OBERLIN PARKS & RECREATION

strategic plan



November 4, 2011





City of Oberlin Parks and Recreation Planning Advisory Committee

City of Oberlin Officials

Eric Norenberg, City Manager Jeff Baumann, Public Works Director Gary Boyle, Director of Planning & Development

Strategic Plan Consultant Team

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Oberlin Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan is the result of a process that synthesized current conditions, extensive public input, and sound recreation/athletic facilities planning into a strategic recreation vision for Oberlin. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is

- 1. To outline the overall direction and philosophy of the City of Oberlin towards parks and recreation
- 2. Examine the current status of parks and recreation within the City of Oberlin
- 3. Set long term objectives for Parks and Recreation

The overall intent of the planning process is to create a clear and concise set of goals, objectives, and action items that will provide strategic direction for the future development and enhancement of the City's parks and the recreational facilities, programs and service based on public priorities.

Process

The Oberlin Parks and Recreation Strategic Planning Process was conducted to yield an inclusive Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan for the City of Oberlin.

This effort was accomplished by forming a Planning Advisory Committee of representative stakeholders and focus groups targeting various constituencies including Youth Activities, Non-Traditional Activities and Community Partners. Our intent has been to utilize a democratic communication and research process that respects and integrates the community's diverse population, opinions, history, environment, sustainability desires, and educational emphasis. The process utilized various techniques that were sensitive to unique community conditions and supported by quality recreation planning principles.

Quality community involvement is fundamental to the creation of a successful plan that is 'the community's vision' with shared goals, strategies and definable work efforts.







DATA INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The strategic planning process began with the Consultant Team leading the Planning Advisory Committee in a discussion of the Oberlin Recreation Department's mission statement and definition of recreation. The mission statement currently reads:

"The mission of the Oberlin Recreation Department is to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Oberlin community by providing equal opportunity for a wide variety of leisure and cultural activities, special events, facilities, and services that encourage health, fitness, relaxation, and enjoyment. In addition, the purpose of this department is to work cooperatively with other appropriate entities which will provide recreational opportunities for broader community involvement."

The Oberlin Recreation Department defines recreation as "Activities which develop skills that provide the incentive, motivation, and means for spending leisure time constructively. As such, recreation must be concerned with the breadth and variety of activities: physical, social, artistic and learning."

While initial comments on the mission statement were minimal, the Planning Advisory Committee and the City of Oberlin Officials have continued to offer input. Suggestions offered since the initial Planning Advisory Committee meeting includes the recommendation that the statement be expanded to include environmental awareness, active and passive recreation opportunities, and structured and unstructured play opportunities.

Based on this input, the Mission Statement has been revised as follows"

"The mission of the City of Oberlin Recreation and Parks divisions is to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Oberlin community by providing equal opportunity for a wide variety of leisure and cultural activities, special events, facilities and services. This will include active and passive, structured and unstructured recreational opportunities. These will encourage health, fitness, relaxation and enjoyment as well as a broad appreciation for our diverse community and the unique natural systems that we share. Our purpose is to work cooperatively with other appropriate to provide recreational entities opportunities for the members of our community."

Following the discussion of the Mission Statement, the Consultant Team discussed with the Planning Advisory Committee the findings of their review of the existing natural and cultural resources within the study area as well as existing physical conditions of the study area including existing municipal parks as well as county, township, and college facilities and additional natural resources and open space systems.





Natural Resources

The defining natural feature of the City of Oberlin is Plum Creek, which bisects the city running west to east and meeting the West Branch of the Black River about 1.5 miles east of the city near the Lorain County Metro Parks Carlisle Reservation. In fact, 90% of the city is located within the Plum Creek Watershed.

The topography of the city is generally level with any significant topographic variations being limited to areas immediately adjacent to Plum Creek. This flat topography and the relatively impervious clay soils result in a number of wetland areas in and around Oberlin. Additionally, there are several woodland areas that remain in Oberlin and its immediate environs including those known locally as the 'Great North Woods' and the 'Great South Woods'.



PLUM CREEK IN PARK STREET PARK

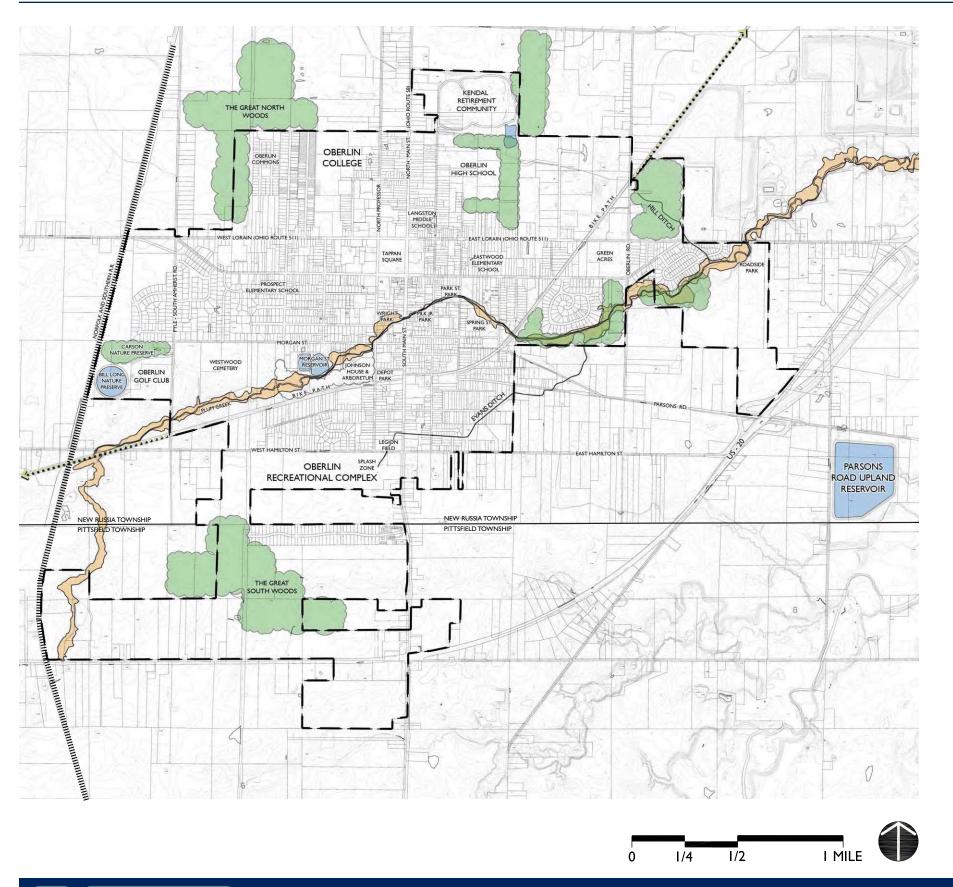


GASHOLDER BUILDING, FUTURE HOME OF UNDERGROUND RAILROAD CENTER

Cultural Resources

Founded in 1833 by two Presbyterian Ministers, Oberlin is home to numerous historic structures. An integral part of the City is Oberlin College which was founded in conjunction with the city itself as the Oberlin Theological Institute, Oberlin College first admitted African-American students in 1833 and admitted women in 1841, becoming the first co-educational college to award bachelors degrees to female students. By 1852 the town of Oberlin was an active terminus of the Underground Railroad. Beyond its historical significance, Oberlin College also provides numerous important cultural resources for the city including its renowned music conservatory, the Allen Memorial Art Museum, Hall Auditorium and the Apollo Theater. Numerous local arts and cultural organizations and businesses have sprung up around this foundation.







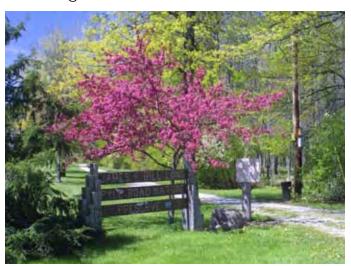
CREEK, POND OR RESERVOIR

One of the first steps in the strategic planning process was for the planning team to document existing physical conditions of existing municipal parks. In addition, the planning team sought to understand the county, township, public school and college facilities and any additional natural resources and open space systems.

The following is an alphabetical list of city parks.

Bill Long Nature Preserve / Scott & Olive Carson Nature Preserve

The 22-acre Bill Long Nature Preserve includes a 13 acre reservoir built to supplement the City's water supply from the east branch of the Vermilion River when the waterworks were at the Morgan Street site before new water treatment facilities were constructed on Parsons Rd. in 1959-1960. Although never used for the City's drinking water supply, the reservoir water supplements the irrigation needs of the Oberlin Golf Club. In 2001, the family of Scott and Olive Carson donated nearly 15 acres of woodlands between the Bill Long Nature preserve and Beech Street. Fishing is permitted in the reservoir; swimming and boating are not allowed.



ENTRY TO BILL LONG NATURE PRESERVE



DEPOT PARK

Depot Park

A 4-acre park with a children's playground that features some accessible features adjacent to the Bike Path.

Legion Field

Approximately 2.6 acres of open space adjacent to the Fire Station. Formerly used as a baseball field. The City contracted with Zion Community Development Corporation to run a community garden at this site in 2010.

Martin Luther King Jr. Park

1.5 acre park on Plum Creek with historic sculptures in honor of the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue, John Brown and Martin Luther King, Jr. There is also an environmental sculpture titled 'Streams' by Athena Tacha set in the banks of Plum Creek, adjacent to a walking bridge that connects the park to City Hall and the Public Library.

Morgan Street Reservoir

A 12.5 acre park that includes two former water supply reservoirs and historic water treatment facilities. A walking trail around the perimeter connects to the Oberlin College Arboretum, additional open space and woodlands along Plum Creek. Fishing is permitted at the Morgan Street Reservoir. Swimming and boating are not allowed.







HISTORIC BUILDINGS AT MORGAN STREET RESERVOIR

Don J. Pease Memorial Bike Path

A 3.1 mile paved bike and walking path, cutting diagonally across the city. A .6 mile extension links the path to the City's Recreation Complex on Hamilton St. The Bike Path is part of the North Coast Inland Trail, a 13.1 mile route between Kipton and Elyria owned and operated by the Lorain County Metroparks outside of city limits.

Oberlin Recreation Complex

The City's primary sports facility including 5 baseball/softball fields and 8 soccer fields with adjacent green space on a 77-acre site. Amenities include a concession stand/ restroom building, 2 pavilions and a large paved parking lot. The City has installed a lightning prediction and warning system to protect park users. The eastern third of the site is leased to the Lorain County Metroparks who own and operate the Splash Zone water recreation facility which features a fitness room, aerobic classes, basketball courts, volleyball courts, a party room for birthdays, an indoor walking track, two indoor pools and a year round water feature for kids.

Park Street Park

A 5.58 acre park along Plum Creek near downtown. The park has two basketball courts, a playground, horseshoe pits, and a former baseball diamond. The park includes a recently completed 6' wide paved trail along Plum Creek connecting Park Street to the downtown business district.

Parsons Road Upland Reservoir

The City's drinking water reservoir contains approximately one year supply of water on the 43.6 acre site. Fishing is permitted at the Parsons Road Reservoir. Boats with electric motors only are permitted at the Parsons Road Reservoir. Swimming is not permitted.

Spring Street Park

12 acres of green space and woodland along Plum Creek. Amenities include two picnic shelters, a gazebo, and a large playground.

Westwood Cemetery

This historic cemetery on nearly 39 acres is listed in the Ohio Historic Inventory. Plum Creek meanders along its southern border and the Oberlin Golf Club surrounds it on 3 sides. The cemetery is graced with natural beauty and a park like atmosphere; it is a popular walking area for Oberlin residents.



