 13.1%	8 8.9%	5 4.9%
I would support it depending upon projects proposed	42 12.2%	0 0.0%	4 14.8%	8 22.9%	10 11.9%	7 7.8%	13 12.6%
I would support it depending upon amount, projects	111 32.3%	1 25.0%	5 18.5%	10 28.6%	30 35.7%	27 30.0%	38 36.9%
No, I would not support it	67 19.5%	1 25.0%	2 7.4%	5 14.3%	13 15.5%	19 21.1%	26 25.2%

Observations:

- § The majority of respondents support a tax measure to maintain, improve and acquire parks and facilities. 25.6% of respondents support such a notion outright; a remaining 55.0% would support this idea with conditions.

28. If yes, how much would you be willing to support? *Please check 1 only.*

Table 3.27
Financial Support for Tax Measure, City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	267	3	22	28	70	69	75
Up to \$15 annually per household	82 30.7%	1 33.3%	6 27.3%	12 42.9%	21 30.0%	17 24.6%	25 33.3%
Up to \$25 annually per household	83 31.1%	1 33.3%	2 9.1%	12 42.9%	16 22.9%	26 37.7%	26 34.7%
Up to \$50 annually per household	63 23.6%	0 0.0%	10 45.5%	3 10.7%	20 28.6%	15 21.7%	15 20.0%
Up to \$75 annually per household	5 1.9%	1 33.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 2.9%	2 2.9%	0 0.0%
Up to \$100 annually per household	23 8.6%	0 0.0%	2 9.1%	0 0.0%	8 11.4%	6 8.7%	7 9.3%
More than \$100 annually per household	11 4.1%	0 0.0%	2 9.1%	1 3.6%	3 4.3%	3 4.3%	2 2.7%

Observations:

- § The majority of tax measure supporters would pay a small to reasonable amount of money on an annual basis to support such a measure. 30.7% would pay \$15 annually (as a household) to support a tax measure. 31.1% would pay \$25 per year or less, and 23.6% would pay \$50 or less.
- § This indicates that a majority of tax measure supporters would likely pay between \$25 and \$50 annually per household for a tax measure to maintain and improve existing parks and trails, acquire more parks and natural areas, or develop trails, parks and recreation facilities.

29. How should residents pay for program costs as compared to non-residents? *Please check 1 choice.*

Table 3.28
Fees for Residents/Non-Residents, City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondents					
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	350	4	26	35	83	92	108
Higher	13 3.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 8.6%	3 3.6%	4 4.3%	3 2.8%
About the same	114 32.6%	1 25.0%	11 42.3%	7 20.0%	26 31.3%	27 29.3%	41 38.0%
Lower	196 56.0%	1 25.0%	12 46.2%	22 62.9%	51 61.4%	57 62.0%	53 49.1%
Don't Know	27 7.7%	2 50.0%	3 11.5%	3 8.6%	3 3.6%	4 4.3%	11 10.2%

Observations:

- § The majority of respondents (56.0%) feel that residents should pay less in program costs than non-residents. 32.6% feel that residents should pay “about the same” as non-residents.

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Current Recreation Participation

Recreation demand is difficult to quantify because of the many factors that influence recreation participation and interests. There have been many methods for identifying demand, ranging from the use of national surveys and standards to measuring actual participant hours.

Recognizing this problem, MIG began accumulating recreation participation information on communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. By making comparisons to similar communities, or with the NORTHWEST AVERAGE (the average of the last 15 communities surveyed by MIG), one can determine if specific activities are above or below the norm in a given community.

Keep in mind that many factors influence participation levels. These include:

- § Population profile
- § Lack or condition of facilities
- § Climate
- § Current recreation trends
- § Cost of using facilities and programs
- § Economic conditions
- § Level of recreation programs and services offered

Table 3.29 shows participation rankings for indoor and outdoor recreation activities in Kalispell. These activities are ranked so that the most popular activities in Kalispell appear first - NW AVERAGE participation rankings are in the right-hand column.

