

Public Outdoor Recreation Plan for City of Milwaukee Neighborhoods (2001-2005)

1.0 Context of Plan

The City of Milwaukee Public Outdoor Recreation plan has two purposes. One is to meet the requirements of the WI DNR and various other grant-in-aid programs in order to retain eligibility for the State's recreational assistance programs. The second is to serve as the City's comprehensive plan for playground and other public outdoor recreational facilities.

2.0 Community Profile

The following statistics are derived from the 1990 Census for the City of Milwaukee:

- Population: 628,088 (equal to 65% of the population for Milwaukee County, 44% of the Milwaukee Metro region, and 13% of the state's population)
- Diversity: 61% White, non-Hispanic; 30% Black; 6% Hispanic; 2% Asian; 1% American Indian
- Age: 27% of population were under 18 yrs old; 12% of population were over 65
- Number of Households: 240,540 (34% of households had children; single parents head 48% of families with children)
- Employment: 71% of male population (16 and older) in the labor force; 58% of female population (16 and older) in the labor force; 8.9% unemployment rate
- Income Level: 18% of households had income below the poverty level; 45% of female-headed families were below the poverty level
- Mobility and Self-care limitations: 9% of population (15 and older) had either one or both of these limitations

3.0 Types of Recreational Facilities

There are five types of public outdoor recreational areas developed and maintained by the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee Public Schools:

- Playfields
- Playgrounds
- Playlots
- Totlots
- Greenspaces

4.0 Recreation Goals

The City of Milwaukee has five major goals related to the public outdoor recreational facilities. These goals serve as a guide for the planning, coordination, and development of improvements to the recreation system.

- To ensure that the city has adequate public outdoor recreational facilities for all of its citizens
- To ensure the best and most efficient use of the City's resources in meeting recreation needs
- To balance recreational development with the City's goals for other land uses and transportation
- To conserve natural resources and significant natural features
- To ensure that adequate public recreational facilities are accessible and available to people with disabilities

5.0 General Recommendations

The following bullets outline the general recommendations for the City's public outdoor recreational facilities:

- Monitor maintenance needs and use this information to schedule maintenance and improvement projects;
- Extend the use of existing sites by developing them more intensively;
- Assess the cost of proposed recreational facility acquisitions, improvements, and dispositions;
- Work with other governmental and private organizations to improve public access to natural resources within the City of Milwaukee;
- Review the current utilization of public outdoor recreational facilities;
- Utilize the safest and most technically advanced recreation systems; and
- Work with the County and various stakeholders to update the City's comprehensive bike plan.

6.0 Special Projects

The following sites have been given special project status because they serve a multitude of functions over and above neighborhood recreational uses.

- Hawthorn Glen Environmental Center: 130,000 visitors use the center each year. The facility is in need of constant updating in order to provide the most current environmental educational information within a natural recreation setting.
- Milwaukee River-Related Improvements:
 - Kilbourn Park: Expand the park down the bluff to North Commerce Street, in order to create pedestrian links from the neighborhood (on top of the bluff) to the river and to establish a new bike trail.
 - City owned lands should be improved along the former North Avenue impoundment.
 - Riverwalk: Should be extended incrementally from the harbor to the North Avenue dam and eventually provide a link between the Lakewalk and the Hank Aaron Trail.
- Menomonee River Valley Related Improvements:
 - Hank Aaron Trail: Should be extended and developed through the valley.
 - The inclusion of riverfront amenities (trails, plazas, parks).
 - The construction of additional wetlands for storm water and flood control, water quality improvement and open space should be considered (where appropriate).
- Milwaukee Lakefront-Related Improvements:
 - Remove fences at the Municipal Pier and develop a perimeter Lakewalk.
 - Kaszube Park: Relocate the park to a more accessible location.
 - Improve fishing opportunities along the lakefront.
 - Develop a continuous/coordinated network of pedestrian/bicycle pathways throughout the lakefront lands.