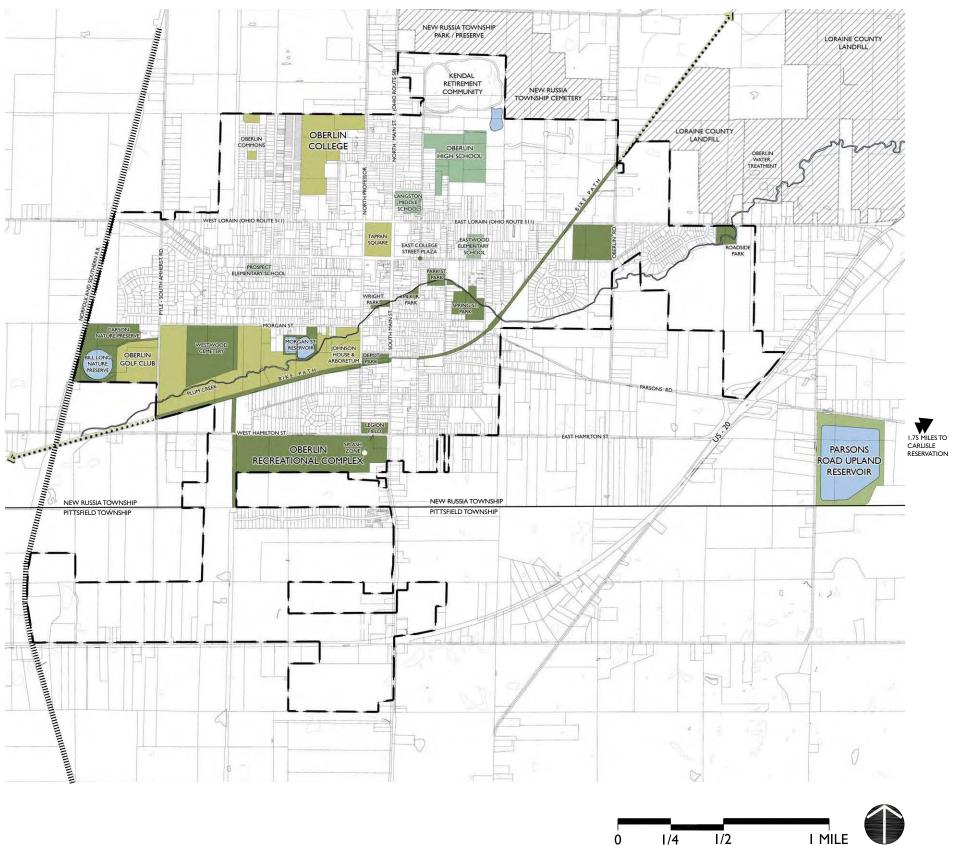
CONCESSIONS BUILDING IN THE OBERLIN RECREATION COMPLEX

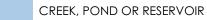




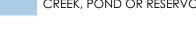








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CITY OWNED OPEN SPACE

CITY SCHOOLS

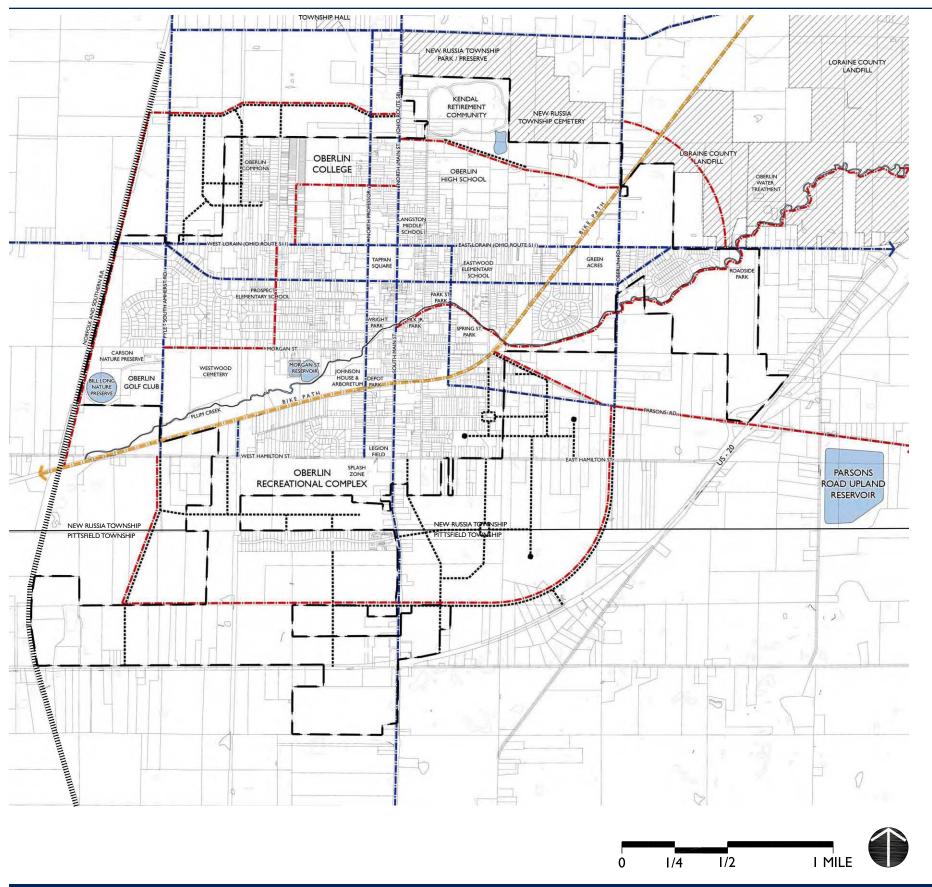
IIIIIIIIIIIII RAILROAD

COUNTY OWNED BIKE PATH

RECREATIONAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

	OWNED OPEN SPACE	
	OT PARK	
	ON FIELD	
	RTIN LUTHER KING JR. PARK	
	K ST. PARK	
	D SIDE PARK	
	NG STREET PARK	
WRIG	GHT PARK	1.9 ACRES
MOF	rgan street reservoir	12.5 ACRES
	Sons road upland reservoir	
	LONG / CARSON NATURE PRESERVE	
WES.	TWOOD CEMETERY	47 ACRES
	REATION AND AQUATIC CENTER LUDES SPLASH ZONE)	77 ACRES
	RLIN BIKE PATH	26.8 ACRES
OBL	KEIN BIKE 17411	(3.7 MILES LONG)
GRE	en acres property	
FAST	COLLEGE STREET PLAZA	0.28 ACRES
	SCHOOLS	0.20 / CKLS
	RLIN HIGH SCHOOL	
LAN	GSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL	7.2 ACRES
EAST	WOOD ELEMENTARY	5.2 ACRES
	SPECT ELEMENTARY	
	ER OPEN SPACE	
	DENTIAL OPEN SPACE	3.1 ACRES
•	ERLIN COMMONS)	
TAPF	PAN SQUARE	12.6 ACRES
JOH	nson house & arboretum	44.2 ACRES
	RLIN GOLF CLUB	
	RLIN COLLEGE SPORT FIELDS	







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FUTURE ROADS FROM 2004 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

KIPTON-ELYRIA BIKE PATH - NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

EXISTING TRAILS FROM 2005 LORAIN COUNTY BICYCLE TRANSP. MAP

PROPOSED TRAIL LINKS 2004 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



GAZEBO LOCATED IN SPRING STREET PARK



PATH LOCATED IN WRIGHT PARK

Wright Park

1.9 acres of green space with a Veteran's Memorial. A path running along Plum Creek through Oberlin College Property connects to South Professor Street and the Oberlin College Arboretum.

Oberlin Underground Railroad Center/ Gasholder Building

Across SR58 from Depot Park, the Gasholder Building is an historic industrial structure on a 1.4 acre site deeded to the City in 2005. This round brick building with a conical slate roof was formerly used to store coal gas manufactured in a nearby facility that has now been torn down. The City is working with numerous stakeholders to adaptively re-use the building to develop a local Underground Railroad Center.

East College Street Project Public Plaza

The focal point of a new mixed-use development in the Central Business District is a ¼ acre public plaza.

Other Open Spaces in Oberlin

Tappan Square

A large and attractive formal open space, this 13.2 acre block in the center of town functions as a town square. Oberlin College campus buildings are across the street on three sides and the City's central business district is located on the fourth side. Tappan Square is owned and maintained by Oberlin College.

Johnson House and Arboretum

The southernmost point of the Oberlin campus: a beautiful preserve with trails, creeks, bridges, and a variety of trees.

Schools

Eastwood and Prospect elementary schools provide small pockets of neighborhood-scale recreation with playgrounds and open space. There is more extensive open space and playing fields at Langston Middle School and Oberlin High School. Recreation facilities at the schools included tennis courts, playing fields, and playgrounds.







POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

As an historical community which has largely been built out, Oberlin's growth has remained slow over the past several years and is projected to remain so into the future. Because of this, future parcels available for park land development fall into two basic categories as shown on the Parcel Development Analysis Map: Small parcels already owned by the City and a limited number of large privately owned parcels. The small parcels owned by the City are mainly located along the existing bike path and yield potential locations for trail heads and rest stops along the path. The City's recent acquisition of the 15-acre Green Acres site provide an exciting opportunity to develop additional park and/or recreational facilities to serve this neighborhood.

The second type of parcel that could be considered for potential park development is some of the few large privately owned parcels that remain within the city. Portions of these parcels could be obtained as park land in several ways including city purchase of properties, negotiating with landowners for property donations, or the potential inclusion of a zoning requirement for park land dedication as part of land development.

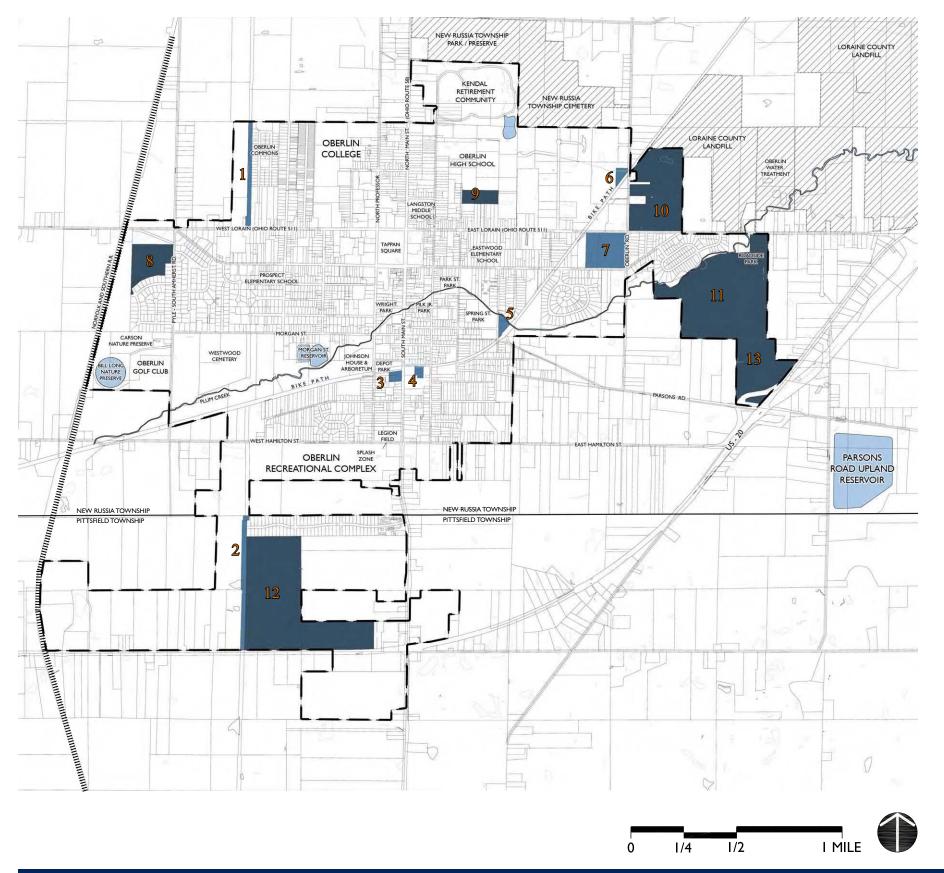


AERIAL SHOWING CITY OF OBERLIN (GOOGLE EARTH)

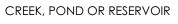




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POTENTIAL FUTURE BIKE AND PARK DEDICATIONS

TOTAL PARCEL AREA	
PARCEL 1	6.3 ACRES
PARCEL(S) 2	8.6 ACRES
PARCEL(S) 3	1.9 ACRES
PARCEL(S) 4	1.4 ACRES
PARCEL 5	2.0 ACRES
PARCEL 6	2.0 ACRES
PARCEL 7	15.0 ACRES
PARCEL 8	19.0 ACRES
PARCEL 9	7.0 ACRES
PARCEL 10	58.0 ACRES
PARCEL 11	111.1 ACRES
PARCEL 12	120.0 ACRES
PARCEL 13	34.5 ACRES



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A critical step in creating a parks and recreation plan for any community is to first determine the actual recreational needs of the specific community. The master plan team utilized three different methods for determining the recreational needs of the City of Oberlin: a national standards comparison study, a community needs assessment survey, and a benchmarking comparison analysis.

