
Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Bennington, Nebraska
2008





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Introduction

Mission Statement

Process

Participants



Introduction

MISSION STATEMENT

The goal of the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to identify any needed parks, facilities, and trails throughout the City of Bennington's One Mile Zoning Jurisdiction and to identify these locations and type of facilities so future developments will be planned to provide recreation for a growing population.

PROCESS

The Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan was discussed early on by the Bennington City Council as a way of assuring that community parks and facilities would be adequately planned as development around the community and growth pressures from Omaha occurred. The City Council hired JEO Consulting Group, Inc. of Wahoo, Nebraska to facilitate the construction of such a plan to not only analyze their current parks and recreational facilities, but to identify locations of new parks and trails and to develop a process by which the City could build and maintain them. The intent of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is become a guide for land developers and Bennington City Officials to successfully plan for all levels of recreation.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee was formed to bring forth ideas, discuss options, and to review recommendations. This steering committee consisted of representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, Tree Board, and various athletic/activity groups. The members of the committee brought their interest and concerns to the table to help develop the plan and prioritize the recommendations. Although members may change, it is the intention of this plan to maintain such a steering committee indefinitely so that the plan may be properly implemented and updated on a regular basis.

The steering committee met with the consultants on a regular basis to identify Bennington demographics, population projections, inventory of existing parks and facilities, and determine any negatives and deficiencies to all passive and recreational opportunities within the city and the one-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. Surveys were distributed to stakeholders to get a feeling of what is working and what is not, what is needed and not needed for facilities and recreational activities, the

best method for notifying the community about events, what type of financial mechanisms the community would support, and what areas should dollars be spent. According to the surveys, programmed baseball play and wrestling rated very good, hockey and golf courses are not needed, swimming and family recreational programs are needed, brochures sent to the home were the best method of notification, more money should be spent on additional recreational facilities, and park development fees or dedication of park land rated higher than special fundraising and tax increases. A summary of the surveys can be found in the Appendix of this plan.

Three focus group meetings were then held to identify the good and bad points of each park and the recreational system as a whole, locate future recreational areas and trails throughout Bennington's jurisdiction, and to assign a priority to such facilities through a dollar designation exercise. This process helped to show the current and future recreational service areas in a graphic format. A list of



Focus Group Participants



participants, identified likes and dislikes, and a composition map of needed recreational facilities can be found in the Appendix of this plan. Based upon public input, current conditions, notable deficiencies, existing area park plans (such as the Omaha Suburban Park System Master Plan map found in the Appendix of this Plan), and future growth projections of Bennington and the school district, the consulting team prepared a proposed parks and trails map and list of recommendations for each existing and proposed park and recreational facility. The steering committee was then review the recommendations and to prioritize them in terms of need based upon all research and learned information. A prioritization worksheet was constructed to address all proposed parks, recreational facilities, trails, and greenways, including land acquisition, studies, development, etc. Each aspect of the existing and proposed recreational facility was rating from one to five with a five having the highest priority. This prioritization was then used to develop the Action Plan. A summary of the prioritization worksheet can be found in the Appendix of this plan.



Focus Group Participants

The Eight Year Action Plan is the recommended plan of action by the City of Bennington to obtain the goals and identified recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This action plan should be updated annually or biannually, or as warranted due to new personnel or development issues.

PARTICIPANTS

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was created to benefit the City of Bennington by residents of the city. Participants in the project included the Bennington City Council, the Planning Commission, a designated steering committee, city staff, invited focus group individuals, and the public. The project consultant was JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

The Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed in conjunction with the following individuals or group, various focus groups and the citizens of Bennington. Focus groups, specific surveys, prioritization summary, etc. are identified in the Appendix of this plan.

City Council

- ✦ C.C. "Skip" Wolff, Mayor
- ✦ Sam Lurvey, Council President
- ✦ Terry Loptin
- ✦ Lisa Bliss
- ✦ Kathy Higgins



Planning Commission

- ♦ Mark Wichelt, Chair
- ♦ Stan Scheifer
- ♦ Dave Olsen
- ♦ Rob Loptin
- ♦ Gary Sather
- ♦ Mel Valasek
- ♦ Angie Smith

City Staff

- ♦ Mindi Laaker, City Clerk
- ♦ Merle Ashmore, Public Works Supt.
- ♦ Jeff C. Miller, City Attorney
- ♦ Lester Johnson, Police Chief
- ♦ JEO Consulting Group, Inc., City Engineer

Parks and Recreation Steering Committee

- ♦ Terry Loptin, City Council
- ♦ Lisa Bliss, City Council
- ♦ Gary Sather, Planning Commission
- ♦ Merle Ashmore, City Parks Department
- ♦ Ryan Rischling, Tree Board
- ♦ Dave Bressman, Tree Board
- ♦ Nicki Dillon, Bennington Athletic League
- ♦ James Bartels, Soccer Club

Planning Consultant

- ♦ David Potter, JEO Consulting Group, Inc. – Lincoln, Nebraska
- ♦ Craig Wacker, JEO Consulting Group, Inc. – Lincoln, Nebraska
- ♦ JEO Project #152PL6



Demographic Profile

Location and Boundaries
History
Population
Population Trends and Analysis
Age Structure
Population Projections
Trend Line Analysis
Cohort Survival Analysis
Platted Lots Analysis
Summary of Population Projections
Profile of Residents
Transportation and Land Use



Demographic Profile

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

The City of Bennington is located in north central Douglas County, Nebraska along Nebraska State Highway 36 and is approximately three miles northwest of Omaha just south of Washington County and is considered part of the expanded Omaha Metropolitan Area. The study area for the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes land within the City’s corporate limits and its extraterritorial jurisdiction, as agreed to between Bennington, the City of Omaha, and Douglas County. Generally, this area is bound by the Washington/Douglas county line to the north, Military Road/Rainwood Road to the south, 180th Street and Prairie View Lake to the west, and 144th Street (extended) to the east. For a detailed map showing the study area, see Figure 2.1. The Bennington School District area (Figure 2.2) has also been analyzed and incorporated into the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Although portions of the district fall outside Bennington’s extraterritorial jurisdiction, residents of the entire district are expected to utilize the recreational facilities of the city.

HISTORY

Bennington was originally platted in 1887 by the Pioneer Town Site Company along the Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad between Omaha and Fremont. The community was named after Bennington, Vermont and its settlers were predominately of German lineage. Bennington was officially incorporated on April 15, 1892, when the community’s population reached the required 100 persons, including all the railroad workers camped near the community. For the next thirty years, Bennington continued to grow and expand, and for a time, had six passenger trains per day passing through town.

The City of Bennington has had a colorful past and is indicating a bright future. As the community grows, it’s important to remember the history and the people who established it, thus preserving its community pride. Such pride is transpired through the community’s landscape and its park and recreational amenities.

POPULATION

Population statistics aid in developing a picture of a community. It is important for a community to understand where it has been and where it appears to be going. Historic population trends assist in projecting future levels, which in turn assist in determining the future need. Population projections are only estimates and a number of unforeseen factors can effect these projections significantly. The following population analysis is similar to the one conducted in the Bennington Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2000; however the analysis for this plan includes the most recent census data and population estimates as well as a new analysis technique that takes into account platted residential lots.

POPULATION TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

Table 2-1 shows the population levels for each incorporated community in Douglas County. Besides the incorporated communities and the total County population; the total population for all incorporated and unincorporated areas are included in the table. Table 1 has population data from 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2006. In addition, the Table contains the percent change from each Census to the next. This gives residents of Bennington a better understanding of recent trends regarding the population of the County and the other areas within Douglas County.











Table 2-1: Population Trends of Douglas County and Communities, 1980-2005

Community	1980	1990	% Change 1980-1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2005 Estimates	% Change 2000-2005	% Change 1980-2005
Bennington	631	866	37.2%	937	8.2%	913	-2.6%	44.7%
Elkhorn	1,344	1,398	4.0%	6,062	333.6%	8,192	35.1%	509.5%
Ralston	5,134	6,236	21.5%	6,314	1.3%	6,193	-1.9%	20.6%
Omaha	346,238	355,795	2.8%	390,007	9.6%	414,521	6.3%	19.7%
Valley	1,716	1,775	3.4%	1,788	0.7%	1,829	2.3%	6.6%
Waterloo	450	479	6.4%	459	-4.2%	506	10.2%	12.4%
Incorporated Areas	355,513	366,549	3.1%	405,567	10.6%	432,154	6.6%	21.6%
Unincorporated Areas	41,525	49,895	20.2%	58,018	16.3%	54,775	-5.6%	31.9%
Douglas County	397,038	416,444	4.9%	463,585	11.3%	486,929	5.0%	22.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1980 - 2000, 2005 Estimates

Table 2-1 indicates that all Douglas County municipalities, as well as, the county as a whole showed an increase in population from 1980 to 2005. The greatest increase was in the City of Elkhorn, which had an overall population change of 509.5% based upon U.S. Census data. The reason for this is in the late 1990's the City of Elkhorn completed an annexation of various SID's and subdivisions allowing the city to reclassify their population as being above 5, 000 for planning and zoning purposes.

Bennington's population from 1980 to 2005 increased by 44.7%. The largest increase in this overall time period came between 1980 and 1990 when the community grew by 255 persons or 37.2%. This increase was a direct result of development occurring adjacent to the community, which was eventually annexed into Bennington's corporate limits. Bennington from 1980 to 2005 had the second largest increase in population of all the municipalities in Douglas County.

AGE STRUCTURE

Age structure is an important component to population analysis. By analyzing age structure, Bennington can see the size of the present age groups and the changes occurring in those age groups, which provides baseline information for Bennington to use as it continues to grow in the future.

According to Table 2-2, the age cohorts suggest from 1990 to 2000 the majority of the growth in the City of Bennington came from young families. In fact the only age cohorts that showed growth through the period were the ages 30-34, 35-44 and 14 and under.

The losses came from the young adult, middle age, and elder cohorts. The 20-24 year olds lost 35.7% of their population and the 25-29 year olds lost 36.7%. These numbers most likely reflect young adults going off for secondary education and/or employment in other communities. The elder population is likely moving into either Elkhorn or Omaha looking for assisted living/nursing home facilities. The loss of the middle age cohorts is the most troubling for the city of Bennington this suggests that after this group was finished raising their families they moved from Bennington because it no longer provided the facilities and/or services they desired.



Table 2-2: Age-Sex Composition of the Population 1990 and 2000

Age	1990		2000		1990-2000		1990-2000	
	Male and Female	% of Total	Male and Female	% of Total	Net Change	% Change	Cohort Change	% Change
0-4	63	7.3%	67	7.2%	4	6.3%	67	-
5-9	83	9.6%	92	9.8%	9	10.8%	92	-
10-14	70	8.1%	80	8.5%	10	14.3%	17	27.0%
15-19	79	9.1%	78	8.3%	-1	-1.3%	-5	-6.0%
20-24	59	6.8%	45	4.8%	-14	-23.7%	-25	-35.7%
25-29	57	6.6%	50	5.3%	-7	-12.3%	-29	-36.7%
30-34	66	7.6%	82	8.8%	16	24.2%	23	39.0%
35-44	134	15.5%	152	16.2%	18	13.4%	29	23.6%
45-54	105	12.1%	103	11.0%	-2	-1.9%	-31	-23.1%
55-64	65	7.5%	82	8.8%	17	26.2%	-23	-21.9%
65-74	44	5.1%	58	6.2%	14	31.8%	-7	-10.8%
75-84	34	3.9%	30	3.2%	-4	-11.8%	-14	-31.8%
85+	7	0.8%	18	1.9%	11	157.1%	-33	-64.7%
Total	866	100.0%	937	100.0%	71	8.2%	61	7.0%
Selected Characteristics	1990			2000				
	Total 18 yrs and Under			269			Total 18 yrs and Under	
				31.1%			% of total population	
	Total 65 yrs and older			85			Total 65 yrs and older	
				9.8%			% of total population	
	Median Age			31.7			Median Age	
	Total Females			451			Total Females	
	Total Males			415			Total Males	
	Total Population			866			Total Population	
				937				

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, STF-1A, 1990, 2000

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections allow Bennington to estimate what the population will be in the future. Projections are only estimates based upon present day and past circumstances, there are a number of factors (economic, social, etc.) that might affect projections positively or negatively. At the present time, these projections are the best crystal ball Bennington has for predicting future population changes.

TREND LINE ANALYSIS

Trend line analysis is a process of projecting future populations based upon specific changes during a specified period of time. In this analysis of Bennington, three different trend lines were reviewed; 2000 to 2006 (estimates), 1980 to 2006 (estimates), and 1990 to 2006 (estimates). The 2000 to 2006 (estimate) shows an increase of 10.2% per year or 102.5 % per decade; the 1980 to 2006 (estimates) shows an increase of 5.4% per year or 53.8% per decade; and the 1990 to 2006 (estimate) shows an increase of 4.7% per year or 46.7% per decade.



The following are projections based upon the three trend lines:

	2000 to 2006	1980 to 2006	1990 to 2006
2010	2,133 persons	1,838 persons	1,796 persons
2020	4,318 persons	2,827 persons	2,634 persons
2030	8,743 persons	4,346 persons	3,864 persons

COHORT SURVIVAL ANALYSIS

Cohort survival analysis reviews a population by different age groups and sex. The population age groups are projected forward decade by decade using survival rates for the different age groups. This projection model also accounts for average birth rates by sex and adds the new births into the future population.

Reviewing different age groups by sex and projecting these forward to the years 2010, 2020, and 2030, indicates that Bennington's total population will continue to grow. Using this modeling technique, the following projections were derived:

Year 2010	997 persons
Year 2020	1,089 persons
Year 2030	1,197 persons

These Cohort projections indicate a steady increase in the population from 2005 to 2030. However, the cohort survival model does not account for migration, which has been a major factor in Bennington's population changes since 1960. This projection also does not account for any population growth occurring due to expansion of the city limits.

PLATTED LOTS ANALYSIS

A Platted Lots Analysis examines the planned and built residential subdivisions within the corporate limits, the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction, and a future growth area. Also taken into account were the subdivisions that were platted within Omaha's planning jurisdiction but lay in the Bennington School District. Many of the families that live in these areas tend to utilize and consider themselves a part of Bennington rather than Omaha. The number of lots is multiplied by an average household size to estimate the population at full build-out of the subdivisions. For the purpose of this analysis an average household size of 2.71 persons was used, this number came from Bennington's 2000 Census data. Furthermore, for the purposes of this analysis the build-out rate was spread over fifteen years, producing the population estimates in Table 2-3.

TABLE 2-3: PLATTED LOTS ANALYSIS

	Bennington	Plus Omaha Jurisdiction
Population of ETJ and Growth Area (2006)	1,754	3,491
Population of ETJ and Growth Area at Half Build-Out (2010)	3,775	5,457
Population of ETJ and Growth Area at Full Build-Out (2020)	7,480	13,618

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 2000; Bennington School District Profile Oct. 2006



SUMMARY OF POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Using the modeling techniques discussed in the previous paragraphs, the following is a summary of the population projections for Bennington through the year 2030. There is a Low Series, Medium Series and a High Series projection established in order to indicate different growth patterns which may be encountered in the next 25 years. It is important to note that only the Platted Lots Analysis takes into account the population outside of the corporate limits, the other estimates are based on census data for the City of Bennington only.

	Low Series	Medium Series	High Series
	1990-2006	2000-2006	Platted Lots Analysis
Year 2010	1,796 persons	2,133 persons	5,457 persons
Year 2020	2,634 persons	4,318 persons	13,618 persons
Year 2030	3,864 persons	8,743 persons	NA

Figure 2.3 is a historic representation of Bennington’s population and future projections. The earliest US Census record for Bennington was 1900, when Bennington had 229 persons. From 1900 to 1960, Bennington’s population was relatively stable ranging from 229 to 375. Between 1960 and 1970, Bennington’s population showed a significant increase and doubled its total population. Bennington experienced another large jump in population from 1980 to 1990 where it went from 631 up to 866. All three estimates for future populations show a dramatic increase in population through 2030, with the low series topping out at 3,864 persons, which is more than twice the current population, or the high series shows 13,618 persons in the year 2020. This equates to an exponential growth of the population. Bennington need only look at other Omaha Metro communities to see that these numbers are not out of the realm of possibility. If Bennington continues to annex surrounding developments the city will grow at these exponential rates and even if the city does not choose to annex these developments they will still see increased use and pressure placed on their park and recreation system from the increased population in these outlying subdivisions, regardless if they are in Omaha or Bennington’s planning jurisdiction.

PROFILE OF RESIDENTS

Given various available 2000 census data and providing assumptions about recent growth trends, it is possible to develop a demographic profile of the typical Bennington resident. This profile can be used as a basis to create individual and group identities for park and recreational planning with the City of Bennington. By knowing what type of person will use the park system, the City can develop the best and most utilized facilities.

