

CITY OF WOODSTOCK PARK MASTER PLAN 2005

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- Exhibit 1 - Existing Park Facilities
- Exhibit 2 - Park Land Dedication and Development
- Exhibit 3 - Standards for Park Facilities
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The City of Woodstock 2002 Comprehensive Plan begins with **“It has been said that Woodstock is a place that did not happen by accident. As a planned city that was laid out in a perfect grid in 1844, a two acre Park-in-the Square marks the heart of the city.”** This opening statement is significant for two reasons. It confirms the City’s long term understanding that park land, open space, and public meeting spaces are critical to the success of our community and for the overall well being of our residents and also shows that the City of Woodstock has consistently planned for park and open space from the very inception of our community. This commitment to providing proper planning for park and open space is now being provided through this Master Plan document.

The City of Woodstock completed the first comprehensive Park Master Plan in 1998. When looking back at the goals set in 1998, the City has been very successful and has enhanced the park facilities and opportunities for our residents during this period. The number, wide variety, and dollar amount for the accomplishments that have already been realized are impressive and will benefit our residents for many years. It is now appropriate to document these accomplishments and update the City’s Master Plan to aid in ongoing efforts to expand and improve park and recreational facilities for our residents.

One of the principal objectives with the preparation of this formal Master Plan is to establish a process of communication and joint decision making involving the City Council, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the City staff, current user groups, future user groups, and interested residents. The final product is a planning document to aid in the future development and management of the City's facilities and resources that will serve the needs of all interested groups and the residents of the City of Woodstock within practical fiscal limits. The Master Plan includes narrative descriptions of important topics and considerations, charts, maps, population and user group trends, standards for development and use, and specific standards and recommendations for future improvements. This Plan provides a means, utilizing input from a wide variety of sources, that can be used by the City to work toward a common goal in order to best serve the residents of our community.

The Plan is divided into several sections beginning with an overview of the current structure of the City's services for our approximately 21,657 residents and an estimated 9,000 to 10,000 additional non-residents who utilize the City’s parks and recreational facilities on a regular basis. Subsequent sections contain specific information to describe current facilities, a description of the user groups who rely on the City's facilities and also add to the overall recreational choices, standards for park and recreational uses, and specific recommendations for improvements. It is important that any reader of this Master Plan reference all of the available information, in order to obtain a complete overview of the current conditions, before conclusions are made regarding future improvements and planned changes.

BENEFITS OF MASTER PLAN

The City of Woodstock Park Master Plan confirms the community's opinion of the importance and value of park land, park facilities, recreational facilities, and open space as a critical and essential part of the overall quality of life that is unique to Woodstock. The City's parks significantly contribute to the quality of life and sense of place for Woodstock residents and can best be managed and enhanced with the long term benefits provided by a master plan. This Plan will provide a guide for our residents, private user groups, and Woodstock government representatives for the future growth and development of all park and recreational facilities following sound financial controls.

The development of this Master Plan will provide the community with the following benefits:

- Encourages communication with a wide variety of residents and user groups;
- Provides a condensed and current inventory of current facilities and recreational services;
- Provides a summary of current user groups and expected trends;
- Provides specific, new goals based on documented needs;
- Provides specific recommendations on how to achieve the goals;
- Sets new policies and revised standards to assist with the implementation of these goals;
- Sets general goals and standards that will aid in the designation of public park land with proposed annexation and development projects;
- Establishes an on-going process whereby the community, City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission, and City Council agree on priorities so that the City may continue to provide the best service possible to the residents of the City of Woodstock;
- Establishes priorities for future improvements with recommendations for phasing and implementation to aid in the achievement of long term goals; and
- Provides information to aid in the decision making process to balance the desires and expectation of the user groups and park patrons with the City's ability to provide maintenance and funding.

COORDINATION WITH WOODSTOCK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City's Park Master Plan is not a free standing document that can or should exist separately or be used without coordination with other planning documents and planning goals of the City. This Park Master Plan is but one portion of the City's long term planning effort, and the Woodstock Comprehensive Plan 2002 includes the following specific information pertaining to parks:

“Woodstock has a significant amount of land set aside for parks. Much can be learned about a community by visiting its parks. The location of a community's parks, the level of design and maintenance, the diversity of facilities provided, and the quality of materials used in the public structures and equipment are good indications of a community's priorities. Parks contribute to the quality of life and

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contribute to the value of property in the adjacent neighborhood as well as the entire community. Woodstock Square is one example of how a park, properly located, designed and maintained, can become a civil hallmark, create value, and instill civic pride. All parks, big and small, in Woodstock should accomplish the same ends. Space for active, programmed recreation activity is necessary, but so are spaces designed for quiet repose and reflection.

Parks are Woodstock's green infrastructure. Parks are differentiated from open landscapes in several ways. They are generally developed outdoor spaces for active and passive recreation activities. Secondly, unlike the regional impacts and influences open landscapes and natural resource corridors have, parks are local and uniquely Woodstock. Finally, parks may include environmental features and natural resources, but they are generally public spaces. Open landscapes may not be accessible to the public.

Even though the Comprehensive Plan addresses open lands and parks separately and as distinctly different community elements, it recognizes that sometimes the two elements overlap and much benefit can be gained by implementing combined strategies for open landscapes and parks.

GOAL: Provide comprehensive park resources and recreational opportunities throughout the community including areas for both active and passive recreational pursuits.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Developers and subdividers shall be responsible for providing and improving city parks to serve their respective developments.
2. Identify locations and develop acquisition strategies to bring park amenities to Woodstock neighborhoods lacking sufficient park infrastructure.
3. Protect existing park sites from the encroachment of conflicting land uses.
4. Maintain a park system that complements the shared facilities and programs of Woodstock Community Unit School District 200 and other similar resources.
5. Support the Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendations for acquisition of future park sites.
6. Place city parks in prominent, visible locations throughout the City and provide a park within a reasonable walking distance of every resident in Woodstock.
7. Develop a system of bicycle and pedestrian trails which link park and recreation sites with each other, residential neighborhoods, other community facilities and resources such as libraries, schools, downtown Woodstock, and regional trail networks.
8. Provide the same attention and resources to city parks as is provided in other city infrastructure.

9. Provide city parks in a variety of sizes and include both formal and informal park sites.
10. Provide park sites for both active and passive recreation pursuits.
11. Develop a system of boulevards and parkways connecting City parks to one another, wherever possible, and to open landscapes and natural resource corridors.”

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT & MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Despite an often incorrect understanding by the general public, the residents of the City of Woodstock are not served by a park district. The City of Woodstock provides and maintains all park facilities and recreational programs to our residents as part of the local City government services. As a result, our residents do not pay any additional property taxes to a separate taxing body (i.e. a park district). Funding for park facilities, park maintenance, and recreational programs is derived from user fees and from general property taxes collected by the City of Woodstock. In addition, the City does collect a fee with the issuance of each building permit for new residential construction that is used to fund the annual Capital Improvement Program for park facilities.

The daily operation of the City's park and recreational services is performed by two separate departments - the Recreation Department and the Parks Division of the Public Works Department - working together under the guidance and overall responsibility of the City Manager. The City Manager reports to the City Council who have complete control of all policy decisions, setting regulations and ordinances, approval of the annual budget, and ultimate responsibility for coordination and communication with the residents and park users.

To assist with the planning and operation of the City's park and recreational facilities, the Woodstock City Council has created a citizen advisory commission -- the **Parks and Recreation Commission**. This Commission consists of seven members and has been given the following specific powers and duties:

- A) Prepare and present to the Council, from time to time, recommendations regarding park and recreational activities for the City.
- B) Provide aid, assistance, and advice to officials of the City on subjects relating to park and recreational activities.
- C) Assist in the implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan as it pertains to park and recreational activities.
- D) Review all new residential development projects and provide a recommendation for the donation of land for park sites.
- E) Assist staff with the preparation of an overall park maintenance and development master plan. Prepare and recommend to the Council, from time to time, such changes in the plan as may be deemed necessary but no less than every five years.

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- F) Solicit information from the public and user groups for specific park improvement projects, provide recommendations for park and recreational facility needs, goals, and implementation schedules.
- G) Solicit information from specific user groups such as established leagues and school organizations to coordinate use of City facilities.
- H) Assist staff to identify special user groups and establish or modify recreational opportunities to increase the availability and selection of park and recreational activities for all residents.
- I) Evaluate current fees for park facilities and recommend changes to the established fee structure.
- J) Develop and conduct various means to publicize Commission activities in order to solicit public comments on park and recreation issues and to communicate with the public to increase general public awareness and understanding.

As shown by this list of duties and responsibilities, the Parks and Recreation Commission has a wide ranging role in the operation and planning of the City's facilities. The Commission's primary role with the development of this Park Master Plan is to solicit and coordinate public involvement and public opinion as part of the decision making process for the development of the Plan and to assist in establishing priorities for park and recreational facilities.

As previously mentioned, there are two separate departments of the City that are assigned the responsibility for the daily operation and maintenance of the park facilities and recreational services. These two departments rely on direct communication and coordination to provide services to our residents. This coordinated and cooperative effort has served our residents well in the past and must be continued in the future if the City is to continue to expand services and park facilities.

The Recreation Department consists of a Director and four full time employees to plan, schedule, and implement a wide variety of recreational programs for our residents. In addition to this full-time staff, the Department relies on a number of part-time employees for seasonal events (e.g. pool staff, winter supervisor) and special instructors for classes.

The Parks Division of the Department of Public Works consists of a Supervisor and ten full-time employees to provide the daily maintenance and special project construction for the City's 500+ acres of public parks. In addition to the full-time staff, the Parks Division relies on the use of a number of summer help employees for the maintenance of parks during the summer months.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the current organizational structure for the management and operation of the City's park and recreational facilities and activities.

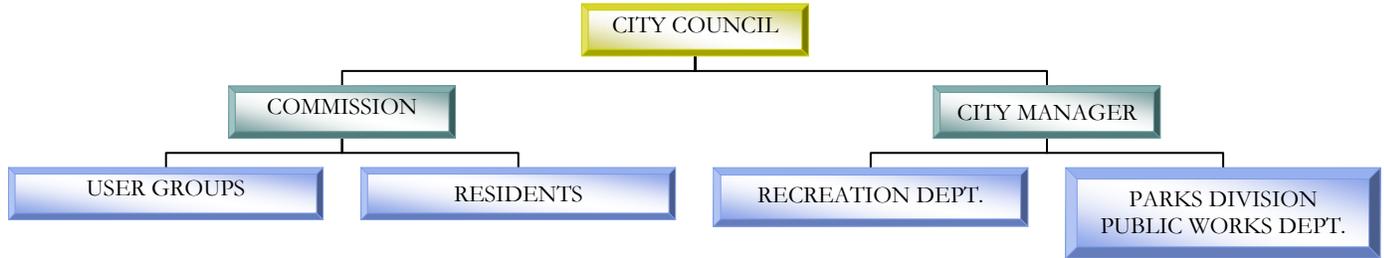


Fig. 1

HISTORY

Woodstock's interest and commitment to park lands has a long history and has included many significant events and changes during the past 150 years. The first community open space/park land was the Park in the Square and was created with the platting of the original community of Centerville in 1853. This prominent park area still serves as a vital focal point for the community and is an important part of the overall park system. The City's attention to the importance of park lands and facilities as a way to document and celebrate our history was most recently demonstrated with the construction of a new park site to celebrate the City's 150th anniversary. There have been a number of significant changes to the City's parks, addition of land, and construction of new facilities beginning with the planning of the downtown and the park as the focal point for the community and continuing with the recent construction of a family aquatic center and opening of a community recreation center.

Following is a brief summary of the changes that have occurred:

- 1857 Creation of the Park in the Square
- 1930's Donation of Sunnyside Park to the City
- 1945 Purchase of land for City Park (which is now called Emricson Park)
- 1963 Purchase of Ryder's Woods
- 1964 Construction of municipal pool
- 1969 City created Youth Commission
- 1970 Expansion of City Park with purchase of "Bigelow" property
- 1975 Construction of A.J. Olson Park as a neighborhood park facility
- 1977 Citizens advisory commission created by City Council, adding
Parks & Recreation to the previous Youth Commission
- 1977 City of Woodstock becomes a member of NISRA
- 1980 Purchase of additional land to increase size of Ryder's Woods
- 1981 Acquisition of Westwood Park and Silver Creek Park
- 1991 Complete renovation of "Dream Field" in Emricson Park as a community
project

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1991	Purchase of additional land to increase the size of Bates Park
1993	Completion of Mary Ann Street Park ~ the first park land donated to the City as part of a new residential development project
1994	Complete renovation of Bates Park
1995	Construction of Tara Drive Park
1996	Previous Parks, Recreation & Youth Commission changed to current Parks & Recreation Commission
1998	Approval of first Park Master Plan
1999	Completion of Banford Road Park
2001	Completion of Woodstock Water Works (community aquatic center)
2003	Purchase and renovation of Woodstock Community Recreation Center
2003	Completion of Prairie Ridge Drive Park
2004	Completion of Sesquicentennial Park
2005	Davis Road Park (soccer complex) constructed

This long term commitment to the residents of the City to provide park and recreational facilities has laid the foundation for an attractive and beneficial system of parks and open space. This Plan will allow the City to continue this commitment and allow the City to manage and expand the park and recreational facilities for future generations.

SERVICE AREA

As with all functions of the local government, the City of Woodstock's official jurisdiction extends to the corporate limits of the City. However, the role of the City's park and recreational services extends well beyond these political and taxation boundaries.

The City is situated in the center of McHenry County and is surrounded mostly by unincorporated land. These surrounding unincorporated residents are part of, and served by, the McHenry County Conservation District, but there is no other park district or adjoining jurisdiction that offers the variety of facilities and recreation programs offered by the City. The result is that the City's facilities and programs are also used extensively by these non-residents. Any planning for the future of the City's facilities and programs, in order to be realistic and meaningful, must account for this additional population.

At this time, the City has not been able to accurately define the geographic area for our user base or make an assessment of the total population being served. The Park Master Plan has been prepared based on the assumption that the primary users will reside within the boundaries of Woodstock Community Unit School District 200. We believe that the current ratio of park users is approximately 65% residents of the City of Woodstock and 35% non-residents. With this assumption, the total population using the City's parks and recreational facilities would be approximately 33,000.

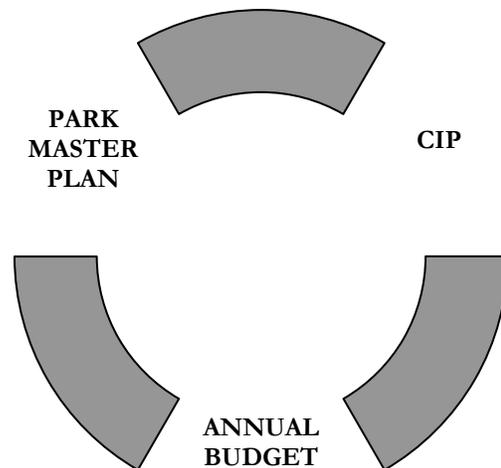
Just as it is important to include this expanded population base as part of the future planning of the park and recreational programs, it is equally important to include this expanded population as a necessary source of revenue. The City often functions as a local park district even though we do not enjoy the revenue benefits available to a separate taxing district. The City must continue to evaluate various options for user fees or other revenues for the special, non-resident users in order to be able to continue service. This report does include specific recommendations regarding service to this expanded population and recommendations for fees and revenues.

FIVE YEAR CIP AND ANNUAL BUDGET

Like most communities, the City of Woodstock does not have sufficient funds to accomplish all of the infrastructure and public improvement projects required by a growing community. The City of Woodstock is faced with the universal dilemma of attempting to meet the needs of its residents for improved public services and facilities with limited revenues coupled with the continued escalation of costs for providing these same requested services and facilities. In an effort to meet this challenge, the City of Woodstock has developed an objective and uniform method of establishing project priorities and identifying the amount and source of funds available to undertake these capital projects. The City is also charged with the responsibility of insuring that the public funds are spent wisely and efficiently. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is the process best suited to assist the Mayor and City Council in accomplishing this objective.

The Park Master Plan is an excellent tool for the development of the City's Five Year CIP. Projects, goals, and objectives that are identified with the Park Master Plan are placed into consideration with the Five Year CIP. The CIP document becomes the next step in implementing the recommendations of the Master Plan based on priorities and competition with other important park improvement projects. However, neither the Park Master Plan nor the Five Year CIP are budgeting documents, and they only serve as tools to better define projects, establish possible schedules, set general goals and objectives, and to rank priorities.

Information from the Five Year CIP is then used for the preparation of the annual budget document. At that time, the final decisions are made regarding availability of revenue for improvement projects matched with the importance and need of each of the projects.



FUNDING SOURCES

Current revenues for the operation, maintenance, and expansion of the City's park and recreational services are derived primarily from the following sources:

RECREATION PROGRAM FEES: The City does charge a fee for most, although not all, recreation programs. These fees are intended to pay for the fixed cost of providing a specific program. Only residents who chose to participate in a program pay these fees, and there are higher fee amounts established for non-resident participants.

USER FEES: These are fees charged to the users of a specific park facility such as the aquatic center (Woodstock Water Works), Community Recreation Center, ball fields, or pavilion rentals. The aquatic center and Community Recreation Center are operated as separate enterprise funds by the City, and user fees collected for those operations go directly to those facilities. User fees collected from other activities such as pavilion rentals and ball field reservations are used for general park maintenance and normally comprise less than 1% of the total annual park revenue.

PROPERTY TAX REVENUES: The City does collect a property tax from all property within the city limits for the operation and maintenance of the park and recreational services which comprises a substantial portion of the total revenues for these departments. Since this is only collected from property within the city limits, non-resident park and recreation users do not contribute to these funds. The current tax rate levied for Parks is 0.0671 (\$22.37 per year for a \$100,000 home). This property tax levied for park operations normally comprises approximately 50% to 55% of the total annual revenue.

GENERAL FUND SUPPORT: Property tax revenues do not pay for all costs for park maintenance and development, and subsidies via the additional transfer of property tax revenues from the City's General Fund are necessary. Approximately 50% to 55% of the annual park revenue is provided by the City from general revenue sources such as local income tax, sales tax, and general property tax revenue.