National Standards Comparison

The national standards comparison study was conducted based on the standards set forth in the 1995 National "Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines" and the 1983 National Facility Standards found in "Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines" produced by the National Recreation and Parks Associations to provide guidance in planning for the recreational needs of a community. These standards have been developed in order to provide communities with general standards that could be applied as guidelines and serve as a point of reference for establishing recreational needs. The standards are summarized on the following comparison table and are divided into park type as well as individual facilities.

While the National Standards and Guidelines address a wide variety of park classifications and specific facility development standards, there are two basic local park types that are defined by general size and applicable uses as follows:

Neighborhood Park (5-10 Acres, 15 Max.):

Area for intense recreation activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.

Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood populations geographically centered with safe walking and bike access.

Potential Features:

Play Fields, Athletic Courts, Playground, Sitting Area, Small Picnic Shelter, Trails

Oberlin Examples:

Depot Park
Legion Field
Martin Luther King Jr. Park
Park Street Park
Road Side Park
Spring Street Park
Wright Park
Morgan Street Reservoir

Community Park (15 Acre Minimum):

Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such athletic complexes, large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need. May include natural features, such as water bodies, and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.

Potential Features:

Playgrounds, Shelters, Trails, Play Fields, Athletic Courts, Aquatic Facilities

Oberlin Examples:

Bill Long Nature Preserve Oberlin Recreation Complex Parsons Upland Reservoir







Following the comparison table, the level of service for each of these park types is further analyzed on the Level of Service Maps which show the service radius for each of the city's parks. Four separate plans have been included:

- City of Oberlin Neighborhood Parks
- City of Oberlin Community Parks
- Other Parks and Open Spaces
- •Level of Service Comparison

Together the National Standards Comparison chart and the Level of Service Maps provide a solid foundation for developing recommendations for physical improvements that will help better serve the city's residents.





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COMPARISON OF CITY OF OBERLIN PARK FACILITIES TO NATIONAL RECREATION STANDARDS

	EXISTING RECOMMENDED FACILITY BASED ON POPULATION FACILITY																
CLASSIFICATION (1)	DESCRIPTION (2)	POPULATION STANDARDS (2)	SIZE STANDARDS	LEVEL OF SERVICE		2008	(ACRES)) (3)	2015	(ACRES	(4)	2020	(ACRE	S) (5)	2028 (A	CRES) (6)	PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS / COMMENTS
MINI PARK	USED TO ADDRESS LIMITED, ISOLATED OR UNIQUE RECREATIONAL NEEDS	0.5 ACRE/1,000 PEOPLE (NO FIRM STANDARD IS APPLICABLE	USUALLY 2,500 SF TO 1 ACRE		NONE	4.2			4.4	,		4.5	`	, ,	4.7	7.7	
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK	COURT GAMES, PLAY FIELDS, PLAYGROUND. SITTING AREA. FOCUS ON IN-FORMAL ACTIVE/PASSIVE RECREATION	1.0 TO 2.0 ACRES / 1000 PEOPLE	5 TO 10 ACRES IS OPTIMAL (15 ACRES MAXIMUM)	BY NON-	45.8	8.4	ТО	16.8	8.7	то	17.5	9.0	то	18.0	9.4	TO 18.8	
COMMUNITY PARK	SERVES A BROADER PURPOSE THAN NEIGHBORHOOD PARK. FOCUS IS ON COMMUNITY-BASED RECREATION NEEDS/PRESERVING UNIQUE LANDSCAPES	5.0 TO 8.0 ACRES / 1000 PEOPLE	AS NEEDED, USUALLY 30 TO 50 ACRES (15 ACRES MINIMUM)		68.6	41.9	то	67.0	43.7	то	69.8	44.9	то	71.8	46.9	TO 75.0	
SCHOOL PARK FACILITY	COMBINES PARK WITH SCHOOL SITES. MAY BE ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE OR HIGH SCHOOL. MAY SATISFY NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMUNITY OR SPORTS COMPLEX NEED	VARIABLE SIZE DEPENDING ON FUNCTION	DETERMINED BY SCHOOL DISTRICT SITES / PROPERTIES	SERVES NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITY	55 (NOT INCLUDED)												
SPORTS COMPLEX	CONSOLIDATES HEAVILY PROGRAMMED ATHLETIC FIELDS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES TO LARGER AND FEWER SITES STRATEGICALLY LOCATED	DETERMINED BY DEMAND, MINIMUM 25 ACRES, 40-80 ACRES OPTIMAL	STRATEGICALLY LOCATED COMMUNITY WIDE FACILITIES	A COMMUNITY WIDE FACILITY	77												
OVERALL SYSTEM	ALL DEVELOPED PARK LAND	6.25 TO 10.5 ACRES / 1000 PEOPLE			191.4	52.4	то	88.0	54.6	то	91.7	56.1	то	94.3	58.6	TO 98.5	CITY IS ALREADY MORE THAN 2X 2028 STANDARDS
BASEBALL / SOFTBALL		1 FIELD / 2,000 PEOPLE		1/4-1/2 MILE	7 [9]	4			4			4			5		
BASKETBALL		1 COURT / 1,000 PEOPLE		1/4-1/2 MILE	6[7]	8			9			9			9		
BOATING		100 ACRES OF WATER SURFACE / 1,000 PEOPLE		N/A	57	838			873			898			938		PARSONS UPLAND RESERVOIR - NO MOTORIZED BOATS
GOLF		18 HOLES / 25,000 PEOPLE		1/2-1 HOUR TRAVEL TIME	35+	6			6			6			7		
PICNICKING		7 TO 14 TABLES / 1,000 PEOPLE		N/A		59			61			63			66		
SOCCER		1 FIELD / 2,000 PEOPLE		1-2 MILES	6[8+]	4			4			4			5		
SWIMMING - INDOOR POOL		1 POOL / 20,000 PEOPLE		15-30 MIN. TRAVEL TIME	1	0			0			0			0		
SWIMMING - OUTDOOR POOL		1-50 METER POOL / 20,000 PEOPLE		15-30 MIN. TRAVEL TIME	2	0			0			0			0		
TENNIS		1 COURT / 2,000 PEOPLE		1/2 MILE	4[10]	4			4			4			5		
THEATER - OUTDOOR STAGE		1 STAGE / 20,000 PEOPLE		N/A	1	0			0			0			0		
TRACK AND FIELD		1 TRACK / 10,000 PEOPLE		N/A	1[2]	1			1			1			1		
TRAILS - BIKING		1 MI. / 1,500 PEOPLE		N/A	13.7	6			6			6			6		
TRAILS - HIKING		1 MI. / 5,000 PEOPLE		N/A	0	2			2			2			2		
TRAILS - NATURE		1 MI. / 10,000 PEOPLE		N/A	1+	1			1			1			1		
VOLLEYBALL		1 COURT / 5,000 PEOPLE		N/A	4	2			2			2			2		

⁽¹⁾ BASED ON 1995 NATIONAL "PARK, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAY GUIDELINES."

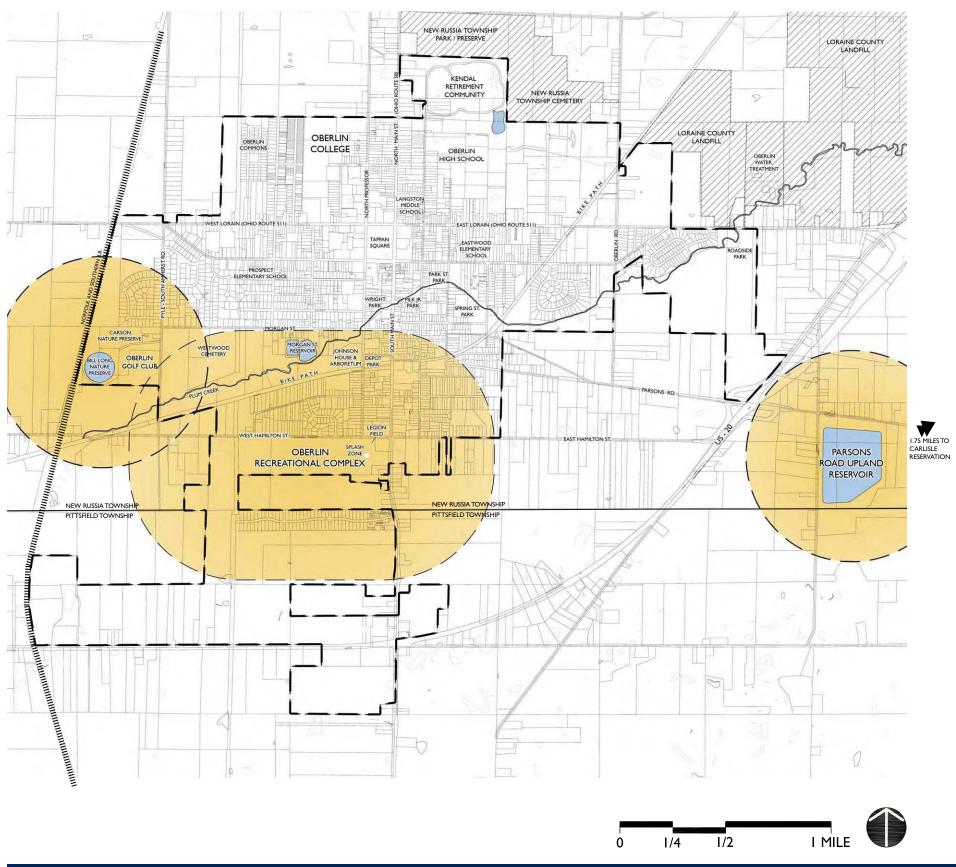


⁽²⁾ BASED ON THE 1983 NATIONAL FACILITY STANDARDS FOUND IN "RECREATION, PARK, AND OPEN SPACE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

⁽³⁾ BASED ON POPULATION ESTIMATE OF 8,381 (Ohio Department of Development)

⁽⁴⁾ BASED ON POPULATION PROJECTION OF 8,731 (Growth of 50 persons per year based on 2004 comprehensive plan update)

⁽⁵⁾ BASED ON POPULATION PROJECTION OF 8,981 (Growth of 50 persons per year based on 2004 comprehensive plan update)
(6) BASED ON POPULATION PROJECTION OF 9,381 (Growth of 50 persons per year based on 2004 comprehensive plan update)
(7) NUMBERS IN BRACKETS INDICATE TOTALS INCLUDING FACILITIES AT PUBLIC SCHOOL SITES