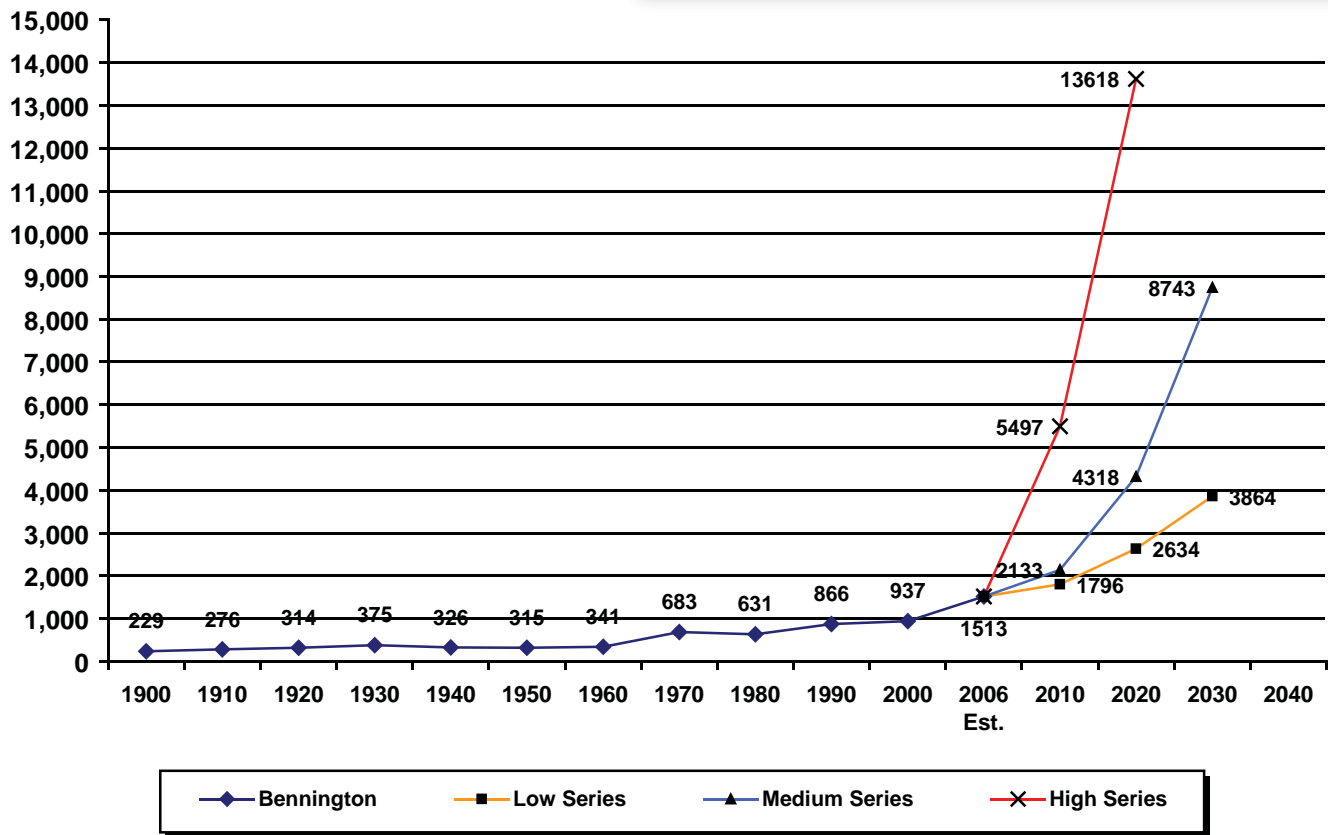
A typical resident of Bennington is:

- More likely to be female than male and be between the ages of 25 and 54 years old
- More likely to own a single family home with a value between \$50,000 and \$150,000
- Living in a family household with an average size of 3.23 persons per family
- Likely to be a High School graduate with some college education
- Likely employed in a Management, Professional, Sales or Office occupation
- Earning \$35,000 to \$75,000 a year per family, with the median being \$53,917
- Commuting to work for 15 to 34 minutes



When Bennington was founded it was a self-sustaining community surrounded by agriculture. Today it is more of a bedroom community for the Omaha Metropolitan Area. Analysis of the demographic tables and profile suggests that the people of Bennington move there to raise a family in its small town atmosphere while commuting into Omaha for work. These families typically have both parents working and commuting which leads to less time spent outdoors after work and more time spent recreating on the weekends.

Figure 2.3: Population Trends and Projections 1990 to 2030



Source: US Census Bureau 1900 to 2005 and JEO Consulting Group, Inc.

TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

The primary arterials for Bennington are Nebraska Highway 36, Bennington Road, Rainwood Road, and 156th, 168th and 180th Streets. At the present time 156th Street through Bennington exists as two lanes with no turning lane. As development has occurred in and around the City of Bennington, 156th street has seen a considerable increase in traffic flow with a diminished amount of safety. To accommodate this increase in traffic and to increase safety, 156th Street is planned for an expansion to three-lane from its present two lane. Any additional lanes would be physically difficult due to existing structures and utilities. In addition, a larger cross section of 156th would threaten the character of the community. This expansion of 156th Street from Highway 36 to the Rainwood Road extension would include adding a turning lane and a larger lane width for the other two lanes. This turning lane would allow through traffic to travel a greater ease while



allowing turning traffic time to make their desired movement. A traffic signal will not be installed at the intersection of 156th & Bennington Road. There are not enough warrants to construct one. A roundabout is being heavily considered.

Additional Modification of 156th Street

Many concerns from the citizens of Bennington about traffic, which travels through the center of the community on 156th Street, were discussed and were taken into account for the future planning of this street. One of the main reasons for this increase is future development south of the City that has caused an increase in traffic volume on this roadway. Certain roadway improvements on a case to case basis must be developed to minimize safety hazards that will increase with increased traffic flow from Nebraska Highway 36 and from the south.

(2000 Bennington Comprehensive Plan)

Expansion of 168th & Expansion of 180th

Both 168th and 180th Streets have been scheduled for improvement in the future, expanding from their present two lane cross sections. Future plans show 168th Street is scheduled to become a total of five lanes coming from the south (four full lanes and one turning lane). In addition, 180th Street is scheduled to become a total of six lanes coming from the south (six full lanes). These scheduled expansions should be taken into consideration in future land use decisions along these roadways to accommodate the right fit between traffic routes and land development. *(2000 Bennington Comprehensive Plan)*

Land Use Developments

Recent residential and recreation developments at Bennington Road and 180th Street, together with the construction of the new Bennington Jr/Sr. High School at 168th and Bennington Road are expected to enhance further growth in the area. Additional residential growth is platted east of town and more development is expected to follow. The development of new residential units drives the need for additional commercial developments, additional streets, public and park facilities, and industrial developments.

According to the Bennington Comprehensive Plan, commercial, higher density residential and light industrial land uses are intended along Nebraska Highway 36. The development of these areas will certainly place pressure on the current park and recreational areas and activities. Specific quantities of land designated for park and recreation activities have not been designated by the Comprehensive Plan. Rather, designation of specific needs have been delegated to the completion of this plan. Additional park and open space will be necessary to sustain projected increases in population for the City of Bennington. Consideration of new parkland and open space shall be considered as development occurs.



Recreational Facility Evaluation

Parks and Open Space Classifications

Park and Recreation Standards

Existing Facilities and Service Areas

Park Condition Summary

- ✦ Tim Ohrt Park
- ✦ Johns-Bohn Park/Soccer Complex
- ✦ Bennington Elementary School
- ✦ Bennington Athletic League (B.A.L.) Sports Complex
- ✦ Centennial Park



Recreational Facility Evaluation

Parks and Open Space Classifications

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria/ Service Area	Size Criteria
Mini-Park	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Less than a ¼ mile distance in residential setting.	Between 2500 sq. ft. and one acre in size.
Neighborhood Park	Basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	¼ to ½ mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal.
School-Park	Depending on circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as neighborhood, community, sports complex, and special use.	Determined by location of school district property.	Variable – depends on function.
Community Park	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhood and ½ to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.
Large Urban Park	Serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves the entire community.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually a minimum of 50 acres, with 75 or more acres being optimal.
Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Greenways	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.



Classification	General Description	Location Criteria/ Service Area	Size Criteria
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal.
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.	Variable – dependent on specific use.	Variable.
Private Park/Recreation Facility	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Variable – dependent on specific use.	Variable.

Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. A Project of the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. A Publication of the National Recreation and Park Association. James D. Mertes, Ph.D., CLP and James R. Hall, CLP



The preceding information from the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines provides some characteristics of different types of parks and facilities, including size and service areas. This criteria becomes beneficial when analyzing Bennington’s parks and recreational facilities.

PARK AND RECREATION STANDARDS

Table 3-1 provides a comparison of Bennington’s parks and recreational facilities to the National Standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association. According to the following table, Bennington is only deficient by one crafts area/meeting room for the population in 2006. As the population projections increase in 2010 and 2020, the City of Bennington develops additional shortages in mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, community center, craft areas/meeting rooms, baseball diamonds, golf course, swimming pool, tennis courts, etc. Although there are a number of projected shortages in 2020 with an estimated population of 13,618, Bennington appears to be at or close to the recommended number of facilities in the year 2010. Development of two mini-parks and a community center with a crafts area will help the city meet the requirements.

It is duly noted that the National Standards provided in this report by the National Recreation and Park Associated are nearly 25 years old, but do provide a gauge for apparent shortages. Local and regional standards have not been developed, therefore no such comparisons have been made. The comparisons given in Table 3-1 together with surrounding amenities, community location, school activities, and public input are all contributing factors when developing recommendations for new parks and recreational facilities or improvements to existing ones.

Table 3-1: Bennington’s Comparison to National Standards

Bennington Park and Recreation Facilities Compared to the National Standards Developed By NRPA				2006 1,513 persons		2010 5,457 persons		2020 13,618 persons	
Park and Recreation Facilities	National Standards	Parks and Rec	Public Schools	Total	Need	Surplus (Shortage)	Projected Need	Surplus (Shortage)	Projected Need
Bennington Parks									
Mini Park	.25 to .50 acres per 1,000	1		1	1	0	3	(2)	5
Neighborhood Park	1 to 2 acres per 1,000	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	3
Community Park	5 to 8 acres per 1,000	1		1	1	0	1	0	2
Indoor Facilities									
Rec/Community Center				0	0	0	1	(1)	1
Crafts Area/Meeting Room	1 per 3,000			0	1	(1)	1	(1)	4
Gym	1 per 10,000		2	2	0	2	0	2	1
Outdoor Facilities									
Badmitten Courts	1 per 5,000			0	0	0	1	(1)	2
Baseball Diamonds	1 per 5,000	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	3
Basketball Courts	1 per 5,000	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	3
Football/Rugby Fields	1 per 20,000		2	2	0	2	0	2	1
Golf. 9 Hole Standard	1 per 30,000			0	0	0	0	0	0
Golf. 18 Hole Standard	1 per 20,000			0	0	0	0	0	1
Golf. Driving Range	1 per 50,000			0	0	0	0	0	0
Handball/Racketball Courts	1 per 20,000			0	0	0	0	0	1
Horseshoe Courts	1 per 2,000	3		3	1	2	2	1	7
Running Track 400m	1 per 20,000		1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Soccer Fields	1 per 10,000	2		2	0	2	0	2	1
Softball/Tee Ball Fields	1 per 2,500	5		5	1	4	2	3	6
Swimming Pool/Aquatic Center	1 per 20,000			0	0	0	0	0	1
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	2		2	1	1	2	0	7
Trails System	1 per region	1		1	1	0	1	0	1
Volleyball Courts	1 per 3,000	2		2	1	1	2	0	4

EXISTING FACILITIES AND SERVICE AREAS

Figure 3.1 identifies the existing parks and recreational facilities with their service area within Bennington and the City’s Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. The circles around each park/facility represents such service area. These service areas are based upon the park classification and can range from ¼ mile to one mile in Bennington.





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PARK CONDITION SUMMARY

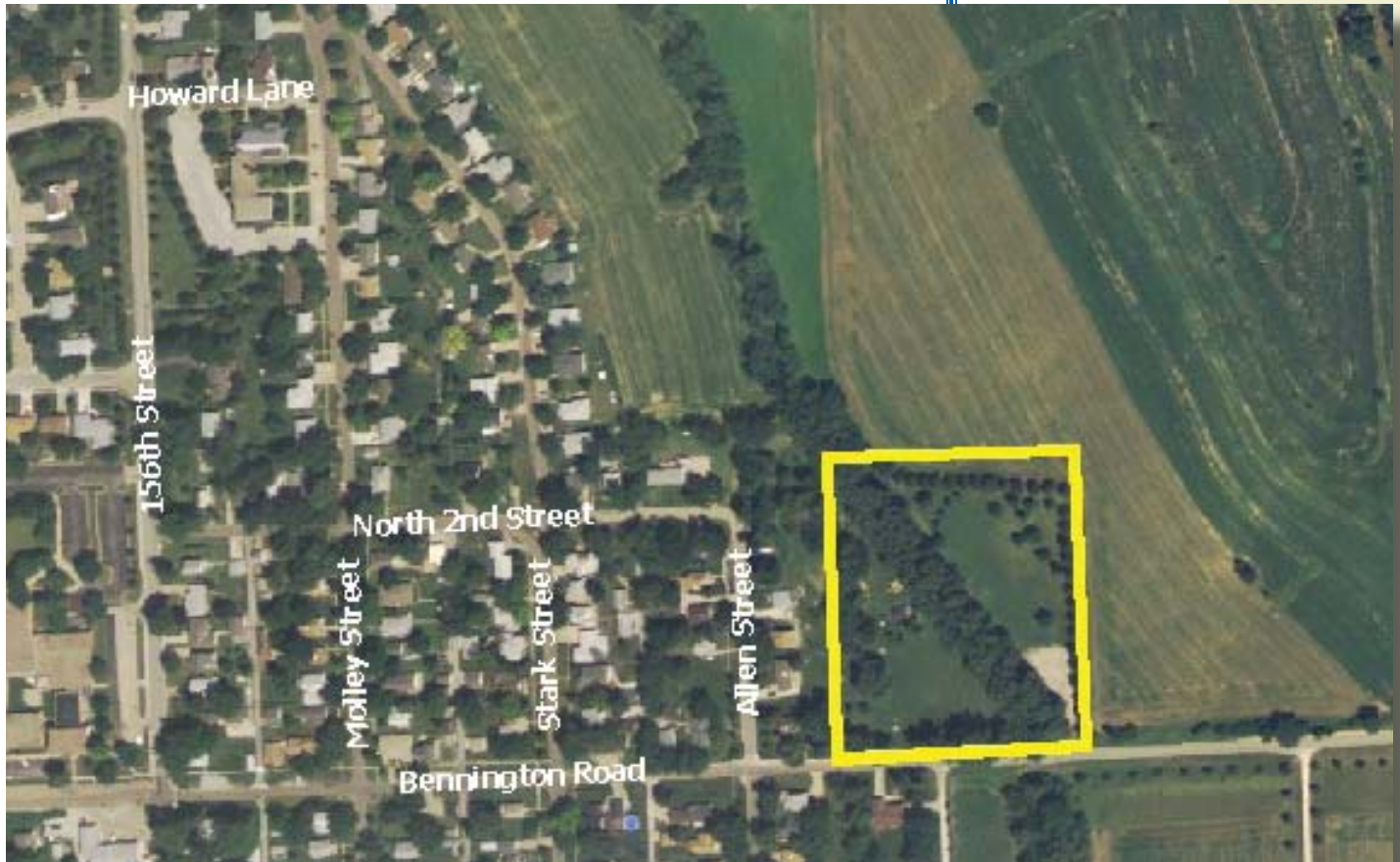
This section will list all the individual parks in Bennington and what amenities are contained within those parks. It will also give descriptions as to the condition and capacity of the parks and a general site layout.

Facility Name: Tim Ohrt Park

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Park Area: ± 5.60 acres

Aerial Location Map



Comments:

Tim Ohrt Park is a neighborhood park located on the east side of Bennington, north of Bennington Road and east of Allen Street. There are three access points to the park. The primary entrance is located on Bennington Road, just east of a tributary of the Big Papillion Creek, which leads to an unpaved parking lot (crushed rock) with space for approximately 40 vehicles and no designated handicap accessible spaces. The two other entrances provide pedestrian access and are located at the south end of the park (along Bennington Road) and in the northwest corner of the park at the east end of North 2nd Street.

The park, as a whole, is divided diagonally (northwest to southeast) by the tributary of the Big Papillion Creek mentioned above,





with the two portions connected by a pedestrian bridge. The northeastern portion of the park consists of a nearly-level playing area with deciduous and evergreen trees lining the perimeter, as well as two horseshoe pits, in very poor condition. The other section of the park is also fairly level with a number of deciduous and evergreen trees around the perimeter. It contains a large play area with a backstop, two play sets (one metal and one wood), a climber, six swings, two fixed benches, a shelter with six picnic tables, two grills and a and a dumpster. The shelter appears to be wired for electricity. Two pole lights provide lighting around the shelter and near the northwest entrance. While there is a water spigot in this part of the park, there are no permanent restrooms facilities. Instead there is a single portable restroom.