Table 3.29
Recreation Participation
City of Kalispell

Activity	City of Kalispell Rankings	NW AVERAGE Rankings
Reading for Pleasure	1	4
Computers (personal)	2	1
Walking for Pleasure	3	2
Exercising/Aerobics	4	3
Gardening	5	5
Bicycling (pleasure)	6	6
Dog Walking/Dog Parks	7	7
Bird Watching/Feeding	8	13
Nature Walks	9	17
Wildlife Watching	10	9
Photography	11	21
Weight Training	12	16
Swimming	13	15
Hiking/Backpacking	14	18
Jogging/Running	15	10
Arts and Crafts	16	23
Concerts (attend)	17	20
Fishing	18	19
Fairs & Festivals	19	11
Playground (visit/play)	20	8
Golf	21	27

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Picnicking	22	14
Basketball	23	22
Volunteer Activities	24	50
Boating (power)	25	12
Bicycling (commute)	26	30
Yoga/Pilates	27	31
Cultural Events (attend)	28	25
Canoe/Kayaking	29	41
Skiing/Snowboarding (downhill)	30	46
Skiing (x-country)	31	36
Rafting/Tubing	32	37
Baseball	33	24
Softball	34	45
Soccer	35	28
Volleyball	36	40
Other: _____	37	29
Ice Skating	38	42
Mountain Climbing	39	39
Football	40	26
Dancing (social)	41	35
Tennis	42	34
Skateboarding	43	43
Group Day Trips	44	32
Horseshoes	45	44
In-Line Skating	46	33
Disc Golf	47	48
Ultimate Frisbee	48	38
Ice Hockey	49	49
Orienteering/Geocaching	50	47

Observations:

- § Four of the top ten activities are typical for greenways/natural open space areas: walking for pleasure, nature walks, bird watching/feeding, and wildlife watching. Bicycling for pleasure is also an activity amenable to trails.
- § Respondents have participation levels akin to that of the NW Average in their top 10 ranked activities, with the exception of jogging/running and visiting playgrounds. Those NW Average activities are replaced with bird and wildlife watching in Kalispell's top 10, a fact not surprising given the community's interest in natural open space.
- § Basketball is the first organized sports activity to appear at 23, followed by baseball (33), softball (34) and soccer (35). This result for basketball and soccer are comparable, results for baseball are somewhat low, and results for softball are somewhat high compared to those of the NW Average.

Preferred Recreation Activities

Respondents were also asked to rank their top ten preferred activities, if the facilities, time and money were available. The activity rankings were then scored with a weighted value by giving a first choice a value of ten, a second choice a value of nine, etc. The total weighted score was then calculated for each activity. Table 3.30 illustrates the 20 highest-ranking activities.

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In the table below, the first column lists the activity the respondent would most like to do if facilities were available, in their ranked order. The last column lists the current participation ranking from Table 3.30. The difference between what residents are currently doing (column 4) and what they would like to be doing (column 1) is called the latent demand. The greater the two numbers vary from each other, the greater the latent demand. Activities with a latent demand value of 10 or greater are screened.

Table 3.30
Preferred Activities and Latent Demand
City of Kalispell

Preferred Ranking	Activity	Actual Participation Ranking
1	Bicycling (pleasure)	6
2	Concerts (attend)	17
3	Walking for Pleasure	3
4	Fishing	18
5	Hiking/Backpacking	14
6	Nature Walks	9
7	Reading for Pleasure	1
8	Swimming	13
9	Golf	21
10	Arts and Crafts	16
11	Boating (power)	25
12	Fairs & Festivals	19
13	Canoe/Kayaking	29
14	Exercising/Aerobics	4
15	Cultural Events (attend)	28
16	Gardening	5
17	Wildlife Watching	10
18	Dog Walking/Dog Parks	7
19	Skiing/Snowboarding (downhill)	30
20	Dancing (social)	41

Observations:

- § Four of the top ten preferred activities are activities in which respondents already frequently participate, although the ranking order is different.
- § Three of the top 10 preferred activities are trail-related: bicycling for pleasure, walking for pleasure and nature walks. An additional two activities are oriented toward natural open space or river/creek frontage: hiking/backpacking and fishing. These account for five of the top six activities.
- § Cultural events are significantly represented in this list of top 20 preferred activities, although none of these activities rank well when actual participation is taken into account. This indicates a latent demand for activities such as attending concerts, arts and crafts, fairs and festivals, attending cultural events, and social dancing. This information correlates with other opinions expressed regarding cultural arts activities in Kalispell within this survey.
- § The following activities, ranked in order of preference, have significant latent demand: attending concerts, fishing, hiking/backpacking, swimming, golf and arts and crafts. Power boating, fairs and festivals, canoeing/kayaking, cultural events, downhill skiing/snowboarding, and social dancing also have notable latent demand.