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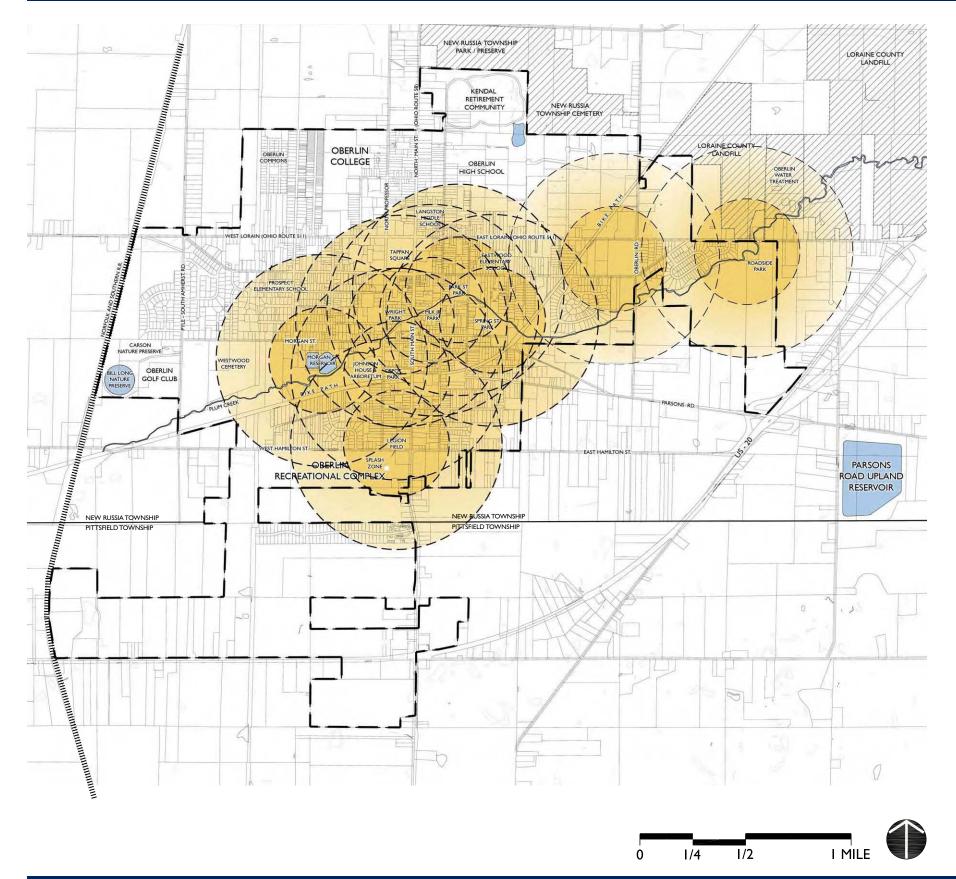
IIIIIIIIIIIIII RAILROAD



LEVEL OF SERVICE AREA
COMMUNITY PARK = 1/2 TO 3 MILE RADIUS
** ONLY 1/2 MILE RADIUS SHOWN - WALKABLE DISTANCE **

COMMUNITY PARKS
BILL LONG NATURE PRESERVE
OBERLIN RECREATIONAL COMPLEX
PARSONS UPLAND RESERVOIR







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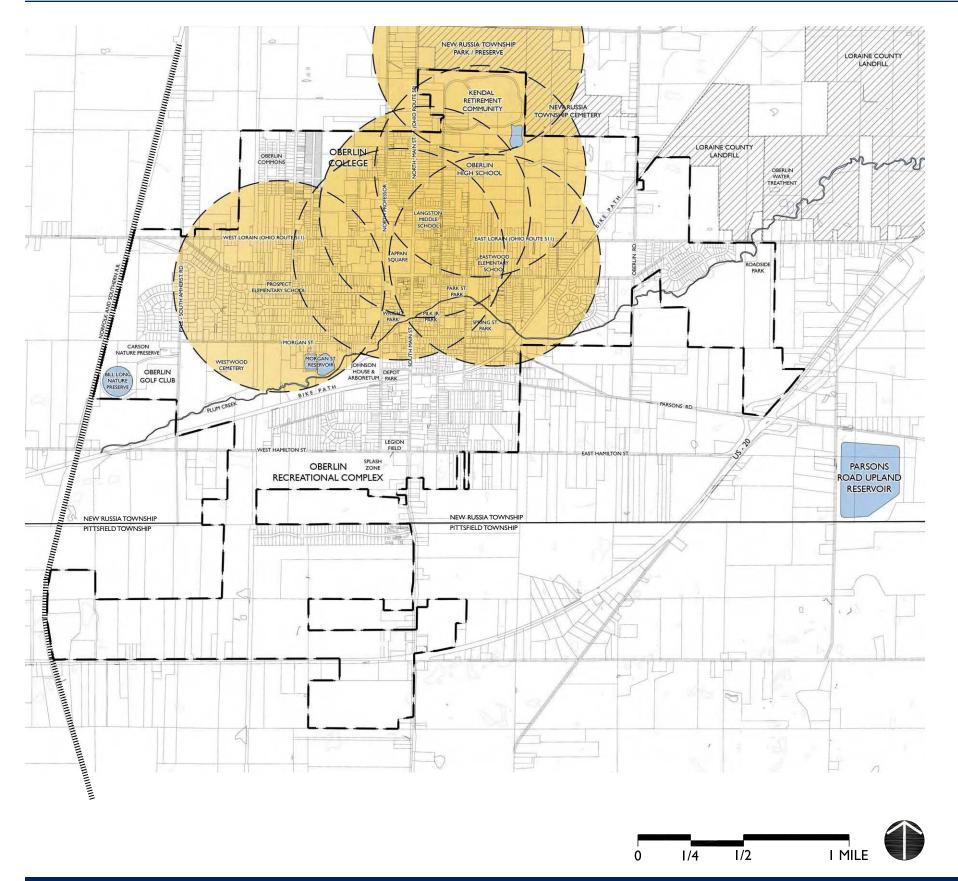
IIIIIIIIIIIIII RAILROAD



LEVEL OF SERVICE AREA NEIGHBORHOOD PARK = 1/4 TO 1/2 MILE RADIUS

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

DEPOT PARK LEGION FIELD MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. PARK PARK ST. PARK ROAD SIDE PARK SPRING STREET PARK WRIGHT PARK MORGAN STREET RESERVOIR





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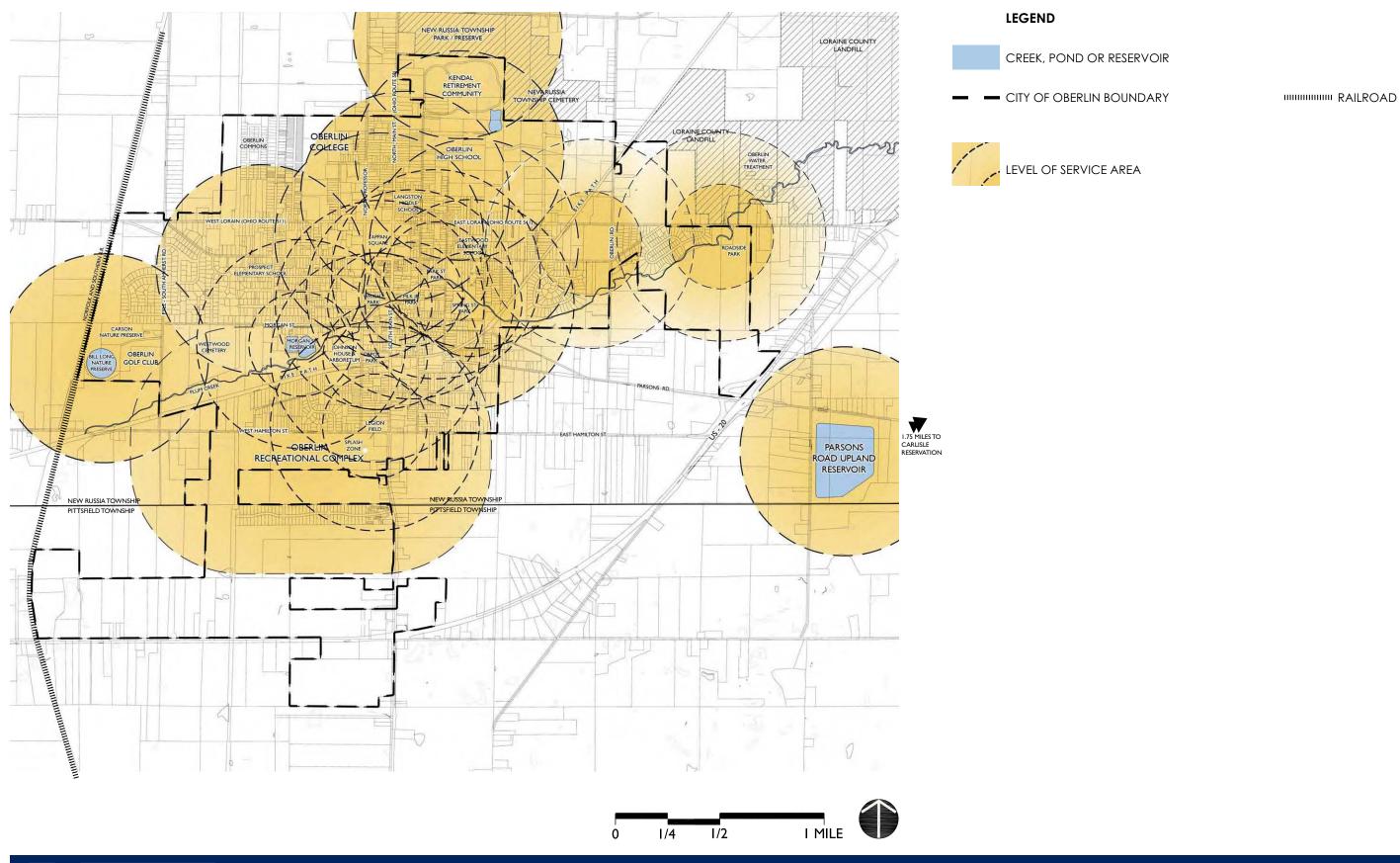


LEVEL OF SERVICE AREA
OTHER PARK = 1/2 TO 3 MILE RADIUS
** ONLY 1/2 MILE RADIUS SHOWN - WALKABLE DISTANCE **

OTHER PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

NEW RUSSIA TOWNSHIP PARK / PRESERVE TAPPAN SQUARE OBERLIN HIGH SCHOOL LANGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL EASTWOOD ELEMENTARY PROSPECT ELEMENTARY







In conjunction with city staff the planning team developed two basic instruments for soliciting input. The first of these was a basic community input survey which was mailed to each home in the community with their utility bill. The survey was also available on the project web-site, the City's web-site, the Public Library, Oberlin Community Services and the Recreation and Public Works offices at City Hall. It was promoted throughout the city with posters generated by Recreation Division staff.

The survey included twenty-five questions related to topics including parks facilities, recreation programming and demographic information (a copy of the survey is included in the appendix of this document). Of the 2000+ surveys that were mailed out the team received 258 responses. Responses to each question were tallied, checked for validity and then tabulated for response frequency. Selected questions were then cross tabulated in order to weigh responses that were relative to one another.

In addition to the mailed survey request the planning team and advisory committee members felt it was important to request

input from local youth. A separate input tool was generated to solicit input from various school aged children from the community. In order to assist potential survey facilitators and to generate responses based on consistent questions the survey was formatted as two posters with five questions to be filled in by the facilitator by a show of hands from the group indicated on each poster. Questions included general demographics as well as input on what existing parks children currently use and what types of potential new park features were interesting to them based on photos shown on the poster. These surveys were presented to children attending summer parks programs with a total result of 145 responses.