In addition to the southern edge of the park being sloped, there is a concrete open drainage structure in the park's southwest corner. Both features appear to serve to remove stormwater from Bennington Road. Coupled with a series of berms and swales, runoff is directed toward the creek and away from the play and picnic areas.

Surrounding the park are residential areas to the west and south. A new residential subdivision is being built to the north and east which will include areas of open space that can serve as pedestrian and bicycle connections to the park.



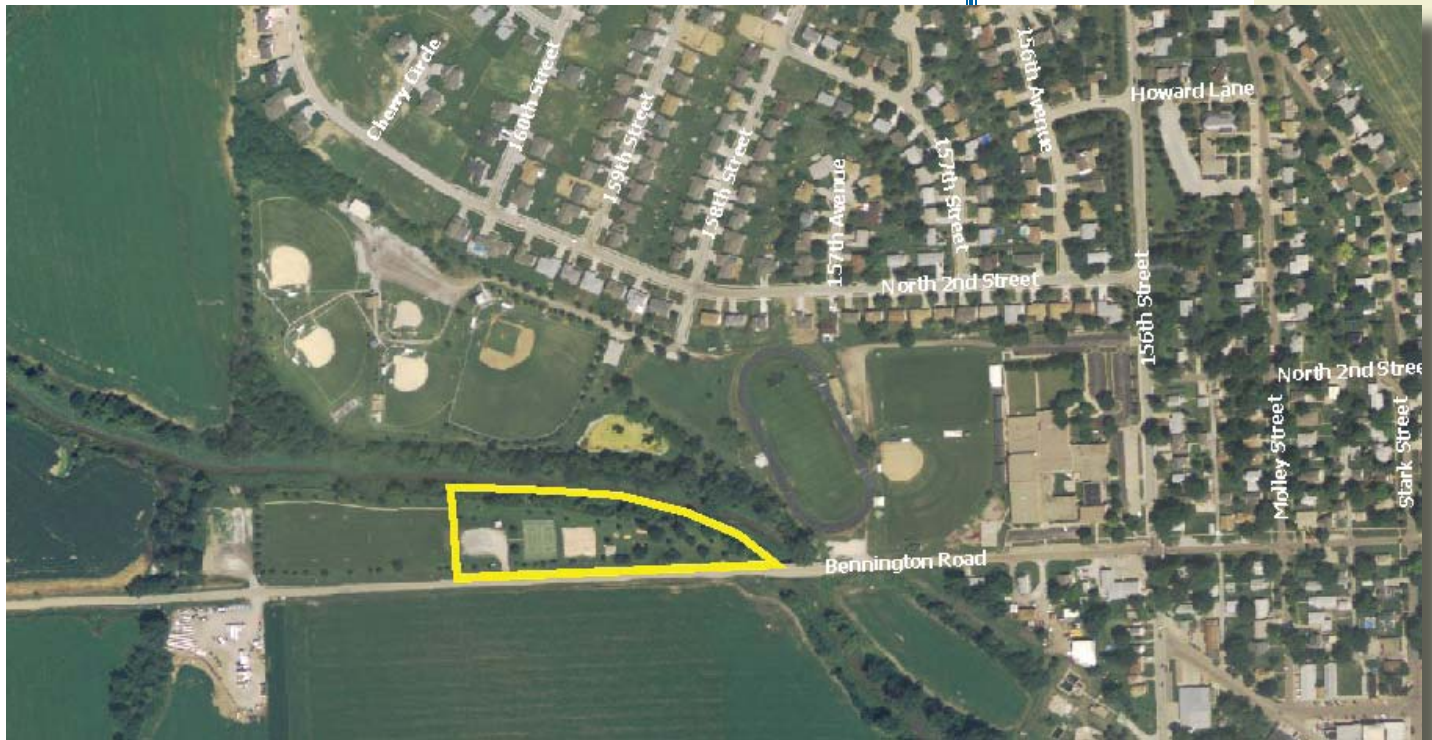
In general, Tim Ohrt Park is in good condition; however, there needs to be some improvements made to make the park more accessible and enjoyable for everyone. This includes the addition of a handicap accessible ramp and sidewalks from the two pedestrian entrances, as well as the addition of new play structures, and pedestrian bridge and sidewalk from the parking area that can accommodate persons in wheelchairs. The park would also benefit from some additional tree plantings in its interior, particularly around the play structures and picnic shelter.





Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At	Over	
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X					Turf dry (non-irrigated); deciduous and evergreen trees throughout; trees within creek area well-maintained; could benefit from additional plantings around picnic area and play equipment
Play Areas			X		X		Two locations; grass areas well-maintained, litter free
Sports Fields				X			No formal field at this location but does include a backstop
Paved Multi-use Areas				X			None at this location
Sports Courts	X			X			Horseshoe pits need to be repaired/replaced
Walks/Trails				X			No sidewalks or trails on park property; access to site by sidewalk and stairs located in southwest corner along Bennington Road and pedestrian bridge across the creek
Play Equipment		X			X		Two play structures – wood structure requires staining and waterproofing; Six swings (no infant or ADA accessible); climber
Structures					X		Picnic shelter lights need replaced; requires staining/painting
Picnic Facilities		X			X		Six movable picnic tables at shelter; two grills that require maintenance/cleaning; could benefit from providing additional picnic tables/shelter next to southernmost grill
Drinking Water	X			X			No water fountains; water spigot located approximately 50 feet from picnic shelter
Restrooms	X			X			No permanent facilities; one portable unit requires maintenance/cleaning, not handicap accessible
Parking	X				X		Crushed rock surface; no handicap designated spaces or access to park from parking lot
Lighting		X		X			No lights in picnic shelter; two light poles/fixtures
Benches		X				X	Two benches on south end of park; could benefit from additional benches next to play equipment and near play area/horseshoe court on northeast corner of the property
Signage		X					Brick and wood sign – requires minor masonry repair
Miscellaneous	X						Pedestrian bridge over creek is not ADA compliant and requires painting (rust visible)



Aerial Location Map**Comments:**

Johns-Bohn Park is a neighborhood park located on the west side of Bennington, west of the elementary school between Bennington Road and the Big Papillion Creek. There are a total of four access points to the park. Two vehicular entrances are located on Bennington Road on the east and west ends of the soccer area, both leading to unpaved parking lots (crushed rock) with space for approximately 80 vehicles and no designated handicap accessible spaces. The two other entrances provide pedestrian access from the east and west ends via a multi-use trail that winds through the park. The trail, which is built to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian traffic, runs one mile from the elementary school at the intersection of Bennington Road and 156th Street, west to the high school, located at 168th Street and loops around the Newport Landing lakefront housing development.

The park is comprised of two sections. The western portion is a soccer complex with youth soccer fields. The area is currently being used as either single play areas for youth leagues or divided into smaller fields (six total) for younger children.

The eastern portion is furnished with a variety of playground equipment, including a metal slide, climber, merry-go-round, two see-saws, and six swings. Other amenities include two tennis/basketball courts, two lighted sand volleyball courts, a picnic shelter, and three grills.





In addition to the facilities listed above, there are a total of six fixed benches (three by the soccer fields and three by the park), two portable restrooms (one for each section), and a storage shed. The park does not appear to be served by water as no water fountains, sprinklers, etc. are present.

Surrounding the park is a single-family residential development and the Bennington Athletic League Sports Complex across the Big Papillion Creek to the north, Bennington Elementary School to the east, vacant farmland and an anhydrous ammonia distribution facility to the south, and Bennington Jr./Sr. High School and vacant city-owned land to the west.

In general, Johns-Bohn Park is in good condition; however, there are accessibility issues that should be corrected. This includes designation and construction of handicap parking spaces, the addition of handicap accessible playground equipment, and facilities to allow handicapped persons to travel between the parking areas, play areas and other amenities. The park could also benefit from additional tree plantings along the multi-use trail and the park's perimeter and interior areas, particularly around the playground equipment and picnic shelter. Some of the playground equipment also requires simple maintenance or should be replaced entirely.





Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At	Over	
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X					Turf dry (non-irrigated); deciduous and evergreen trees along perimeter; could benefit from additional plantings around picnic area and play equipment
Play Areas			X		X		None in addition to soccer fields on west end
Sports Fields		X				X	Two junior size soccer fields with six smaller cross-fields each
Paved Multi-use Areas				X			None at this location
Sports Courts		X				X	Two lit tennis courts with side basketball goals and two lit sand volleyball courts
Walks/Trails		X			X		10-foot wide multi-use trail running east-west across park property (connects elementary school to Prairie View Lake); sidewalk connecting parking lot to tennis/basketball courts – cracked and uneven in spots/needs replaced; need handicap access to trail
Play Equipment		X		X			Two seesaws and merry-go-round – need painting/rust visible; Six swings (no infant or handicap accessible); climber; metal slide; no handicap accessible play equipment
Structures					X		Picnic shelter lights need replaced – requires staining/painting
Picnic Facilities		X			X		Six movable picnic tables at shelter; three grills – require maintenance/ cleaning
Drinking Water							No water fountains or spigots at this location
Restrooms	X			X			No permanent facilities; two portable units require regular maintenance/cleaning
Parking	X				X		Crushed rock surface; no handicap designated spaces or access to park or trail from parking lot; no lighting
Lighting	X					X	No lights in picnic shelter
Benches			X			X	Six benches scattered along trail (3 on soccer field side and 3 on park side); could benefit from additional benches next to play equipment
Signage		X			X		Two wood signs next to parking entrances – will require repainting or replacement in time
Miscellaneous							If feasible, could benefit from pedestrian bridge/connection to Athletic League Sports Complex



Aerial Location Map**Comments:**

Bennington Elementary School houses students in Kindergarten through 6th grade. The school is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Bennington Road and 156th Street. A total of seven vehicular access points exist on the property, three each along 156th Street and Bennington Road, and one in the northwest corner from 158th Street. Pedestrian access is available from all sides of the campus, most importantly from the residential areas to the north and east. The school is also connected to the one-mile multi-use trail mentioned previously, which runs west to the high school and other residential and recreation areas.

The school buildings, which housed grades K through 12 until 2005, range in age from 40 to 71 years old. Recreation facilities in the school include a gymnasium (7,220 s.f.) with adjoining stage (760 s.f.), wrestling room (2,240 s.f.), multi-purpose room (1,200 s.f.), and two boys and two girls locker rooms. Other spaces, which may be used for community meetings and other activities, include classrooms, a media center, and student commons and cafeteria area. Outdoor facilities include a playground, basketball court with 2- and 4-square, lighted baseball field, football field and 7-lane track (used by the high school athletic program), an additional practice field, and other play areas. Playground equipment consists of two play sets, crossbars, pull-up bars, balance beams, six swings and a climber. In general, the school's facilities are in fair condition, with the football field and track in good condition.

The playground equipment is open to the public throughout the year. The Bennington Baptist Church group has been using the elementary gymnasium for a little more than the last three years. Other local church groups have also used the gymnasium/ stage for past concerts. The gym is used by the YMCA for weekend basketball games and several public meetings have been held in elementary commons area in the past few years. The parking lots are available for public use and have been utilized by the local motorcycle club.



Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At	Over	
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X					Turf dry (non-irrigated); deciduous and evergreen trees along north and east side of school building; shrubs in planter/retaining wall next to play equipment area; could benefit from additional plantings around play equipment and along multi-purpose trail
Play Areas		X			X		Two locations along north side of school property; grass areas well-maintained, litter free
Sports Fields		X			X		One practice field, one lighted softball field, and one lit football field with 7-lane, 400-meter track (used by high school)
Paved Multi-use Areas	X					X	One (1) area located at southeast corner of school building; includes marked areas for two- and four-square and basketball
Sports Courts		X			X		Gymnasium, multi-purpose room/practice gymnasium, weight room, wrestling room and locker rooms inside school building
Walks/Trails			X			X	Sidewalks located throughout school property, connecting main building to parking areas and portable classrooms; 10-foot wide multi-use trail along Bennington Road – runs from 156th Street west to High School and on to the Newport Landing subdivision and Prairie View Lake
Play Equipment		X		X			Two play structures – wood structure requires staining and waterproofing; Six swings (no infant or ADA accessible) – one broken; climber; balance beams; crossbars; pull-up bars; tire swing (New playground equipment and basketball hoops to be installed)
Structures		X			X		Concession stands and equipment buildings next to sports fields; restroom building; main school building and four (4) portable classroom buildings
Picnic Facilities		X			X		None at this location
Drinking Water		X		X			No water fountains or water spigots noted at this location
Restrooms		X				X	One set of permanent facilities outside; restrooms and locker rooms inside the school building
Parking	X				X		Paved surface adjacent to school building with designated handicap spaces; crushed rock surface with no handicap designated spaces or access to park from parking lot next to football and baseball fields
Lighting		X		X			Lighting provided for football, track and baseball areas, as well as exterior of school building
Benches		X				X	Two benches next to play equipment area
Signage		X					No signage other than school signs on property
Miscellaneous							



Facility Name: Bennington Athletic League (B.A.L.) Sports Complex

Classification: Sports Complex

Park Area: ± 19.64 acres

Aerial Location Map



Comments:

The Bennington Athletic League Sports Complex is located west of 156th Street, between North 2nd Street and Big Papillion Creek. Surrounding the complex is single-family residential to the north, Bennington Elementary School to the east, Big Papillion Creek and Johns-Bohn Park to the south, and vacant farmland to the west.





Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At	Over	
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)		X					Turf dry (partially-irrigated); deciduous and evergreen trees throughout; could benefit from additional plantings around picnic areas, concessions and play areas
Play Areas			X		X		One location at east of complex; grass areas well-maintained, litter free
Sports Fields		X				X	Five baseball/teeball fields – main (legion) baseball field is lit; two batting cage locations
Paved Multi-use Areas				X			None at this location
Sports Courts			X		X		Basketball court (concrete) – no lines
Walks/Trails		X			X		Walking path around pond area; sidewalks and paths link parking lot, concessions and ball fields
Play Equipment		X		X			One chain-link enclosed play structure and swings – wood structure requires staining and waterproofing; metal slide between basketball court and pond
Structures		X			X		Grounds maintenance building; two concession stands; one picnic shelter
Picnic Facilities		X		X			Two picnic tables at shelter and one each at the main entrance to the four field complex and basketball courts; three grills around pond – require maintenance/cleaning
Drinking Water				X			No water fountains noted at this location
Restrooms		X			X		Two sets of permanent restrooms, one set at each concession area; one portable unit next to entrance of four field complex – requires maintenance/cleaning
Parking	X			X			Combination of crushed rock and cold pack surface; no handicap designated spaces or access to park from parking lot
Lighting		X		X			Lighting provided at main baseball field and concession areas
Benches		X				X	No benches noted on-site; bleachers provided at each ball field; could benefit from additional benches next to play equipment and near common areas, basketball court and play area between track and pond
Signage					X		Painted wood signs attached to facades of concession buildings
Miscellaneous							If feasible, could benefit from pedestrian bridge/connection to Johns-Bohn Park and Soccer Complex



Facility Name: Centennial Park

Classification: Mini-Park

Park Area: ± 1.79 acres

Aerial Location Map



Comments:

Centennial Park is a mini-park located on the south side of Bennington, south of Warehouse Street and east of 156th Street. There are two access points to the park. The primary entrance is located on Warehouse Street, just east of the Fire Station. There is only on-street parking along Warehouse Street for this park. The other possible entrance is for pedestrian access on the west side of the park along 156th Street.

Amenities of the park include a gazebo, swings, seesaws, a new play structure, jungle gym, toddler swing, picnic tables, a portable toilet, horseshoe courts and open play areas. These amenities, along with mature shade trees and location to downtown, make this park a nice area to relax and play during the business day or special community events.