PARK DONATION FEES: The City does require the dedication of park land with each new residential development project within the City Limits. In the event that the City determines that park land is not appropriate, the development is required to pay a cash equivalent to the City. These cash payments are used by the City for capital improvement projects.

PRIVATE FUNDING and CONTRIBUTIONS: The residents of the City of Woodstock have always been very supportive of the park and recreational systems in the City, and the efforts of private citizens and volunteer organizations have produced several very significant and beneficial improvements. Examples of these privately funded projects and volunteer organizations include the Dream Field completed by the Woodstock Baseball Association, Sullivan Field improvements completed by the Woodstock Little League and the Woodstock Baseball Association, new basketball courts completed by the Woodstock Basketball Association, a new outdoor hockey rink paid for by

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the Cool-Kids-On-Ice, and softball field improvements and lighting completed by the local fast pitch softball players. These types of privately funded improvements are to be encouraged and will become a very important source of funding.

A more detailed discussion of these various revenue sources is included later in this report, along with specific recommendations regarding changes. If the City determines that the amount of park land should be increased, number of recreational facilities increased, and our services should expand, then this Master Plan must also include recommendations to pay for these increases.



CHAPTER 2

EXISTING PARK SITES

AND FEATURES

INTRODUCTION

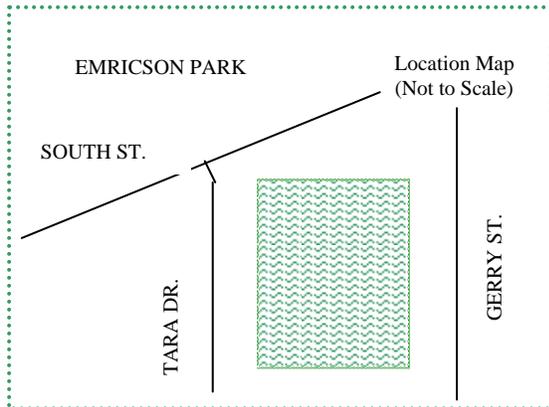
The City of Woodstock has a significant amount of land set aside for parks which provide a wide variety of recreational choices for our residents. This includes a total of 22 different park sites, located in all areas of the City, which encompass a total of 525 acres of park land. Each park site is unique; most provide different types of athletic and recreational facilities while a few are devoted to the preservation of open space and provide a natural setting. Since the first public park was dedicated in 1857, the City has maintained its commitment to expanding the number of parks and to improve the park facilities for our residents. This is very clearly demonstrated with the comparison of the number of park sites that have been added by the City of Woodstock in recent years. **The City's 1998 Park Master Plan included a total of 12 park sites with the existing park inventory. The accompanying report provides information for a total of 22 park sites that are now provided for our residents.** That increase from 12 to 22 park sites is very impressive and not only demonstrates the value of park facilities and recreational choices by the community, but also documents the benefits that were derived from the first planning document.

In order to evaluate the park system and recreational opportunities, and to prepare a plan for the continued development and growth of the City's parks, it is important to first have a clear understanding of our existing parks. The information in this chapter provides a brief overview of all of the existing parks and a summary of the park facilities available.

ALBERT/GERRY STREET NATURE AREA

During the 90’s the City obtained this 30.4 acre parcel of land as part of a settlement agreement for a pending lawsuit. Over the next few years, the City considered various development options for the property including sale to a private owner for residential development, but it was eventually decided that the majority of the parcel should be preserved for public use primarily as a natural park setting. In 2005 a portion of the land along the perimeter of the property was sold to adjoining properties, leaving as public open space with the intent of future development for park facilities.

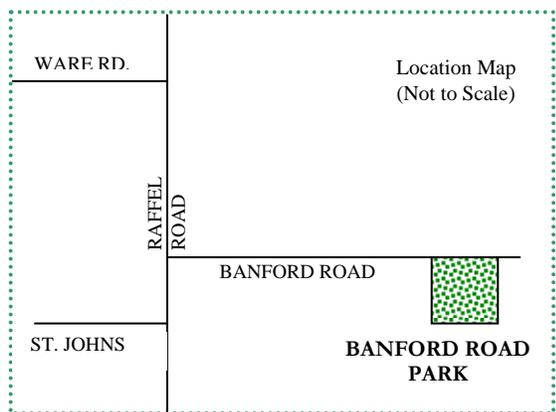
Albert/Gerry Street Nature Area
Facilities Summary
 Maintenance and enhancement of this park site is currently being implemented through a public/private partnership.



The site is currently being utilized by District 200 for outdoor class room space and environmental studies, and student led community service projects are being completed for trail development. The City has also contracted for service with the Land Conservancy of McHenry County for the management and enhancement of the wetland areas and natural features.

BANFORD ROAD PARK

This is a 1.35 acre park that was dedicated to the City as a park site in 1994 as part of the Victorian Country subdivision. The park site is located on the south side of Banford Road approximately 2,000 feet east of Raffel Road. With this park



site on the northeast side of town, residents are able to find recreational opportunities without having to cross Route 47 or Illinois Route 120.

The public park land is located immediately adjacent to the stormwater detention basin for the residential subdivision which results in additional open space and an attractive setting. Sidewalks were constructed by the City along the south side of Banford Road as part of the park improvement project which results in convenient and safe access for the residents in this area. This land was developed into a park site by the City in 2000 at a total cost of approximately \$125,000.

Banford Road Park Facilities Summary

Acres: 1.35
Playground: 4 Juvenile Structures
Basketball: one full size court
Parking: 20 spaces
Mini-Picnic Shelter

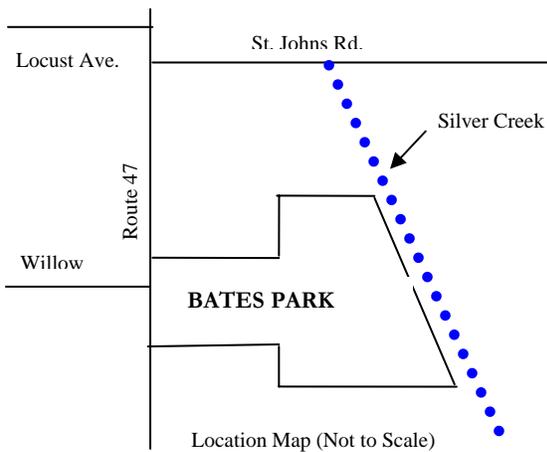
The park land has been fully developed and currently utilized, and there is no additional space at this location for expanded facilities without removal of existing equipment.

BATES PARK

For a number of years, Bates Park (which was previously known as Silver Creek Park) provided ball fields primarily for the Little League organization and youth baseball. However, as a result of improvements made by the City during the 1990's, the park now serves as one of the City's two regional park sites and provides recreational opportunities for a number of different users.



The original park at this location includes approximately



20 acres of land which was acquired by the City in 1961 in conjunction with the construction of the Seminary Avenue water treatment plant. The park was primarily used for little league ball fields until 1994 when the City undertook a complete renovation of the park facilities and an expansion of the park land. In February 1992, the City purchased an additional 3.0 acres of land to the south of the existing park site at an approximate cost of \$45,000 in order to complete an expansion of the park facilities. During 1994 and 1995, the City undertook a \$500,000 renovation of the existing park facilities .

Bates Park does provide a unique setting that offers many advantages for our residents and the organized user groups who utilize these facilities on a regular basis. The park is bordered along the easterly boundary by Silver Creek and also Silver Creek Conservation Area on the east side of the creek. This natural setting provides not only a buffer for the park use but also can provide the City with other recreational opportunities such as increased use of the nature area and expansion of walking and jogging paths.

Bates Park Facilities Summary

Acres: 23
Drinking Fountains: 2
Restrooms: 1
Basketball: 2 Full sized courts, no lights
Baseball: 1 field with 320' outfield, sod infield
Softball/Youth: 5 fields with 200' outfield
Parking Spaces: 120
Playground: 1

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Bates Park now provides outdoor sports

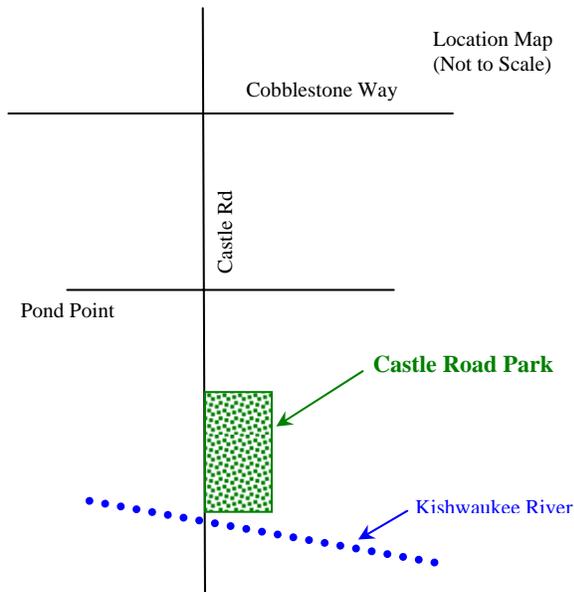
facilities for a wide variety of residents and users with an emphasis on organized team activities. This includes softball fields, baseball fields, basketball courts, playground equipment, paved parking, restrooms, and a concession stand area. The focal point of the park and the major emphasis are the ball fields. This includes one baseball diamond (Roskie Field) which has a sod infield with a 320' outfield which is used by the Woodstock

Little League, Marian Central Catholic High School, and District 200. There are five softball/youth baseball fields with 200' outfields that are used by the Woodstock Little League and Girl's Softball. With the number of fields at this location and suitable parking, this park has become the preferred site for some tournaments for the users groups.

These facilities are used by Marian Central Catholic High School, Woodstock Little League, Girl's Softball, and area residents for pickup games on the basketball courts. During 2004, approximately 46% of all softball and baseball games were played on the six ball fields in Bates Park. Woodstock Little League played 81% of all of their games during 2004 at Bates Park, and the Woodstock Girls Softball organization played 72% of all of their games on these fields during 2004.

The two full sized basketball courts are located in the north easterly portion of the park and are primarily for open use and pickup games. Playground equipment is located at the west side of the park and is convenient for area residents and family members during ball games.

CASTLE ROAD PARK



The Woodstock Commons development is located east of Castle Road and south of Cobblestone Way, and the final plat for this residential development included the dedication of approximately 4.16 acres of park land. This park site is located along the east side of Castle Road immediately adjacent to the Kishwaukee River and will include vistas overlooking a much larger open space along the Kishwaukee River corridor. The development of the park site can provide space for the City to provide active recreational facilities for our residents that can then be visually combined with the benefits of a much larger open space. This park land is currently vacant and has not been improved by the City at this time.

Development of the park land is anticipated within the next five years, and possible park facilities and goals and objectives are identified later in this Master Plan.

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Castle Road Park Facilities Summary
 Land has been dedicated to the City, but this park land has not been developed at this time.

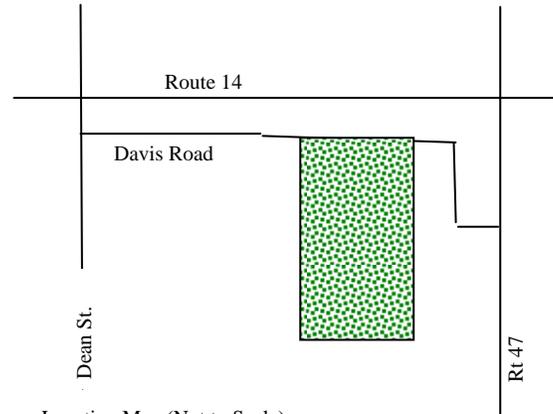
DAVIS ROAD PARK

Davis Road Park Facilities Summary

Six new soccer fields were constructed in 2005, and are anticipated to be open for use beginning in 2007.

land is now suitable for public use and provides an excellent opportunity for expansion of park facilities in the future. Approval to construct public park facilities on this land has been obtained from the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and six soccer fields with irrigation and parking were constructed in 2005. That new facility is scheduled to be available for public use starting in 2007.

The City of Woodstock owns approximately 42 acres of land on the south side of Davis Road between Route 47 and Dean Street. With the recent completion of the site remediation work by the City, the



DICK TRACY WAY PARK

In 1999, the City acquired approximately 8 acres of land along the south westerly side of Lake Avenue for the construction of a new police facility. That development project has been completed, and there is approximately 4 acres of land lying to the west of the new police station that is currently vacant.

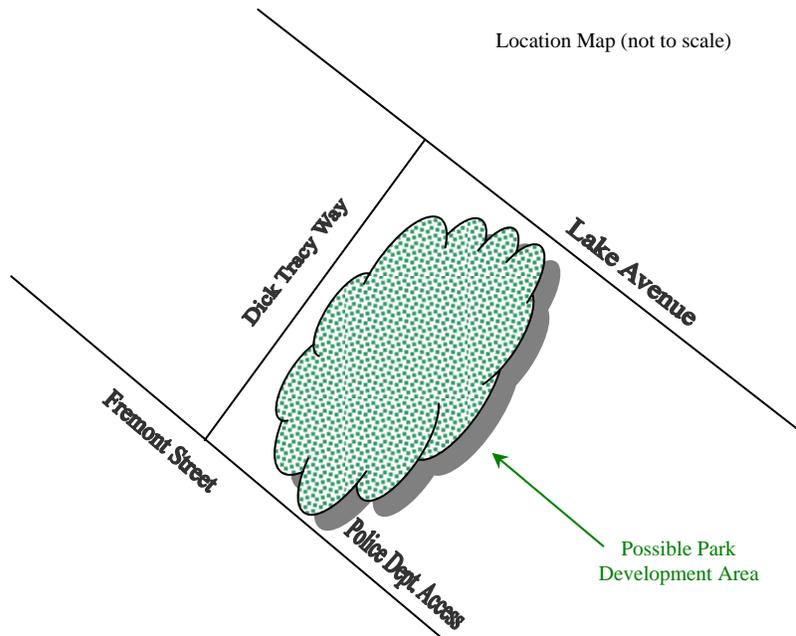
It is anticipated that this land (or a portion of this land) will be needed for future expansion of the police facility as the community grows. This could include relocation or expansion of the

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Dick Tracy Way Facilities Summary

Land has been purchased by the City, but this park land has not been developed at this time.

Department's facilities in the future. Although the park facilities and park area may have to be

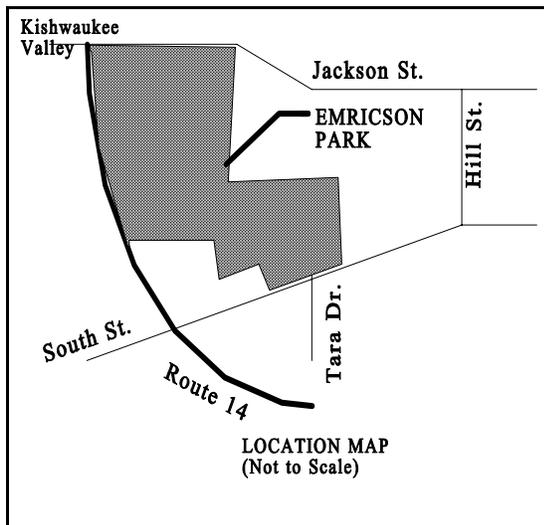


parking lot or additional garage space for their needs. However, at the request of area residents, the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Commission and the Woodstock City Council determined in 2004 that a neighborhood park should be considered at this location until the land would be needed for the Police

reduced or eliminated at a later date, the City and our residents could realize a beneficial use of this land on a temporary basis with some park facilities. Development of the park land is anticipated within the next five years, and possible park facilities and goals and objectives are identified later in this Master Plan.

EMRICSON PARK

Emricson Park is the City’s largest park site (130 acres) and provides a diversified choice of recreational opportunities throughout the entire year. In the spring, the park is the site of many softball and baseball games and provides an attractive setting for casual walks and enjoying the warm weather. The aquatic center is very popular during the summer as well as the picnic pavilions for family gatherings and special events. The park has provided enjoyment for many residents and spectators for the annual Fourth of July fireworks display for several years. Each winter, residents can enjoy the sledding hill, skating areas, warming house, and cross country skiing.



Emricson Park combines the enjoyment of a beautiful natural setting with developed sports and recreational facilities to create a very pleasing park setting. The rolling terrain, natural ponds, and mature oak trees provide a unique and pleasing setting for people who just want to relax and who enjoy the beauty of the park. The aquatic center, five ball fields, two soccer fields, two basketball courts, five tennis courts, paved recreation path, and winter sport areas provide recreational facilities for many different activities.

Winter Activities at Emricson

Emricson Park is the only City park that includes facilities specifically for winter sports and activities.

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While other parks, such as Ryder’s Woods, provide excellent areas to view the changing seasons and to just relax during the winter, Emricson Park provides the opportunity for more active winter recreation. This includes the ice skating areas and sledding hill which are very popular activities for kids and families. Skating is provided on the ponds at the park, and the ice is cleared by the City for open skating areas. Through the generous donation of materials and supplies from interested

residents, the City was able to add an ice hockey rink during 1996. For the comfort of the park users, the City provides a warming house conveniently located next to the skating areas and the sledding hills.

Special Events

Due to the large size of the park and the amount of parking available, Emricson Park does accommodate several special events throughout the year. One of the most popular is the annual Fourth of July fireworks display which is sponsored by a local non-profit organization. The City hosts an annual road run each summer in the park which attracts competitors from the area as well as many local residents. The picnic pavilions and all of the facilities that are available at the park have made Emricson Park a popular location for many company sponsored picnics and a convenient gathering place for large families and special events.

<u>Emricson Park Facilities Summary</u>	
Acres: 130	Parking Spaces: 400
Picnic Tables: 150	Picnic Shelters: 5
Restrooms: 2	Playgrounds: 3
Basketball: 2 full sized courts	Aquatic Center
Baseball: 1 field with 380' outfield	Sledding Hill
Baseball: 1 field with 190' outfield	Warming House
Softball: 3 fields, 2-275' outfield & 1-250' outfield	1.6 miles of paved path
Tennis Courts: 5, three lighted	
Soccer Fields: Two regulation sized, game fields	
Practice soccer and open play area: 10 acres	
Nature areas and Open spaces!!!	