While these citizen input tools are not scientific in nature when combined with input received from stakeholder meetings, community partner interviews and advisory committee input these tools do provide a reasonable source of feedback with which to review existing and future facilities and programming needs within the community.

The following is a summary of significant results from the community input survey:







Facilities

- 63.5% of survey respondents reported that their family currently recreates using City of Oberlin Parks and Trails and 42.8% currently recreate at the Splash Zone
- The Bike Path was identified as the most popular facility or feature...
 - 68.3% of survey respondents say that they use the bike path on at least a monthly basis
 - 73.9% of survey respondents saying that they get at least some use out of the walking and bike paths
 - 63.1% of survey respondents ranked more bike paths as a medium to high priority
- Legion Field was identified as the least used facility with 70.1% of survey respondents saying they do not use the park
- 63.5% of survey respondents said that they are not currently members of the Splash Zone
- 52.4% of survey respondents said they were at least somewhat willing to pay for a stand alone community recreation center through membership dues or a tax increase

Programming

- Survey respondents demonstrated the importance for the City to provide or support recreational programs with at least 69.7% of survey respondents ranking programming in every category as somewhat to very important.
- 86% of survey respondents ranking programming for teenagers as somewhat to very important
- 83.7% of survey respondents ranking programming for children ages 6-11 as somewhat to very important
- However, 63.1% of survey respondents said that their families do not currently participate in Spring/Summer Programs and 69.7% do not participate in Fall/ Winter Programs
- 53.5% of survey respondents do not feel well informed about Recreation Programming
- Interest in different types of potential programming varied widely with the most popular being Fitness Classes which 16.2% of survey respondents identified as being something they would participate in if offered
- Lack of child care was not identified as a reason for not participating in recreation programming with only 6.3% saying that child care was a reason for not participating

For full survey results and survey copy, please see the Appendix.





The third and final method for determining community leisure needs was to perform a benchmarking analysis. Benchmarking is the systematic process of searching for best practices, innovative ideas and highly effective operating procedures that lead to superior performance by making a comparison to communities with similar demographic statistics. The benchmarking process identifies potential goals and policy development based on comparable agencies and comparable outcomes and thereby provides a basis for the development of recommendations for organizational improvements. In most general terms, a benchmark was originally a point from which a standard against others could be measured. In this context, a benchmark serves as a reference point in determining one's current position.

In selecting cities to include in the benchmarking study it quickly became evident that it is difficult to find equivalent cities to the City of Oberlin. This is largely due to the fact that Oberlin is a small city with an extensive historical and cultural heritage and a steady population. Several factors were considered in selecting cities for inclusion in the benchmarking study including total population, presence of a college or university, or minimal population growth/loss. Cities included in the benchmarking study:

- Granville, Licking County (Dennison University)
- 2. St. Clairsville, Belmont County (Belmont Technical College)
- 3. Nelsonville, Athens County (Hocking College)
- Kirtland, Lake County (Lakeland Community College)
- 5. Ada, Hardin County (Ohio Northern University)

These cities were studied to compare several measures including:

- 1. Acres of Parkland
- 2. Recreation Facilities
- 3. Operations / Maintenance
- 4. Organizational Structure
- 5. Recreation Programming
- 6. Parks & Recreation Staffing

Summary of Findings:

After speaking with the listed cities, data was collected and responses were recorded to the 13 question benchmarking analysis. The following highlights some of the general trends and special cases noted throughout the course of conducting this benchmarking analysis.

One area of focus for the analysis was recreation programming. Every city did in fact have some sort of city sponsored recreation programming. Granville, St. Clairsville and Kirtland had the most extensive programs with opportunities for youth through seniors. Both Nelsonville and Ada did have programming, however, their events were more limited to youth focused programs.

Other findings include a wide range of acreage of parkland. Ada had little to no parkland, whereas Oberlin is the leader in area of parkland available. Oberlin is comparable to the other cities in recreation facilities provided. None of the cities had all of the listed facilities, most did not have a recreation center, some had an outdoor pool, and a few had an indoor basketball facility. Finally, the organizational structure of parks and recreation varied widely. Some have a system where the departments are separate where as others are combined. Each city was unique in their organizational structure.







The following chart shows a comparative analysis of the benchmarking questions. For full results and a copy of the questionnaire, please see the Appendix.

Benchmarking City of Oberlin -- 2010 Parks Master Plan

	Oberlin	Granville	St. Clairsville	Nelsonville	Kirtland	Ada	
County:	Lorain	Licking	Belmont	Athens	Lake	Hardin	
Population:		•	•	•			
2000 U.S. Census	8,195	5,233 / 4,204 1	5,057	5,230	6,670	5,582	
2009 U.S. Estimates *	8,442	5,232	5,025	5,690	7,463	6,065	
Average Annual Pop. Change	0.3%	0.1%	-0.2%	0.9%	1.4%	1.0%	
Median Age (2000 Census)	23.6 yrs	41.5 yrs	46.0 yrs	26.8 yrs	42.5 yrs	22.0 yrs	
Total Households:				,			
2000 Census	2,678	1,384 2	2,430	2,273	2,558	1,948	
Total Households Income:	1 '			,		,	
2000 Census	\$ 41,094.00	\$ 67,689.00	\$ 36,630.00	\$ 20,634.00	\$ 65,422.00	\$ 24,665.00	
Race: (2000 Census)	, , , ,	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,			,,,	, ,	
White	71.92%	96.75%	94.48%	95.22%	98.47%	95.50%	
African-American	18.55%	0.69%		2.39%		1.58%	
Latino	3.04%	1.14%		1.24%		0.59%	
Other	6.49%					2.33%	
Parkland: (in acres)	3.1070		1	070	3.7070	2.30 70	
Developed	265	87 ₃	100	10	18	<1 10	
Un-developed	0	0	0	5	>30	0	
Recreation Facilities:	1		Ĭ	Ŭ	700	Ŭ	
Recreation Center	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	
Outdoor Pool	Yes	No	Yes ₅	Yes s	No	Yes 11	
Indoor Pool	No	No No	No.	No.	No	No	
Teen Center	No	Closed	Yes 6	No	No	No	
Indoor Basketball	No	Yes 4	Yes 7	No	No	No	
Owned by the City	INO	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
Operations / Maintenance:	I	INO	165	165	INO	165	
Maintain a Public Cemetery?	Yes	l No	No	No	Yes	No	
Other Maintenance?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No No	
Organizational Structure:	162	INO	162	INO	165	INO	
Separate Parks and Rec. Depts?	Yes	l No	No	No	Yes 9	Yes 12	
Annual Budget	162	\$583,000	\$300,000	\$280,000	\$200,000	T CS 12	
· ·	V			' '	' '		
Separate Rec. Programming & Maintenance Budgets?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes		
Recreation Programming:	Í	İ	İ		İ İ	i	
(City Sponsored)	V	\/	V	NI-	V	V	
Community Events	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
Senior Rec Programs	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Adult Rec Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Adult Sport Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Teen Rec Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	
Youth Rec Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
Youth Sport Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
Family Rec Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	
Parks & Rec Staffing:		1	1	•	, ,		
Parks FT	2.5	2	3	0	3		
Parks PT	3	2	2	0	2		
Recreation FT	2						
Recreation PT	39						

^{* 2009} Population Estimates based on information provided by the State of Ohio, Department of Development, Office of Strategic Development; Released by U.S. Census Bureau

- 1. Population for the Village is 5,233 / the balance of the township is 4,204. Total population is 9,437.
- Zero acres are owned by Park District. Land is leased by the Park District and owned by Granville Township.The Village of Granville maintains and manages over 87 acres of park property within the Village.
- 3. The indoor basketball courts are located in Bryn Du Mansion, the Recreation Center.
- 4. The Shadyside Pool is located within in city township.
- 5. Recreation Center doubles as Teen Center.
- 6. Indoor basketball courts are found within in Recreation Center.
- 7. The Nelsonville Water Park is the outdoor pool facility which is owned and operated by the City of Nelsonville.
- 8. The Public Works Department is responsible for park maintenance while the recreational programming is through the community center.
- 9. The only park land owned by the city is the Railroad Depot. Other parks are maintained and separately owned.
- 10. The Ada Municipal Swimming Pool is maintained by the Village.
- 11. One park is maintained by the Village, another by a separate Park Board, and then school playground are maintained by the school district.









PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS



TAPPAN SQUARE IN DOWNTOWN OBERLIN

After reviewing all of the information collected, the Consultant Team worked with the Planning Advisory Committee to develop a list of recommendations for consideration. Knowing that not all potential long term recommendations can be completed immediately, these strategies have been categorized into two separate areas of focus as follows: organizational improvements and physical improvements.



strategic plan

1. Goal: Provide a variety of recreational opportunities to residents.

Objective:

Improve the diversity and efficiency of recreational opportunities available to residents by maintaining and enhancing community partnerships.

Due to the current difficult economic climate and the limited resources available to local governments, a major recent trend in the Parks and Recreation industry has been for local governments to partner with local schools, neighboring communities, regional park systems to improve the diversity and efficiency of recreation opportunities available to residents. Oberlin is fortunate to have successful relationships with several partners in the surrounding community. Oberlin College, Oberlin City Schools, Lorain County Metro Parks, New Russia Township and others all contribute to the recreational goals of the community through cooperative efforts in either programming or providing facilities for activities run by the Oberlin Recreation Division. We believe it is very important for the city to work to continually enhance these relationships in order to maintain not only the appropriate physical park spaces needed in the community but also to provide additional programming opportunities to Oberlin's citizens.

One of the primary weaknesses identified from responses to the community-wide survey points to either a lack of awareness or limitations for desirable programming offered by the city. This is evidenced by the fact that less than 10% of respondents ranked the recreation programming offered for teenagers, adults, seniors, families, and special needs as excellent. By enhancing relationships with various community partners the city can offer more updated, expanded and varied programming to its constituents. Examples include: may alternative programming in areas like art, theater, music, sports, etc., coordination with Lorain County Metro Parks for nature education or to utilize its expanded Splash Zone facility for open gym for Oberlin residents or fitness classes, or a partnership to enhance public school grounds to provide higher quality playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, or athletic fields for neighborhood use during non-school hours.

Action Items

- Compare programming offered by The City of Oberlin to programming offered by community partners to identify groups or program types that are being under served.
- 2. Develop a comprehensive listing of programs offered by The City of Oberlin and its community partners that is easily accessible to residents







2. Goal: Efficiently administer parks and recreation services.

Objective:

Ensure that administrative **functions** (programming, maintenance, operations, etc.) related to parks and recreation are performed efficiently and in keeping with industry best practices.

One of the ever-present challenges to recreation departments throughout Ohio is the balance of available funding for programming, operations and maintenance. Public entities are constantly reviewing ways to do more, or at least maintain their current services for a smaller portion of the annual budget. Given what seems to be an unlikely reversal in this trend of available funding it would be wise to include a review of methods to deliver parks and recreation related services in the most efficient manner possible. For the purposes of this section the word 'services' refers not only to recreational programming but also departmental operations, maintenance and capital improvements to park grounds, etc.

Assuming Oberlin continues to evolve and expand its recreational opportunities to meet the desires expressed by the community there will be a continued need for a well coordinated effort to operate, maintain and possibly construct new park features for its citizens. If there is indeed a likelihood that these efforts will need to be accomplished with flat or reduced budgets in the foreseeable future then the City may benefit from a review of the organizational structure that is currently in place to provide these services. Four potential organizational options that might be worth consideration include:

Maintain the status quo. Parks remains part of the Buildings & Grounds Division within the Public Works Department; Recreation remains a division within the Planning Department

strategic plan



WRIGHT PARK

- Merge the Recreation Division of the Planning Department into the Public Works Department, future structure within the Public Works Department to be determined.
- Merge the Buildings & Grounds Division or at least the Parks maintenance functions into the Planning Department, future structure within the Planning Department to be determined.
- Create a new Parks and Recreation Department within city government with a Parks and Recreation Director appointed by and reporting to the City Manager.