Conditions and Capacity Report -- Centennial Park

Park Component	Condition			Capacity			Notes
	Poor	Fair	Good	Under	At	Over	
Vegetation (Trees, shrubs, turf)			X				Turf dry (non-irrigated); deciduous and evergreen trees throughout; could benefit from additional plantings along north side of Big Papillion Creek and 156th Street
Play Areas		X			X		Three small areas on south end of park; grass areas well-maintained, litter free
Sports Fields				X			None at this location
Paved Multi-use Areas				X			None at this location
Sports Courts	X				X		One horseshoe courts - pits need to be repaired/replaced
Walks/Trails				X			One sidewalk connecting parking area along street to gazebo; play equipment not handicap accessible
Play Equipment		X				X	One metal/plastic play structure; Six swings (includes 1 infant and handicap 1 accessible); climber; two seesaws; and two bouncers
Structures		X			X		Gazebo (approximately 400 sq.ft.) with lights and electrical outlets – needs staining/ waterproofing
Picnic Facilities		X		X			Eleven movable picnic tables scattered around park; one grill – requires maintenance/ cleaning
Drinking Water		X			X		One water fountain located near park/ library entrance along Warehouse Street
Restrooms	X					X	No permanent facilities; one portable unit requires maintenance/cleaning
Parking		X			X		17 asphalt parking spaces provided along Warehouse Street; two handicap designated spaces
Lighting		X		X			Lights provided in gazebo; three additional light poles/fixtures in play areas and next to water fountain/park entrance
Benches		X				X	Three benches provided; could benefit from additional benches next to play areas/ horseshoe courts on south end of the property
Signage							No sign posted
Miscellaneous							Recommend fence or landscaping along eastern boundary to screen industrial/ storage area



Recommendations

Introduction

Required and Optional Facilities, Amenities,
and Services

Parks

Trails and Greenways

Tree Plan



Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

Recommendations for the Bennington parks and recreation system are based upon a number of factors, including national standards, regional opportunities and plans, and the identified needs and desires of the City of Bennington. Community input has shown that Bennington residents who attended the focus group workshops and completed the surveys are somewhat satisfied with the amount and quality of the existing facilities, programs, and activities available, but there is definitely room for improvement and expansion. A summary of the survey results and focus group activities can be found in the Appendix of this plan. Recommendations are provided for existing and proposed parks, trails and greenways, green streets, and additional recreation opportunities such as a community center.

The Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan incorporates sufficient park classifications to satisfy different park and recreation needs of the City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. These park classifications include mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, school parks, special use facilities, sport complexes, and trails/greenways. Recommendations are made for each of these park classifications in terms of required and optional facilities and services. Each existing or proposed park, facility, and trail is identified according to this classification and specific recommendations are provided.

Park and recreation facility recommendations are divided into three main topics: 1) Parks and Facilities, 2) Trails and Greenways, and 3) Tree Plan (including green streets). These recommendations are the initial means by which Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan can be incorporated into the community. Such recommendations may change over time, but will provide a basis for developing individual park master plans (as defined herein) and developing the City's Eight-year Parks Action Plan. Implementing such recommendations will improve and expand park and recreation facilities and activities for all residents of the City of Bennington and the surrounding area. Figure 4.1: Existing and Proposed Parks and Facilities shows the location of existing and proposed parks, greenways, trails, and green streets. Figure 4.2: Existing and Proposed Service Areas also shows existing and proposed parks, along with the service areas for mini-parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks. Park locations are centralized inside the service areas. Locations of the proposed parks and trails as shown on the maps are approximate. Parks and trails are shown in the general area where the facilities may be located. These proposed locations may shift or be altered when the planning and development of subdivisions or roadways becomes more detailed. Likewise, the type of a park may change based upon certain situations. For example, the proposed community park planned for northwest of town may be downsized to a neighborhood park depending upon development in that area.





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REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES

Based upon public input and policies recommended by the steering committee, basic requirements and optional facilities or services for each of the park classifications were determined. These required and optional facilities and amenities for all park classifications are listed in Table 4-1 and are divided into three categories, including:

- ✦ Park and Recreation Facilities, such as play structures and basketball courts
- ✦ Park and Recreation Amenities, such as security lighting and drinking fountains
- ✦ Park and Recreation Services, such as reservation requirements and maintenance

Required and optional facilities, amenities, and services are to serve as a guide for the City of Bennington. It is the responsibility of the city to determine which facilities, amenities, and services are or are not feasible in existing and proposed parks. The required facilities are recommended for existing parks, but due to physical limitations and space constraints they may not be added. In proposed parks, future demand for certain facilities, amenities, and services and the recreational preferences of users may change over time. Therefore, these guidelines may change or be revised to respond to the future demand of Bennington residents. Each park will be looked at individually to determine the physical capacity of providing basic requirements and to determine needs and wants of residents served by that park. Each park is different and this difference will be considered when determining which facilities will be included in each park. The city shall strive to provide the basic requirements in all of its parks and careful consideration shall be given to each proposed park and trail through the city's approval of such facility.

Even though the list of facilities, amenities, and services is extensive, it is very likely other items not listed will be requested to be included in the park and recreation system. Each new facility and service requested shall be analyzed according to public demand, site/location criteria, operating implications, and other relevant criteria.



Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities, Amenities, and Services

Facilities, Amenities, and Services	Mini-Park	Neighborhood Park	Community Park	School-Park	Special Use Facility	Sports Complex	Trail/Greenway
Park and Recreation Facilities							
Play Equipment/Structures	R	R	R	R	O	O	O
Open Play Area	R	R	R	R	O	O	O
Soccer Fields	NA	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Softball Fields	NA	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Baseball Fields	NA	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Paved Multi-use Areas	O	R	R	R	O	O	NA
Tennis Courts	O	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Basketball Courts	O	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Volleyball Courts	O	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Multi-Purpose Trails	O	R	R	R	O	O	O
Picnic Facilities (shelters)	R	R	R	O	O	O	O
Special/Unique Features	O	R	R	O	O	R	O
Natural Areas	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Trees/Shaded Areas	R	R	R	R	O	R	R
Special Use Facilities	NA	O	O	O	R	O	O
Swimming Pool	NA	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Aquatic Center	NA	NA	O	O	O	O	NA
Wading Pool	O	O	O	O	O	NA	NA
Ice Skating Rink	NA	O	O	O	O	NA	NA
Amphitheater/Outdoor Gathering Area	NA	O	O	O	O	NA	O
Arboretum/Botanical Gardens	NA	O	O	NA	O	O	O
Fine Arts Facility/Public Art Displays	NA	NA	O	NA	O	NA	O
Community Center or Indoor Rec.	NA	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Camping Facilities (RV facilities)	NA	NA	NA	NA	O	NA	NA
Dog Park	NA	NA	O	NA	O	NA	O
Horseshoes	O	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Disc/Frisbee Golf	NA	O	O	O	O	O	O
Roller Hockey	O	O	O	O	O	O	NA
Football/Rugby Field	NA	NA	O	O	O	O	NA
Outdoor Exercise Circuit	NA	O	O	O	O	O	O
Skating Facility (in-line/skateboard)	NA	O	O	NA	O	O	O
High-Risk Area	NA	NA	O	NA	O	O	NA
Golf Course	NA	NA	O	NA	O	O	O
Youth Sports Complex	NA	O	O	NA	O	O	NA
Competitive Sports Facility	NA	NA	O	NA	O	O	NA



Facilities, Amenities, and Services (continued)	Mini-Park	Neighborhood Park	Community Park	School-Park	Special Use Facility	Sports Complex	Trail/Greenway
Park and Recreation Amenities							
Security Lighting	R	R	R	R	R	R	O/R*
Activity Lighting	O	O	R	O	O	R	NA
Public Telephones	O	O	R	R	R	R	O
Off Street Parking	O	R	R	R	R	R	O/R*
Bike Racks	R	R	R	R	R	R	O/R*
Restrooms	O	R	R	R	O	R	O/R*
Drinking Fountains	R	R	R	R	R	R	O/R*
Benches	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Picnic Tables	O	R	R	O	O	R	O
Signage	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Information Kiosks	NA	NA	O	NA	O	O	O
ADA Accessibility	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Park and Recreation Services							
Security**	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Emergency Telephone Service	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Reservations for Facility Use (shelters, group picnics, sports leagues, for-profit use)	R	R	R	R	R	R	NA
Activities/Facilities for Groups, Companies Teams	NA	O	R	O	O	R	O
Special Events (programs, concerts, fairs)	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Facilities and Grounds Maintenance	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
<p>R - Required Facility/Service O - Optional Facility/Service NA - Not Appropriate * Optional for Greenway, Required for Trail</p> <p>** May include, but not limited to, police patrols, private security, neighborhood watches, park design to eliminate hidden places, structure design and lighting, and/or location markers on trail.</p> <p>Note: This does not preclude the addition of other unlisted facilities and services as optional.</p>							



PARKS

Mini-Parks

The guidelines for mini-parks are established in Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services. Existing mini-parks may not have all the required facilities and services due to physical limitations and land availability. It is the goal of Bennington to provide the required facilities and services where possible in existing and proposed parks. Only two mini-parks are proposed. One is located in an area slated for higher density residential north of the Bennington Park Subdivision that should be incorporated into the public system. The other proposed mini-park is to be located along the east side of the Ridgewood Subdivision near the area proposed for senior housing and near a proposed Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District lake. Beyond these, new mini-parks are not recommended because there are many single-family homes that offer their own play equipment and facilities that act in a similar manner as mini-parks.

As general guidelines, mini-parks should strive to include the following:

- a site between 2,500 square feet to one acre
- a service area of a maximum $\frac{1}{4}$ mile radius
- a site with a less than 4% slope
- a site that takes advantage of vegetation and other natural resources of the area
- a site that is located in residential areas

Existing Mini-Parks

Centennial Park

- Develop park master plan through public input.
- Provide aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.
- Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- Utilize new fire station parking lot for basketball court. Signs shall be posted to warn that parking lot shall be cleared at time of a fire call to allow for parking.
- Horseshoe pits shall be re-located due to the parking lot.
- Open area to the south end of the park shall be maintained as open space to allow for flea market and other events.
- As other parks develop in and around the community, area along street should be utilized more as open space to allow for community events.
- Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).



Proposed Mini-Parks**M-1** (East side of Ridgewood Subdivision)

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide shelter and picnic tables.
- ✦ Provide interpretive area for adults and youth.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

M-2 (North of Bennington Park Subdivision)

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Neighborhood Parks

The guidelines for neighborhood parks are established in Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services. Existing neighborhood parks may not have all the required facilities and services due to physical limitations and space constraints. It is the goal of the City of Bennington to provide the required facilities and services where possible in existing and proposed neighborhood parks.

As general guidelines, neighborhood parks should strive to have the following:

- ✦ a site of approximately five to ten acres
- ✦ a service area with a maximum ½ mile radius
- ✦ not more than 50% of the site should have a slope greater than 4%
- ✦ a site that takes advantage of vegetation and other natural resources of the area
- ✦ a site located in primarily residential areas

Existing Neighborhood Parks.*Tim Ohrt Park*

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- ✦ Provide more accessible parking for ball field and connect with ADA accessible trail.
- ✦ Remove some trees and vegetation near bridge and horseshoe pits to open area up.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).



Existing Restroom Facility
at Elementary School Park

Bennington Elementary School-Park (See also School-Parks)

- ♦ Develop joint use agreements between the school district and city that would establish rules and criteria.
- ♦ Work with the school district to develop park master plan.
- ♦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities and rules of play.
- ♦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ♦ Install self-locking or timer locks on bathroom doors and other control features on building so restrooms can be open to the public at regular times.
- ♦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).



NRD Park

- ♦ Develop an interlocal agreement with the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District to utilize the park as a neighborhood park.
- ♦ Work with Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District or with adjacent subdivision to construct a play structure to meet all requirements of a neighborhood park and set forth in Table 4-1.
- ♦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ♦ Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- ♦ Continue to provide basic requirements that are feasible (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Proposed Neighborhood Parks.*Heritage Park*

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- ✦ Work with school district so services will not be unnecessarily duplicated at adjacent school site.
- ✦ Construct a frisbee-golf course in the park that would be located in the flood plain.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

N-1

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

N-2

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

N-3

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

N-4 (and possible Elementary School site)

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input and work with Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District with future lake location and development.
- ✦ Work with school district so services will not be unnecessarily duplicated at adjacent school site.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.



- Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

N-5

- Develop park master plan through public input.
- Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

N-6

- Develop park master plan through public input.
- Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

N-7 (and possible Community Center and Elementary School site)

- Develop park master plan through public input.
- Work with school district so services will not be unnecessarily duplicated at adjacent school site.
- Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- Connect park with adjacent residential development with trails.
- Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Community Parks

The guidelines for community parks are also listed in Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services. Existing community parks may not have all the required facilities and services due to physical limitations and area. It shall be the goal of the city to provide the required facilities and services where possible in existing and proposed parks.

As general guidelines, community parks should strive to have the following:

- a site of approximately 30 to 50 acres
- a service area with a maximum three mile radius, typically a one to two mile radius
- surrounding land uses are primarily residential
- located adjacent to arterial or collector street(s)

Existing Community Park.

Johns-Bohn Park/Soccer Complex and BAL Sports Complex

- Develop park master plan through public input.



- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Construct access bridge and trail across Papio Creek to connect both sides of park.
- ✦ Secure land to west of BAL Sports Complex for expansion.
- ✦ Provide second access to Sports Complex to west from 168th Street.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Proposed Community Park.

C-1

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input. Such master plan should take into account any other planned facilities in the area, including proposed lakes.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Special Use Facilities

The guidelines for special use facilities are listed in Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services. It is the goal of the City to provide the required facilities and services where possible in existing facilities.

As general guidelines, special use facilities should strive to have the following:

- ✦ size of the site is variable
- ✦ a service area that is community-wide
- ✦ surrounding land uses are variable

Existing Special Use Facilities.

Newport Landing Fishing Area

- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide restrooms.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Proposed Special Use Facilities.

Bennington Community Center (with Library)

- ✦ Conduct a community center and swimming pool study. A library study has been completed)
- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Explore opportunities through community input workshops to acquire land for public use.



- Construct a pedestrian bridge and trail across Papio Creek to connect area to High School, trails along Bennington Road, and proposed arboretum between the high school and Papio Creek.
- Work with school district so services will not be unnecessarily duplicated at adjacent school site.
- Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Sports Complexes

The guidelines for sports complexes are listed in Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services. Existing sports complexes may not have all the required facilities and services due to physical limitations and space constraints. It is the goal of the city to provide the required facilities and services where possible in existing and proposed sports complexes.

As general guidelines, sports complexes should strive to have the following:

- size of the site is greater than 25 acres
- a service area that is community-wide
- surrounding land uses are variable
- adjacent to arterial or collector street(s)
- Adequate parking and accessibility

Existing Sports Complexes.

Bennington Athletic League Sports Complex and Existing Soccer Complex

- Develop park master plan through public input.
- Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- Consider lighting some additional fields.
- Pave parking lots.
- Add trees around parking lots and fields.
- Acquire additional land at southwest corner.
- Provide one formal baseball field.
- Expand Sports Complex to the west along Papio Creek and surrounding floodplain areas to offer additional opportunities for public recreation uses.
- Expand trail system throughout Complex.
- Fill in pond to provide additional parking or play area.
- Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

Existing Trail through Sports Complex.



Proposed Sports Complexes.

Bennington Soccer Complex (South Complex)

- ✦ Acquire property for future athletic field development.
- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide for competition size fields.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide trail access to adjoining neighborhoods and downtown.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

School-Parks

The guidelines for school-parks are listed in Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services. Currently, there is one existing school-park in the system located at the Bennington Elementary School building. For the proposed school-parks, it is the goal of the city to work with the school district to provide the required facilities and services where possible. Adjacent land to the proposed school sites may be required to supply required facilities and services to fulfill provisions of a neighborhood park without building an additional park.

As general guidelines, school-parks should be constructed as neighborhood parks or in conjunction with neighborhood parks and should strive to have the following:

- ✦ size of the site is variable (typically around five acres)
- ✦ service area is variable (typically ½ mile radius)
- ✦ a site that takes advantage of the trees and other natural resources of the area
- ✦ located primarily in residential zoned areas

Sites that include schools should be large enough to accommodate school needs and neighborhood park uses, where feasible. A committee of city personnel and representatives of the school district should be established to discuss joint use facilities, joint maintenance possibilities, and joint improvement possibilities to maximize community use of facilities. The committee should also establish a process whereby new schools that may fall under formal joint use agreements are planned and designed jointly by the school district and the city. Master plans for each school park should be developed through public input by such committee.

Proposed School-Parks.

Heritage Elementary School-Park (See Neighborhood Parks – Heritage Park)

N-4 (See Neighborhood Parks)

N-7 (See Neighborhood Parks)



TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

Proposed greenways and trails will link parks and recreational areas together as a continuous system. Bennington has an opportunity to incorporate these linkages throughout its entire extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction at the time of development.