Woodstock Water Works

The City's new aquatic center is certainly the focal point of the park during the summer months and a very popular activity for our residents. Constructed in 2001, this facility not only provides a convenient summer time activity but also allows the City to offer swim lessons and special family nights for our residents. The aquatic center provides three separate pool areas including a kiddie pool, zero depth play area, a lap pool with diving boards, two water slides, four water play features, a separate playground area for children, and two picnic pavilions.

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Athletic Facilities

Emricson Park includes a full offering of sport and athletic facilities for our residents and also for both of the local high schools. This includes baseball fields, softball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, soccer fields, a paved recreation path, and a cross country course for the high school. Due to the amount of use for these fields and courts, most of the facilities need to be scheduled in advance

with the City. However, all residents are welcome to use any of the courts and facilities when available.

Volunteer Improvements

Emricson Park has seen numerous improvements and facilities completed over the years by volunteer organizations. Examples include the Dream Field, Sullivan Field, Main Softball, ice hockey rink, and new basketball courts. Literally hundreds of our residents enjoy the results of the hard work and dollars invested by local residents, business sponsors, and volunteers. Their money and work has made Emricson Park special and certainly increased the recreational facilities.

THE FIELDS OF WOODSTOCK PARK

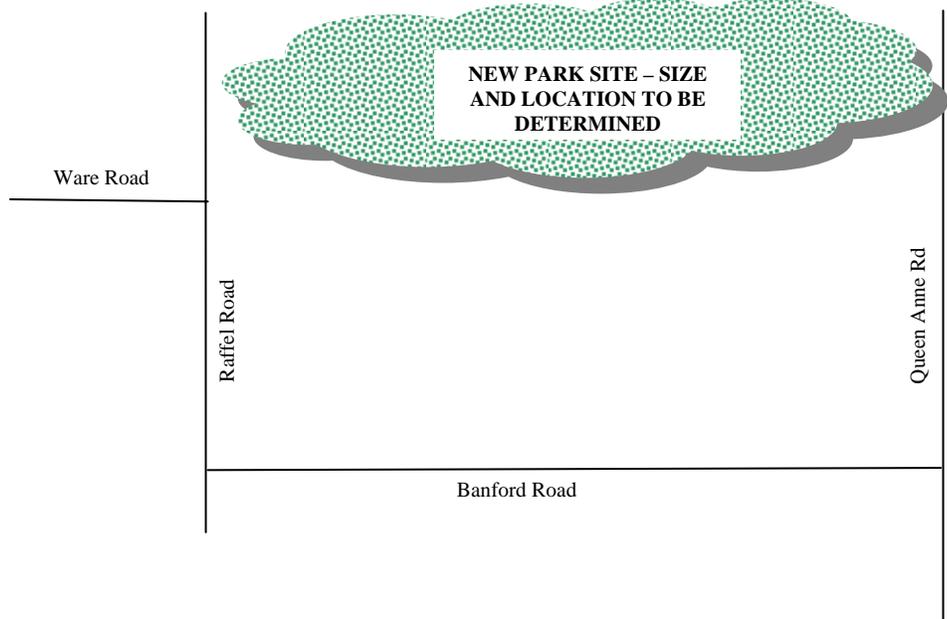
The Fields of Woodstock is a proposed residential development located east of Raffel Road and north of Banford Road, and the annexation of this site was approved by the City Council in February

The Fields Park Facilities Summary
Dedication of this new park site is anticipated during 2005, and construction of the ball field diamonds and parking could begin in 2006.

2005. The current preliminary plan for this development anticipates that approximately 81 acres of park land will be dedicated to the City for public use. Once completed, this new park facility will be the second largest park site provided by the City. It

will be approximately three times the size of Bates Park and two-thirds the size of Emricson Park.

One of the needs expressed by several sports groups who use the City's park facilities on a regular basis is for more ballfields in the future. These user groups primarily play all of their games within a 6 to 8 week period from mid-May through early July, and scheduling problems occur during this limited period.

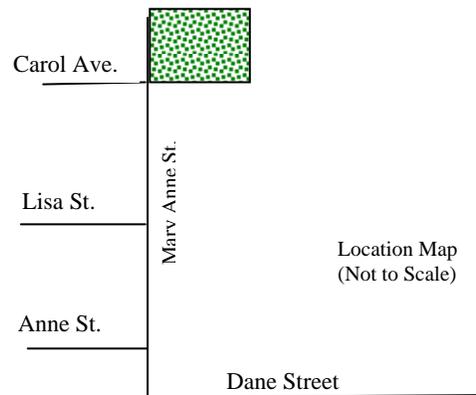


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The user groups would like to expand the number of participants (without increasing the length of their season) and have asked the City to provide more softball fields and youth baseball fields. It is anticipated that the park land dedicated with The Fields of Woodstock during 2005 will provide the opportunity for the City to construct additional ballfields. Construction of the first phase of that park improvement project is scheduled to begin in 2006.

MARY ANN STREET PARK

This is a 0.9 acre park site that was dedicated to the City as a neighborhood park in 1993 as part of the Fox Pointe subdivision. The park is located along the easterly side of Mary Ann Street near the intersection of Carol Avenue and is adjoined by a 0.6 acre storm water detention basin. Park improvements were completed by the City in 1994 after working closely with area residents for the planning of the park facilities. These facilities include a basketball court, playground equipment, a tot play area, sitting benches and landscaping. The original park improvements included a full sized basketball court. At the request of several area residents, one of the basketball goals was removed and the facility now only includes a half-court.

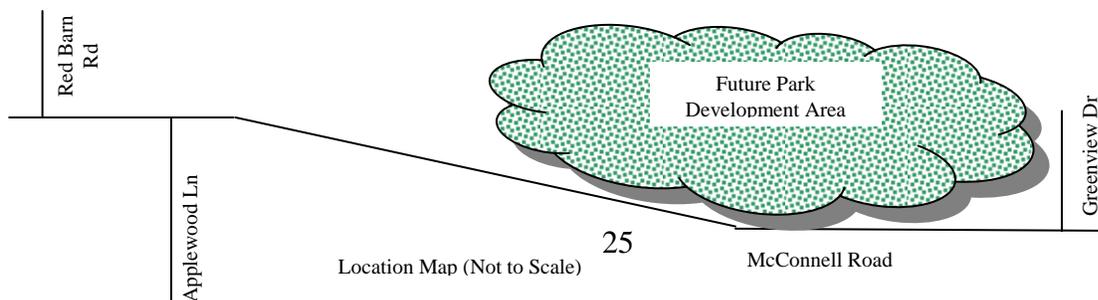


Mary Ann Street Park Facilities Summary
Acres: 0.9
Parking Spaces: None
Picnic Tables: 2
Basketball
Playground: 1 Juvenile /1 Tot play structure

This park is intended to provide a limited amount of park and recreational activities for residents in the general area. By choice and design, there is no parking available (other than some on-street parking) at the park, and the park users need to walk to the park. The park has been fully developed, and there are no expansions or other improvements planned for this park site.

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McCONNELL ROAD PARK



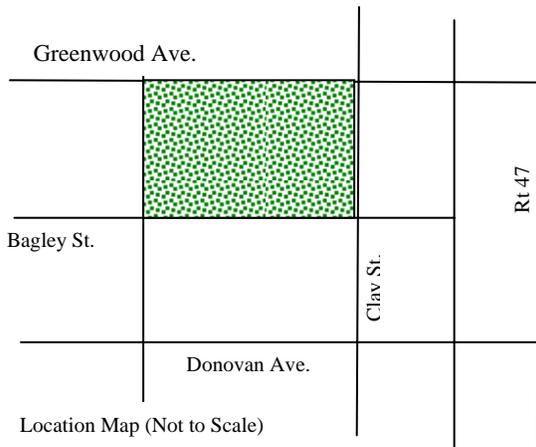
Approximately ten acres of park land has been dedicated to the City for a new neighborhood park by the developers of The Ponds of Bull Valley and Bull Valley Greens subdivisions along the north side of McConnell Road (east of Applewood Subdivision) for a public park. By combining the land dedication requirements from two different subdivisions, the City was able to obtain a large sized park site rather than what could be provided just from a single development project. The benefits of combining park land dedications should continue to be considered with other projects in the future.

McConnell Road Park Facilities Summary
 Land has been dedicated to the City, but this park land has not been developed at this time.

This park land is currently vacant and has not been improved by the City at this time. Development of the park land is anticipated within the next five years, and possible park facilities and goals and objectives are identified later in this Master Plan.

A.J. OLSON PARK

A.J. Olson Park is a 2.3 acre park that has been improved to include a wide variety of activities and facilities in a neighborhood park setting. This park occupies a full block at the south west corner of Greenwood Avenue and Clay Street and has been fully



developed and improved. This neighborhood park provides a great variety of activities for residents in this area of the City. While the size is small, this park has the most diverse recreational facilities in any neighborhood park.

Facilities at this park include two tennis courts, a full sized basketball court, a lighted softball field, playground equipment, a picnic shelter, and some open space. One of the most popular summer

Olson Park Facilities Summary

Acres: 2.3 **Parking Spaces:** 8

Picnic Tables: 1

Basketball: 1 full sized court

Tennis: 2 courts

Softball: 1 lighted ball field

Playground equipment

Spray Fountain Play Area

time activities is the spray fountain which provides a chance for children to keep cool and enjoy the fun in the water during the summer months at no charge. Even though this park was originally designed and constructed as a neighborhood facility, it is very heavily used. This includes extensive use of the basketball court for pickup games, use of the lighted diamond on a regular basis for night time league play, extensive use of the spray fountain during the summer months, and serves as one of the

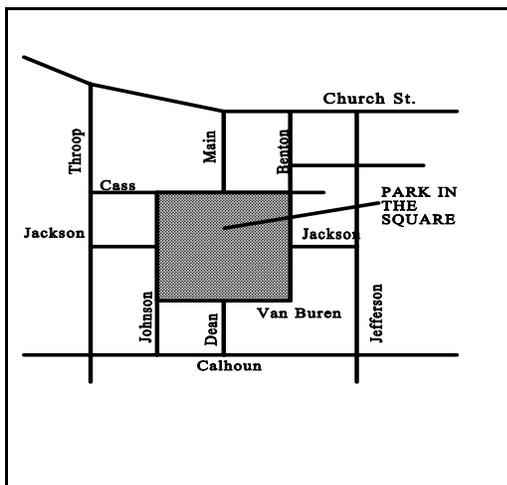
locations for the City’s popular Summer Playground Program. There are only eight parking spaces at the park, and the remaining park users and spectators rely heavily on available on-street parking along the perimeter of the park.

PARK in the SQUARE

From the very beginning, the founders of this community wanted the square to be the focal point for the residents, and they helped to ensure that goal by creating a public park in the heart of the City. This first park for the City continues to be a very important part of the community and provides a special identity for Woodstock.



Since the creation of the Park in the Square almost 150 years ago, it has undergone many changes due to nature conditions (e.g. a tornado that destroyed the mature trees and Dutch Elm Disease that required replacement of all of the mature elm trees) and changes to make the park more enjoyable. The last major

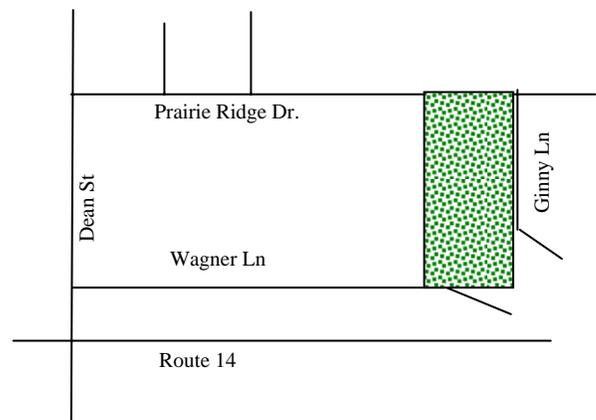


renovation of the park occurred after the filming of the ‘Groundhog Day’ movie in 1992. Using funds the City received from the film makers, the brick sidewalks were replaced, new sod was installed, an automatic sprinkler system was installed, and improvements made to the landscaping. However, over this time the City and the community have preserved the beauty of the park and have kept the unique charm that the park provides to the downtown. This park provides a very pleasant and enjoyable open space in the center of an active downtown. Varied plantings of trees, shrubs, and flowers; brick sidewalks; and wooden benches create a place for conversation, rest, and just to enjoy the downtown.

The Park in the Square also serves as the focal point for many community events and gatherings. The City Band provides free concerts to our residents during the summer in a setting that can only be described as the best free entertainment in the area. The park and the downtown are now host to numerous special events during the summer including the annual Fair Diddley® Craft Show, Dick Tracy Days events, the Fair in the Square, HarvestFest, antique car shows, the City’s Scare on the Square, and many other community activities and events. During 2005, there were a total of 15 major community events held in the park and/or downtown. In addition to these activities, the Park in the Square is a popular setting for weddings due to its history and beauty.

PRAIRIE RIDGE DRIVE PARK

Following the recommendations of the City’s first Park Master Plan, the developer of the Prairie Ridge subdivision dedicated approximately 3 acres of land to the City for a new neighborhood park. In 2003, this park was developed by the City and now includes a full sized basketball court, a tennis court, a softball field, and playground equipment.



Prairie Ridge Drive Park
Facilities Summary

Acres: 3
Softball Diamond
Playground: Juvenile/Tot Lot
Full size Basketball Court
Tennis Court

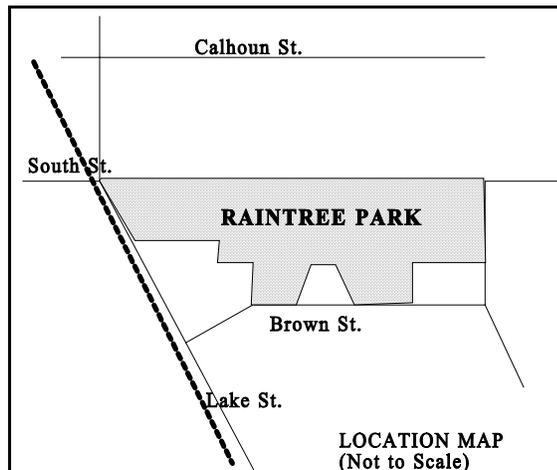
RAINTREE PARK

Raintree Park was acquired by the City for the construction of a regional stormwater detention basin. However, this 25 acre site also provides park and recreational facilities for the neighborhood. As part of the overall design and planning for the stormwater facility, the City also wanted to incorporate as many park facilities as possible. This allows the City to



Raintree Park Facilities Summary

Acres: 25 **Parking Spaces:** 40
Picnic Tables: 3
Playground Equipment
Practice Soccer Fields: 2



meet several goals which include stormwater management, additional park and recreation facilities, and preservation of open space at one location. In 1998, the City completed the regrading of the detention basin bottom to provide an open area that can be used by user groups and area residents for soccer practice. Although the park setting is not suitable for game fields due to the primary purpose of stormwater management and the extensive residential development adjacent to the park, it now provides a very beneficial practice site.

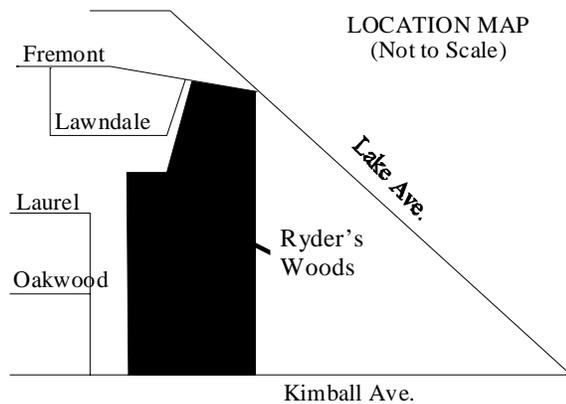
Raintree Park also includes picnic tables, playground equipment, a parking area, and an open area that can also include activities such as bike riding, flying model airplanes, and just walking.

RYDER’S WOODS

Ryder’s Woods is a 17 acre nature park acquired by the City in 1963 to preserve a very attractive and natural setting within the city limits. This park provides excellent nature trails and wooded areas that not only provide a very relaxing and enjoyable change of pace for our residents, but the park also provides a good habitat for a variety of wildlife. Dense woods, extensive foot trails, and a secluded pond make Ryder’s



Woods an excellent area for observing nature. A one mile trail winds throughout the park incorporating both woodlands and meadow habitats. Winter activities include ice skating, cross country skiing, and enjoying the natural setting. The City of Woodstock does have other open space/natural parks, but Ryder’s Woods is the most popular and provides a very important and unique opportunity for our residents. The park still retains its natural setting and has been improved with the addition of paved parking, cleared walking trails that provide access to all parts of the park, and observation areas.



SESQUICENTENNIAL PARK

The City of Woodstock purchased the triangular shaped parcel of land along the south side of Church Street between Benton and Jefferson Streets during 2001. The City Council directed that the parcel was to be improved as a passive park site including landscape features and flower beds, a pedestal clock, and decorative water fountain. The site was named “Sesquicentennial Park” as a lasting remembrance of and to commemorate the City’s Sesquicentennial year in 2003. One of the unique features of this park setting are the many commemorative bricks that have been purchased by area residents and corporate sponsors which have been installed in the brick sidewalks by the City.