Each of these options has relative advantages and disadvantages structurally, economically, and for the personnel that would be involved. These need to be explored more fully in order to make an informed decision.

Action Items

1. Study financial and administrative impacts of Parks and Recreation organizational structure







Our assessment of the existing parks facilities along with feedback received through the various resident surveys leads to a few specific physical improvements to be planned for as a follow-up task to this strategic planning process.

3. Goal: Improve the quality of the most used recreational facilities.

Maintain and enhance the role of bikeways as transportation and recreation amenity

All sources of input point to the city's bikeways as one of the most heavily used and identifiable recreation amenities within the community. This resource has the potential to become even more meaningful to the community as both a physical connector and a means to access one of the most prominent natural features in the area by analyzing new segments that can be added along the Plum Creek corridor.

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance defines a bicycle friendly community as one that "attempts to create an urban environment that is conducive to safe and convenient bicycling. At the same time the community becomes more livable for everyone by improving health, reducing congestion, providing transportation choices, and creating connections" (http:// www.bta4bikes.org/). An important aspect of this definition is the idea that residents can safely access various parts of the community via safe bike routes from their home or workplace. While the existing rail trail provides an excellent outlet for longer range usage, it is really geared for faster paced linear recreation. The connectivity and accessibility of the community to bicycle transportation could be improved in several ways including the connection of existing city owned properties with path segments along the creek corridor, establishment of bike lanes on existing streets with adequate

width, enhanced connectivity between parks (including the New Russia Township Park), and by providing enhanced access to the Central Business District.

Maintain and enhance the role of greenways as an environmental amenity

An important current trend in the Parks and Recreation industry is the recognition of the importance of connecting people with the natural environment. The City of Oberlin has a unique opportunity to improve access to and along Plum Creek utilizing the existing network of parks and open space, where users could explore the natural creek corridor. An opportunity exists for coordinating efforts between the city, Oberlin College, ODNR, Lorain County Metro Parks, etc. in the clean-up and restoration of the creek corridor throughout the city. This process should focus on the removal of invasive plant species and any necessary realignment or naturalization of the creek bed itself to help prevent cutbank erosion and related degradation of water quality. Specific areas to consider connections along Plum Creek include the segment from South Professor Street east to Spring Street Park as well as any segments that could better connect Roadside Park to adjacent neighborhoods to the west.

Action Items

- Identifykeyconnectionsneededfor improving bikeway connectivity
- 2. Identify potential on street routes for bicycles
- 3. Analyze environmental improvements needed along Plum Creek
- 4. Grant Funding Assessment







4. Goal: Provide parkland that is easily accessible by all residents throughout the City of Oberlin.

Objective:

Acquire and develop park land south of Hamilton Street to address geographic deficiencies in the level of service (gaps in service radii)

A review of existing park locations throughout the community indicates very strong level of service. As evidenced by the Level of Service mapping, two potential gaps do appear. The first is the largely undeveloped southern portions of the community. Planning principles recommend providing open space areas within about one quarter to one half mile of any area within the community. This distance is considered to be the comfortable range to be able to walk from home or work to the park or open space. Future plans for the southern portion of Oberlin should include the provision of neighborhood parks that would meet this comfortable walking distance standard.

Additionally, the City owns the former Ramsey Railroad right-of-way from the bike path south across Hamilton St. to US 20. From the bike path to Hamilton St., a spur has been added to connect the bike path to the City's Recreation Complex. A gravel access road has been placed from Hamilton St. south to US 20 to provide access for utility maintenance. This right-of way could form the spine to connect future park(s) to the Recreation Complex, the bike path, and other points in the City.

Acquire and develop park land in the northeast portion of the City near Oberlin Road to address geographic deficiencies in the level of service (gaps in service radii)

Our study indicates a gap in the level of service radii on the east side of the community. Roadside Park is the nearest park to this service gap. According to citizen input, Roadside Park is considered somewhat inaccessible due to its location on State Route 511 at the edge of town. Our study has identified the Green Acres site as an optimum location to fill this level of service gap. This property has recently become available and the City is currently in the final stages of its acquisition. National Standards Analysis and the Level of Service Analysis both tend to suggest that from a community recreation standpoint only, the most desirable use of the Green Acre site would be the development of a Community Park (15+ acres). This is the only park classification in which our study indicates the City has any shortcomings based on 2028 population projections. Development as a community park would improve the overall level of service for the entire City. Nonetheless, the City's parks and recreation portfolio would still benefit from the partial development of this site as a Neighborhood Park.





Action Items

- 1. Identify potential sites that would fill gap in level of service
- 2. Evaluate methods of land acquisition (city purchase, land donations, development requirements)
- 3. Implement an inclusive planning process for the future development of the Green Acres site that includes future parkland and/or recreational facilities programming

5. Goal: Provide facilities to meet residents' recreational needs.

Objective:

Address community desires to improve its park system through the inclusion of additional amenities in existing parks.

Our requests for input from the community included identification of specific park amenities that could be added to existing parks to make the overall park system better for the community. These requests were made not only on the community-wide survey but also during input sessions held with children at the summer playgrounds program. Items mentioned at fairly high rates include:



OBERLIN BIKE PATH

% of survey respondents ranking as a high or medium priority

More Bike Paths	.63.1%
Restrooms in Parks	.38.4%
Dog park	.35.7%
Neighborhood Spraygrounds	.31.3%
Additional Basketball Courts	. 28.8%
Skate Park	.21.4%

Action Items

- 1. Conduct exercises to obtain further public input on each new improvement to maximize its appeal by identifying specifics related to location and design (surveys, focus groups, etc.)
- 2. Create a capitol improvement budget with prioritized projects.
- 3. Initiate design development and construction of prioritized improvements.







6. Goal: Provide facilities for indoor recreational programming.

Objective:

Determine the feasibility / necessity of a City owned indoor recreation facility.

A great deal of feedback in all sessions conducted in the planning process has been focused on whether or not the city should consider a facility of its own to provide space for indoor recreational programming. Question #7 of The Community Input Survey indicated that desired activities in such a facility include:

Activity	% of survey respondents ranking as Somewhat Important	% of survey respondents ranking as Most Important
Fitness AreaSpace for Teen Recreation Multi-use Court Space for Basketball Leagues or		
Open GymsMulti-Purpose Rooms		

Action Items

- 1. Conduct a statistically valid phone survey to determine residents need for programming and support of a stand alone community center versus shared space with community partners.
- 2. Comparing programming needs with programming offered by community partners.
- 3. Refine programming of uses to be accommodated by community center based on additional survey input.
- 4. Study shared use options including re-use of an existing school building if a future school consolidation takes place, addition of a community center space associated with a new school facility should one be developed, expansion of the Splash Zone through an enhanced partnership with Lorain County Metro Parks, or construction of a free-standing structure on a new site such as Green Acres Children's Home or another similar site.
- 5. Conduct a feasibility study based on anticipated program of uses for community
- 6. Review funding options (tax increases, user fees, etc.)

Note: Full Community Input Survey Results are available in the Appendix.











APPENDIX

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS

Parks and Recreation Facilities

1. Where do you and your family recreate now?

1.	City of Oberlin Parks & Trails	63.5%
	At Home	
3.	Splash Zone	42.8%
4.	Oberlin College Recreation Center (Philips Gym)	32.5%
5.	Other	22.9%
6.	At Work	11.8%
7.	Another Private Fitness Center	10.0%
8.	At Oberlin Schools	08.9%
9.	At Church	08.9%

2. How often does your family currently visit/use the following parks and facilities within the City of Oberlin?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	<6 times per year		No Answer
Bike Path	16.6%	38.4%	13.3%	16.6%	10.3%	04.8%
Oberlin Recreation Complex	04.8%	19.9%	05.5%	17.0%	35.8%	17.0%
Westwood Cemetery Spring St.	04.1%	11.4%	17.3%	19.9%	33.6%	13.7%
Park	03.0%	04.8%	08.5%	14.0%	49.8%	19.9%
Park Street Park	02.6%	11.1%	04.8%	11.1%	47.6%	22.9%
Morgan St. Reservoir	01.8%	08.5%	10.0%	31.0%	32.8%	15.9%
Depot Park	01.8%	03.7%	06.6%	16.6%	49.8%	21.4%
Bill Long Nature Preserve	01.1%	04.8%	06.3%	19.6%	48.7%	19.6%

Martin						
Luther King						
Jr. Park01.1%	01.1%	02.6%	22.5%	50.2%		22.5%
Wright Park01.1%	00.4%	03.3%	09.2%	59.4%		26.6%
Legion Field00.7%	00.4%	01.1%	01.1%	70.1%		26.6%
Roadside						
Park00.4%	00.7%	00.4%	07.0%	65.7%		25.8%
Parsons						
Road						
Upland	01 00/	02.00/	14 20/	E4 00/		22 10/
Reservoir00.0%	U1.8%	03.0%	10.2%	50.8%		22.1%
3. Within the park sys	tem, rank th	ie 3 park fea	itures or activi	ities that y	our family	uses most
1. Walking/Biking Paths			6. Other Activ	ities		
1. Most Use			1. Most Us	se	04.8%	
2. Some Use	18.5%		2. Some l	Jse	03.3%	
3. Least Use	08.1%			se		
4. Not Ranked	18.1%		4. Not Ra	nked	90.0%	
2. Open Green Space			7. Picnic Shelt	ers		
1. Most Use	14.8%		1. Most Us	se	03.3%	
2. Some Use	21.0%		2. Some l	Jse	07.0%	
3. Least Use	12.9%		Least U			
4. Not Ranked	51.3%		4. Not Ra	nked	80.1%	
3. Playground Equipme	ent		8. Fishing			
1. Most Use			1. Most Us	se	03.3%	
2. Some Use			2. Some l	Jse	05.9%	
3. Least Use	05.5%		Least U	se	03.7%	
4. Not Ranked	68.3%		4. Not Ra	nked	87.1%	
4. Athletic Fields			9. Grills			
1. Most Use	11.1%		1. Most Us	se	02.2%	
2. Some Use				Jse		
3. Least Use			3. Least U	se	02.2%	
4. Not Ranked			4. Not Ra	nked	91.1%	
5. Basketball Courts			10. Horseshoe	Pits		
1. Most Use	07.0%			se	00.4%	
2. Some Use				Jse		
3. Least Use				se		
4. Not Ranked				nked		







4. Please indicate your level of support for additional park features.

1	More Bike	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not Interested	No Answer
1.		36.5%	26.6%	10.3%	14.0%	12.5%
2.	Restrooms	25.5%	12.9%	14.4%	23.2%	24.0%
3.	Dog Park	23.2%	12.5%	13.3%	35.8%	15.1%
4.	More Passive Open Space	22.1%	19.6%	17.0%	25.1%	16.2%
5.	Neighborhood Sprayground	19.9%	11.4%	13.3%	33.6%	21.8%
6.	More Small Neighborhood Pocket Parks	16.6%	23.6%	14.4%	25.1%	20.3%
7.	More Basketba Courts		14.8%	16.2%	36.5%	18.5%
8.	Other	13.7%	00.4%	00.0%	01.1%	84.9%
9.	Skate Park	09.2%	12.2%	17.7%	44.6%	16.2%
10.	More Parking	_09.2%	10.0%	15.5%	32.1%	33.2%
11.	More Athletic Fields	07.4%	13.7%	21.4%	37.3%	20.3%
12.	Tennis Courts	06.6%	22.1%	22.1%	30.3%	18.8%
	BMX Course (Off Road Biking)_04.1%	07.4%	15.5%	55.0%	18.1%

5. Are you currently a member of the Splash Zone?

No_____63.5% Yes____34.3% No Answer____02.2%





6. If you are not a member of the Splash Zone, why not?

1.	Other	22.1%
2.	Have membership / access to a similar facility	21.4%
3.	Don't fell welcome	13.3%
4.	Too crowded	10.0%
5.	Too expensive	08.1%
6.	It doesn't provide the facilities that I need	05.2%
7.	Not in a convenient location for me	02.2%

7. Based on the indoor facilities that are currently available to you and your family in the area, consider the following: If a stand alone community recreation center building existed, rank the 3 activities that you feel would be most important to be accommodated in that facility.