Greenways serve as a natural connection along a flood plain, creek, drainageway, and/or corridor lined with trees. Such greenways may be developed as a passive or active recreation area. The city may not necessarily own a passive greenway, but the area should be protected as a natural area through some measure such as an easement. Active greenways may include crushed limestone or paved trails and would typically be owned and/or maintained by the city. A typical trail cross-section along a greenway is shown in Figure 4.3 and a typical trail cross-section along a roadway is shown in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.3: Typical Trail Cross Section along a Greenway or Natural Area

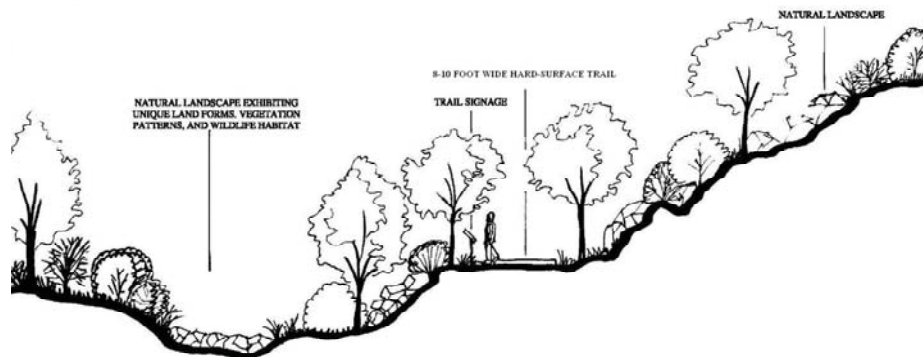
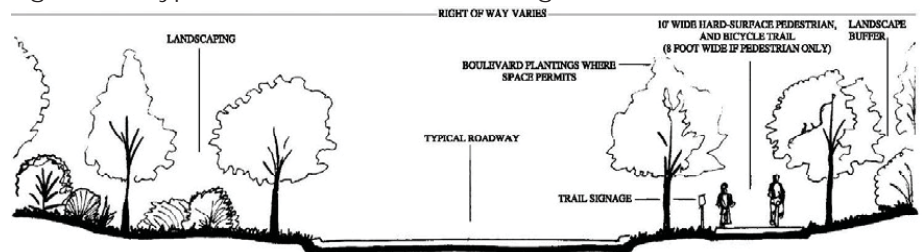


Figure 4.4: Typical Trail Cross Section along a Street/Road



The proposed trail and greenway system in Bennington will provide important connections to park and recreation facilities, schools, commercial/business areas, and residential neighborhoods in existing developments as well as future developments. The system will also provide important connections to surrounding communities and recreational areas and trails in those communities. The City of Bennington shall work with surrounding communities, Douglas County, and the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District to establish relationships and develop important regional trail connections. These proposed trails and greenways shall be eventually incorporated into the Omaha Suburban Area Master Plan.

The guidelines for trails and greenways are established in Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services. It is Bennington's goal to provide the required facilities and services where possible for all trails and greenways.

Proposed Greenways.

The following tasks should be completed for each greenway:

- ✦ Begin land acquisition/easement process, if to be publicly owned and if necessary.
- ✦ Develop park master plan through public input.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).

West Bennington Bypass Greenway

This Greenway would follow the north side of the proposed West Bennington Bypass that would connect 156th Street with Bennington Road at a diagonal and directing traffic away from the elementary school location. Such Greenway would utilize existing flood plain/floodway areas and is recommended to be 50 to 150 feet in width. The Greenway would create a buffer between the proposed street/road and the proposed soccer complex. A trail is proposed through the Greenway to provide a safe pedestrian route and connectivity to the soccer fields.

Vermont Street Greenway

This proposed greenway follows Vermont Street on the east side of Bennington from Bennington Road (Tim Ohrt Park) south to Papio Creek Greenway. The Vermont Street Greenway is to be developed as a linear park with a trail, benches, and exercise stations. Trail connections shall be made at street intersections as access points to residential properties and downtown destinations. The old railroad bridge across the north/south Papio Creek tributary should be utilized as a trail bridge through the greenway.

Papio Creek Greenway

This Greenway follows Papillion Creek from the Vermont Street Greenway south-east to Bennington's jurisdictional line and connects a proposed trail to the trails proposed by Omaha along Papio Creek. Such trail should be connected to the Heritage Subdivision with a bridge across Papio Creek.

Planned and Proposed Trails.

All planned and proposed trails should be constructed as multi-purpose (hiking/biking) trails and have a width of eight to ten feet. Trail surfacing shall be crushed limestone, concrete, or asphalt. The length given for each proposed trail is approximate. Such trails are illustrated in Figure 4.1 in their approximate locations. Proposed trails may be altered due to layout of subdivision, road construction, etc.

The following tasks should be completed for each proposed trail:

- ✦ Continue/begin land acquisition/easement process, if necessary.
- ✦ Provide aesthetic and identification amenities.
- ✦ Provide ADA accessibility and ADA facilities where feasible.
- ✦ Provide basic requirements that are feasible and optional additions that are desired (See Table 4-1: Required and Optional Facilities and Services).



Existing trail along Bennington Road east of Bennington High School



<i>156th Street Trail</i>	Length
✦ Heritage West Trail to North 4th Street	4,752'
<i>Heritage West Trail</i>	Length
✦ Proposed Bennington Boulevard to 156th Street	2,112'
<i>Heritage East Trail</i>	Length
✦ Proposed Bennington Boulevard to proposed Rainwood Road	5,808'
<i>Ridgewood Trail</i>	Length
✦ Bennington Rd. to Highway 36 along Ashwood Rd.	2,910'
<i>Ridgewood Trail East</i>	Length
✦ Highway 36 to proposed N-3 Neighborhood Park	2,640'
<i>Ridgewood Trail West</i>	Length
✦ Through Ridgewood outlots connecting to Tim Ohrt Park	3,168'
<i>North Second Street Trail (Safe Routes to School)</i>	Length
✦ 156th Street to Tim Ohrt Park	2,112'
<i>Newport Hill Trail</i>	Length
✦ Through Newport Hill Subdivision connecting to NRD Park	3,168'
<i>West Bennington Bypass Greenway Trail</i>	Length
✦ 156th Street to Bennington Road	3,696'
<i>Vermont Greenway Trail</i>	Length
✦ Tim Ohrt Park to South 3rd St. and to Papio Creek	2,640'
<i>Rainwood Trail</i>	Length
✦ 180th Street to Heritage East Trail	13,728'
<i>BAL Trail</i>	Length
✦ Bennington Road through ball field area to Community Center	2,640'
<i>Papio Creek Trail East</i>	Length
✦ Vermont Greenway to jurisdictional line	5,280'
<i>Papio Creek Trail West</i>	Length
✦ 168th Street to 180th Street	7,392'
<i>Haden Trail</i>	Length
✦ 156th St. to Bennington Rd. north & west of Bennington Park	7,286'
<i>Community Center Trail</i>	Length
✦ BAL to 168th Street	3,168'
<i>East Bennington Trail</i>	Length
✦ Papio Creek to Washington County line	15,840'



<i>180th Street Trail South</i>	Length
✦ Bennington Road south to jurisdictional line and beyond	6,336'
<i>180th Street Trail North</i>	Length
✦ Highway 36 north to county line	5,280'
<i>South Bennington Trail</i>	Length
✦ West Bennington Bypass to 180th Street	12,672'
<i>North Bennington Trail</i>	Length
✦ Pawnee Road to Papio Creek Trail	10,032'
<i>Pawnee Trail</i>	Length
✦ 138th Street to Highway 36	9,504'
<i>Northeast Trail</i>	Length
✦ Ridgewood to East Bennington Trail	3,696'

TREE PLAN

The Bennington Tree Plan includes recommendations for green streets, trees within parks, recommended species, species that should not be used, and planting guidelines.

The following statements describe just how valuable trees are for a community:

- ✦ “The planting of trees means improved water quality, resulting in less runoff and erosion. This allows more recharging of the ground water supply. Wooded areas help prevent the transport of sediment and chemicals into streams.” *USDA Forest Service*
- ✦ “The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.” *U.S. Department of Agriculture*
- ✦ “Trees can boost the market value of your home by an average of 6 or 7 percent.” *Dr. Lowell Ponte*
- ✦ “Landscaping, especially with trees, can increase property values as much as 20 percent.” *Management Information Services/ICMA*
- ✦ “One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. This is enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people.” *U.S. Department of Agriculture*
- ✦ “There are about 60 to 200 million spaces along our city streets where trees could be planted. This translates to the potential to absorb 33 million more tons of CO₂ every year, and saving \$4 billion in energy costs.” *National Wildlife Federation*
- ✦ “Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30 percent and can save 20-50 percent in energy used for heating.” *USDA Forest Service*
- ✦ “Trees can be a stimulus to economic development, attracting new business and tourism. Commercial retail areas are more attractive to



shoppers, apartments rent more quickly, tenants stay longer, and space in a wooded setting is more valuable to sell or rent.” *The National Arbor Day Foundation*

- ♦ “Healthy, mature trees add an average of ten percent to a property’s value.” *USDA Forest Service*
- ♦ “In laboratory research, visual exposure to settings with trees has produced significant recovery from stress within five minutes, as indicated by changes in blood pressure and muscle tension.” *Dr. Roger S. Ulrich Texas A&M University*

Source: The National Arbor Day Foundation, <http://www.arborday.org>

Green Streets

Green streets are streets designed to extend a park-like appearance through the community and serve to create an interconnected network of parks, recreation areas, schools, and other civic facilities. Green streets should be designed or redesigned when feasible to have one or more of the following elements:

- ♦ one or more rows of trees along both sides of the roadway (along city right-of-way or on private property)
- ♦ one or more rows of trees down the center of the street/roadway located within islands.
- ♦ space for wide sidewalks or off-street trails on one or both sides of the roadway
- ♦ no overhead utility wires that interfere with the growth of overstory trees

Green streets may include signage, benches, nodes, and landscaping. Existing street right-of-way widths would dictate specific design on a street-by-street basis. Figures 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 show typical cross-sections of the three types of green streets. The hierarchy of green streets is neighborhood, secondary, and primary green streets. Neighborhood green streets are through streets within a neighborhood, secondary green streets are traffic collector routes, and primary green streets are major traffic arteries. Figure 4.7 shows an alternative cross-section with plant material in the center of the street.

The City of Bennington has received Tree City USA status since 1990 having achieved the four standards for Tree City USA status. These standards include having a Tree Board; having a Community Tree Ordinance; spending at least \$2.00 per capita on tree planting, maintenance, removal, and management; and having an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.



Figure 4.5: Neighborhood Green Street Section (Typical)

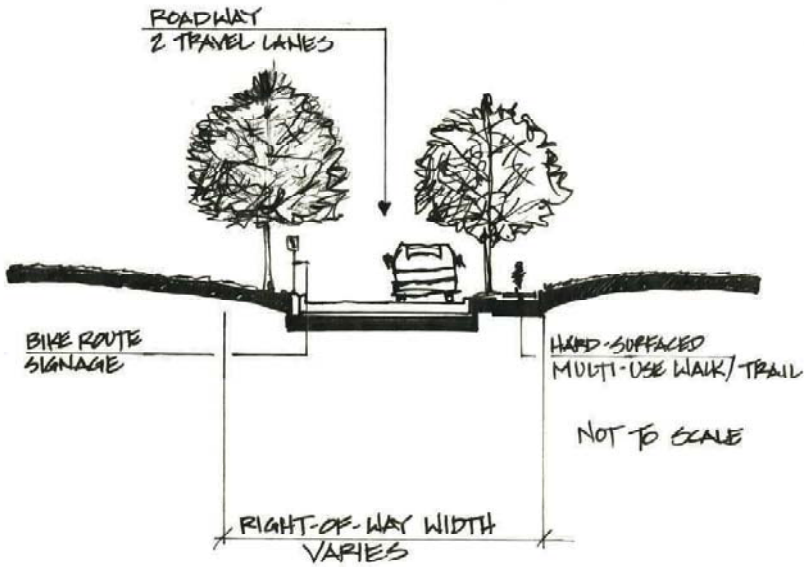


Figure 4.6: Secondary Green Street Section (Typical)

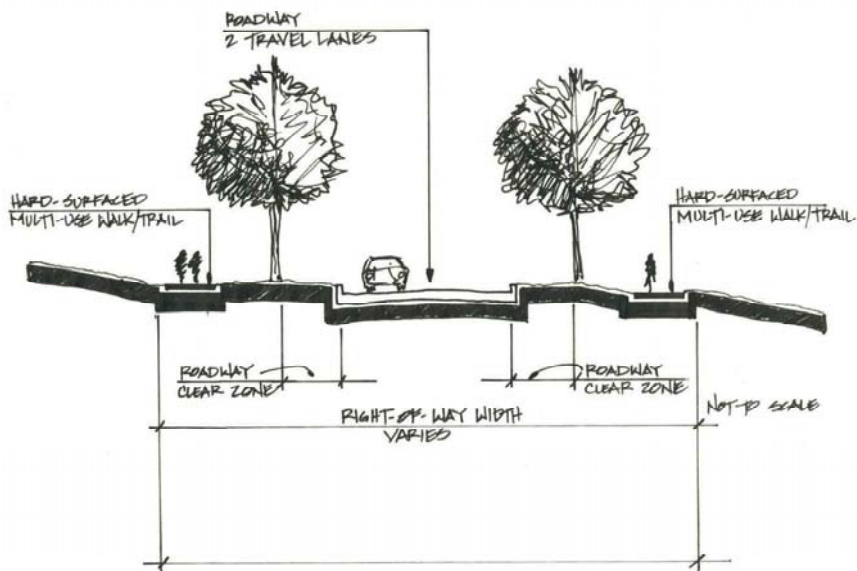
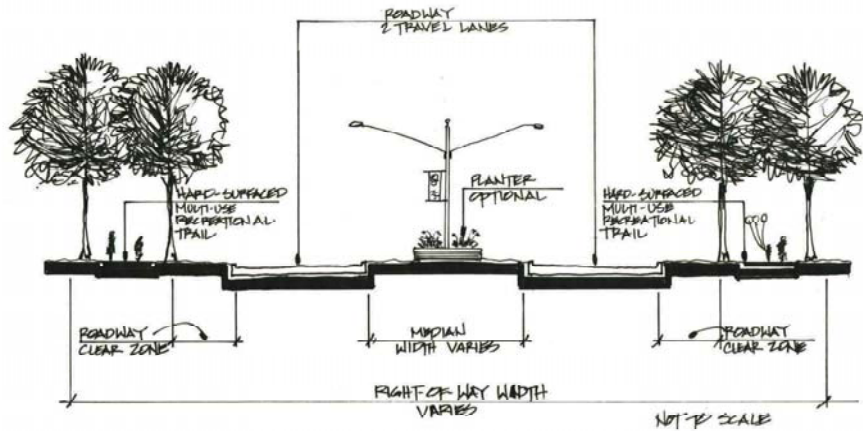


Figure 4.7: Primary Green Street Section (Typical)



All proposed street trees should have approval by city staff on specie type and location regarding all existing and proposed infrastructure. Tree height near power lines and root systems near sewer and water lines shall be considered. All proposed green streets should be planned/designed accordingly with all existing or proposed utilities. With typical green street sections, the existing walk on both sides of the street should be widened to eight feet, extending it toward the street. If there is less than two feet remaining between the widened walk and the curb, it is recommended this strip also be paved, since an area less than two feet wide could likely not be maintained efficiently and effectively in grass or any other plant material. An additional five-foot easement should be acquired from adjoining private property, if necessary, in which street trees should be planted. Trees should be located three feet from the edge of the walk, spaced at approximately forty-foot intervals. Allowances should be made for existing items in the R.O.W., such as driveways or fire hydrants. In summary, green streets that cannot follow the typical sections should include the following, starting from the street curb:

- grass strip, if more than two feet between curb and walk (if less than two feet from street to walk, strip should be paved)
- eight-foot wide walk
- five-foot easement, in which street trees are planted three feet from the walk

Implementation of designated green streets in Bennington would ensure that the tree-lined streets become part of the landscape throughout the city. It would also help create a pedestrian and bicycle movement network through the city that would link parks and public recreational areas together as a continuous, interconnected system. The proposed green streets in Bennington are identified in the Existing and Proposed Parks and Facilities Map (Figure 4.1) and are as follows:

Neighborhood Green Streets

- Rosewater Parkway throughout the Heritage Subdivision
- Ashwood Drive throughout the Ridgewood Subdivision

Secondary Green Streets

- 156th Street from Bennington's southern jurisdictional line to North 4th Street
- Proposed West Bennington Bypass from 156th Street to Bennington Road

Primary Green Streets

- Bennington Boulevard from 156th Street to 149th Street
- Rainwood Road from 151st Street to 149th Street

Park Trees

Just as green streets can help provide a unified and cohesive system throughout the city, so can the trees located within the parks. Tree within parks should be enhanced with shrubs, flowers, and ground covers. Park trees can provide numerous benefits to the park, including:

- Add value to the property (and nearby property)
- Provide shade for the area
- Break up the strong winds
- Provide habitat for wildlife
- Help define different spaces and uses within the park
- Provide a screen between the park and nearby residents
- Provide a buffer between the park and heavily used streets or conflicting/undesirable uses
- Makes the park more aesthetically pleasing

(Source: The National Arbor Day Foundation, <http://www.arborday.org>)

Recommended Trees

Choosing the right tree for the right location is important. All trees planted within the right-of-ways shall have approval of the city staff prior to installation to assure compatibility with street and utility functions. Trees within parks shall be consistent with individual park master plans that may be adopted. Although the same few species of trees are planted again and again, there are actually hundreds of types of trees that will grow well in eastern Nebraska. Diversity is the cornerstone of a healthy and vibrant community forest.