RECREATION SURVEY – YOUTH RESULTS

30. What are the TWO primary reasons you use parks in Kalispell? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.31
Top Reasons for Park Use - Youths
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent	
		10-14	15-18
	76	46	30
Enjoy the outdoors or nature	13 17.1%	7 15.2%	6 20.0%
Use a specific facility at a park	2 2.6%	2 4.3%	0 0.0%
Play sports	18 23.7%	14 30.4%	4 13.3%
Picnic and general leisure activities	4 5.3%	4 8.7%	0 0.0%
Walk or bike for exercise	12 15.8%	9 19.6%	3 10.0%
Meet friends	14 18.4%	4 8.7%	10 33.3%
Participate in family activities	7 9.2%	5 10.9%	2 6.7%
Attend special events/concerts	3 3.9%	1 2.2%	2 6.7%
Don't use parks	3 3.9%	0 0.0%	3 10.0%

Observations:

§ When evaluated together, teens and preteens indicate sports are their top reason for using parks in Kalispell. When assessed as separate groups, preteens overwhelmingly use parks for sports; teenagers use parks to meet friends.

31. How do you usually get to parks or recreation activities? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.32
Methods of Transportation to Parks, Activities
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent	
		10-14	15-18
	65	39	26
Walk	13 20.0%	9 23.1%	4 15.4%
Bike	14 21.5%	12 30.8%	2 7.7%
Skateboard, rollerblade, scooter	1 1.5%	0 0.0%	1 3.8%
Drive myself	8 12.3%	0 0.0%	8 30.8%
Ride with someone else	24 36.9%	16 41.0%	8 30.8%
Take the bus	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Other:	5 7.7%	2 5.1%	3 11.5%

Observations:

§ The vast majority of preteens access parks and activities by getting a ride with someone else to facilities and events. A large number of teenagers do the same; 30.8% of teenagers also access facilities and events by driving with someone else.

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32. Which of the following recreation facilities are most needed by youth in Kalispell? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.33
Most Necessary Facilities for Youth
City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent	
		10-14	15-18
	69	44	25
Environmental education/nature center	3 4.3%	2 4.5%	1 4.0%
River access for swimming, boating, fishing, etc.	14 20.3%	10 22.7%	4 16.0%
Areas for special events and festivals	5 7.2%	3 6.8%	2 8.0%
Trails and paved pathways that connect park, school, stores	9 13.0%	6 13.6%	3 12.0%
Teen Center	9 13.0%	5 11.4%	4 16.0%
Public indoor recreation center (gym/social areas/classrooms)	11 15.9%	5 11.4%	6 24.0%
Entertainment businesses (movie theater/bowling alley)	11 15.9%	8 18.2%	3 12.0%
Your idea:	5 7.2%	3 6.8%	2 8.0%
No new facilities are needed	2 2.9%	2 4.5%	0 0.0%

Observations:

- š Preteens feel that river access for swimming, boating, fishing and so forth is the top recreation facility needed for youth in Kalispell.
- š Teenagers are in search of a public indoor recreation center – given the facility description noted in the question, this facility type is akin to the flexible community center described in MIG’s 2006 Community Center Survey.