1. 2. 3.	ommunity space for teens Most Important Somewhat Important Least Important Not Ranked	14.8% 10.3%
1. 2. 3.	less Area Most Important Somewhat Important Least Important Not Ranked	11.1% 07.7%
1. 2. 3.	mnasium Most Important Somewhat Important Least Important Not Ranked	07.7% 08.1%
1. 2. 3.	Itipurpose Rooms Most Important Somewhat Important Least Important Not Ranked	15.1% 11.8%
1. 2.	oor Pool Most Important Somewhat Important Least Important	08.5%

6. Small kitchen / banquet facilities		
Most Important		
2. Somewhat Important		
3. Least Important	08.5	%
4. Not Ranked	80.8	%
7. Performing arts area		
1. Most Important	07.4	%
Somewhat Important		
3. Least Important		
4. Not Ranked		
8. Community space for seniors		
1. Most Important	06.3	%
Somewhat Important		
3. Least Important		
4. Not Ranked		
9. Parks and Recreation office space	2	
Most Important		%
Somewhat Important		
3. Least Important		
4. Not Ranked		
T. NOUNCHINGO	02.3	/0





4. Not Ranked _______78.6%

8. Indicate your willingness to pay for a stand alone community recreation center through membership dues or a tax increase

1.	Somewhat willing	39.9%
2.	Will not pay	21.8%
	Not very willing to pay	
4.	Very willing	12.5%
	No Opinion	

9. How would you rate the maintenance and upkeep of the City Parks and Parks Facilities, with 5 being maintained very well and 1 maintained quite poorly?

1.	Maintained Quite Poorly	02.2%
2.		12.2%
3.		21.4%
4.		35.8%
5.	Maintained Very Well	21.8%

Recreation Programs

11. How would you rate the Recreation Programming provided by the Recreation Division for adults and youth, with 5 being excellent programming and 1 being poor programming?

	5 (Excellent)		3	2	1 (Poor)	No Answer
Pre-School	10.7%	09.2%	10.0%	04.1%	05.2%	60.9%
Children 6-11	17.0%	10.7%	09.6%	02.6%	01.8%	58.3%
Teenagers	03.7%	05.5%	11.8%	10.3%	10.3%	58.3%
Adults	07.4%	08.5%	17.7%	05.5%	04.8%	56.1%
Senior Adults	07.7%	06.3%	12.2%	08.1%	06.6%	59.0%
Family Programming	04.8%	10.0%	15.9%	05.2%	05.2%	59.0%
Special Needs Programming	04.4%	05.5%	11.8%	07.0%	06.3%	64.9%

12. How important do you think it is for the City to provide or support recreational programs for each population group listed below?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important			No Answer
Pre-School	42.8%	26.9%	11.4%	06.3%	12.6%
Children 6-11	57.9%	25.8%	01.8%	03.7%	10.7%
Teenagers	70.5%	15.5%	01.5%	03.3%	09.2%
Adults	34.7%	35.8%	10.7%	04.8%	14.0%
Senior Adults	41.0%	35.4%	07.0%	05.2%	11.4%
Family Programming	39.5%	33.9%	04.8%	06.3%	15.5%
Special Needs Programming	36.5%	32.5%	04.1%	09.6%	17.3%

13. Which existing Recreation Programs do you or your family currently participate in?

	Spring/Summer Programs		Fall/Winter Programs
1.	Do Not Participate	63.1%	1. Do Not Participate69.7%
2.	Playground Experience	15.9%	2. After School Enrichment11.4%
3.	Open Gym	10.3%	3. Biddy Basketball10.7%
4.	Hoop Camp	09.2%	4. Indoor Soccer07.7%
5.	Soccer & Letters	08.5%	5. Book Club05.9%
6.	OB Jump	04.8%	5. Biddy Wrestling 05.9%
			7 Adult Drop-in Basketball 04.1%

14. Do you believe that the cost to participate in these programs is:

1.	No Opinion	55.7%
2.	A Fair Price	32.5%
3.	No Answer	07.7%
4.	Over Priced	03.0%
5.	Under Priced	01.1%





15. Which Special Events do you or your family currently participate in?

1.	4th of July	50.2%
	Halloween Parade	
3.	Midnight Bike Ride &	
	Pancake Breakfast	18.8%
3.	Annual Outdoor	
	Basketball Festival	18.8%
5.	Easter Egg Hunt	17.3%
6.	Earthday 5k Run	12.9%

16. For those events above that require a fee, do you believe that the cost to participate is:

1.	No Opinion	48.6%
2.	A Fair Price	33.6%
3.	No Answer	15.1%
4.	Over Priced	02.2%
5.	Under Priced	00.7%

17. Do you feel well informed about the Recreation Programming that is provided by the Recreation Division?

No......53.5% Yes....34.3% No Answer...12.2%

18. The following is a list of recreation programs and activities that are often offered by other communities, but not necessarily available in Oberlin. Please rank the 5 activities you or your family would participate in if offered in Oberlin:

1. Fitness Classes	16.2%
2. Art/Crafts Classes (Adult)	10.3%
3. Nature Classes	08.9%
4. Community Gardening	06.3%
4. Personal Fitness Training	06.3%
6. Kick Ball Leagues	05.9%
7. Golf Lessons	04.8%
8. Tennis Lessons	03.7%
9. Other	03.3%
10. Cooking Baking Classes	03.0%
10. Dance Classes(Youth)	03.0%
12. Dance Classes (Adult)	02.6%
12. Art/Crafts Classes (Youth)	02.6%
14. Tennis Leagues	02.2%
15.Track & Field (Youth)	01.5%
15. Sand Volleyball Leagues	01.5%
17. Cheerleading	01.1%
17. Adult Soccer	01.1%
17. Golf Leagues	01.1%
20. Indoor Volleyball Leagues	00.7%
21. Flag Football (Youth)	00.4%

19. Does the lack of child care prevent you from taking advantage of current recreation and fitness programs offered at Oberlin College Recreation Center (Philips Gym), Splash Zone, or your private fitness center?

Not Applicable	62.7%	No	.26.6%
Yes	.06.3%	No Answer	.04.4%





20. If child care was made available for a modest fee or as part of your membership fee for one of these facilities, would you be encouraged to use the facility more frequently?

Not Applicable	69.0%	No	15.1%
Yes	10.3%	No Answer	.05.5%

21. The ages in my household are:

1.	50-59 years	32.8%
2.	40-49 years	29.9%
3.	60-69 years	21.8%
4.	30-39 years	17.0%
5.	10-14 years	15.9%
6.		15.1%
7.	70-79 years	
8.	6-9 years	10.3%
9.	<5 years	15.1%
10	. 23-29 years	06.3%
11	. 19-22 years	04.8%
12	. 80 years +	15.1%

22. Which of these categories best describes the gross annual income of your household? (Before Taxes)

1.	\$50,000-\$74,999	22.9%
2.	\$75,000-\$99,999	21.0%
3.	\$100,000-\$149,999	18.1%
4.	\$25,000-\$49,999	12.5%
5.	No Answer	11.4%
6.	\$1-\$24,999	08.5%
7.	\$150,000-\$199,999	04.1%
8.	\$200,000+	01.5%

23. My residence is located in:

City of Oberlin	91.1%
New Russia Township	04.4%
Pittsfield Township	01.5%
No Answer	03.0%

24. If your residence is located in the City of Oberlin, please check which area on the map below.

1.	Southeast	44.6%
2.	Southwest	24.7%
3.	No Answer	14.8%
4.	Northeast	08.9%
	Northwest	

25. How long have you lived in the greater Oberlin Area?

> 10 years	66.4%
6-10 years	14.4%
1-5 years	
Northeast	
Northwest	
	6-10 years 1-5 years Northeast



Write In Comments of Oberlin Survey.

Bold lettering indicates the most popular answers.

1. Where do you and your family recreate now?

- -Lorain County Metro parks
- -Metro Parks
- -Westwood cemetery
- -Carlisle Reservation
- -Tappan Square
- -Oberlin Golf Club
- -Hamilton Complex
- -city streets
- -downtown
- -Bacon Woods
- -Oberlin College Soccer Fields
- -Lakeview Park in Lorain
- -long distance bicycling
- -out of town
- -New Russia Township Reserve
- -N. Ridgeville Bowling Alley
- -OC Bowling Lanes
- -Finley
- -Curves
- -Rail Trail At Kipton
- -Finley State Park
- -Sidewalks around town
- -exercise facilities
- -Country Skateland

10. Specific concerns about maintenance

- -Westwood Cemetery
 - -roads needs paving
 - -badly kept, should be a historic treasure
 - -gravestones are in terrible disrepair
 - -trash cans are overflowing
 - -sign at entrance in an eye sore
 - -rotting trees

- -needs to be a priority
- -needs more restroom facilities
- -clean up pond

-Park Street Park

- -no restroom; porta potty is not acceptable
- -basketball rim has been broken for a year
- -could use more mulch and rubber pads under play equipment

-Bike Paths

- -garbage cans on paths
- -debris
- -snow removal
- -dog droppings
- -poison ivy on path betweenWright Park and Professor St.
- -mowing
- -graffiti, near Spring St.
- -berry bushes should not have been cut down

-more frequent cutting of grass

-Splash Zone:

- -dressing rooms are overused and dirty
- -chlorine level way to high in the pool
- -need private stalls
- -weight room dirty/dusty
- -showers that work (water is too hot)
- -equipment is often broken, repair takes a long time

-litter, trash should be emptied more regularly

-areas of the Morgan St. Reservation look 'junky'







- -nighttime policing, cameras, vandalism
- -general safety, signs should be posted
- -implementation of a more active recycling program
- -spray more for insects
- -maintenance of structures needs to be increased
- -baseball diamonds need to be drug after rain so games aren't cancelled
- -no benches to watch children play
- -the shortcut between Vine St. and S. Professor along creek needs to be widened/paved
- -Arboretum
 - -woods are full of litter, broken glass: crack down on the camping/ partying-overgrown Poison Ivy
- -stop cutting grass by Plumb Creek then throwing it into the creek
- -Graffiti at Depot Street.
- -Spring St. Park
 -mulch/weeds under play
 ground equipment
 -Poison Ivy
- -Maintenance is good, but there needs to be an incentive for the community to do their part

- -No play area at Hamilton Road Ball Park
- -Road Side Park-vegetation is overgrown

General Comments

- -DOG PARK addition (#1 request)
- -no more portable toilets
- -better advertising of activities/ events around the community (promotional campaign or monthly pamphlet)
- -more specific programming for the youth
- -instead of a new facility, community gardens should be implemented in empty lots
- -Splash Zone
 - rules are too strict in regards to bringing in food and water
 mistreats African Americans
 better hours of operation
 addition of a blood pressure machine
- -better promotion/advertising of events/activities
- -multi-purpose park with trails +dog areas
- -centralize park facilities
- -repave city streets, ruining cars