Sesquicentennial Park Summary

Acres: .5

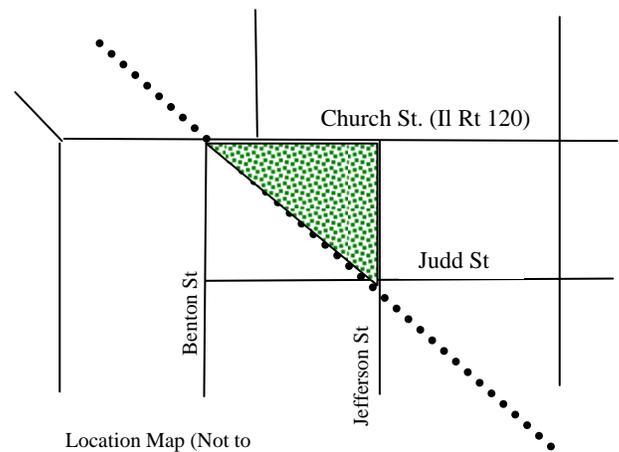
Ornamental Flower Beds

Historic Clock

Water Fountain

Ornamental Benches and Trash Cans

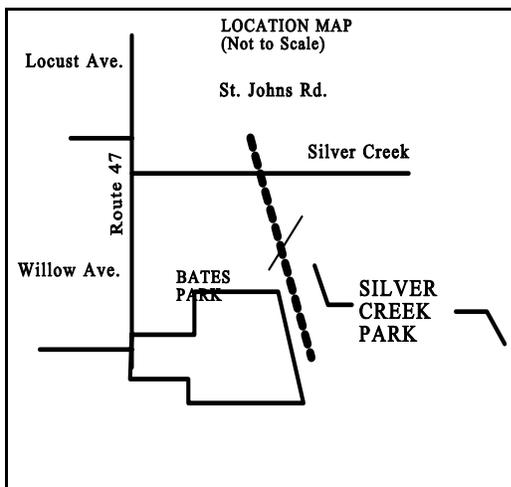
Brick Paver Walks



Location Map (Not to Scale)

SILVER CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

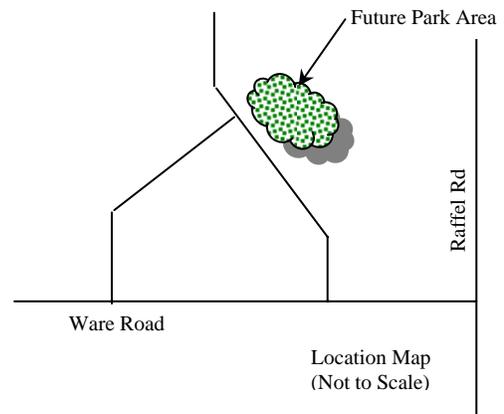
Silver Creek is one of the City’s three natural park sites and open areas. This park site includes 62 acres of open space located along the east side of Silver Creek immediately east of Bates Park. The property was acquired by the City in 1981 and has been kept in its natural condition since that time.



Although there are few heavily wooded areas within the park or developed woods and rolling terrain that make Ryder’s Woods so attractive, Silver Creek Conservation Area provides a different type of open space and natural setting. Most of this park site consists of flood plains and peat soils which provide an excellent example of the conditions that existed in many portions of Woodstock prior to development. The park includes some wetlands areas, flat meadows, and a meadow setting that supports a wide variety of wildlife. Access to the site is limited to foot traffic across Silver Creek via Bates Park. Trails are mowed and maintained by the City around the property.

SONATAS PARK

The first final plat for this residential development includes the dedication of park land approximately 7.04 acres in size. This park site is located immediately adjacent to a much larger open space and stormwater management outlot that will be owned and maintained by the homeowner’s association. Once completed, the combination of the City park site and privately owned open space will result in an overall parcel approximately 26.4 acres in size and will be a very attractive setting combining both active recreation use and passive open space for the residents. Development of the park land is anticipated within the next five years, and possible park facilities and goals and objectives are identified later in this Master Plan.



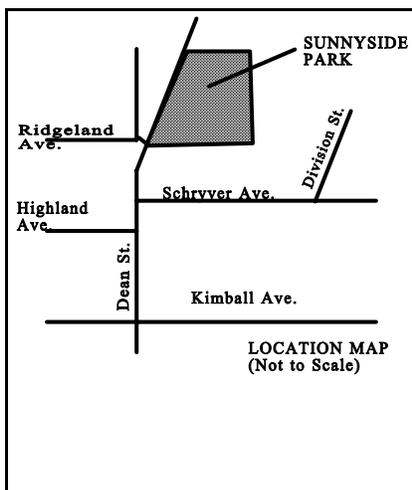
Sonatas Park Facilities Summary
 Land has been dedicated to the City, but this park land has not been developed at this time.

SUNNYSIDE PARK

Sunnyside Park is a small, 0.5 acre, neighborhood park with playground equipment and a limited amount of open space for lawn games and play. The park is located on the east side of Dean Street, north of Kimball Avenue, and does not have any parking available immediately adjacent to the park site. This park is intended for use by smaller children, and the play



structures and equipment installed at this park site are for children eight years and under. The playground equipment was replaced by the City in 2004, and the facilities continue to be a very popular destination for neighborhood children.

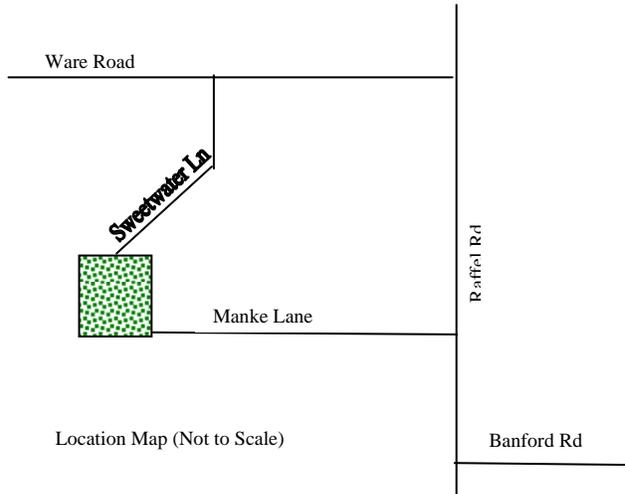


Sunnyside Park Facilities Summary

Picnic Tables: 1 Juvenile Play Equipment

SWEETWATER PARK

The first final plat for this residential development included the dedication of park land approximately 2.98 acres in size. Development of the park land is anticipated within the next five years, and possible park facilities and goals and objectives are identified later in this Master Plan.



Sweetwater Park Facilities
Summary
 Land has been dedicated to the City, but this park land has not been developed at this time.

TARA DRIVE PARK

This is a 1.5 acre park that was dedicated to the City as a neighborhood park in 1994 as part of the Autumn Ridge subdivision. The park site is located at the northeast corner of Tara Drive and Winslow Avenue and was improved by the City in 1995.



These improvements include juvenile playground equipment, tot play equipment, picnic table, benches, water fountain, and open space for play. The park site does not include any off street parking, but there is some on-street parking adjacent to the park.

The park adjoins a large wetland area, located to the north and

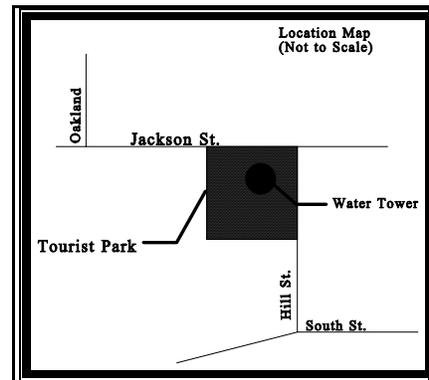
east, that has been preserved as open space with an adjoining subdivision. Tara Drive Park overlooks this adjoining wetland and provides an excellent view of this open space and the wildlife that utilizes the wetlands on a regular basis.

Tara Drive Park Facilities Summary

Acres: 1.5	Parking: None
Picnic Tables: 1	Water Fountain
Tot Lot & Juvenile Play Equipment	
Mini Shelter: 1	

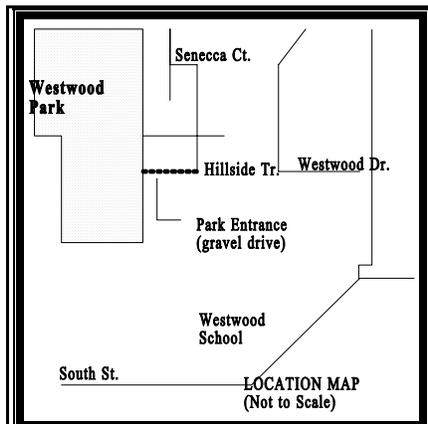
TOURIST PARK

Tourist Park consists of two acres located at the southwestern corner of Hill and Jackson Streets. The property is the site of an overhead water storage tower but has been considered as a park site for several years. The property does include several large, mature oak trees and provides an attractive setting due to the rolling terrain and trees. There are two adult swings at this location.



WESTWOOD CONSERVATION AREA

Westwood Conservation Area is the third of the City's nature areas consisting of 64 acres acquired by the City in 1981. The park is located west of Westwood subdivision, is somewhat secluded for public access, and has not been widely used



during the past few years. This park provides a wide variety of natural settings and is more varied than the City's other two nature parks. Within Westwood Park, residents can enjoy mature stands of oak and hickory trees, wetlands habitats, and a prairie grass meadow. Walkways and grass paths have been provided for a trail system extending through the park.

WOODSTOCK COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

In the spring of 2003, the City purchased the former Body Club, located at 820 Lake Avenue, to be converted into a community recreation center. The City took possession and began operating the facility on May 1, 2003. The City immediately began converting the facility from a private health club to a community recreation center. The original facility included a 2.5-acre site, parking lot, and 13,600 s.f. building with exercise equipment and loose weights, an indoor swimming pool with whirlpool and sauna, aerobics/dance floor, three racquetball courts, a cardiovascular room, tanning rooms, a nursery, and offices. In August of 2003, the interior and exterior of the original building were renovated, the front parking lot was reconstructed, and a new parking lot was constructed in the back. The project also included the construction of a 7,500 s.f. addition that includes a full-size basketball court, a two-lane indoor track, and two multi-purpose rooms.



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The Recreation Center project totaled \$1.6 million. The purchase and improvements will be financed

over a twenty-year period through a bank loan. The acquisition (\$625,000) and renovation (\$275,000) of the original facility will be financed entirely by cash flows generated by the membership dues and user fees, while the gym/track/multi-purpose room expansion (\$700,000) will be financed by Park Development Impact Fees. No tax dollars were requested, proposed, or anticipated to purchase, renovate, expand, or operate the community recreation center.

As of April 1, 2005, full-time memberships exceed 1,000 with an additional 150-200 temporary and punch-card members. Due to the almost tripling of membership, a number of additional projects/improvements have been undertaken since 2003 including the purchase of additional cardio machines, loose weights, weight machines, aerobic exercise equipment, parking lot improvements, office and maintenance equipment, and HVAC upgrades.

The center now hosts a number of Recreation Department programs including land and water aerobics, swim lessons, adult volleyball and basketball leagues, youth sports programs, youth fitness programs, seniors fitness and social programs, cheerleading, Tae Kwon Do, the Lakewood after school program, and racquetball leagues. The Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA) uses the facility for swimming, aerobics, and gym activities. The center is also rented to various user groups, clubs, organizations, and families for athletic activities, meetings, and parties.

WOODSTOCK WATER WORKS FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER

On March 21, 2000, the voters in Woodstock approved, with 57% of the vote, a \$3.9 million bond referendum to build an aquatic center in Emricson Park to replace Peters Pool which had fallen into disrepair. In addition to the bond issue, the \$5 million project was funded by a \$400,000 Open Space Land Acquisition & Development (OSLAD) grant from the State of Illinois, \$500,000 in alternate revenue bonds, and \$200,000 in interest income. With the passage of the bond referendum, representatives from city staff, the local swim team, the special recreation association, and other user groups worked with the architects on final design plans. The project was bid in the summer of 2001, and construction began that fall.

On Memorial Day 2002, the City of Woodstock opened the three-pool aquatic center in Emricson Park that provides outdoor aquatic activities for Woodstock and several surrounding communities. The original construction of the aquatic center included the following:

- ◆ 9,000 s.f. zero-depth recreation pool with a double flume water slide plus multifaceted play apparatus, a boat slide, tumble buckets, and a Rain Drop water feature.
- ◆ 5,000 s.f. eight-lane lap/competition pool that includes a one-meter and three-meter diving board.
- ◆ 1,150 s.f. baby pool that includes two Funbrellas on the deck.
- ◆ 1,800 s.f. bathhouse with concession stand.



- ◆ 1,500 s.f. sand, tot play lot with adjacent picnic shelter.

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- ◆ Inside and outside food courts with Funbrellas.
- ◆ 2,100 s.f. mechanical/storage building.
- ◆ approximately two acres of green space for sunbathing and picnicking.

The first year in operation was very successful with attendance for open swim exceeding 60,000 patrons. The facility was also awarded the 2002 Illinois Parks & Recreation Association's, Division II, Facility of the Year.

In the fall of 2002, a number of additional improvements were completed including the addition of Funbrellas in the baby pool and tot lot, expansion of the concrete decking and nautical roping, the construction of an additional shelter/storage room, and the construction of an overflow parking lot.

In addition to open swim, other programs are offered at the aquatic center including the Recreation Department's Red Cross swim lesson program, adult lap swim, and the facility is the home of the Woodstock Dolphins swim team. The facility is also rented to groups and organizations for parties.

The facility employs approximately 60 seasonal part-time staff of American Red Cross certified lifeguards and Water Safety Instructors, attendants, and cashiers. The full-time Recreation Department staff assists in several areas of the operation from hiring, training, and supervising staff to processing swim lesson registration as well as establishing and approving all policies and procedures.

(Insert Park Location Map here)

(Insert Park Site Data here)



CHAPTER 3

USER GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

The City of Woodstock provides many services and recreation opportunities that normally are provided by a park district. This has historically included serving a population base much greater than just our City residents and providing park and sports facilities for a wide variety of activities. Chapter Two provided information needed for the evaluation of the current park sites and facilities available at each park. In addition to this summary of the physical condition of the City's parks, a review of the users of the City's park facilities is also needed as part of the development of this Master Plan. Only by trying to define who will be using the City's parks and recreational facilities, and projecting the future needs of those customers, can the City develop a plan that will best fit the expected needs with the City's ability to provide improvements. The development of a Park Master Plan also must consider the City's ability to meet all of the needs of all of these user groups. It will not be financially possible for the City of Woodstock to provide facilities for every request by every user group within the time frame that might be preferred. Therefore, it is necessary that the City evaluate what facilities might be preferred by our residents, expectations from the organized user groups who have historically relied on the City of Woodstock to provide facilities for their programs, and possible new user groups who might turn to the City in the future to support their activities.

This discussion and evaluation, with the input and comment from the public and known organized user groups, can aid in the development of this Master Plan and can then be used to help formulate planning goals, set priorities for the City's long term park and recreation facility planning, and help to avoid unrealistic expectations from the user groups in terms of the type and number of facilities that the City may be able to provide in the near future.

As a result, the City provides park and sports facilities for a diverse group of users. However, the City's first commitment should be to the residents of the City of Woodstock, and as the City grows, it may be necessary to place some limitations on non-resident groups and providing physical facilities to serve non-residents. Cooperation and assistance from the organized user groups to decrease participation and number of games in the future based on services to non-residents will be important to the continued success of the cooperative and beneficial programs that are already established.

GENERAL PUBLIC AS A USER GROUP

The current Park Master Plan, prepared in 1998, focused on the use of City facilities by organized user groups. This certainly was, and still is, an important and beneficial service that is provided by the City to the community but also limits the discussion to a few groups and activities. That previous discussion did not adequately address the services that are provided by the City for the general public and the thousands of park users who enjoy the benefits of the park system for non-organized activities. There are more residents and non-organized park users who enjoy our parks than any other user group, those type of activities continue year round, and the residents are the ones who pay for the facilities and park maintenance. Those residents are certainly one of the principal users of our park and recreation facilities and that use, their needs and expectations, and the services the City provides have been included with this new Park Master Plan.

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The largest amount of activity and the largest number of users of the City's park systems each year is by the general public as distinct from the organized leagues and user groups. Our residents enjoy the facilities that are provided for a wide variety of leisure activities throughout the entire year such as picnics, use of the playground equipment, sledding and ice skating in the winter time, quiet walks through the trees and open areas, flying kites, tennis games, pickup basketball games, relaxing with a quiet lunch during the week, and simply enjoying being outdoors. The number of participants is not measured nor recorded by the City since there is no reservation needed to enjoy these activities, but this category certainly includes the largest number of customers and park patrons each year.

If one of the goals of the City will be to continue to provide the best quality service possible to the largest number of users and residents, then it is important that the Park Master Plan realize the needs and expectations of the general public along with the needs and expectations of the organized user groups. Through this effort, the City can better serve our residents and continue to provide a wide range of park facilities with the priorities balanced to serve different activities and different types of user groups. This challenge will continue to be important in the future as the community grows and as more park land is provided by the City.

Following is a list of the type of facilities that the City provides for the enjoyment of the general public for non-organized activities:

- ◆ Tennis courts
- ◆ Basketball courts
- ◆ Paved recreation path
- ◆ Nature trails and paths
- ◆ Natural settings and wooded areas
- ◆ Open play areas
- ◆ Picnic pavilions
- ◆ Neighborhood parks and playground equipment
- ◆ Sledding hill
- ◆ Ice skating areas

The importance of these facilities, type of improvements that could be provided in the future, need for ongoing maintenance and replacement, and possible expansion to improve our service to the largest number of participants will be identified and discussed later in this Master Plan. A balanced approach to long term planning that includes the facilities that are desired by the general public such as picnic pavilions, playground equipment, tennis courts, basketball courts, jogging and walking trails, and similar features is as equally important as planning for ball diamonds and soccer fields that are desired by the organized leagues.

CURRENT USER GROUPS (BALL DIAMONDS)

Historically, the City has provided sports facilities and park property for the use of separate, private youth organizations, sports leagues, and the local schools. Those leagues and sports organizations have developed on their own and are independent not-for-profit organizations that provide a benefit to the community but rely on the City for their success and to provide their facilities. This codependency has worked well within the City. Our City residents are provided the opportunity to belong to established leagues for organized sports without the need to have these leagues operated and managed by the City. Each independent league and organization can plan, operate, and manage their group without having to invest large sums of money for land and capital improvements. Both local high schools utilize the City's sports facilities for many of their activities, and the City has the opportunity to utilize some of the school's indoor facilities to provide other recreational choices for our residents.