33. Which types of recreation activities are most needed by youth in Kalispell? *Please check your top 2 choices.*

Table 3.34
Most Necessary Activities for Youth, City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent	
		10-14	15-18
	69	41	28
Outdoor programs (hiking, canoeing, nature programs)	10 14.5%	6 14.6%	4 14.3%
Extreme sports/adventure (rock climbing, snowboarding)	11 15.9%	7 17.1%	4 14.3%
Aquatic programs (swimming, scuba diving, water fitness)	9 13.0%	6 14.6%	3 10.7%
Special events (dances, concerts in the park, festivals)	11 15.9%	4 9.8%	7 25.0%
Sports (baseball, ultimate frisbee)	6 8.7%	5 12.2%	1 3.6%
Arts (performing, visual, cultural)	1 1.4%	1 2.4%	0 0.0%
Drop-in activities (gymnasium, game room, computers, etc.)	13 18.8%	8 19.5%	5 17.9%
Job-related active. (volunteer, internship, employment)	6 8.7%	2 4.9%	4 14.3%
Your idea:	2 2.9%	2 4.9%	0 0.0%
Now new activities are needed	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%

Observations:

- § Drop-in activities, extreme sports/adventure activities, special events, outdoor programs, and aquatic programs are the activities youth feel they are most in need of.
- § Preteens feel that drop-in activities are particularly necessary; teens would like special events more than any other activity.

34. Where should youth recreation activities be provided (i.e., where would you feel most comfortable going)? *Please check all that apply.*

Table 3.35
Places for Youth Activities, City of Kalispell

	Total	Age of Respondent	
		10-14	15-18
	78	37	41
School	18 23.1%	10 27.0%	8 19.5%
Teen Center	17 21.8%	7 18.9%	10 24.4%
Community Center	12 15.4%	3 8.1%	9 22.0%
Other:	2 2.6%	2 5.4%	0 0.0%
The Mall (or in a shopping area)	14 17.9%	7 18.9%	7 17.1%
Skatepark	7 9.0%	3 8.1%	4 9.8%
Don't Know	8 10.3%	5 13.5%	3 7.3%

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Observations:

- § When asked where youth recreation activities should be provided, teens and preteens alike selected a teen center as good location for events. Preteens also favored school and at the mall, while teenagers favored a community center, school and the mall.

35. How often do you go to these parks in Kalispell? *Circle the word that describes how often you visit these parks.*

Table 3.36
 Frequency of Park Facility Use (Youth)
 City of Kalispell

	<i>Total</i>	Per Capita Occasions per Last 30 Days	
		10-14	15-18
Base	38	23	15
Skatepark	11.29	10.86	11.93
Kalispell Youth Sports Complex	9.53	8.23	11.57
A neighborhood park in your area	8.81	8.00	10.14
Woodland Water Park	8.54	7.57	10.14
Private Rec Facility (Flathead Fitness, KAC, Summit)	7.86	8.43	6.93
A community park in the city (Depot/Woodland/Lawrence)	7.08	7.35	6.67
School Grounds or Gymnasium	6.78	6.70	6.93

Observations:

- § Kalispell’s Skatepark gets the most per capita use by teens of any park facility owned by the City. This is true for teens and particularly true for pre-teens.
- § Teenagers also frequent KYAC, neighborhood parks, and the Woodland Water Park.