- -Need more sidewalks throughout the city: Amherst rd, Morgan, College, Lorain, Pyle South
- -complete boundhouse project & park
- -This survey should be distributed better in collaboration with local stores, (also, online) yielding more participation
- -addition of a Target Shopping Center
- -Child care facility
- -outdoor chess
- -more fast food restaurants
- -users of the trails shouldn't have to stay on paths. Being able to explore should be encouraged.
- -repainting of crosswalks and parking lines
- -there is a need for a centrally located recreation center
- -Green Acres should be used for recreational facility offices
- -facilities need to be open earlier/later.
- -appreciate the flowers and hanging baskets
- -need mom/toddler programs
- -summer concerts should be moved to Friday nights for more attendance

- -bike/skate park... BMX lessons
- -programs and classes offered for a variety of ages
- -Community events; community track meet/field day
- -Need a bike path along Plum Creek connecting Park St. Wright Park west to the Reservation and Cemetery
- -more senior citizen activities
- -running/walking clubs
- -ice skating





O #1 Mb at City Dayle do you and your family so to?	
Q #1 -What City Park do you and your family go to?	
#1 Bill Long Nature Preserve: 2 GROUP SURVEY	
#2 Depot Park: 28 (By show of hands)	
#3 Park Street Park: 10	
#4 Martin Luther King Park: 13	
#5 Morgan Street Reservoir: /2 #6 Oberlin Recreation Complex: '4'/ Size: 1.4	
#7 Road Side Park: 16 Size: 47	
#8 Spring Street Park: 28	
#9 Westwood Cemetery: 8	
#10 Wright Park: /D Age	
#11 Bike Path: 51 Range: 6-7	
Q #2 – Is there something you would like to see in	
the Parks?	
Live in	4
#1 Neighborhood Spray grounds: 5/ Oberlin: 55	
#1 Neighborhood Spray grounds: 5/ Oberlin: 55 #2 Skate Park: 15 #3 BMX Bike Course: 13	
#4 Mara Small Neighborhood Parks: 19	
LIVE III	
#6 More Bike Paths: 12	
#7 Tennis Courts: 12	
#8 More Basketball Courts: 25 #9 More Athletic Fields: 19 Do you go to Splash	
#9 More Athletic Fields: 19 Do you go to Splash #10 More Passive Open Space: 21 Zone: all	
2011e. <u>411</u>	
Q #3- What do you like to do in the parks?	
monster trucks, Slides, more basket ball	
of wood, More monker bars hasker ball	100
Courts, more Swings, more baseball	
Fields, New rest Rooms (old ones Stink)	





Q#1-What C	ity Park do	you and	your family g	o to?
			•	

#1	Bill Long Nature Preserve:
#2	Depot Park: <u>26</u>
#3	Park Street Park: 21
#4	Martin Luther King Park: <u>30</u>
#5	Morgan Street Reservoir: 27
#6	Oberlin Recreation Complex: 36
#7	Road Side Park: 14
#8	Spring Street Park: 25
#9	Westwood Cemetery: <u>i2</u>
#10) Wright Park:
#11	Riko Dothe 34

Q #2 – Is there something you would like to see in the Parks?

#1 Neighborhood Spray grounds: 21
#2 Skate Park: 22
#3 BMX Bike Course: 33
#4 More Small Neighborhood Parks: 🔀
#5 Dog Park: <u><u>@</u> 19</u>
#6 More Bike Paths: <u>§</u>
#7 Tennis Courts: 20
#8 More Basketball Courts: 24
#9 More Athletic Fields: 20
#10 More Passive Open Space: 9

Q #3- What do you like to do in the parks?

-	
- merry-go-round	· nunning track
- Merry - go - Mund - Swimming peel	- gyms
- swings	- track team for
- tetnerbatt	ynunger kids
- Carnival	- more basketball courts
- inature parks	
-benches	
-skatelooard ramps	
- go kart derbys	

GROUP SURVEY

(By show of hands)

Group Size: 40

Age Range: 8-9

Live in Oberlin: 25

Live in

Township: 13

Live in 8

Ofner City: 8

Do you go to Splash

Zone: all







BENCHMARKING QUESTIONS

Benchmarking Questions – Granville, Ohio (Alicia Eckhart, (614) 571-0896)

Parkland

1. How many acres of developed parkland area owned by the City?

0 acres are owned by the Park District. Land is leased by the Park District, owned by Granville Township.

2. How many acres of un-developed parkland area owned by the City?

0 acres

Facilities

- 3. Does your City Feature any of the following facilities?
 - Recreation Center? Yes-Bryn Du Mansion owned by the Village of Granville
 - Outdoor Pool Facility? No
 - •Indoor Pool Facility? No
 - •Teen Center? Closed
 - Indoor Basketball Facilities? Yes-at Bryn Du Mansion and the schools
- 4. Are all of these facilities operated by the City?

No

Operations / Maintenance

5. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of a public cemetery?

No

6. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of curbed tree lawns and other public buildings (other than recreational facilities?)

No

Organizational Structure

7. Does your City maintain separate Parks and Recreation Departments?

strategic plan

No-The Park District offers both park services and recreational programming. The Park District does maintain the parks leased.

8. What is the approximate annual budget of your Parks and Recreation Department? \$583,000





9. Does your City budget recreational programming separately from maintenance activities?

Programming

- 10. Does your City Parks and Recreation Department offer any of the following programming?
 - Community Events? Yes
 - •Senior Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Adult Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Adult Sports Programs? Yes
 - •Teen Recreation Programs? Yes-only a few currently, but more to come
 - •Youth Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Youth Sports Programs? Yes
 - Family Recreation Programs? Yes
- 11. Can you send a listing of your programs offered?

www.granvillerec.org

- 12. How many full time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?
- 13. How many part time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?





Benchmarking Questions – St. Clairsville, Ohio (Kevin Barr, Director of Parks and Rec (740) 695-2037)

Parkland

- 1. How many acres of developed parkland area owned by the City? 100 acres
- 2. How many acres of un-developed parkland area owned by the City?

 0 acres

Facilities

- 3. Does your City Feature any of the following facilities?
 - Recreation Center? Yes-JB Martin Rec Center
 - Outdoor Pool Facility? Yes-Shadyside Pool, located within city township
 - •Indoor Pool Facility? No
 - •Teen Center? Yes-the rec center
 - Indoor Basketball Facilities? Yes-the rec center
- 4. Are all of these facilities operated by the City?

Yes

Operations / Maintenance

5. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of a public cemetery?

No-but it is being discussed

6. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of curbed tree lawns and other public buildings (other than recreational facilities?)

Yes-Buildings and Grounds Superintendant

Organizational Structure

7. Does your City maintain separate Parks and Recreation Departments?

No-the only park owned and maintained separately is Memorial Park which is ran through the township.

- 8. What is the approximate annual budget of your Parks and Recreation Department? \$300,000
- 9. Does your City budget recreational programming separately from maintenance activities?

 Yes







- 10. Does your City Parks and Recreation Department offer any of the following programming?
 - •Community Events? Yes
 - •Senior Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Adult Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Adult Sports Programs? Yes
 - •Teen Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Youth Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Youth Sports Programs? Yes
 - Family Recreation Programs? Yes-but limited
- 11. Can you send a listing of your programs offered?

 Online

- 12. How many full time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?
- 13. How many part time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ? 2 part time year around, the rest are seasonal





Benchmarking Questions - Nelsonville, Ohio (Joe Scherer, City Manager (740) 753-1314)

Parkland

1. How many acres of developed parkland area owned by the City? 10 acres

2. How many acres of un-developed parkland area owned by the City? 5 acres

Facilities

- 3. Does your City Feature any of the following facilities?
 - Recreation Center? No
 - Outdoor Pool Facility? Yes-Nelsonville Water Park, owned/operated by the city
 - •Indoor Pool Facility? No
 - •Teen Center? No
 - Indoor Basketball Facilities? No
- 4. Are all of these facilities operated by the City?

Yes, the pool is

Operations / Maintenance

5. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of a public cemetery?

No

6. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of curbed tree lawns and other public buildings (other than recreational facilities?) No

Organizational Structure

7. Does your City maintain separate Parks and Recreation Departments? No

strategic plan

- 8. What is the approximate annual budget of your Parks and Recreation Department? \$280,000
- 9. Does your City budget recreational programming separately from maintenance activities? No





- 10. Does your City Parks and Recreation Department offer any of the following programming?
 - •Community Events? No
 - •Senior Recreation Programs? No
 - Adult Recreation Programs? No
 - Adult Sports Programs? No
 - •Teen Recreation Programs? No
 - Youth Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Youth Sports Programs? Yes
 - Family Recreation Programs? No
- 11. Can you send a listing of your programs offered?

Little League Baseball; Pee Wee Football

- 12. How many full time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?
- 13. How many part time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?

 0-only seasonal employees for the pool and referees/umpires







Benchmarking Questions – Kirtland, Ohio (Public Works Department (440) 256-1234)

Parkland

- 1. How many acres of developed parkland area owned by the City?

 18 acres
- 2. How many acres of un-developed parkland area owned by the City? >30 acres

Facilities

- 3. Does your City Feature any of the following facilities?
 - Recreation Center? No
 - Outdoor Pool Facility? No
 - •Indoor Pool Facility? No
 - •Teen Center? No
 - •Indoor Basketball Facilities? No
- 4. Are all of these facilities operated by the City?

Nc

Operations / Maintenance

5. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of a public cemetery?

Yes

6. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of curbed tree lawns and other public buildings (other than recreational facilities?)

Yes

Organizational Structure

- 7. Does your City maintain separate Parks and Recreation Departments?
 - Yes-there is a Public Works Department responsible for park maintenance while the recreational programming is run through the community center.
- 8. What is the approximate annual budget of your Parks and Recreation Department? \$200,000-including staff pay
- 9. Does your City budget recreational programming separately from maintenance activities? Yes







- 10. Does your City Parks and Recreation Department offer any of the following programming?
 - Community Events? Yes
 - •Senior Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Adult Recreation Programs? Yes
 - Adult Sports Programs? Yes
 - •Teen Recreation Programs? No-through the schools
 - •Youth Recreation Programs? No-through the schools
 - Youth Sports Programs? Baseball-but that's a separate organization that only uses the parks
 - Family Recreation Programs? No
- 11. Can you send a listing of your programs offered?

 Online

- 12. How many full time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?
- 13. How many part time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?





Benchmarking Questions – Ada, Ohio (General Office (419) 634-4045)

Parkland

1. How many acres of developed parkland area owned by the City?

<1 acre-the Railroad Depot is the only city owned park

2. How many acres of un-developed parkland area owned by the City?

0 acres

Facilities

- 3. Does your City Feature any of the following facilities?
 - •Recreation Center? No
 - Outdoor Pool Facility? Yes-Ada Municipal Swimming Pool, maintained by the Village
 - Indoor Pool Facility? No
 - •Teen Center? No
 - Indoor Basketball Facilities? No.
- 4. Are all of these facilities operated by the City?

Yes

Operations / Maintenance

5. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of a public cemetery?

No

6. Is your City's Parks and Recreation Department responsible for maintenance of curbed tree lawns and other public buildings (other than recreational facilities?)

No

Organizational Structure

7. Does your City maintain separate Parks and Recreation Departments?

strategic plan

- 8. What is the approximate annual budget of your Parks and Recreation Department?

 Exact amount unknown, but very minimal since the city is only responsible for the maintenance of the Railroad Depot
- 9. Does your City budget recreational programming separately from maintenance activities?

 Unknown





- 10. Does your City Parks and Recreation Department offer any of the following programming?
 - •Community Events? Yes
 - •Senior Recreation Programs? No
 - Adult Recreation Programs? No
 - Adult Sports Programs? No
 - •Teen Recreation Programs? No
 - Youth Recreation Programs? Yes-t ball and basketball
 - Youth Sports Programs? Yes
 - Family Recreation Programs? No
- 11. Can you send a listing of your programs offered?

cc:-- --

- 12. How many full time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?

 Unknown
- 13. How many part time employees does your Parks and Recreation Department employ?

 Unknown