The following list of trees includes some of those species that would thrive in the Bennington area:

Large Deciduous Trees

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Ash* | • Hackberry | Red |
| Green 'Marshall Seedless', Green 'Patmore', White 'Autumn Purple' | • Honeylocust, Thornless 'Shademaster', 'Skyline' | 'Autumn Blaze', 'Northwood', 'Red Sunset' |
| • Baldcypress | • Kentucky Coffeetree | Sugar |
| • Birch, River | • Linden | 'Bonfire', 'Green Mountain', 'Legacy' |
| • Cherry, Black | American, Green-spire | |
| • Cottonwood 'Ohio Red', 'Platte' | • Maple | • Oak |
| • Elm | Norway | Bur, Red, Shingle, Swamp White |
| 'Dynasty', 'Homestead' | 'Deborah', 'Emerald Lustre', 'Emerald Queen' | • Sycamore |
| | | American, European |



Medium and Small Deciduous Trees

- ✦ Buckeye, Ohio
- ✦ Callery Pear
 - 'Aristocrat'
 - 'Capital'
 - 'Chanticleer'
- ✦ Cherry, Canada Red
- ✦ Crabapple
 - 'Adams'
 - 'Donald Wyman'
 - 'Harvest Gold'
 - 'Indian Magic'
 - 'Indian Summer'
 - 'Liset'
 - 'Mary Potter'
 - 'Prairiefire'
 - 'Robinson'
 - 'Sargent'
 - 'Spring Snow'
 - 'Snowdrift'
- ✦ Dogwood
 - Kousa
- ✦ Ginkgo
- ✦ Hawthorn
 - Cockspur
 - Cockspur, thornless
 - Green 'Winter King'
 - Washington
- ✦ Hophornbeam
- ✦ Lilac, Japanese Tree
- ✦ Magnolia, Saucer
- ✦ Maple
 - Amur
 - 'Columnar' Norway
- ✦ Redbud, Eastern
- ✦ Serviceberry
 - 'Autumn Brilliance'
 - 'Cole Select'

Coniferous Trees

- ✦ Fir
 - Douglas
 - Concolor
- ✦ Pine*
 - Jack
 - Limber
 - Ponderosa
 - White
- ✦ Spruce
 - Black Hills
 - Colorado
 - Norway
 - Serbian

The following trees should not be permitted along Green Streets:

- ✦ All Poplars
- ✦ Box Elder
- ✦ Buckeye
- ✦ Bradford Pear
- ✦ All Willows
- ✦ Catalpa
- ✦ All Conifers
- ✦ Cypress
- ✦ Horsechestnut
- ✦ Birch
- ✦ Silver Maple
- ✦ Tree of Heaven
- ✦ Pecan
- ✦ Walnut
- ✦ All Cottonwoods
- ✦ Non-Approved Elms
- ✦ Pin Oak

The following tree species are recommended under power lines:

- ✦ Dogwoods
- ✦ Hawthorns
- ✦ Serviceberries
- ✦ Crabapples
- ✦ Redbud
- ✦ Amur Maple

*Caution shall be given to use of these species regarding disease/infestation.

(Sources: University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Cooperative Extension, [Http://hortparadise.unl.edu/news-release/recommendedtreesfornebraska.htm](http://hortparadise.unl.edu/news-release/recommendedtreesfornebraska.htm), Recommended Trees for Nebraska. University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Cooperative Extension, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Douglas/Sarpy Counties, Trees Recommended for the Omaha Area. City of Lincoln, Parks and Recreation Department, Forestry Section, Approved Trees for Streets, Revised August 1999).



Guidelines for Planting Trees

Properly planted and cared for, trees add beauty, protection, and diversity to almost any location, whether it be along a street or in a park. To maintain a well-kept and desirable landscape, proper planting and maintenance practices are essential. To ensure success, appropriate species should be selected, correct planting techniques followed, and knowledge of growth characteristics, site requirements, and intended landscape function is required.

To ensure the right plant is planted in the right location, a landscape/planting plan should be prepared. Trees should be arranged in natural and complementary groupings. Trees should also be arranged to prevent potential negative impacts, such as damage from mowing equipment, over watering, under watering, lack of sun exposure, and over fertilizing. Aesthetic needs, site limitation, intended function, and maintenance capabilities should also be considered.

Selecting the most appropriate location for planting is one of the most critical decisions made during the planting process. When selecting a species and site, consider overhead and underground utilities, future construction sites, exposure to sunlight, soil drainage needs, and the mature size of the plant.

Selecting the appropriate species of tree is also important for the survival of the plant. The basic criteria for selecting trees are hardiness and function. Hardiness is the ability to withstand cold, heat, drought, and other adverse soil and environmental conditions. Function means the intended use of the tree in the landscape, including mature size, growth rates, longevity, form, texture, strength, color, flowering habit, insect and disease resistance, and other physiological characteristics. Planting objectives, site conditions, and the tree's growth characteristics must be compatible.

Once the location and desired species have been determined, a reliable nursery can assist with selecting the tree. Nursery plants usually are properly cultivated and trained, have well-developed root and crown systems, and are more likely to survive than wild trees. Nurseries typically offer a large selection of sizes and species. Plants from a hardy seed source and grown in a similar climatic zone should be selected to help insure survival. Smaller nursery stock recovers from transplant shock more quickly. Standards, including plant size designations, height, caliper, ball or pot size, have been set by the American Association of Nurserymen in the publication entitled American Standard for Nursery Stock. These standards help to guarantee quality and to facilitate commerce in nursery stock. Good, high quality nursery stock is the best assurance of success.

When properly planted and cared for, trees will thrive and provide beauty, protection, and diversity in the landscape. (Source: Woody Landscape Plants: Selection and Planting, G98-1349-A, Apr-14-00, <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/pubs/forestry/g1349.htm>, David P. Mootter, Mark O. Harrell, Justin Evertson.)





Eight-Year Action Plan

Introduction

Year One (FY 2009)

Year Two (FY 2010)

Year Three (FY 2011)

Year Four (FY 2012)

Year Five (FY 2013)

Year Six (FY 2014)

Year Seven (FY 2015)

Year Eight (FY 2016)

Completed Projects



Eight-Year Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Eight-Year Action Plan outlined below and on the following pages is derived from the policy and facility recommendations and from the project prioritization conducted by the Steering Committee. The Action Plan and any future amendments as recommended by the Steering Committee and Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council, present an orderly sequence in which to plan and implement improvements to existing facilities and provide for new facilities. The following plan is meant as a guide for developing the Bennington parks and recreation system within the corporate limits and Bennington's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

The Action Plan is to commence the fiscal year following acceptance of the Park and Recreation Master Plan by the City Council. The council adopted the plan during Fiscal Year 08 (October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2008), so year one of the Action Plan is FY 09. This will give the city administration time to plan for initiation of early stages of the Action Plan. Each project or action should be assigned a number that reflects the fiscal year it originally appears in the Action Plan for tracking purposes. Such project number should be carried through the project's completion listed at the end of the Action Plan under the heading "Completed Projects" and the date at which the project was finished. The Action Plan should be updated annually as new projects arise, priorities change, budgets are proposed, projects are completed, etc.

The Master Planning process for existing individual parks will be the responsibility of the City in conjunction with community input. Individual park master plans (as defined herein) will be used to assist in updating equipment and facilities, interact with the City's One and Six Year Road Plan, and help in determining funding levels for the City. Master plans for new parks shall be approved during the platting process.

Some of the recommendations in the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan will require the City to preserve additional land. While it may not be feasible for the City to acquire all the recommended parkland, the City should, at the least, examine ways to preserve these lands for public use and take advantage of such opportunities. Preservation may take place through public and private partnerships, Sanitary Improvement Districts, Natural Resource Districts, donations, easements, etc. Policies, procedures, and recommendations in the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan provide the tools for the City to preserve only land actually needed for park and recreational purposes.

Most planning and improvements recommended for facilities outside current corporate boundaries are listed at the end of the Action Plan in the year eight. These potential projects should be reviewed and appropriately placed or prioritized in the Action Plan whenever the respective areas in which they are located are annexed and/or developed.

Projects listed in the Eight-Year Action Plan are largely based on the prioritization worksheets completed by the steering committee and working with staff. The prioritization worksheet and results are located in the Appendix of this plan. Each existing, planned, and potential project was prioritized and the average prioritization of each was calculated. The average number taken for each project was then placed into the designated range that corresponds with one of the eight years. Projects with an average of 5.0 were placed in the first year, projects with an average of 4.5-4.9



were placed in year two, projects with average of 4.0-4.4 were placed in year three, projects with 3.5-3.9 were placed in year four, projects with 3.0-3.4 are in year five, projects with 2.5-2.9 are in year six, projects with 2.0-2.4 are in year seven, and projects have an average between 1.0 and 1.9 were placed in year eight and beyond. Most of the projects in year eight are long-term or “opportunity” projects which are to be developed as opportunities exist to develop them. It should be also noted that some of these projects are ongoing (park and trail acquisition, existing park renovation, etc.) and may last several years.

The City recognizes that the all projects cannot be completed within the identified eight-year period but such projects are based upon priorities set forward in this plan and the City Council. Annual updates and review of the Eight-Year Action Plan should be made as priorities change. Updates can be accomplished by recognizing any new projects in the prioritization worksheet and completing such worksheet to establish new prioritization averages. Depending upon budgets, personnel, and markets, the City also recognizes that projects listed in year six, for example, could easily be re-assigned or listed in year two or three in the following year’s re-prioritization and action plan update. At the same token, a project listed in year three may be pushed back to year seven based upon new priorities and development situations.

YEAR ONE (FY 2009)

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- ✦ Acquisition of BAL Trail
- ✦ Development of BAL Trail

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- ✦ *Amendments* - Amend Bennington Comprehensive Plan and Subdivision Regulations so that Parks and Recreation Master Plan is referenced within the appropriate sections.
- ✦ *Playground Safety Plan* - Adopt a policy to inspect all play equipment annually and replace or improve unsafe pieces on a park by park basis. Such policy shall also consider replacement of obsolete play equipment as each park is inspected every four years or as the parks are renovated.
- ✦ *ADA Plan* - Comply with American with Disabilities Act requirements by beginning each park into compliance as it is renovated or equipment is replaced. Provide ADA accessibility to all parks and park facilities.
- ✦ *Community Center and Swimming Pool Study* – Participate in a study to determine need, size, location, and amenities for possible community center and swimming pool.
- ✦ *Inter-local Agreements* - Develop a joint use agreement between the City of Bennington and the Bennington school district for the use of elementary and high school sites. Such agreement should take into consideration all shared facilities, policies, and rules.
- ✦ *Year Two Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the second year.



YEAR TWO (FY 2010)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- ♦ Acquisition of M-2 mini-park.
- ♦ Acquisition of N-7 neighborhood park (and possible comm. center and/or elementary school park).
- ♦ Develop Master Plan for Johns-Bohn/Soccer Complex and BAL Sports Complex.
- ♦ Make improvements to Johns-Bohn/Soccer Complex and BAL Sports Complex as described in recommendations and on adopted park master plan.
- ♦ Acquisition of land for proposed community center (and swimming pool).

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- ♦ Development of Ridgewood Trail along Ashwood Road.

Studies & Reports, Reviews, and Policy Development

- ♦ *Park Signage Plan* - Develop uniform park sign design and guidelines for all parks and trails with Bennington jurisdiction.
- ♦ *Park Color Scheme Plan* – Develop uniform colors for all structures to be located in the parks, including play equipment, shelters, benches, etc.
- ♦ *Year Three Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the third year.

YEAR THREE (FY 2011)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- ♦ Develop Master Plan for Tim Ohrt Park.
- ♦ Make improvements to Tim Ohrt Park as described in recommendations and on adopted park master plan.
- ♦ Develop Master Plan for N-7 Neighborhood Park (and possible comm. center and/or elementary school park).
- ♦ Begin construction of N-7 Neighborhood Park (and possible comm. center and/or elementary school park) as described in recommendations and on adopted park master plan.

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- ♦ Develop 156th Street Trail.
- ♦ Develop North Second Street Trail (safe route to school)
- ♦ Acquisition of land to develop West Bennington Bypass and Green Street

Studies & Reports, Reviews, and Policy Development

- ♦ *Year Four Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the fourth year.



YEAR FOUR (FY 2012)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- ✦ Develop Master Plan for Bennington Elementary in conjunction with school district.
- ✦ Make improvements to Bennington Elementary as described in recommendations and on adopted school park master plan.
- ✦ Develop Master Plan for Community Center.
- ✦ Begin construction on Community Center.

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed West Bennington Bypass Greenway.
- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed Vermont Street Greenway.
- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed Haden Trail (156th St. to Bennington Road around Bennington Park Subdivision).
- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed Community Center Trail (BAL to 168th Street).

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- ✦ *Year Five Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the fifth year.

YEAR FIVE (FY 2013)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed M-1 mini-park.
- ✦ Development of master plan for M-2 mini-park.
- ✦ Begin construction of M-2 mini-park.
- ✦ Acquisition of land for Bennington Soccer Complex (South).

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed Papio Creek Greenway.
- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed West Bennington Bypass Greenway Trail.
- ✦ Acquisition of land for proposed Vermont Street Greenway Trail.
- ✦ Development of Heritage West Trail.
- ✦ Development of Ridgewood West Trail.
- ✦ Development of Haden Trail (156th St. to Bennington Road around Bennington Park Subdivision).
- ✦ Development of Community Center Trail (BAL to 168th Street).
- ✦ Acquisition of land for Bennington Blvd. Green Street.
- ✦ Acquisition of land for Rainwood Road Green Street.
- ✦ Development of Bennington Blvd. Green Street.
- ✦ Development of 156th Street Green Street.
- ✦ Development of West Bennington Bypass Green Street.



Studies & Reports, Reviews, and Policy Development

- ♦ *Year Six Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the sixth year.
- ♦ *Plan Update* - Update Bennington's Park and Recreation Master Plan.

YEAR SIX (FY 2014)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- ♦ Acquisition of land for proposed N-5 Neighborhood Park.

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- ♦ Master Plan for West Bennington Bypass Greenway.
- ♦ Begin Construction of West Bennington Bypass Greenway.
- ♦ Acquisition of land for proposed Papio Creek East Trail.
- ♦ Development of Ridgewood East Trail.
- ♦ Development of Rainwood Road Green Street.
- ♦ Development of Ashwood Drive Green Street.

Studies & Reports, Reviews, and Policy Development

- ♦ *Year Seven Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the seventh year.

YEAR SEVEN (FY 2015)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- ♦ Master Plan for Centennial Park.
- ♦ Make improvements to Centennial Park.
- ♦ Work with NRD to make any necessary improvements to NRD Park.
- ♦ Acquisition of land for proposed N-4 Neighborhood Park (and possible elementary school park).
- ♦ Master Plan for Heritage Park.
- ♦ Begin construction of Heritage Park.
- ♦ Master Plan for proposed N-6 Neighborhood Park.
- ♦ Begin construction of N-6 Neighborhood Park.
- ♦ Work with Newport Landing Subdivision to make any improvements to Newport Landing Fishing Area.
- ♦ Master Plan and Development of new Bennington Soccer Complex (South).

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- ♦ Development of Vermont Greenway.
- ♦ Development of Papio Creek Greenway.
- ♦ Acquisition of land for proposed Rainwood Trail.
- ♦ Acquisition of land for proposed Papio Creek West Trail.
- ♦ Development of Heritage East Trail.



- Development of Newport Hill Trail(s).
- Development of Papio Creek East Trail.
- Development of Rosewater Parkway Green Street.

Studies & Reports, Reviews, and Policy Development

- *Year Eight Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the eighth year.

YEAR EIGHT (FY 2016)

Parks and Recreational Facilities

- Master Plan for M-1 Mini-Park.
- Begin construction of M-1 Mini-Park.
- Acquisition of land for proposed N-1 Neighborhood Park.
- Acquisition of land for proposed N-2 Neighborhood Park.
- Acquisition of land for proposed N-3 Neighborhood Park.
- Master Plan for N-1 Neighborhood Park.
- Begin Construction for N-1 Neighborhood Park.
- Master Plan for N-2 Neighborhood Park.
- Begin Construction for N-2 Neighborhood Park.
- Master Plan for N-3 Neighborhood Park.
- Begin Construction for N-3 Neighborhood Park.
- Master Plan for N-4 Neighborhood Park (and possible elementary school park).
- Begin Construction for N-4 Neighborhood Park.
- Master Plan for N-5 Neighborhood Park.
- Begin Construction for N-5 Neighborhood Park.
- Acquisition of land for proposed C-1 Community Park.
- Begin Construction of C-1 Community Park.