APPENDIX C: COST ESTIMATES

TOTAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COST ESTIMATE				
<i>Priority 1 Items: 0-6 Year Development Time Frame; Priority 2 Items: 7-12 Year Development Time Frame; Priority 3 Items: As Funding is Available; DIM = Deferred Maintenance Items Exist - See Deferred Maintenance Spreadsheet</i>				
Map Key	Acreage	Park	Cost Estimate	Priority
MINI PARKS				
MP-1	0.3	Park View Terrace Park	\$ -	N/A
MP-2	1.2	Buffalo Head Park	\$ -	N/A
MP-3	0.3	Eagle Park	\$ -	N/A
MP-4	0.4	Central School/Museum	\$ -	N/A
MP-5	1.7	Courthouse Park	\$ 32,000	1
MP-6	0.1	Helen O'Neil Park	\$ -	N/A
MP-7	1.7	Western Park	\$ 260,000	3
			Subtotal	
			\$	292,000
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS				
NP-1	4.0	West Valley Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
NP-2	4.0	Clark Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
NP-3	4.0	Prairie View Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
NP-4	4.0	Wintercrest Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
NP-5	4.0	Tumble Creek Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
NP-6	4.0	Whitefish Stage Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
NP-7	3.6	Camelot Estates Park (C)	\$ -	N/A
NP-8	3.2	Evergreen Lions Park (C)	\$ -	N/A
NP-9	4.0	Country Estates Park (C)	\$ -	N/A
NP-10	1.6	Mission Village Park (C)	\$ -	N/A
NP-11	5.0	Kings Loop Park (C)	\$ -	N/A
NP-12	7.3	Hillcrest Park (C)	\$ -	N/A
NP-13	2.1	Spring Prairie Tree Park	\$ 40,000	1
NP-14	9.6	Northridge Park	\$ 18,700	1
NP-15	1.8	Empire Estates Park	\$ -	N/A
NP-16	1.7	Cottonwood Park	\$ 8,500	1
NP-17	4.3	Sunset Park	\$ 72,750	1, 2
NP-18	2.3	Hawthorne Park	\$ -	D/M
NP-19	4.0	Three Mile Drive Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	2, 3
NP-20	4.0	Skyline Drive Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
NP-21	4.0	Ashley Creek Neighborhood Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	1, 2
NP-22	2.2	Greenbriar Park	\$ 11,000	1
NP-23	1.1	Washington Park	\$ 1,000	1
NP-24	2.6	Meridian Park	\$ 11,500	1
NP-25	1.0	Gallagher Park	\$ -	N/A
NP-26	10.5	Willow Glen Site	\$ 2,545,000	1
NP-27	2.2	Thompson Field	\$ 6,500	1, D/M
NP-28	6.2	Begg Park	\$ 90,300	1
NP-29	2.7	Green Acres Pak (C)	\$ -	N/A
NP-30	4.4	Flathead Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	1, 2
NP-31	4.0	Ashley Meadows Park (P)	\$ 1,244,500	3
			Subtotal	
			\$	16,494,750
COMMUNITY PARKS				
CP-1	15.0	Lost Creek Park (P)	\$ 5,513,125	3
CP-2	20.0	Spring Creek Community Park (P)	\$ 8,907,500	1, 2
CP-3	15.0	Hagerman Park (P)	\$ 5,513,125	2, 3
CP-4	10.0	Rose Crossing Park (P)	\$ 5,013,750	1, 2
CP-5	117.5	Lawrence Park	\$ 350,000	1, 2, 3, D/M
CP-6	15.0	Patrick Creek Community Park (P)	\$ 5,513,125	2, 3
			Subtotal	
			\$	30,810,625
LARGE URBAN PARKS				
LUP-1	42.8	Woodland Park	\$ 435,000	1, 2, 3, D/M
			Subtotal	
			\$	435,000
SPECIAL USE AREAS				
SUA-1	121.1	Kalispell Youth Athletic Complex	\$ -	N/A
SUA-2	3.4	Tennis Court Complex	\$ -	N/A
SUA-3	3.7	Depot Park	\$ -	D/M
SUA-4	10.5	Laker & Archie Roe Park	\$ 20,000	1
SUA-5	2.2	Lions Park	\$ -	
			Subtotal	
			\$	20,000
LINEAR PARKS				
LP-1	31.9	Ashley Creek Greenbelt (C)	\$ -	N/A
LP-2	121.8	Ashley Creek Greenbelt Extension (P)	\$ -	N/A
			Subtotal	
			\$	-
NATURAL OPEN SPACE/GREENWAYS				
NOS-1	4.6	Grandview Park Drive	\$ -	N/A
NOS-2	3.5	Heritage Park	\$ -	N/A
NOS-3	26.9	Dry Bridge Park	\$ 127,500	2
NOS-4	62.0	Stillwater Greenway (P)	\$ 1,220,000	3
NOS-5	78.0	Whitefish Greenway (P)	\$ 1,520,000	3
NOS-6	89.0	Ashley Creek Greenway (P)	\$ 1,470,000	1, 2
			Subtotal	
			\$	4,337,500
MAJOR FACILITIES				
	5.0	Community Center (P)	\$ 6,950,000	3
		Trails, Trailheads	\$ 165,000	1
			Subtotal	
			\$	7,115,000
			Subtotal	
			\$	59,504,875