In 1996, the City of Woodstock provided a total of 785 scheduled games to the organized user groups. That level of participation had increased to a total of 1,052 scheduled games in 2004. In fact, there was a 25% increase in the number of games played in just one year from 2003 to 2004. It may not be possible for the City to continue to meet similar, very large annual increases in the future without the need to exclude some requests.

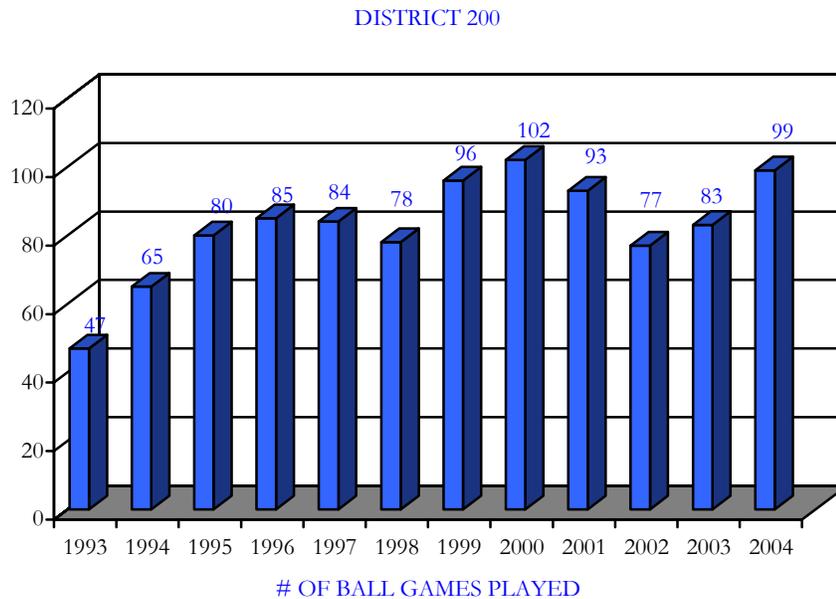
In addition to the recreational and organized sports activities provided by these separate user groups, the City's Recreation Department provides broad based organized leagues as a direct function of the City services. These City-managed and sponsored activities serve a wider group of participants and offers other choices and leisure activities for our residents that are not currently provided by the private user groups.

Following is a summary of the current users and the type of activities played on City fields and park land:

Woodstock High School - District 200 uses the City's parks for varsity baseball, junior varsity baseball, varsity softball, junior varsity softball, varsity soccer practice, junior varsity soccer, cross country practice and meets, and freshmen tennis games. Since these activities are competitive sports, there is no significant increase projected in the number of games to be played in the future. Even though the enrollment of the high school continues to increase each year, there will continue to be only one varsity team and one junior varsity team for each sport. Some increase in the use of City facilities can be expected, as the school population increases, if the school offers Freshman level sports in addition to their junior varsity teams. Currently, District 200 relies on the City facilities for most of their outdoor sports. Unlike many school districts in the area, the school does not have their own outdoor sports fields other than the high school football field, track, and tennis courts. Any change in that status in the future would have an impact on the City's planning goals and could result in more sports fields being available for increased use by other user groups. Conversely, if at some time in the future District 200 and the community determines that it is necessary and appropriate to have more than one high school without also providing outdoor athletic facilities, the current City facilities would not meet the demand.

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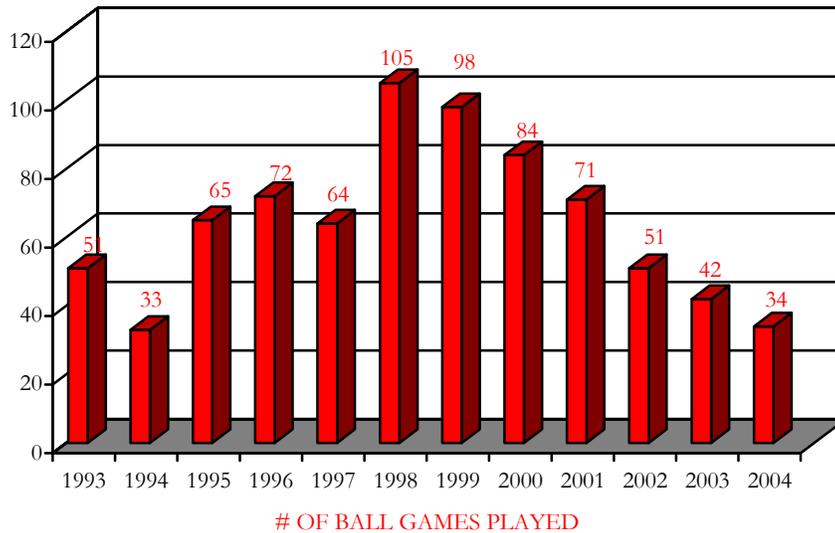
In 2004, Woodstock High School played a total of 99 scheduled games on City baseball and softball fields, 30 soccer games, and 10 tennis matches on City facilities. The largest use by District 200 is for softball and baseball fields. District 200's season for ball field use typically includes the months of March, April, and May, and they currently use fields at Emricson Park but not at Bates Park. The following chart provides a summary of the number of ball games played over the past few years:



Marian Central Catholic High School – Marian Central Catholic High School raised funds and completed the construction of their own outdoor sports facility. They now have facilities for a baseball field, softball fields, football, tennis, soccer, and track. However, their facilities are not adequate to meet all of their athletic needs, and Marian Central Catholic High School continues to use the City's parks for baseball and softball on a regular basis. Since these activities are competitive sports, there is no significant increase projected in the number of games to be played in the future.

In 2004, Marian Central Catholic High School played a total of 34 scheduled games on City baseball and softball fields, 1 tennis match, and held 3 cross country meets at Emricson Park. The largest use by Marian Central Catholic High School is for softball and baseball fields, and the following chart provides a summary of the number of ball games played over the past few years. As expected, this chart shows that the reliance on the use of City fields has decreased as a result of the school providing their own sports fields. This has allowed for increased use by other organizations and user groups, but they do still rely on the City for the overall success of their programs. Currently, Marian Central Catholic High School uses fields at Bates Park only.

MARIAN CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

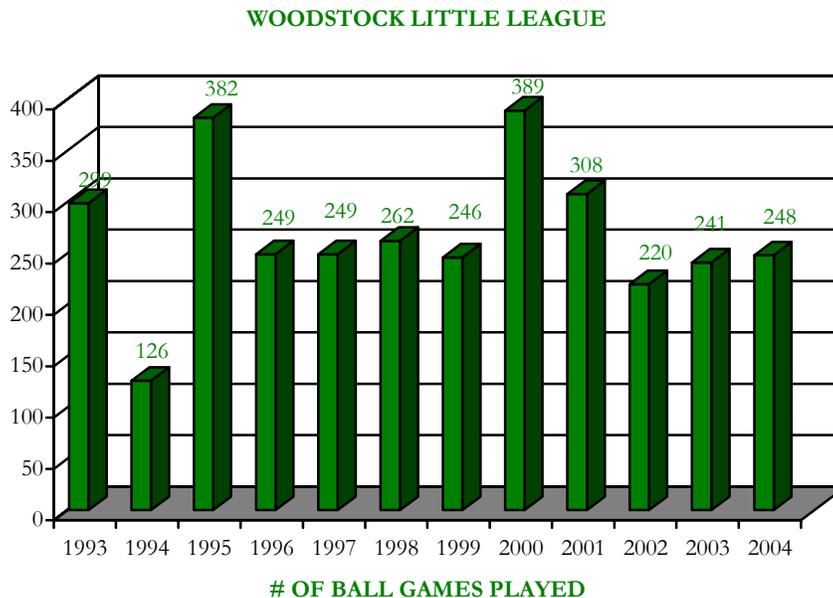


Woodstock Little League - The Woodstock Little League is a very successful youth organization that was established in 1954, and they use the City’s parks for all of their games and practices. The organization has actively promoted their league and has made several improvements to the City’s parks and facilities over the years. The most recent example is the reconstruction of Sullivan Field in Emricson Park which was completed by the Little League in 1996 and is now used exclusively by Little League. Sullivan Field is the only ball diamond that has been dedicated to a single user group due to the physical construction of the field, and The Woodstock Little League shares use of other City facilities with all other user groups.

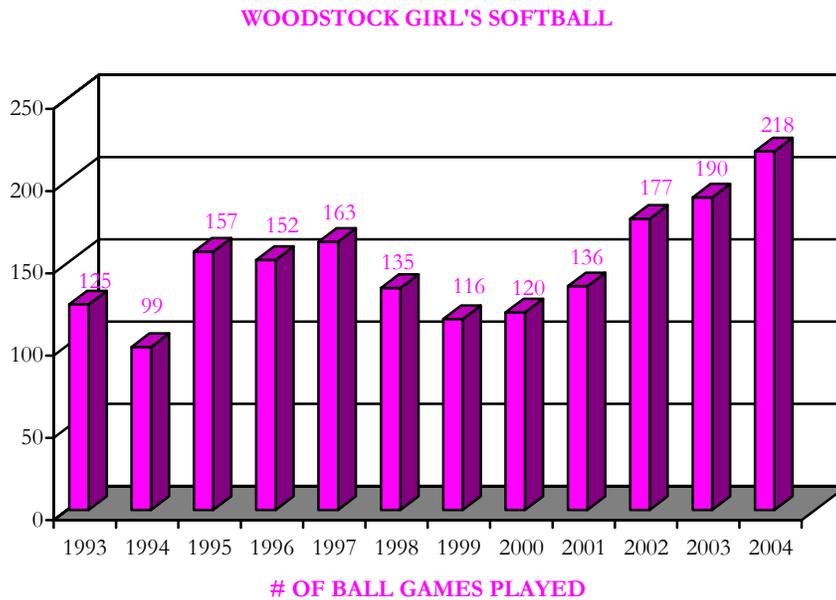


Due to the success of this organization, their membership has increased and is expected to continue to increase in the future. They played a total of 248 games on City ballfields in 2004 which represented the largest of the current user groups at 23% of all scheduled games played during that year. The chart below provides a summary of the number of ball games played over the past few years. As shown with this comparison, the peak use for the Woodstock Little League occurred in 2000 followed by two years of declining schedules. Although the City is not exactly certain of the cause of this decrease, it may have been a result of other leagues and user groups being formed near the same time. The number of games played by the Woodstock Little League has started to increase again since 2002, and as the population of the City and the surrounding unincorporated areas increases, participation in this organization will also increase.

Typically, the Little League season includes May and June although the organization recently started scheduling games in March and April which has resulted in some scheduling conflicts with the school season. The Woodstock Little League normally uses eight of the City's eleven fields for their programs.



Woodstock Girl's Softball - The Woodstock Girl's Softball organization uses the City's parks for most of their games and practices. They do use some fields at Northwood School and Olson Middle School in addition to the City's fields; however, the organization is still dependent on the City for the majority of their activities. The Woodstock Girl's Softball organization has also been very successful and provides an important recreational opportunity at a competitive level for girls of the area. The number of games played on City fields has increased to an all time high of 218 games played during 2004. The Girl's Softball organization accounted for 21% of all games played during 2004, and the following chart provides a summary of the number of ball games played over the past few years. The number of games played on City fields by the Woodstock Girl's Softball organization has continued to grow since 2000, and that trend would be expected to continue in the future if facilities are available. The Woodstock Girl's Softball season is similar to the season for Woodstock Little League, and most games are played during the months of May and June. Their games are played on fields at Bates Park and at Emricson Park.

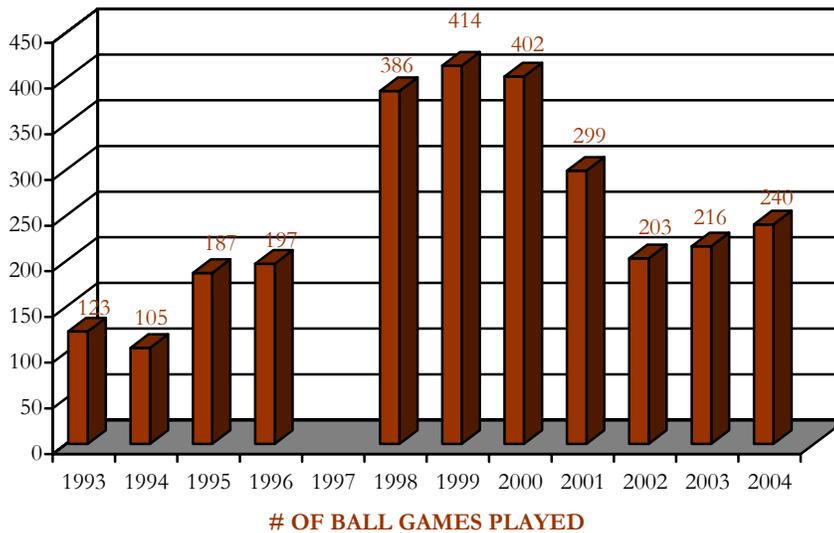


Heat Wave (Girl’s Softball) – A separate organized league for girl’s softball was formed during the past few years which also utilizes the City fields for their games. This is a traveling league that utilizes fields at Bates Park and Emricson Park for all of their home games, and their normal season runs from May to July similar to the other youth leagues. Woodstock Heat Wave played a total of 135 games on City fields during 2004 which was a substantial increase from the 22 games played during the previous year.

City of Woodstock Recreational Leagues – In addition to the separate organized leagues, the City of Woodstock plans, schedules, and manages recreational leagues for adult softball. This has become a popular recreational choice for our residents, and the number of games played has increased. There were a total of 240 games played under the City programs in 2004, and the following chart provides a summary of the number of ball games played over the past few years.

Most of the games played under the City’s program are scheduled outside of the normal seasons for the school sports and for the two primary youth leagues (Woodstock Little League and Woodstock Girl’s Softball). Where there may be some overlap of play time based on weather conditions, extended seasons, or special tournament activities that the user group initiates, in general, the number of games scheduled by the City does not impact field availability for the schools and youth organizations. These leagues do, however, provide a very important and beneficial recreational choice for the community.

CITY OF WOODSTOCK LEAGUES



(Data for 1997 is not available)

Woodstock Travelers – This organization was formed in the Woodstock area in 1998 and primarily includes 13 and 14 year old boys. The league played only 4 games on City fields in 1998, and their use has increased to a total of 59 games played in 2004. It is unknown how many participants in this organization are Woodstock residents since this is a traveling team that competes on a regional basis. The league plays games in the spring, summer, and fall and rely totally on the City of Woodstock’s facilities for their home games. In the past, the Woodstock Travelers have used the Dream Field and three different ball fields in Emricson Park for their home field.

Other – In addition to these organized leagues that comprise the majority of ball field use currently provided by the City, there are some other organized leagues that also rely on the City facilities for their success. Examples include McHenry County Over 40, McHenry County Over 30, Men’s Fast Pitch softball, and American Legion ball. The number of games played varies from year to year but normally has been much less than the organizations previously listed. These *Other* organizations played a total of 19 games on City fields in 2004.

CURRENT USER GROUPS (SOCCER)

Woodstock Area Youth Soccer - WAYSO is the largest of the youth soccer organizations and has been very successful in not only operating their own league but also providing their own fields for play. WAYSO had previously constructed and maintains soccer fields on approximately 20 acres of land leased from District 200 at the Northwood School site. With their own facilities, they are able to serve approximately 900 to 1,000 members in their spring and fall soccer league, and the numbers continue to grow each season. This organization does not currently utilize any City fields for their activities and have not indicated to the City that they will be using City fields in the future.

The City of Woodstock does support that youth organization and has made a cash contribution to WAYSO in the past in lieu of providing any City fields or services. Based on the approval of the City's annual budget, a contribution is made by the City to help support their field maintenance and, subject to the availability of funds, that support from the City is expected to continue in the future.

Crossfire Soccer - Crossfire is a second league that provides organized soccer activities and games for area youth, and they rely totally on the City of Woodstock for their game fields and most practice areas. The league operates both a spring and fall season with no games scheduled during summer months. Following is a summary of the recent field use for Crossfire Soccer organization:

2004 = 72 games 2003 = 82 games 2002 = 65 games

Woodstock District 200 - Woodstock Community Unit School District 200 utilizes the City's soccer fields for most of their games in the spring and fall for both boys and girls soccer games. In addition, District 200 and their coaching staff utilize the City soccer fields for summer time camps and coaching clinics. Following is a summary of the recent field use for District 200:

2004 = 30 games 2003 = 23 games 2002 = 33 games

Adult Leagues - The use of City soccer fields for adult leagues and recreation has certainly increased. These leagues are managed separate from the City, and many of the participants play on fields other than the City of Woodstock in this area based on availability. Due to the popularity and the number of participants, almost all available dates not already reserved by the school or for the youth leagues are in use by the adult organizations.

2004 = 161 games 2003 = 121 games 2002 = 63 games

WOODSTOCK AQUATIC CENTER USER GROUP

Woodstock Dolphins - The Woodstock Dolphins use Woodstock Water Works at Emricson Park for all of their practices and meets.

ICE HOCKEY

Cool Kids On Ice Hockey - A group of residents interested in promoting hockey as an organized youth sport activity successfully raised funds to purchase materials to build an outdoor hockey rink in 1996. The Woodstock Park Division completed the construction of the hockey rink in the fall of 1996, and their program utilizes the outdoor facility in Emricson Park for their classes and games.

POTENTIAL FUTURE USER GROUPS AND FACILITIES

It is very difficult to predict what new organizations may be formed within the next 10 to 20 years and what new sports activities will become more popular. The creation of new user groups and organized leagues requires committed leadership, sound planning, and the interest to generate consistent numbers of participants. Often these groups are formed before the City is involved which can result in facility and scheduling problems. The following activities have been mentioned in the past by interested user groups and interested residents. These are only listed as example of programs, facilities, and sports activities that might be considered in the future and have not been presented as proposed activities. (See discussion later in this Plan regarding specific recommendation.)

Indoor Hockey - Ice hockey is certainly a popular sport in this area, and the interest has increased at the local level during the past few years. During 1996, a local organization (Cool Kids On Ice) was formed and successfully raised funds to purchase materials for a new outdoor hockey rink which was constructed by the Parks Division in Emricson Park. However, this is a limited use, outdoor rink that is certainly subject to problems with weather conditions to create and maintain ice. The need for an enclosed ice rink to provide a better quality of ice and to allow for increased use has been discussed.