Trails, Greenways, and Green Streets

- Development of Rainwood Trail.
- Development of West Papio Creek Trail.
- Acquisition of land for proposed East Bennington Trail.
- Development of East Bennington Trail.
- Acquisition of land for proposed South 180th Trail.
- Development of South 180th Trail.
- Acquisition of land for proposed North 180th Trail.
- Development of North 180th Trail.
- Acquisition of land for proposed South Bennington Trail.
- Development of South Bennington Trail.
- Acquisition of land for proposed North Bennington Trail.
- Development of North Bennington Trail.
- Acquisition of land for proposed Pawnee Trail.



- Development of Pawnee Trail.
- Acquisition of land for proposed Northeast Trail.
- Development of Northeast Trail.

Studies & Reports, Reviews, and Policy Development

- *Year Nine Prioritization* - Review and revise action plan prioritization for the ninth year.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

(SECTION LEFT BLANK FOR FUTURE LISTING OF STUDIES, ACQUISITIONS, AND/OR PROJECTS COMPLETED AND YEAR OF COMPLETION)



Policies

Goals and Objectives
Funding Opportunities
Park Land Dedication/Fee
Maintenance



Policies

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this master plan is to provide the City of Bennington with a roadmap to continue to provide quality parks and recreational facilities for its residents and guest users. A goal of the City is to enhance existing parks and facilities while continuing to develop new sites and services to support a growing community. Bennington should be environmentally sensitive in managing parks, open spaces, and trails throughout the community while achieving these goals.

The following objectives were developed from the aforementioned goals:

- Identify types and locations of new parks and recreational facilities that will adequately serve Bennington residents.
- Create additional parks, facilities, and trails that provide safe community linkages and neighborhood connections.
- Develop criteria to assist city staff and officials through land development and platting that will require park dedication, trail connections, and/or recreational facility fees.
- Make the proposed recommendations in the master plan implementable and sustainable through exploring and utilizing funding and financing tools and other resources.
- Actively solicit private funds for parks acquisition, development, and long term care/maintenance.
- Require the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee to meet at least annually to review the plan, revise the action plan, and discuss relative issues.
- Support staff continuing education to identify trends in parks and recreation.
- Establish agreements with school district and NRD for use of recreational facilities to best utilize all community recreational assets.
- Develop consistent signage in existing parks and facilities and as new parks and facilities are constructed that would create a City of Bennington brand/identity.
- Develop color scheme for all park and facility structures that is consistent and creates a Bennington identity. Such colors should be harmonious with the park setting.
- Provide above average management and maintenance in parks and recreational facilities that sets Bennington's Park and Recreational System above all others. Such management and maintenance should include regular mowing, equipment and facility repairs, litter pickup, erosion control, etc.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

There are basically four ways to accomplish the objective of making this master plan implementable and sustainable. Each initiative or method could be stand alone or in combination. They are:

- ✦ Utilize creative funding and financing tools
- ✦ Create revenue producing facilities
- ✦ Utilize outside volunteer resources
- ✦ Control costs

The following strategies have been identified as means to achieve the above-mentioned initiatives:

Sponsorships

Sponsorships are a common way for cities to get private funding for public facilities. It is typically done by advertising the sponsor in program guides, at sports fields, at special events, or by naming a facility after the sponsor. Sponsors should be approached from the business perspective of exposure to the public as opposed to a philanthropic venture.

Partnerships

Partnerships are very different from sponsorships. Sponsorships give money in exchange for recognition; partnerships require a contractual obligation from both sides. Common partnerships for a city parks department are typically with school districts, recreation associations, quasi-public organizations, concessions operators or other governmental entities. The partnership contract specifically states the responsibilities of the city and its partner for a specific recreational or park facility.

General or Parks Foundations and Associations

The City could use the existing Bennington Foundation for support of the parks system or a new foundation could be setup that would be specifically for the parks and recreation system in Bennington. Foundations with 501(c) (3) status can leverage many opportunities that the city may not be able to go after. A foundation can typically work much faster if opportunities present themselves, making them useful tools for acquiring land in developing areas. Other opportunities may include recreational associations that can leverage or purchase property for the benefit of their activities and the entire community.

Federal and State Assistance

The Nebraska Game and Parks Department administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program for the State. This is a Federal Program controlled by the National Parks Service; the LWCF allocates moneys for outdoor recreation projects and all their phases. TEA-21 funds are administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads for the enhancement or creation of non-motorized transportation routes. The City could utilize this funding source in the expansion of the City's trail system.

User Fees

Fees can be charged to users of facilities that require significant upkeep or have utilities charges associated with their operation; such as a major sports complex, a pool, or a community center. These fees might be different for residents and non-residents, particularly for those facilities that create a regional draw.



Park Development Fees

Another tool that Bennington may use while undergoing increased residential development is a developer park development fee. The rationale is that the existing citizens have shared in the development to date and so the new residents should share like costs. Further explanation of the use of park development fees is incorporated in the Section entitled Park Land Dedication/Fee.

Revenue Bonds

Revenue Bonds are a popular way to finance high usage specialty facilities that can produce enough revenue to cover operational costs and service the debt. Typical facilities financed through revenue bonds include, golf courses, ice rinks, fitness facilities, and major athletic complexes.

Easements

In using easements to create parkland or trails, the City utilizes the property without actually purchasing the land. The three most common easements in any parks and recreation department are recreation easements, conservation easements, and scenic easements. Each instrument provides the landowner title to the property, while for consideration of an annual fee, the landowner agrees to the conditions of the easement. The various Natural Resources Districts utilize similar types of easements to preserve natural areas throughout the State.

Revenue-producing Facilities

Two of the revenue producing facilities in a parks and recreation system are family aquatic centers and golf courses. Both of these facilities can generate enough cash flow to service their operational needs as well as support other needs of the city. A community center may have similar characteristics if constructed and utilized (leased) for private events such as parties, wedding dances, etc.

Volunteer Groups

To maximize all resources, volunteer groups in the community should be encouraged and utilized. Volunteers such as senior groups, Boy and Girl Scouts, and garden clubs can be used in a variety of capacities including community support, maintenance projects, and program assistance.

Cost Control

As the City's Parks and Recreation System grows it will be increasingly important to determine and understand how and what services are provided to the community. By understanding such true cost, the City can achieve savings through cost controls. Such controls may include development of master plans for each park so equipment and space is efficiently utilized, establishment of partnership or interlocal agreements with other agencies so that park equipment is not duplicated in the same general area or neighborhood, and utilization of new equipment or materials to ultimately reduce cost and maintenance, such as poured rubber under and around play structures.

PARK LAND DEDICATION/FEE

New Development Dedication and/or Fee

As a way of assuring adequate land is available for new parks and facilities and that all existing and new recreational amenities are properly maintained, the City of Bennington has implemented a policy for the dedication of land for such parks and facilities and a park fee in-lieu of such dedication.



When there is a new subdivision platted within Bennington's jurisdiction, the City shall require either a dedication of parkland (for parks, trails, open space, or other recreational facilities) and/or a park dedication fee. Such dedication policy should be referenced in the Comprehensive Plan and made part of the Bennington Subdivision Regulations. Logistics of the recreational facility type and its exact location shall be determined through the pre-application meetings of the platting process. The parcel of ground to be dedicated or the amount of fee to be paid will be negotiated and written into the subdivision agreement. Master plans for such parks and facilities shall be laid out at time of preliminary plat and approved at time of final platting and prior to execution/filing of final plat. Any required park development fees shall be submitted to the City at the time of final platting and placed into the City's established park fund. Such funds shall be used for the acquisition of land, development, and maintenance of Bennington's park system.

When deciding whether or not the developer should dedicate land, pay the fee, or both, the City and developer shall consult the Existing and Proposed Parks and Facilities Map (Figure 4.1) within this plan. If there is a future park, trail, open space, or other recreational facility located in whole or in part of the new subdivision, the City may require that the subdivider dedicate land for such improvements. Development and maintenance of each park, trail, etc. shall be determined in the individual subdivision agreements. Any land that is dedicated should be buildable land (non-floodplain or non-floodway designated ground or areas of less than 15% slope) and be of sufficient size for the type of park or recreational facility designated in this plan.

Dedication of such parkland and fees described above is determined by the size and type of subdivision development. Land dedication in subdivision developments shall be as follows:

- ✦ Residential developments shall dedicate 10% of buildable land.
- ✦ Commercial developments shall dedicate 10% of buildable land.
- ✦ Industrial developments shall dedicate 10% of buildable land.

As a minimum, developers shall dedicate the maximum required parkland area for the type of park and/or recreational facility identified, unless negotiated to a smaller amount with the City Council through the platting process and subdivision agreement approval. The remaining acres of un-dedicated land falling within the required percentages listed above shall be evaluated with a per acre park development fee set forth in the City of Bennington's adopted Master Fee Schedule and described hereafter. In absence of such a fee schedule, the fees set forth herein shall apply.

If the Parks and Recreation Master Plan does not identify a proposed park or facility in the platted area and the subdivider is directed to provide the City with fee payment in lieu of parkland dedication, then such subdivider shall pay a park development fee based upon a set multiplier. The following fee schedule is based upon gross total acres of development at time of platting and shall be paid prior to execution of the final plat.

- ✦ Residential developments: \$1615.00 per acre
 - Neighborhood Park or Mini-Park - \$995/acre
 - Community Park - \$411/acre
 - Trails, Greenways, Green Streets - \$209/acre
- ✦ Commercial developments: \$1754.00 per acre
 - Community Park - \$897/acre
 - Trails, Greenways, Green Streets - \$857/acre



- Industrial developments: \$1754.00 per acre
- Community Park - \$897/acre
- Trails, Greenways, Green Streets - \$857/acre

Subdivisions of mixed use developments or planned unit developments shall dedicate parkland or pay a park development fee based upon the amount individually zoned land. If land in the subdivision is utilized by multiple uses (residential, commercial, industrial) without different zoning, then the higher amount of parkland dedication or park development fee shall be required for entire subdivision.

MAINTENANCE

Plan Maintenance

Like the city's comprehensive plan, the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan is designed to be a living breathing document. As stated in the introduction of this plan and in the action plan, the eight-year action plan should be reviewed annually and the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan is recommended to be updated after five years. Maintenance to the plan may be warranted earlier than scheduled due to various situations, including subdivision development, annexation, street improvements, school expansion, NRD projects, grant applications, etc.

Park Maintenance

The City should adopt a maintenance policy for each level of park and facility. A maintenance standards schedule could be developed that places each park and recreational facility into one of three levels for maintenance. Level 1 would be the most intense level of care, with Level 3 being the most natural and least maintenance intense areas. For example, mini-parks should be maintained higher than some greenways. The park department may not only create levels within the system but also may create levels of care with individual parks. For example, the park entry and sports fields may be Level 1, the majority of the park may be Level 2, and the creek or wooded area may be Level 3. A maintenance policy and detailed scheduling may include the following areas of service within each park or recreational facility:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Lawn care | • Floral care (perennials and annuals) | • Drainage structures |
| • Sports turf care | • Restroom maintenance | • Pedestrian bridges |
| • Litter control | • Ballfield maintenance and preparation | • Retaining walls |
| • Lighting | • Fence and gate construction and repairs | • Site amenities (picnic tables, goals, etc.) |
| • Hard/multi-purpose surfaces maintenance | • Playground maintenance | • Picnic shelters (including reservations) |
| • Graffiti control | • Trails | • Signage |
| • Repairs | • Waterway management | • Unique/Special Features (historical, natural, etc.) |
| • Inspections | | • Concessions |
| • Tree and shrub care | | |
| • Native grass care and control | | |

Policies should also be adopted to address signage and color schemes for parks and recreational facilities located with Bennington's jurisdiction. Signs are recommended to be of the same style and color for all Bennington parks so that they represent one park system. Suggested colors for park shelter, playground structure, benches, etc. should include greens, tans, browns, and maroon colors. Such colors are less obtrusive to the park environment. All park plans with proposed subdivisions shall be submitted for approval, including all proposed structures, materials, and colors.



Glossary



Glossary

Action Plan: An orderly year-by-year sequence over eight years in which to implement facilities improvements and conduct studies proposed in the Recommendations section of this plan. Such action plan is similar in comparison to the city's one and six-year road plan.

Active Recreation: This type of recreation generally involves participation in some form of strenuous, physical activity either as an individual or member of a team. Examples include aerobics, baseball, basketball, fitness/weight training, hockey, ice-skating, in-line skating, jogging/running, skateboarding, softball, swimming, tennis, and volleyball.

ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act; enacted by Congress in 1992. ADA establishes the legal responsibilities of municipalities to provide a reasonable level of accessibility to parks and recreation programs for individuals with varying levels of ability.

Casual Play/Pick-up Games: Games or other competitive activities put together by the individuals or self-organized teams. Such games are not scheduled or operated by the City or any other organization, are not part of a formal league or tournament, and usually involve only one game.

Community Park: A park 30 to 50 acres in size that provides for active and passive recreational needs of several neighborhoods as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). A community park typically serves an area within a 1- to 3-mile radius of the park and should be accessible by automobile and/or public transit. Such parks should allow for group activities and other recreational opportunities not feasible at the neighborhood level.

Community Survey: A survey taken by various stakeholders (members of the public) to determine the quality of local recreation activities available in Bennington. The survey or questionnaire also asked for preferred means of notifications about recreation activities, public financing mechanisms for recreation, and priorities.

Comprehensive Development Plan: The Comprehensive Plan of Bennington, Nebraska as adopted by the City Council in 2000, setting forth policies for the present and foreseeable future community welfare as a whole and meeting the purposes and requirements set forth by Nebraska Statutes, and as may, from time-to-time, be amended.

Condition & Capacity Report: An assessment of physical attributes of each existing park and recreational facility, and whether the physical attributes are under-, at-, or over-capacity. The report also provides photos, a brief narrative description, and location of each park and recreational facility on the map.

Dedicated Recreational and Open Space: The land set aside and dedicated for public use through subdivision of land.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction: The area beyond the corporate limits extending approximately one mile, in which the City of Bennington has been granted the powers by the State to exercise zoning and building regulations and is exercising such powers. The City of Bennington shares a common boundary to the south and southeast with the City of Omaha's 3-mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction.



Focus Group Meeting: Public input meetings directed at specific stakeholder groups and individuals, as well as the general public. Participants at such meetings were invited to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the park and recreation system, make recommendations concerning improvements, and participate in a mapping exercise to determine where potential park and recreation facilities might be located.

Green Streets: Streets or roads designed to extend a park-like appearance through the City or extraterritorial jurisdiction and serve to create an interconnected network of parks, recreation areas, schools, and other community or regional facilities. Green Streets should be designed to a) have one or more rows of trees in a center island or along both sides of the roadway, either in the right-of-way or in adjacent private property; b) have space for wide sidewalks or off-street recreation trails on one or both sides of the roadway; and c) have no overhead utility lines located within the mature growth area of overstory trees.

Greenway: Natural or man-made corridors that tie parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces to form a cohesive park environment as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Greenways are usually linear, generally following suitable natural resource areas such as streams and floodways or man-made areas such as abandoned railroad beds, utility rights-of-way, and pipeline easements. Greenways are frequently used as part of the community's trail system.

Land Acquisition or Preservation: Preservation of selected current open space areas through use of zoning regulations, agreements with property owners to refrain from development, floodplain development regulations, and other forms of land use restrictions available to the City of Bennington, including outright purchase if necessary.

Large Urban Park: A park large enough to accommodate the desired uses, generally a minimum of 50 acres, with 75 acres or more being optimal as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). It serves a broader purpose than a community park and is used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of a community. The focus of such park is to meet community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.

Mini Park: A small park, usually 2,500 square feet to approximately 2.5 acres in size as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Such parks address limited, isolated, or specialized recreational needs at small sites in heavily developed areas and at sites with unique recreational opportunities. Mini parks serve the immediate neighborhood within a ¼ mile radius.

Mission Statement: A broad statement of the purpose of the plan as set out by its own committee members or their representatives.

Natural Resource Area: Land set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, open space, and visual aesthetics as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Neighborhood Park: A park 5-10 acres in size as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Such a park serves as the primary recreational area of the neighborhood, offering a balance of active and passive recreation activities to neighborhood residents. A neighborhood park serves the neighborhood within a ½ mile radius.



NRPA Guidelines: Guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to describe various park and recreation facilities, the types of recreation activities recommended for each type of park, and the geographic areas served by each type of park. These guidelines are intended to assist communities plan for their current and future recreational needs. The NRPA has also established guidelines to help determine the number and type of specific recreation facilities -- e.g. sports fields and courts and recreation trails -- needed in a community's park system to satisfy its current and future active recreational needs.

Park Master Plan: A plan for a specific park or recreation facility, drawn to scale, that illustrates proposed development of that facility. Such a master plan includes all major physical components of the park or recreation facility, arranged in a functional and aesthetically pleasing manner to take advantage of its unique natural features and relate to surrounding existing or future development.

Park User Survey: A survey taken in conjunction with the various public input meetings to elicit opinions about the quality of the Bennington public parks and recreation facilities and programs.