APPENDIX C: COST ESTIMATES

COST ESTIMATE OF PRIORITY ONE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS					
Map Key	Acreage	Park		Cost Estimate	Proposed Projects
MINI PARKS					
MP-5	1.7	Courthouse Park		\$ 32,000	Benches, Picnic Tables, Irrigation
			Subtotal	\$ 32,000	
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS					
NP-13	2.1	Spring Prairie Tree Park		\$ 40,000	Full Basketball Court
NP-14	9.6	Northridge Park		\$ 18,700	Trees, Enhancement
NP-16	1.7	Cottonwood Park		\$ 8,500	Trees, Enhancement
NP-17	4.3	Sunset Park		\$ 60,500	Trees, Enhancement, Pathways, 1/2 Basketball Court
NP-21	4.0	Ashley Creek Neighborhood Park (P)		\$ 399,500	Complete Acquisition
NP-22	2.2	Greenbriar Park		\$ 11,000	Trees, Enhancement
NP-23	1.1	Washington Park		\$ 1,000	Trees
NP-24	2.6	Meridian Park		\$ 11,500	Trees, Enhancement
NP-26	10.5	Willow Glen Site		\$ 2,545,000	Site Master Plan, Development
NP-27	2.2	Thompson Field		\$ 6,500	Enhancement
NP-28	6.2	Begg Park		\$ 90,300	Trees, Enhancement, Pathways, Picnic Shelter
NP-30	4.0	Flathead Park (P)		\$ 399,500	Complete Acquisition
			Subtotal	\$ 3,592,000	
COMMUNITY PARKS					
CP-2	20.0	Spring Creek Community Park (P)		\$ 1,997,500	Complete Acquisition
CP-4	10.0	Rose Crossing Park (P)		\$ 998,750	Complete Acquisition
CP-5	117.5	Lawrence Park		\$ 90,000	Parking, Pathways, Trees, Casual Sport Amenities, Forestry Plan
			Subtotal	\$ 3,086,250	
LARGE URBAN PARKS					
LUP-1	42.8	Woodland Park		\$ 120,000	Water Quality Study; 1/3 of Cost of Water Quality Improvements and Rip-Rap Replacement
			Subtotal	\$ 120,000	
SPECIAL USE AREAS					
SUA-4	10.5	Laker & Archie Roe Park		\$ 20,000	Hard-Surface Dugout
			Subtotal	\$ 20,000	
LINEAR PARKS					
			Subtotal	\$ -	
NATURAL OPEN SPACE/GREENWAYS					
NOS-6	50.0	Ashley Creek Greenway (P)		\$ 734,750	Partial Acquisition
			Subtotal	\$ 734,750	
MAJOR FACILITIES					
		Trails, Trailheads		\$ 165,000	Trail Signage, Trailheads
			Subtotal	\$ 165,000	
TOTAL PRIORITY ONE COST ESTIMATE				\$ 7,750,000	

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE PROJECTS AND COST ESTIMATES					
Map Key	Acreage	Park		Estimate	Proposed Projects
MINI PARKS					
			Subtotal	\$ -	
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS					
NP-18	2.3	Hawthorne Park		\$ 63,000	Resurfacing of Tennis Courts, Basketball Courts
NP-27	2.2	Thompson Field		\$ 82,500	Resurfacing of Tennis Courts
			Subtotal	\$ 145,500	
COMMUNITY PARKS					
CP-6	117.5	Lawrence Park		\$ 11,500	Replacement of Cottonwoods
			Subtotal	\$ 11,500	
LARGE URBAN PARKS					
LUP-1	42.8	Woodland Park		\$ 208,000	Horseshoe Pit and Fencing Reconstruction; 2/3 of Cost of Water Quality Improvements and Rip-Rap Replacement
			Subtotal	\$ 208,000	
SPECIAL USE AREAS					
SUA-3	3.7	Depot Park		\$ 235,000	Bandshell Replacement
			Subtotal	\$ 235,000	
LINEAR PARKS					
			Subtotal	\$ -	
NATURAL OPEN SPACE/GREENWAYS					
			Subtotal	\$ -	
MAJOR FACILITIES					
			Subtotal	\$ -	
TOTAL DEFERRED MAINTENANCE COST ESTIMATE				\$ 600,000	