Roller Hockey/Roller Blading - Roller hockey can provide many of the same activities as ice hockey during warm weather, and roller blading has continued to increase in popularity.

Skate Park - Some interest has been expressed for the construction of a skate park as a new recreational choice for Woodstock residents. A feasibility study and concept plan was previously prepared by the City for one possible choice, but the proposal is not currently active.

Frisbee Golf - The City has received a request from a local resident to provide a Frisbee golf course at some park location in the future. The preferred size is anything between 9 holes and 27 holes.

Dog Park - The City has been asked to provide a park site and/or a designated and separate area within an existing park that would be reserved for dogs and their handlers.

USER GROUPS - GOALS

Provide and maintain a variety of park and recreational facilities to serve a diverse group of customers and user groups; continue to support the beneficial efforts of separate, organized leagues by providing and maintaining park facilities for their programs; and plan for the expansion of sport fields and recreational facilities to serve an expanding community.

OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Recognize the importance and value to the community of providing adequate facilities for the general public such as pavilions, playground equipment, tennis courts, basketball courts, jogging/hiking trails, and other amenities that are not directly linked to use by organized leagues but are a critical part of the quality of life for our residents. Balance the need and value of these facilities to the community through the ongoing planning efforts in the City's Capital Improvement Program and annual budget process.

2. Due to the desire of many of the established organizations to utilize the same fields during the same time period, the City should continue to schedule the availability of fields based on the following priorities:

- a. City of Woodstock leagues and programs.
- b. Schools (District 200 and Marian Central Catholic High School).
- c. Established youth leagues including Woodstock Little League, Woodstock Girl's Softball, and Crossfire Soccer.
- d. Newer youth leagues which currently include Woodstock Travelers and Heat Wave.
- e. New leagues and organizations which may be approved later by the City that serve youth members.
- f. Adult leagues and organizations

3. While the City will strive to provide an adequate number of fields and sport facilities, it may not always be possible to meet the demand or to accommodate specific scheduling preferred by all organizations. Funding for the construction of facilities and for maintenance is received from the residents of the City of Woodstock, and participation by non-residents adds to the burden for these facilities without contributing any revenue. **In the future, if the number of participants and the number of resulting games proposed presents scheduling conflicts, the City may encourage the organized leagues to reduce the number of non-resident participants.**

4. During the past few years, there have been new private leagues formed that assume that the City will be able to accommodate their schedules and provide an adequate number of facilities. While the City is supportive of these efforts, the new programs and leagues can and have reduced the playing opportunities for the leagues and programs that have been established in Woodstock for a long period of time and that are already providing a valuable service to the community. The City will work to accommodate as many new requests and new organizations as possible but also needs to try to ensure that there will be no long term negative impacts on the current organizations prior to making commitments.

Requests from new organizations and leagues who desire to use City fields for their programs should be submitted to the City at least one year in advance. Those requests will then be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission, with comment and input from the other established user groups, to assess the impact on the existing facilities and organizations. Through this effort, the City will strive to maintain the cooperative support that has been already established for the current user groups.



CHAPTER 4

COORDINATION WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS

INTRODUCTION

There are several other agencies that provide recreational and leisure services to our residents. Since the City of Woodstock has limited financial resources that can be devoted to parks and recreation services, it is important to identify these other service organizations and describe the type of services and activities that they currently provide. Wherever possible, the City should avoid duplication of recreational programs and facilities and encourage the cooperative use of facilities for our residents.

The City should help to promote the recreational opportunities and selection offered by these various organizations and businesses.

Community Unit School District 200

Woodstock School District 200 does work cooperatively with the City of Woodstock for shared programs and sharing of facilities for recreational programs. The City of Woodstock currently utilizes District 200 space for various programs including, but not limited to, use of the indoor pool at the high school for open swim, indoor walking at the high school, the Playground Program at Olson School, and indoor youth baseball where space exists for that particular session.

Marian Central Catholic High School

The City also utilizes indoor facilities at Marian Central High School for recreational programs. The City currently utilizes the gymnasium at Marian Central High School for special basketball camps and their ball diamonds for the Girls Softball Tournament.

McHenry County College (MCC)

All residents of the City of Woodstock are also residents within the boundaries of MCC and can participate in their classes and programs. In addition to their wide selection of educational classes, the college offers a wide variety of recreational and leisure programs. Examples are classes in arts and crafts, instructional classes in leisure activities, classes for hobbies, and many other choices for our residents. The college also plans and arranges several excursion trips each year which are available to our residents.

Woodstock Public Library

The Woodstock Public Library offers a wide variety of programs and special classes to our residents which compliment the programs offered by the City's Recreation Department. Examples include special Saturday 'Just for Fun' program, preschool story time, mystery books and discussion, computer classes, special arts and craft for younger children, and many more activities during the year.

Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA)

The City of Woodstock is a member of NISRA which is a special recreation district created to serve the needs of handicapped residents and residents with special needs. NISRA provides a wide variety of activities, programs, recreational choices, and facilities to their member communities and our residents.

McHenry County Conservation District

All residents of the City of Woodstock are also residents within the boundaries of the McHenry County Conservation District and can participate in their programs and utilize their facilities. The Conservation District provides a wide variety of parks and nature areas that can be enjoyed by our residents for hiking, walking, observing nature, and simply enjoying the outdoors. The District also offers a variety of programs and educational classes.

Private Facilities

In addition to all of these public facilities and organizations that serve Woodstock, our residents are fortunate to have several private businesses that offer additional recreation and leisure activities. Examples of these include fitness training and exercise, gymnastics and exercise, swimming lessons, miniature golf, golf, karate, bowling, game rooms, a movie theater, and many other activities. The City of Woodstock Recreation Department works closely with the local business and schedules several classes and programs at these private facilities each year. The additional choices provided by these private businesses and facilities that can be used by the City are very important to the overall quality of the recreational programs offered to our residents and will be an important part of our service in the future.



CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDED STANDARDS

PARK LAND DEDICATION

Prior to the approval of a preliminary plat of subdivision or a preliminary plan of a planned development, for the residential development of land within the City, each developer shall be required to dedicate usable land for park sites to serve the immediate and future needs of the residents. The Parks and Recreation Commission will review each development or preliminary plat and provide a recommendation to the Woodstock Plan Commission and the Woodstock City Council to either accept the dedication of land for park use, to require a cash payment in lieu of the land dedication, or to recommend a combination of land dedication and cash contribution.

For those locations where some or all of the park impact fees are to be met with land dedication, the City will receive less revenue for capital expansion fees. Capital expansion fees are used as the primary source of revenue by the City for the development of new park facilities, and therefore, the dedication of land with a new development fee will reduce the future revenue available for park development. As a result, the City will need to balance the need and desire for more park land with the need to generate revenue to improve future parks. The proper balance between citing parks when land is available with the need to preserve cash revenues must be considered at all times when discussing new development projects.

The City should not accept nor require the dedication of park land with every single new development project that is proposed. Some amount of the land dedication requirement will need to be provided in the form of cash to generate revenue for the successful construction of necessary park improvements in the future. Unless the City provides a careful review of the land dedication requirements versus cash payments, there will not be adequate funds in future years to improve the land that has been dedicated.

To assist with this evaluation of new park land, the Parks and Recreation Commission has prepared a formal policy relating to the evaluation of park land with new development projects. This policy is attached to the Master Plan as Exhibit 2 and may be updated and revised by the Parks and Recreation Commission from time to time.

STANDARDS FOR FACILITY SIZE

In order to evaluate the needs of the City's park users and to properly plan for future improvements to the City's parks, it is helpful to establish certain standards for facility construction. These standards would include the size of athletic fields and recreational facilities, minimum land requirements, and parking needs. By following these standard sizes and standard dimensions, the City can develop fields and facilities that can be used by more than one user group and avoid the construction of specialized fields that will not serve a variety of users and activities.

Following is a summary of the standards recommended by the City for various activities. Wherever possible, actual field and facility construction should follow these guidelines for projects constructed by the City and projects constructed by private user groups. Details of each facility layout and

Chapter Five

dimensions are included in Exhibit 3. The following table provides general guidelines and planning recommendations to be used for the planning of new park sites. This table will assist with the land area requirements for planning of new park spaces and is to be used only as a general guide. The City of Woodstock shall be responsible for determining land area requirements for the dedication of new park land, and the actual requirements by the City may be greater than the general guidelines in the following table.

FACILITY	FIELD DIMENSIONS	MINIMUM LAND AREA REQUIRED*	MINIMUM PARKING REQUIRED
REGULATION SOCCER	240' x 330'	2.7 acres	30
YOUTH SOCCER	105 x 222' or 180' x 270'	2.0 acres	20
SOFTBALL - teen/youth	200' outfield	1.1 acres	30
SOFTBALL - adult	300' outfield	2.0 acres	30
BASEBALL	300' outfield	2.5 acres	30
BASKETBALL	94' x 50'	0.15 acres	10
TENNIS (per court)	78' x 27'	0.13 acres	6
ICE HOCKEY	85' x 200'	0.4 acres	12
ROLLER HOCKEY	85' x 200'	0.4 acres	12
VOLLEYBALL	59' x 36'	0.7 acres	12

* Area required is for field use only. Does not include any additional land for parking, driveways, landscaping, or other improvements.

Within each of these categories there could be other specific subcategories for planning purposes. Examples include baseball fields/softball fields at different base paths or half court basketball. Those differences should be determined and designated with detailed design, and the general sizes listed in the preceding table are to be used with this Master Plan for overall land size.

ACTIVITY/FACILITY	FIELD DIMENSIONS	OTHER
REGULATION SOCCER	240' x 330'	
YOUTH SOCCER	105' x 222' or 180' x 270'	
SOFTBALL	200' to 220' outfield	60' base paths
SOFTBALL	300'	60' base paths
BASEBALL	200' to 220' outfield	60' base paths
BASEBALL	275' to 300' outfield	70' base paths
BASEBALL	300' to 320' outfield	80' base paths
BASEBALL	320' to 350' outfield	90' base paths
BASKETBALL COURT	94' x 50'	
TENNIS COURT	78' x 27'	

STANDARDS FOR NUMBER OF FACILITIES

There is no single correct method for the City to determine the optimum number of athletic fields and recreational facilities that might be preferred by our residents. Participation and interest may vary over time and is dependent upon the success of the local sponsorship and individuals that organize and promote the activity. The State of Illinois has published a guide for local communities to use for the planning of their outdoor facilities based on the participation and interest of park users throughout the State. This provides the City with one means of comparing our current level of service and number of recreational facilities to an established State standard.

FACILITY TYPE	STATE WIDE AVG. per 1,000 POPULATION	STATE WIDE AVG. / CURRENT POPULATION	EXISTING FACILITIES	WITH PLANNED FACILITIES
LAND (Woodstock standard)	17.5 acres	284	364	486
BALL FIELDS	0.98	21	12	20
SOCCER FIELDS	0.22	5	2	8
TENNIS COURTS	0.91	20	8	8
BASKETBALL COURTS	0.64	10	7.5	7.5
VOLLEYBALL COURTS (sand)	0.16	3.5	4	4
PICNIC SHELTERS	0.56	12	8	8
PLAYGROUNDS	0.82	18	12	13
SWIMMING POOL	0.14	2	1	1
HIKING PATHS (miles)	0.35	7.6	4	

Source: Illinois Recreational Facility Inventory, 1990 by the Illinois Dept. of Conservation. The right hand column includes new facilities that are proposed to be constructed in 2005 or 2006 at Davis Road park property and The Fields of Woodstock park site.

While this table does provide one means of determining the number of facilities that should be provided, it should not be used as the absolute standard for the City of Woodstock. Each community has its own local needs and preferences for types of recreational facilities and opportunities based on past history and the success of local special interest groups. As an example, the number of tennis courts currently provided by the City is substantially less than the State-wide average but there has not been any strong local interest to substantially increase the number of courts. At the same time, after the new ball fields are completed at The Fields of Woodstock, the number of facilities provided will be near the State-wide averages but still may not be adequate to meet the needs of all potential user groups. The amount of park land provided by Woodstock is greater than the typical community, yet the City is often asked to create more neighborhood parks and to increase the size of the regional parks. Therefore, this table only provides a simple measurement to an average community and does not reflect the actual expectations and desires of our residents.

STANDARDS FOR PATHS AND TRAILS

The City of Woodstock has, for many years, provided public sidewalks for the safety and enjoyment of our residents and has provided a system of trails in nature area settings in the parks. Ryder's Woods, Westwood Conservation Area, and Silver Creek Conservation Area all have a system of paths and trails for the enjoyment of our residents. These are unique facilities that provide easy access into the nature areas and allow residents to enjoy the passive park system. As the City obtains and/or develops new passive parks with natural settings in the future, consideration should also be given to providing a trail system for both access and simple enjoyment of the natural features of the park land.

Recently, the City constructed a paved recreational path in Emricson Park with a different type of function and purpose. The setting for the Emricson Park paved path is more open and provides a better surface for running/jogging, walking, roller blading, and bicycling. This new facility has been widely used since completion and has become a popular new addition to the recreational choices for our residents. Based on the success of that facility, the City should look to provide additional paved recreational paths in other areas of the City in the future either as free standing or as linked paths.

Trails and paths within natural settings should fit well with the surroundings and generally will not be paved. The trail system can be constructed of wood mulch, stone, or other natural materials and will be set within the existing grade and elevations of the park land without extensive grading and excavation. The location of the trails should be determined by avoiding damage to the natural conditions while at the same time allowing easier access to important and attractive features of the park site.

Recreational paths have a different purpose and, therefore, will have a different set of planning goals during design. Public recreational paths (owned and maintained by the City) will normally be paved and at least eight feet (8') wide. The grade of the path shall be controlled to avoid steep slopes that may be a safety concern for patrons on roller blades or bikes which may require some locations of extensive excavation and changes to the natural ground elevations. Access to the paved path should be allowed at different locations and staging areas, but wherever possible, the paved path needs to be a closed loop system that will allow for multiple laps. The paved path should be located in a variety of terrain and natural settings including open spaces, adjacent to wetland or water features, wooded areas, and even adjacent to active play areas.

Guidelines and standards for the construction of paved paths are included as Exhibit 4.

STANDARDS FOR PARK IDENTIFICATION AND SIGNAGE

It is important for all of our residents to understand that the park facilities are provided and maintained by the City of Woodstock, and the City must be able to quickly and easily identify any public park site. One of the means to accomplish that goal is through the use of uniform identification signage at each park site. The use of standardized signage can improve the accessibility of our parks to the residents, encourage more public use, establish pride in ownership, and will let the residents know who is responsible for their park facilities.

All City parks should be identified with a ground sign placed near the street frontage or at one or more of the public entrances to the park. The sign shall include the name of the park, the City logo, and also 'City of Woodstock', and all signs shall be constructed using uniform colors and a consistent style. The City should have an identification sign installed at each existing park site when funds are available. Identification signage should be included as part of the development of all new park sites.

In addition to the identification sign, each park shall include a separate rules sign. This rules sign will include standard rules that apply to all park sites such as hours of operation, no alcohol, parking restrictions, etc. as well as any special conditions that would apply only to a specific site.



CHAPTER 6

DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR EXISTING PARKS & FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Before a final analysis of needs, recommended improvements, and proposed locations can be completed, the City should first assess the current park facilities and their potential for full development. This allows the City and the park users to determine the best use of existing park lands and determine the best location for any future improvements. Based on that assessment, the City and the park users can then better identify what new park land should be obtained and how the additional lands should best be used for the benefit of the community.

The purpose of this Chapter and the importance of looking at how best to utilize our existing park sites goes beyond the need for future and full development. One of the goals is to help ensure that the long term maintenance and quality of the existing facilities is addressed at the same time that the community and the park and recreational facilities expand. This should include ways to make each current park site more attractive and a more interesting place to visit. The goal for each park site individually, and then collectively, is to create a variety of open spaces and park settings that can accommodate changes in use and offer opportunities that continue from season to season and year to year. Ultimately, the City's network of existing park sites will attract people throughout the day, throughout the week, and throughout the year.

The following pages provide an overview of each existing park facility and improvements that can be considered for full development, identify maintenance improvements that should be considered, and offer suggestions on ways to improve the appearance of the park settings. This Chapter provides a concept plan for each park site to identify the potential development that might be considered and completed at some time in the future based on the size and space of the park. This information is not a specific recommendation for development, because these development plans are not based on priority and available funding. However, this planning step does show how each park could be developed and what new facilities could be provided within the existing park sites.

Albert/Gerry Street Nature Area

This is a 25 acre passive park site that is located south of South Street, between Tara Drive and Gerry Street. The property owned by the City has only a very limited amount of direct street frontage, although it does have public access on both the east and west sides of the property. The park property is currently undeveloped for any significant public use and does contain some significant natural features. This is one of the natural park sites that is proposed for improvement in the future, by the City in conjunction with a private partner (The Land Conservancy) and the following maintenance and improvements have been identified:

- Clearing of shrubs for walking paths by District 200 students.
- Regular burning of wetlands to improve plant quality.
- Removal of non-native species from wetlands and wooded areas.
- Construction of a paved path system that will link access to Emricson Park.
- Potential for small parking area to increase public access and use.

Banford Road Park

This is a 1.35 acre neighborhood park located on the south side of Banford Road between Raffel Road and Queen Anne Road. The park site currently includes a playground structure, a full sized basketball court, a small mini-shelter, and a parking lot. At this time, this neighborhood park is considered to be fully developed, and space is not available to accommodate any significant new facilities. The following maintenance and improvements could be considered for this site:

- Resurfacing of basketball court on a regular schedule.
- Maintenance and resurfacing of parking lot as needed.
- Replacement of playground equipment between 2015 and 2020.
- Landscape improvements which could include trees along Banford Road frontage and/or trees and landscaping along the south lot line.
- Installation of sidewalk/path from the south lot line to Victorian Country for improved pedestrian access for area residents.

Bates Park

This is a 23 acre regional park facility located on the east side of Illinois Route 47 near the intersection of Willow Avenue. The park currently includes two basketball courts, one baseball field, five softball fields, playground equipment, stone paths, and parking lots. The following maintenance and improvements could be considered for this site:

- Installation of lights for all six ball diamonds.
- Installation of lights for one or two of the basketball courts.
- Installation of scoreboards for all six ball diamonds.
- Installation of irrigation system for ball diamonds to improve quality.
- Expansion of paved parking lot to increase parking capacity.
- Installation of new bike and pedestrian access to/from St. Johns Road for improved access by area residents.
- Replacement of playground equipment between 2012 and 2015.
- Resurfacing of basketball courts on a regular schedule.
- Maintenance and resurfacing of parking lot as needed.
- Reconstruction and renovation of ball diamonds and fences based on 20 year expected life with renovation to occur between 2013 and 2018.
- Reconstruction and renovation of restrooms and storage building based on 20 year expected life with renovation to occur between 2013 and 2018.
- Additional landscaping along Route 47 frontage to improve overall site appearance.

Castle Road Park

This 4.2 acre park site is located east of Castle Road and south of Cobblestone Way immediately adjacent to the Kishwaukee River. Once completed, the park setting will include vistas overlooking the river and a much larger open space to the east. At this time, no improvements have been made to the park site by the City, and this location is intended to be developed in the future as an active park

site. One primary feature should be to provide playground equipment and some active recreational facilities for the residents who live east of Illinois Route 47 and south of US Route 14. The following improvements could be considered for this new park site, however, no specific plans have been identified at this time:

- Playground equipment for both tots and juvenile ages.
- One or two tennis courts.
- A basketball court.
- Landscaping compatible with the river setting and the adjoining open space.

Davis Road Park

The 42 acre site, used by the City as a municipal landfill until 1975, is being improved as a soccer complex. Construction was completed in 2005 and includes six new soccer fields with an underground irrigation system. The following future maintenance and improvements could be considered for this recreational site:

- Construction of two additional soccer fields.
- Installation of trails and/or paved paths with connection to the adjacent McHenry County Conservation District property.
- Construction of a picnic shelter.
- Provide bleachers for spectators.
- Landscape improvements along Davis Road frontage.

Dick Tracy Way Park

The City has been asked to construct a new neighborhood park on City-owned property at the corner of Lake Avenue and Dick Tracy Way. The new park is expected to be designed during 2005 and constructed in 2006 and could include the following features:

- Sidewalk along Dick Tracy Way.
- Perimeter fence for safety on three sides.
- Tot lot play equipment and playground area for juvenile age.
- Brick sidewalk with decorative lighting, sitting area, and decorative benches.
- Extensive landscaping adjacent to Lake Avenue, possible expansion of lilac areas.

Emricson Park

While Emricson Park is the largest of the City's parks at 130 acres, it is also the most heavily developed at this time. There are few opportunities for new recreation facilities in this park without the removal of existing facilities and features. Additional land should be one of the prominent future goals as well as maintenance of the existing facilities. The following maintenance and improvements could be considered for Emricson Park:

- Replacement of all playground equipment, based on the schedule established in the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Plan, for safety and to provide exciting new recreational choices.

- Replacement of all picnic shelters based on the schedule established in the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.
- Resurfacing and reconstruction of all roads and parking lots on a regular basis.
- Complete reconstruction and renovation of Bigelow B softball field including replacement of fence and lights.
- Complete reconstruction and renovation of Bigelow C softball field including replacement of fence and lights.
- Complete reconstruction and renovation of Main Softball field including replacement of fence and lights.
- Coordinate renovation and major maintenance of Sullivan Field with Woodstock Little League.
- Coordinate renovation and major maintenance of the Dream Field with Woodstock Baseball Association.
- Construct new full sized picnic shelter at site of former Recreation Building.
- Purchase of additional land adjacent to Emricson Park (when opportunity for voluntary sale is available).
- Expansion of paved path to new areas of the park and to provide alternate routes; as well as consideration of importance and benefits of passive paths in the park for specific locations.
- Resurfacing and repair of tennis courts and fences as needed.
- Resurfacing and repair of basketball courts as needed.
- Demolition of former Peters Pool bathhouse.
- Construction of warming house and shelter area at top of sledding hill.
- Reconstruction and grading of sledding hill to improve capacity and to also divert users away from pond areas.
- Cleaning and dredging of the two lagoons.

The Fields of Woodstock Park

This is a new 82 acre park that has been dedicated to the City located between Raffel Road and Queen Anne Road. A master plan has been prepared for the development of this new facility which could include the following features and amenities:

- Up to 8 ball diamonds.
- Tennis courts and basketball courts.
- Playground area and picnic area.
- Park maintenance garage.
- Paved recreation path.
- Water/spray playground area.

Mary Ann Street Park

This is a small (1.66 acre) neighborhood park that is fully developed. There is not adequate space available for any prominent new facilities, however, the following maintenance and improvement items could be considered:

- Maintenance and coating of basketball court as needed.
- Replacement of playground equipment based on the schedule identified in the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.

McConnell Road Park

Approximately 14 acres of land have been dedicated to the City for the development of a new neighborhood park on the north side of McConnell Road near the easterly City Limits. Construction is anticipated to occur in 2007 or 2008, and the new park could include the following features. However, no specific planning has been completed at this time.

- Playground equipment for tots and juvenile age groups.
- Planting of trees to create a small wooded area with picnic tables.
- A basketball court and tennis court(s).
- Open play area/grass field.
- Small softball field without fences.
- Off street parking area for park users.
- Grading and landscape buffers adjacent to some of the adjoining homes.

A.J. Olson Park

Olson Park has functioned as both a neighborhood park site as well as some regional facilities in the past. However, due to the small size (2.3 acres), space is limited, and the City intends on changing the emphasis of this facility to just a neighborhood park in the future. The existing park facilities should be maintained, but there are no expansion nor new development options that have been identified.

Park in the Square

The Park in the Square is the focal point for the historic square and is one of the primary assets of the community. Special attention to maintenance is needed for this popular setting, and the following maintenance and improvements could be considered:

- Complete reconstruction of the concrete wall around the perimeter either with concrete or with a different style and appearance.
- Replacement of all trash cans and benches compatible with the new material being used in the downtown.
- Replacement of all lights in the park with poles and fixtures compatible with the new material being used in the downtown.
- Continued maintenance of bandstand and Springhouse structures.
- Regular maintenance and care of trees and landscape features.

Prairie Ridge Drive Park

This 2.5 acre park is relatively new and currently includes playground equipment, tennis court, basketball court, and a softball field. Maintenance and improvements that could be considered include:

- Regular maintenance and coating of basketball court and tennis court as needed.
- Regular maintenance of ball field and replacement of back stop as needed.
- Replacement of the playground equipment following the schedule identified in the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.
- Addition of more landscaping with an emphasis on improving the appearance along the two street frontages.

Raintree Park

The primary purpose of Raintree Park is for stormwater retention, and the majority of the property does have limited development potential. Some improvements that could be considered include:

- Construction of a paved path around the park perimeter.
- Grading to improve use of the park site in the winter for a sledding hill area.

Ryder's Woods

Ryder's Woods is one of three 'passive' park sites that the City provides for the enjoyment of residents, and the park has different maintenance and improvement needs than the active park settings. A habitat restoration and management plan has been prepared for the City which identifies the following maintenance items and improvements that can be considered for the 21 acre nature area:

- Cut invasive species in the prairie area, treat stumps, and burn prairie once a year.
- Cut invasive species and treat cattails around pond area.
- Remove undesirable plants from forest area and treat stumps.
- Emphasis on continued maintenance of trail system in this park.
- Evaluation of alternatives for improvement of the pond facility in the park.

Sesquicentennial Park

This is a small, ornamental park that was constructed in celebration of the City's 150th anniversary. The park is fully developed, and no further park improvements have been identified. The addition of a decorative sign for the park, in a style compatible with the fountain and streetscape features could be considered.

Silver Creek Conservation Area

This is the second of three 'passive' park sites that the City provides for the enjoyment of residents, and the park has different maintenance and improvement needs than the active park settings. A habitat restoration and management plan has been prepared for the City which identifies the following maintenance items and improvements that can be considered for the 67 acre nature area:

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- Spray majority of park area for the elimination of reed canary grass, and repeat on annual basis as needed.
- Remove undesirable plants from forest area and treat stumps.

Sonatas Park

This 14 acre parcel has been dedicated to the City for the development of a new neighborhood park west of Raffel Road and north of Ware Road. The new park could include the following features, however, no specific planning has been completed at this time:

- Playground equipment for tots and juvenile age groups.
- Planting of trees to create a small wooded area with picnic tables.
- A basketball court and/or tennis court(s).
- Open play area/grass field.
- Connection to paved trails in the subdivision.
- Landscape improvements with emphasis on compatibility with adjacent open space.

Sunnyside Park

This is a small, 0.5 acre neighborhood park that includes tot lot playground equipment. The park site is fully utilized, and no additional improvements have been identified at this time.

Sweetwater Park

This 3 acre parcel has been dedicated to the City for the development of a new neighborhood park west of Raffel Road and south of Ware Road. The new park could include the following features, however, no specific planning has been completed at this time:

- Playground equipment for tots and juvenile age groups.
- A basketball court and/or tennis court(s).
- Open play area/grass field.
- Connection to paved trails in the subdivision.
- General landscaping to enhance appearance.

Tara Drive Park

Tara Drive Park is a 0.5 acre neighborhood park located at the northeasterly corner of Tara Drive and Winslow Avenue. The current park facility includes playground equipment, but one of the prominent features is the adjacent open space. The following maintenance and improvements could be considered for this park site:

- Replacement of the playground equipment based on the recommended schedule included with the City's Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.

- Expansion of the playground size and features to include different and new play options.
- Installation of a half sized basketball court or possibly one tennis court.
- Installation of trees and landscape features with an emphasis on compatibility with the adjoining wetlands and open space.

Westwood Conservation Area

This 64 acre parcel is the third of the ‘passive’ park sites that the City provides for the enjoyment of residents, and the park has different maintenance and improvement needs than the active park settings. A habitat restoration and management plan has been prepared for the City which identifies the following maintenance items and improvements that can be considered for the nature area:

- Cut invasive species in the prairie area, treat stumps and burn prairie once a year.
- Remove undesirable plants from forest area and treat stumps.
- Burning of cattail marsh should be completed once a year with some spraying.
- Emphasis on continued maintenance of trail system in this park.

Woodstock Community Recreation Center

The Woodstock Recreation Center sits on a 2.5 acre site with two parking lots, and 21,100SF building that houses the Recreation Center and the offices of the Recreation Department. The Recreation Center is land locked on all four sides making expansion difficult without the purchase of the neighboring gas station. All but a small portion of the site is taken up by the building and the parking lots. The following future maintenance and improvements could be considered within the existing facility:

- Installation of an automatic chemical feeder system for the pool/spa.
- Additional plantings on the perimeter of the site.
- Replacing exercise equipment as needed.
- Installation of a divider curtain in the gym.

Woodstock Water Works

Woodstock Water Works sits on a 7 acre site, and as the Recreation center, it is land locked on all four sides making any future expansion problematic. The following future maintenance and improvements could be considered within the existing facility:

- Installation of a spa/whirlpool.
- Periodically changing out the play features in the zero depth area of the recreation pool and the tot play lot.
- Construction of an additional picnic shelter.
- Installation of additional Funbrellas.



CHAPTER 7

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Since 1990, the City has evaluated the need and benefits of providing neighborhood park sites with each new residential development. This has resulted in the addition of several new park sites by the City including Mary Ann Street Park, Banford Road Park, Tara Drive Park, Prairie Ridge Drive Park, McConnell Road Park, Davis Road Soccer Complex, The Fields parksite, Dick Tracy Way Park, Albert Property, and new park sites approved but not yet dedicated at Savanna Grove on Castle Road, Sweetwater, Sonatas, Apple Creek, and Riverwood. These neighborhood park sites do provide a very important part of the City's overall park and recreational facilities and provide play areas and equipment conveniently located in new residential areas. Previously, the Parks and Recreation Commission had identified specific areas within the City where new neighborhood parks should be considered, and this recommendation and the suggested locations have been included as part of the Woodstock Comprehensive Plan approved by the City Council.

However, as detailed earlier in this report there are many other demands and requests for park and recreational facilities in addition to providing more neighborhood parks. **While small parks conveniently located in various residential areas provide a desirable asset to a neighborhood, the City can not (in the near future) fund the development and maintenance of more neighborhood parks and at the same time meet the needs and requests of other user groups such as softball fields, baseball fields, soccer fields, pool, recreation center, community center, etc.** Based on the current expectations of our park users, the City should focus on the expansion of other types of park facilities.

Recommendation:

- **In order to meet the needs and requests of existing park users and organized sports activities, the City should carefully review and evaluate the dedication of neighborhood park sites for the next five years if the dedication will reduce the cash payment from the development.** The City should require and request the dedication of park land for neighborhood parks in locations where there is a clear need and where it is determined by the City that there are not adequate facilities to support new residents with a proposed development. At the same time, the City should evaluate the importance and need of expanding regional park sites and facilities that can serve a broader population and provide a wide variety of recreational choices for residents. This can best be accomplished through a detailed and specific evaluation of each proposed development and each recommended park land dedication by the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council.
- After five years, the City should again assess the need and importance of neighborhood park sites and evaluate the goals for these facilities.
- The City should, as early as funding allows and as soon as improvements have been made for the expansion of athletic fields and recreational facilities, continue to evaluate and acquire land for neighborhood parks.

- The City should plan for the development of neighborhood park sites already approved and/or dedicated to the City based on the priorities of park projects and the availability of funds.
- The City should consider requiring the dedication of park land for a neighborhood park in addition to cash payments with all proposed residential annexations.

OPEN SPACE

Like neighborhood park sites, open space and unique landscape areas are very important to the quality of life for our residents and also provide a variety of park settings and leisure choices for our park users. However, **the addition of open space and/or open landscape areas should not be pursued by the City where it will result in the reduction of funds available to complete the expansion of active recreational facilities.**

Recommendation:

- **The City should continue to evaluate new development projects and support the acquisition of public open space and unique landscape areas that supplement and enhance existing open space and landscape areas or that create linkage between such areas.** The Parks and Recreation Commission should continue to evaluate new development projects and development requests to identify important, unique, and beneficial open space and landscape areas. The Commission and the City should work with new development projects to obtain public use of these areas through land dedication to the City, public access easement, and/or preservation easements and should carefully evaluate the dedication of these areas in lieu of other park donation requirements.
- **In order to meet the needs and requests of existing park users and organized sports activities, the City should not accept the dedication of open space and/or unique landscape areas for the next five years in lieu of any cash payments.** This will increase the funding available for the development and expansion of regional park facilities.
- The City should consider requiring the preservation of open space and/or unique landscape areas, greenways, and pedestrian links with all proposed annexations.

MAINTENANCE

Proper maintenance and repair of existing park facilities and athletic facilities must be included as part of any sound master plan for the future use and development of the City's park facilities. Deferred maintenance could result in increased cost in the future which could result in a decrease of funding available for expansion of park and recreational facilities. Lack of proper maintenance could result in decreased use of a facility which could then lead to an increased demand for even more land or the construction of new facilities.

Recommendation:

- The City should annually review the maintenance, repair, and replacement of existing park facilities in order to preserve the existing facilities and to provide continued use by the residents.
- Maintenance funding and maintenance plans should consider the importance and financial value of preserving existing facilities versus the cost of new construction.
- **In general, funding for the proper and necessary maintenance of existing facilities should be given higher priority than funding for the expansion of park facilities or the construction of new facilities.** The City should avoid postponing necessary maintenance and upkeep as a means to fund new improvements.

EXISTING PARKS

In order for the City to continue to provide quality park facilities for our residents and to also use our existing parks to their fullest, the best use of the existing park sites and park land must be considered. It will be more cost effective for the City to provide new improvements and expanded facilities on existing park land than it will be to acquire new property for development. However, this financial consideration must be balanced with the problems that can result from the over-development and over-use of park land. As the City completes the planning for new facilities, existing park land should be first evaluated following the suggested development plans provided earlier in this Plan.

Also, the City needs to be aware of the impact new developments might have on existing park sites and the impact that changing neighborhood characteristics will have on existing parks. Even where there is not the potential for future expansion of a park facility, the City needs to continue to evaluate each location to best preserve the quality of the park.

Recommendation:

- The City should protect existing park sites from the encroachment of conflicting land uses.
- **The City should evaluate and encourage new developments to provide convenient access with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle access to existing park sites.**
- The development and improvement of existing park sites and facilities shall generally follow the recommendations contained in Chapter Six. Minor changes to these development plans and concepts should be accommodated, but major changes should be carefully evaluated by the Commission and the City. **Care should be taken to avoid over-development of any park site and to also avoid “special request” facilities that do not fall within the goals and objectives of this plan.**

- Since it will generally be more cost effective to improve existing park land, the City should consider the construction of new improvements that increase park facilities prior to the development of similar facilities on new land.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Financially, the City can not fulfill every request that is received nor meet the expectations of all park users as the sole provider for these facilities. There are several other established agencies and jurisdictions that also serve many of the same residents and park users (see Chapter Four). Through careful coordination of our efforts, sharing of costs, and with joint planning to meet common needs and goals, the City will be better able to continue to provide quality park and recreational choices for our residents. The ability to provide improved facilities and choices through a cooperative effort has already been successfully utilized by the City and should be continued as well as expanded.

Recommendation:

- Work with the McHenry County Conservation District and neighboring communities to develop connections with their greenway and bike plans.
- Continue to work with District 200 and Marian Central Catholic High School for the expansion of athletic facilities through the use of the ‘Outdoor Facilities Committee’ which has already been established. The goal will be to plan, fund, and develop additional sport fields through a joint effort.
- Continue to work with District 200 and Marian Central Catholic High School for the shared use of indoor school facilities by the City for recreation programs and activities. The goal will be to provide the widest range of use possible of existing facilities with the least cost to our common residents.
- Continue to work with local businesses and private ventures to sponsor joint recreational programs and to encourage private facilities as an option for recreational and sports choices. Wherever possible, the City will encourage the private development and operation of sport and recreational facilities and work with private providers to plan and implement joint activities and programs.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AND SCHEDULES

It is not possible, nor necessary, to include a specific schedule for improvements as part of the Master Plan. The City’s ability to fund projects will change from year to year. The time required to plan, design, and complete improvements may alter future completion dates. The ability to locate suitable land for future park sites may require additional time or require a change in schedule.

However, the plan should include a statement of priorities and a goal to be followed for the preparation of future budgets and future capital improvement plans for the City.

Following is a description of known projects and requested park facility improvements to be considered by the City. It is entirely possible that funding can not be provided by the City for all projects and improvements. However, this does indicate the priority of each project.

YEAR 1 – 5

New Park Development:

- Develop first phase of new park site at The Fields of Woodstock
- Develop new park site at Dick Tracy Way
- Develop new park site at McConnell Road
- Develop new park site at Castle Road
- Continue review and requirement for land dedication with new developments, with an emphasis on maximizing cash contributions

Ball Fields:

- Install lights on four (4) softball and one (1) baseball field at Bates Park
- Construct eight (8) new diamonds at The Fields of Woodstock Park
- Install sun screen covers over play bench areas at Bates Park
- Reconstruct and renovate Bigelow Field B

Recreation Paths:

- Expand paved paths in Emricson Park with future expansions to consider the benefits of passive paths and need to balance both types of facilities
- Construct paved paths with first phase of The Fields of Woodstock Park improvements
- Construct paved paths at Albert/Gerry Street property
- Continue planning and requirement of paved paths with new developments
- Support efforts of MCCD for paved path from Woodstock to Crystal Lake

Playgrounds:

- Replace playground structure at Mary Ann Street Park
- Replace two (2) structures in Emricson Park
- Replace playground structure at Bates Park
- Replace playground structure at Raintree Park

Soccer:

- Open Davis Road Park for soccer play in spring of 2007
- Develop policies and procedures for reservation of fields and fees
- Determine future use of two fields in Emricson Park, possible youth fields

Tennis/Basketball:

- Reseal courts at Emricson, Bates, and Mary Ann Street Parks

Emricson Park:

- Remove old bath house, reshape and regrade sledding hill, and building warming shelter; replace Main Pavilion at Emricson Park; construct new pavilion at Emricson Park

Nature Parks:

- Wetlands and vegetation management at Westwood Park
- Wetlands and vegetation management at Albert/Gerry Park
- Construction of paved paths at Albert/Gerry Park
- Continued joint effort with District 200 for student involvement
- Continue efforts for maintenance and care of passive trail systems in nature settings

YEAR 5 – 10

New Park Development:

- Develop new park site at Sweetwater
- Develop new park site at The Sonatas
- Develop park site at Apple Creek
- Develop second park site at Apple Creek
- Evaluate options and site for construction of dog park
- Continue review and requirement for land dedication with new developments

Ballfields:

- Reconstruct Bigelow C field in Emricson Park
- Reconstruct Main Softball diamond in Emricson Park
- Complete construction of ninth ball diamond at The Fields of Woodstock Park

Recreation Paths:

- Construct paved paths at Raintree Park
- Construct paved paths at Davis Road Park
- Continue planning and requirement of paved paths with new developments
- Coordinate regional path improvements with MCCD
- Continue planning and requirement of paved paths with new developments
- Begin planning to link City sites and paved recreation paths

Playgrounds:

- Replace playground structures at Tara Drive Park
- Replace playground structures at Banford Road Park
- Replace playground structures at Emricson Park
- Install playground equipment at The Fields Park

Pavilions:

- Replace South, Hilltop, and Stuessy Pavilions in Emricson Park
- Add one pavilion to Davis Road Park
- Add three pavilions in The Fields of Woodstock Park

Ponds:

- Dredge Emricson Park ponds
- Dredge Ryder's Woods pond

Community Recreation Center:

- Evaluate options and alternatives for expanded and/or new rec center

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

New Park Development:

- Develop new park sites based on new development locations
- Continue review and requirement for land dedication with new developments

Ballfields:

- Install lights at The Fields of Woodstock Park
- Reconstruct and renovate all fields at Bates Park
- Obtain land for fourth ball field complex
- Coordinate with District 200 for sharing of ball fields on school property

Recreation Paths:

- Continue planning and requirement of paved paths with new developments
- Link paved paths between Woodstock and regional systems

Playgrounds:

- Replace one playground structure per year

Pavilions:

- Replace Main Pavilion at Emricson Park
- Construct new pavilion at Emricson Park

Pool:

- Construct an additional aquatic center and/or water play park with the type and location yet to be determined.

Soccer:

- Construct final two soccer fields at Davis Road Park

Recreation Center:

- Construct a larger recreation center based on findings and recommendation completed in the Five to Ten year Plan period.

Ice Skating:

- Determine community need and interest for the construction of an indoor ice skating rink facility

Golf:

- Determine the community need and interest for the construction of a Frisbee golf course



CHAPTER 8

IMPLEMENTATION

PUBLIC INPUT

In order for this plan to be successful and meaningful, it is essential that public input be encouraged and used not only for the initial preparation and adoption but also for regular updates. As part of the implementation plan, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council encourage residents, park users, and organized user groups to provide recommendations and comments for the goals and objectives of this plan. For purposes of this plan and future updates, the Parks and Recreation Commission shall serve as the primary contact and focus of discussion between the City and the park users and residents.

REGULAR REVIEW

Once the Park Master Plan has been reviewed and approved by the City of Woodstock, it shall serve as the guide and blue print for the development and improvement of the City's park facilities. However, the Plan can not be considered as a static document, and changes are inevitable and will often be positive. The goals of the City, the finances of the City, the needs of the organized user groups, and the preferences of Woodstock residents will change over time. Therefore, for this Plan to be as meaningful in the future as it is now, the Plan may have to change.

However, the changes to the Plan and priorities should be made only after careful consideration. Frequent changes based on individual requests from residents or special requests from user groups will be counter productive and can result in delays in implementing any recommended improvements. Many of the projects and improvements discussed with this plan will require years of consistent planning and financing to complete. Frequent changes in priorities and expectations will only result in the need to start over and will certainly decrease the City's ability to move forward on needed park improvements and recreational facilities.

In order to balance these two items — by allowing for a regular and periodic review of the goals and objectives of this Park Master Plan and allowing for the changing needs of park users, and to allow the City the time needed to implement the plan recommendations — the following formal review process is recommended:

- The Park Master Plan should be formally and publicly reviewed again no sooner than three years from the date of final approval but no later than five years following the date of final approval.

FINANCING

The discussion of park improvements and additions to the City's park and recreation facilities can not be complete unless the Plan also includes a discussion of financing of the planned improvements. In order to complete the park and recreation facilities included with this Plan, it will be necessary to increase funding for these improvements. Following is a brief description of the funding options that have been identified and could be considered for these improvements:

Chapter Eight

Park Donation Fees: Each new residential development within the City is required to dedicate land for public park use or to make a cash payment in lieu of any land dedication. The City's current park donation requirements were last reviewed and increased in 2004 and are reasonable and appropriate. The City should review and evaluate these fees on a regular basis, but it is not recommended that they be substantially increased. Therefore, it is not expected that substantial amount of new or additional funds can be secured through these fees.

One alternative that the City should consider, on a case by case basis, is the negotiation of additional fees or a combination of some land and payment of fees with the annexation of residential property to the City. Prior to annexation of any land to the City, the City has the opportunity to negotiate additional fees or to negotiate for land dedication in addition to other fees required by ordinance. Again, this would have to be reviewed on a case by case basis, and although this option could provide the City with some unique opportunities, it is not expected to result in any regular or substantial new funds.

General Corporate Revenues: The City's park and recreation facilities are already supported through the City's General Corporate Fund. Revenues within this fund are primarily derived from property tax money, sales tax receipts, income tax revenues from the State, and other fees collected by the City. The amount of the funds transferred from the general fund for park and recreation use is solely a financial and policy decision of the City. However, these funds are also used to provide most of the City's basic services including police protection. There is no substantial increase in general fund revenue anticipated in the near future, and therefore, there is no substantial amount of new money that can be anticipated. The desire for park and recreation facilities will compete with the needs of other City departments/divisions, and it is not expected that a substantial amount of new revenue or funds will be available.

User Fees: User fees are direct charges to park and recreation facility users to help pay for portions of the programs and facilities. The City already charges user fees for a variety of activities and costs, and this program has been generally accepted. The City should continue to monitor and adjust existing user fees in order to ensure that the fees are reasonable and include the intended costs. Some new user fees may be considered by the City in the future, but again, this is not expected to result in the funds needed to complete large capital improvement projects.

Bond Issues: The City can issue general obligation bonds to finance large sized capital improvement projects with voter approval. This financing could provide a source of funds that could finance several improvement projects at one time or be used over a period of years. The projects and costs would require approval of the residents and would require an active, dedicated group of volunteers to propose any bond issue project and/or development.

Park District: A park district has some financing and funding options available that are not available to the City and could be an alternative to fund recommended improvements. This also would require voter approval and would likely also result in an increased demand for other facilities and changed priorities. As a result, the formation of a park district would likely require the preparation of a totally new Master Plan and a significant change in priorities and recommended facilities.

Chapter Eight

Private Construction: Some of the recommended improvements and recreational facilities may be best constructed and operated under private ownership (e.g. indoor ice skating). Wherever possible, the City will encourage private ownership and private operation of recreational facilities.

Assistance from User Groups: The many organized user groups who rely on the recreational facilities provided by the City have been able to provide funding or assist with the construction of improvements in the past. The City encourages this participation and shared responsibility and will rely on the financial support of these user groups in the future.

Joint Ventures: Both of the local high schools in Woodstock utilize the City's park facilities for various activities and organized sports. The City utilizes indoor facilities owned by District 200 and also at Marian Central Catholic High School. Therefore, all three agencies are dependent on each other to serve the needs of their students and to serve the needs of the residents. The City of Woodstock, District 200, and Marian Central should pursue joint development and shared use of new outdoor athletic facilities and indoor recreational facilities as a means to provide the best service possible to our common users at the least cost.



EXHIBIT 1

EXISTING PARK FACILITIES

A.J. OLSON PARK:

Date Acquired: 1910
Size: 2.25 acres
Parking Lot: 8 spaces – constructed 1962 (additional 5 spaces added 2003)
Softball: 1 neighborhood softball diamond – constructed 1962
Tennis Courts: 2 courts – constructed 1979/resurfaced 2005
Basketball Court: 1 court – constructed 1979/resurfaced 2005
Fencing: replaced perimeter fencing and ball diamond fencing 2002
Playground Equipment constructed in 2005

ALBERT/GERRY STREET NATURE AREA:

Date Acquired: December 20, 2001
Size: 25 acres
Passive/Undeveloped

BANFORD ROAD PARK:

Date Acquired: September 24, 1999
Size: 1.35 acres
Basketball Court: 1 full size court - constructed 2000
Picnic Shelter: constructed 2000
Parking: 20 spaces – constructed 2000
Playground Equipment constructed in 2000

BATES PARK:

Date Acquired: December 4, 1959 (purchased 3 additional acres 2/14/92)
Size: 23 acres
Basketball: 2 full size courts – constructed 1995
Parking: 120 spaces – constructed 1995
Picnic Shelter: 1 shelter – constructed 2001
Soft Ball Diamonds: 5 diamonds – 60' base paths/200' outfield fences
constructed 1995
Baseball Diamond: 1 diamond – 80'/90' base paths – 320' outfield fence
constructed 1995
Playground Equipment constructed in 1995
Concession/Bathroom Building constructed 4/12/1996

CASTLE ROAD PARK:

Date Acquired: March 8, 2004
Size: 4.2 acres
Undeveloped

DAVIS ROAD PARK:

Date Acquired: October 15, 1968
 Size: 40 acres
 Soccer: 6 full size soccer fields – constructed 2005
 Irrigation: irrigation of all six fields - constructed 2005
 Parking: 586 parking spaces – constructed 2005
 Maintenance Building: proposed construction 2006

DICK TRACY WAY PARK:

Date Acquired: April 19, 2000
 Size: 2 acres
 Improvements to be constructed 2006

EMRICSON PARK:

Date Acquired: November 1, 1946 (Bigelow Property added 10/30/70 and Highlands donation added 8/22/96)
 Size: 130 acres
 Basketball: 2 full size courts – constructed 1993
 Sand Volleyball: 2 full size courts – constructed 1993
 Picnic Shelters: 5 total within park – Main constructed 1965, Hilltop constructed 1965, South constructed 1965, Stuessy constructed 1975, and Toney Roskie constructed in 1983.
 Parking: 642 spaces
 Soccer: 2 full size fields – South Street constructed 2001, Bigelow constructed 1998
 Irrigation: Bigelow Soccer – constructed 2002
 South Soccer – constructed 2001
 Dream Field – constructed 1990
 Sullivan Field – constructed 2000
 Aquatic Center – constructed 2001
 Tennis Courts: 5 tennis courts – reconstructed 1992
 Recreation Path: 1.6 mile path – constructed 2003
 Aquatic Center: constructed 2001
 Bathrooms: Pond Bathrooms – constructed 1979
 Main Bathrooms – reconstructed 1982
 Ice Hockey Rink: constructed 1998
 Baseball Diamond: 1 at 90' base paths/380' outfield fence – reconstructed 1990
 1 at 60' base paths/200' outfield fence – reconstructed 1992
 1 at 60'-65' base paths/250' outfield fence – constructed 1972
 2 at 65' base paths/275' outfield fence – constructed 1983
 Playground Equipment: South Street – constructed 2003
 Main Free Standing Equipment – constructed 2001
 Hilltop – constructed 1992
 Main Handicapped – constructed 1992
 Castle in Main Play Area – constructed 2000

Exhibit 1

Maintenance Building constructed in 1968 (addition added 1979, Pole Barn constructed 1990)
Old Pool Bathhouse constructed in 1962

THE FIELDS PARK:

Date Acquired: 2005
Size: 82 acres
Baseball: 8 baseball diamonds – to be constructed 2006
Parking: approximately 400 spaces – to be constructed 2006
Recreation Path: paved path around entire complex – to be constructed 2006
Maintenance Building to be constructed 2006

MARY ANN STREET PARK:

Date Acquired: 1993
Size: 1.66 acres
Basketball: 1 full size court – constructed 1994
Parking: On street parking
Drinking Fountain: 1 fountain – installed 1994
Playground Equipment constructed in 1994

MCCONNELL ROAD PARK:

Date Acquired: May 20, 1991 – 5.1 acres / January 24, 2002 – 8.987 acres
Size: 14.087 acres
Improvements to be considered in 2006 by Parks and Recreation Commission

RAINTREE PARK:

Date Acquired: February 20, 1974
Size: 25 acres
Soccer: 2 practice soccer fields – constructed 1998
Parking: 40 spaces – constructed 1999
Playground Equipment constructed in 1992

RYDER'S WOODS:

Date Acquired: March 20, 1963
Size: 21 acres
Parking Lot: 20 spaces – constructed 1975
Nature Trail: 1 mile in length
Conservation Area/Passive Park

PRAIRIE RIDGE DRIVE PARK:

Date Acquired: August 4, 1999
Size: 2.58 acres
Softball: 1 neighborhood softball diamond – constructed 2003
Tennis Court: 1 single court – constructed 2003
Basketball Court: 1 full size court – constructed 2003
Playground Equipment constructed in 2003
Drinking Fountain/Bike Rack constructed in 2003

SESQUICENTENNIAL PARK:

Date Acquired: August 17, 2001
Size: .2 acres
Water Fountain: constructed 2004
Pedestal Clock: constructed 2004
Benches/Trash Cans: installed 2004

SILVER CREEK CONSERVATION AREA:

Date Acquired: December 23, 1997
Size: 67 acres
Nature Trail: 1.5 miles in length
Conservation Area/Passive Park

SONATA'S PARK:

Date Acquired: pending
Size: 14 acres
Undeveloped

PARK IN THE SQUARE:

Date Acquired: June 1, 1855
Size: 2 acres
Brick Sidewalks: replaced 1993
Benches: 16 benches replaced 1993
Irrigation: constructed 1985
Cannon Memorial: 2000
Statue: constructed 1909
Bandstand: reconstructed 1981
Spring House: constructed 1872 (reconstructed 1976)

SUNNYSIDE PARK:

Date Acquired: March 31, 1994
Size: .46 acres
Playground Equipment constructed in 2004

SWEETWATER PARK:

Date Acquired: June 29, 2004
Size: 2.98 acres
Undeveloped

TARA DRIVE PARK:

Date Acquired: May 2, 1994
Size: .75 acres
Parking: on street parking
Mini-Shelter: constructed 1995
Split-Rail Fencing: constructed 1995
Playground Equipment constructed in 1995

WESTWOOD CONSERVATION AREA:

Date Acquired: August 8, 1980
Size: 64 acres
Parking: 10 spaces – constructed 1980
Nature Trail: 2 mile nature trail
Conservation Area/Passive Park



EXHIBIT 2

PARK LAND DEDICATION AND DEVELOPMENT



EXHIBIT 3

STANDARDS FOR PARK FACILITIES



EXHIBIT 4

STANDARD FOR PATHS AND TRAILS

Exhibit 4

Following are the general guidelines and standards for paved recreational paths to be owned and maintained by the City of Woodstock.

- All public paths shall be located within a street right-of-way or a permanent easement granted to the City that specifically allows for public use and public access.
- Recreational paths intended for use by runners, joggers, and bicyclists are to be a paved surface.
- The typical section shall include a minimum of 6" of aggregate base and a total of 2 1/2" of bituminous concrete. Additional aggregate base material may be necessary for certain soil conditions.
- The finished surface of the paved path shall be at the same elevation of the adjoining ground. There shall be no drop offs or edges along the sides of the paved path that could create a trip hazard.
- The maximum grade of the paved path should be 5%.
- The minimum width of the path should be eight (8') feet.
- Signage or barriers shall be provided at each intersection of the paved path with a street or roadway clearly prohibiting access with motorized vehicles.