Passive Recreation: The less intensive range of outdoor activities. Such recreation is often compatible with preserving natural resource functions such as wildlife habitat and floodplain protection. Examples of passive recreation include activities such as walking on internal park trails; picnicking; and nature/scenic view observation.

Programmed/Organized Play: Formal, competitive, individual or team activities, operated and scheduled by a Parks and Recreation Department or other recreation organization, often as part of a league.

School-Park: A site that accommodates a public park (or components of a park) and a public school at the same location to fulfill the space requirements for a neighborhood, community or special use park, or a sports complex as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Designated school-parks should involve formal or informal agreements between the city and the school district to manage ownership, scheduling, maintenance, and other issues.

Special Use Facility:
A park or recreation facility geared toward a single-purpose use as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Special use facilities include historic/cultural/social sites, golf courses, aquatic parks, etc.

Sports Complex: A public recreation facility where heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities are consolidated at a larger site strategically located in the community as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Sports complexes allow economies of scale and higher quality facilities, improved management, scheduling, control of facility use, and reduction of negative impacts to neighborhood and community parks.

Stakeholder or Focus Group: An individual or group who can effect, or is affected by, the achievement of the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Stakeholders include city staff and elected officials, school board, managers, employees, suppliers, vendors, citizens, neighborhood residents, community groups, organized recreational groups, etc.

Steering Committee: The committee comprised of city staff, elected officials, appointed officials, and Bennington residents that guided the process leading to the completion of the Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



Appendix

Community Survey

Community Survey Results

Focus Group Invitees/Participants

Focus Group Strengths and Weaknesses

Focus Group Composite Maps

Action Plan Prioritization Worksheet

Prioritization Summary

Omaha Suburban Park System Master Plan



BENNINGTON PARK AND RECREATION

Community Survey – Focus Group

June 2007

Q1. What is your opinion of each of the following activities in Bennington?

Please rate on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = Excellent and 1 = Poor. Please answer KO if you don't know, NO if the activity is needed but not currently provided, and DN if the activity is not provided and is not needed.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Aerobics/Fitness/Exercise | 37. Nature/Outdoor Awareness..... |
| 2. After School Programs..... | 38. Open Gym Time..... |
| 3. Art Fairs | 39. Overnight Trips..... |
| 4. Baseball - Casual Play/Pick-up Games | 40. Painting Classes |
| 5. Baseball - Programmed/Organized Play | 41. Photography Club |
| 6. Basketball - Casual Play/Pick-up Games | 42. Picnicking..... |
| 7. Basketball - Programmed/Organized Play | 43. Pottery/Ceramics Classes |
| 8. Bicycling - Connection to Metro Trails | 44. Preschool Programs..... |
| 9. Bicycling - Trails in City | 45. Racquet/Squash - Casual Play/Pick-up Games |
| 10. Concerts..... | 46. Racquetball - Programmed/Organized Play |
| 11. Crafts/Hobbies..... | 47. Senior Citizen Programs |
| 12. Cross Country Skiing | 48. Shuffleboard..... |
| 13. Cultural Arts Programs..... | 49. Skateboarding..... |
| 14. Dance Lessons..... | 50. Sledding/Tobogganing |
| 15. Drawing/Sketching Classes..... | 51. Soccer - Casual Play/Pick-up Games..... |
| 16. Family Recreation Programs..... | 52. Soccer - Programmed/Organized Play |
| 17. Football - Casual Play/Pick-up Games..... | 53. Softball - Casual Play/Pick-up Games |
| 18. Football - Programmed/Organized Play..... | 54. Softball - Programmed/Organized Play |
| 19. Frisbee - Programmed/Organized Play | 55. Summer Day Camp |
| 20. Full-Day Trips (Youth) | 56. Summer Sports Camp..... |
| 21. Full-Day Trips (Adults)..... | 57. Swimming - Lessons |
| 22. Full-Day Trips (Senior Citizens)..... | 58. Swimming - Open - Outdoor..... |
| 23. Gardening Club | 59. Swimming - Open - Indoor |
| 24. Golf - Course Play..... | 60. Table Tennis..... |
| 25. Golf - Driving Range | 61. Teen Activities - Open Facility |
| 26. Gymnastics..... | 62. Teen Activities - Programmed/Organized..... |
| 27. Handball - Casual Play | 63. Tennis - Casual Play/Pick-up Games |
| 28. Handball - Organized Play | 64. Tennis - Lessons..... |
| 29. Hiking/Walking/Jogging | 65. Tennis - Programmed/Organized Play |
| 30. Hockey - Casual Play/Pick-up Games..... | 66. Volleyball - Indoors |
| 31. Hockey - Programmed/Organized Play..... | 67. Volleyball - Outdoors..... |
| 32. Holiday Theme Events | 68. Water Exercise |
| 33. Horse Shoes..... | 69. Weightlifting/Weight Training..... |
| 34. Ice Skating..... | 70. Wrestling..... |
| 35. Karate/Self Defense..... | 71. Other (list) |
| 36. Movies..... | |



Q2. What is the best method to notify your family about activities which are available in the community?Please rate on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = *Most Effective* and 1 = *Least Effective*.**Notification Method**

Brochures sent to the homes.....	City newsletter
Brochures available in public outlets	Radio announcements
Information through schools	TV announcements/Triad TV
Newspaper.....	Bulletin boards in businesses, churches, etc.....
Notices in libraries, community centers	Other (list)
Recreation newsletter	

Q3. How would you rate existing parks, recreational facilities and activities in Bennington?Please rate on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = *Excellent* and 1 = *Poor*.

1. Adequacy of facilities available	8. Overall quality of facilities
2. Maintenance of facilities	a. Park and open space
3. Availability (hours)	b. Playgrounds.....
4. Cost (reasonableness)	c. Recreation facilities and fields
5. Accessibility (ease/availability to all).....	d. Recreation programs.....
6. Security.....	e. Cultural programs.....
7. Promotion (making residents aware)	9. Special activities

Q4. Which of the following financing mechanisms would your family be willing to support in order to provide additional facilities and activities, if necessary?Please rate on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = *Support* and 1 = *Not Support*.**Financing Mechanism**

Tax increase	User fees, for specific activities
Bond issue	Grants
Special fund raising campaigns.....	Other (list)

Q5. If resources are not available in the community to meet the desires and needs of all residents, how would you rank the following as a priority for your family? Please rank the general areas of need, with number 5 the highest and number 1 the lowest.Please rate on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = *Highest* and 1 = *Lowest*.**Area of Need**

Additional open space and park land	Additional recreational programs.....
Additional recreational facilities	Maintenance of existing facilities/programs
(fields, special use facilities)	Other (list)

Q6. We would like a little information about your household to assist us in determining where recreational needs in Bennington are not being met. Please help us by responding to the following questions.

A. Number of persons currently living in your home

B. Please list ages of all individuals identified in Q6.A as of their last birthday.

Oldest	4th Oldest
2nd Oldest	5th Oldest
3rd Oldest	

C. Is your home located within the city limits or outside the city limits?

within city limits outside city limits

D. How long have you lived in Bennington?

E. What was your gross household income in 2006? (*OPTIONAL*)

Less than \$15,000	\$35,000 to \$49,999
\$15,000 to \$24,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999
\$25,000 to \$34,999	More than \$75,000

Q7. Please list other comments or concerns you might have regarding Bennington Parks and Recreation activities and programs. (Attach additional sheet if necessary.)

.....

.....

.....



Community Survey Results

Need

- Aerobics/fitness/exercise
- Bicycling-connection to metro trails
- Crafts/hobbies
- Cultural Arts Programs
- Family Recreation Programs
- Sledding/tobogganing
- Swimming lessons
- Swimming-outdoor
- Swimming-indoor
- Teen Activities – Open facility
- Teen Activities – Programmed/Organized
- Tennis-lessons
- Tennis-organized play
- Water exercise
- Weightlifting/Weight training

Don't need

- Cross Country Skiing
- Golf-course play
- Golf-driving range
- Gymnastics
- Handball-casual play
- Handball-organized play
- Hockey-casual/pick-up games
- Hockey-organized play
- Ice Skating
- Karate/Self-Defense
- Movies
- Painting classes
- Photography club
- Shuffleboard
- Skateboarding
- Table Tennis

Not Good

- Basketball-casual play/pick-up games
- Football-casual play/pick-up games
- Open gym time
- Soccer-casual play/pick-up games
- Softball-casual play/pick-up games
- Volleyball-Indoors

Good

- After School Programs
- Baseball-casual play/pick-up games
- Basketball-programmed play
- Bicycling-trails in the city
- Dance lessons
- Football-programmed play
- Hiking/Walking/Jogging
- Horse Shoes
- Picnicking
- Preschool Programs
- Senior Citizen Programs
- Soccer-organized play
- Softball-organized play
- Summer sports camp
- Tennis-casual play
- Volleyball-outdoors

Very Good

- Baseball-Programmed Play
- Wrestling



Best methods for notifying the community about upcoming events

1. Brochures sent to homes,	4.38
2. Information through the schools,	4.22
3. City Sign,	3.50
4. City Newsletter,	3.19
5. Newspaper,	2.83

Ratings of the Parks, Recreational Facilities and Activities

1. Cost to Use,	4.44
2. Availability	3.83
3. Maintenance	3.67
4. Parks and Open Space, Playgrounds, Accessibility, and Security	3.61
5. Overall quality of facilities,	3.50
6. Recreation facilities, fields	3.28
7. Adequacy of facilities available,	3.18
8. Recreation Programs	3.00
9. Promotion of Parks and Programs,	2.28
10. Other or Special activities,	2.00
11. Cultural programs,	1.44

Ratings of Financial Mechanisms the community would support

1. Impact Fees and/or dedication of land by new developments,	4.67
2. Grants,	4.50
3. Bond issues,	3.78
4. Special fundraising	3.61
5. Tax increase, and User fees	3.28

Monetary Priorities

1. Additional recreation facilities,	4.22
2. Maintenance of existing facilities and programs,	3.44
3. Additional recreation programs,	3.11
4. Additional open space and park land,	2.78



Focus Group Invitees/Participants

Individuals and Community Interest Groups June 25th 2007 at 5:30pm

Tim Clark
Michael Fuchser
Scott Heese
Denver Klaus
Stacey Havekost
Debby Kois
Lisa Flaxbeard
Sara Schlosser
Dori Settles
Nancy Neumeyer
Denise Klaus
Shannon Thoendel

Stan Turner
Kathy Higgins
Dr. Orville Walz
Marilyn Walz
Dr. Mark Toelle
Rachel Reiman
Regina Meradith
Elizabeth Pooley
JoAnn Warrick
Diane Warrick
Mark Boyer

Recreation and Athletic Groups June 25th 2007 at 7:00pm

Tracy Heddens
Matt Wullenwaber
Curt Bohn
Mike Tomjack
Bernard in den Bosch
Larry Klaus
Kevin Kuker
Kurt Sowers

Joe Schumm
Rex Moats
Brett Hiscock
Stan Meradith
James Bartels
Nicky Dillon
Sue Wiley
Robert Zaruba

Government Officials June 26th 2007 at 6:00pm

Greg Bohn
Gerry Gowen
Chad Weaver
Dr. Terry Haack
Angie Smith
LeAnn Siekman
Darren Siekman

Merle Ashmore
Lisa Bliss
David Bressman
Terry Loptin
Ryan Rischling
Gary Sather
Sean Juitt



Bennington Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Focus Group Meetings

Strengths:

- Tim Ohrt—trees, green, patio/pavilion, help from Ridgewood development (future), playground equipment, t-ball fields?
- Centennial—good horseshoes, shade, new equipment, pavilion,
- Papio Creek—amenities
- Spread out park locations—lots of little ones
- Growth vs. infrastructure
- New school expansion→ability to partner for community facilities
- Supportive Community of future planning
- Trails connectivity

Weaknesses:

- Tim Ohrt—trees over horseshoes, bridge, accessibility, parking for ball field, signage, permanent restrooms
- Centennial—fire parking,
- Papio parking
- No large, all-encompassing park
- Limited basketball, tennis (multi-use)
- BAL Fields—single access point, parking, restrooms,
- No consideration for non-residents from their perspective
- North of Hickey field (old high school field)—ball field not utilized in summer
- Lighting
- Lack of pools and community centers (gym/basketball space)
- More soccer fields needed (competition w/ other sports)—lighting needed as well, complex?
- Difficulty acquiring land
- Youth football fields
- Dog park?
- Splash park not worth the money—water park instead
- Permanent bathrooms (unlocked, open), lighting, parking, emergency vehicle accessibility!!!!
- Indoor facilities—library/community room, community tv/kitchen rooms, gyms, pool, building should fit community character, basketball, art programs, passive recreation,
- Ball fields don't allow for tournaments, etc.





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BENNINGTON PARK AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

ACTION PLAN PRIORITIZATION

Rank the following items on a scale of 5 to 1. A high priority is one with an immediate need or desire and should be given a 5. A low priority is one with no immediate need or desire and should be given a 1. Please circle the appropriate ranking for each item.

	<i>High Priority</i>	<i>Medium Priority</i>	<i>Low Priority</i>	
Improvements to Existing Mini-Parks				
Centennial Park.....	5	4	3	2 1
Acquisition of Proposed Mini-Parks				
M-1	5	4	3	2 1
M-2	5	4	3	2 1
Development/Improvements of Proposed Mini-Parks				
M-1	5	4	3	2 1
M-2	5	4	3	2 1
Improvements to Existing Neighborhood Parks				
Tim Ohrt Park	5	4	3	2 1
NRD Park.....	5	4	3	2 1
Bennington Elementary School-Park (and develop joint use agreement).....	5	4	3	2 1
Acquisition of Proposed Neighborhood Parks				
N-1	5	4	3	2 1
N-2	5	4	3	2 1
N-3	5	4	3	2 1
N-4 (and possible Elementary School site).....	5	4	3	2 1
N-5	5	4	3	2 1
N-6	5	4	3	2 1
N-7 (and possible community center and Elementary School site).....	5	4	3	2 1
Development/Improvements of Proposed Neighborhood Parks				
Heritage Park	5	4	3	2 1
N-1	5	4	3	2 1
N-2	5	4	3	2 1
N-3	5	4	3	2 1
N-4 (and possible Elementary School site).....	5	4	3	2 1
N-5	5	4	3	2 1
N-6	5	4	3	2 1
N-7 (and possible community center and Elementary School site).....	5	4	3	2 1



Improvements to Existing Community Parks

Johns-Bohn Park/Soccer Complex and BAL Sports Complex	5	4	3	2	1
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Acquisition of Proposed Community Parks

C-1	5	4	3	2	1
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Development of Proposed Community Parks

C-1	5	4	3	2	1
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Improvements to Existing Special Use Facilities/Complexes

Newport Landing Fishing Area	5	4	3	2	1
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Bennington Athletic League Sports Complex	5	4	3	2	1
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Acquisition of Proposed Special Use Facilities/Complexes

Bennington Community Center	5	4	3	2	1
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Bennington Soccer Complex (South)	5	4	3	2	1
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Development of Proposed Special Use Facilities/Complexes

Bennington Community Center	5	4	3	2	1
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Bennington Soccer Complex (South)	5	4	3	2	1
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Acquisition of Proposed Greenways

West Bennington Bypass Greenway	5	4	3	2	1
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Vermont Street Greenway	5	4	3	2	1
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Papio Creek Greenway	5	4	3	2	1
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Development of Proposed Greenways

West Bennington Bypass Greenway	5	4	3	2	1
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Vermont Street Greenway	5	4	3	2	1
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Papio Creek Greenway	5	4	3	2	1
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Acquisition of Proposed Trails

West Bennington Bypass Greenway Trail	5	4	3	2	1
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Vermont Greenway Trail	5	4	3	2	1
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Rainwood Trail	5	4	3	2	1
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BAL Trail	5	4	3	2	1
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Papio Creek Trail East (Vermont Greenway to jurisdictional line)	5	4	3	2	1
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Papio Creek Trail West (168 th St. to 180 th St.)	5	4	3	2	1
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Haden Trail (156 th St. to Bennington Road)	5	4	3	2	1
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Community Center Trail (BAL to 168 th St.)	5	4	3	2	1
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East Bennington Trail (Papio Creek to Washington County line)	5	4	3	2	1
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180 th Street Trail South	5	4	3	2	1
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180 th Street Trail North	5	4	3	2	1
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South Bennington Trail (West Bennington Bypass to 180 th St.)	5	4	3	2	1
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North Bennington Trail (Pawnee Rd. to Papio Creek Trail)	5	4	3	2	1
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Pawnee Trail (138 th St. to Highway 36)	5	4	3	2	1
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Northeast Trail (Ridgewood to East Bennington Trail)	5	4	3	2	1
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Development of Proposed Trails

156 th Street Trail	5	4	3	2	1
Heritage West Trail.....	5	4	3	2	1
Heritage East Trail.....	5	4	3	2	1
Ridgewood Trail East	5	4	3	2	1
Ridgewood Trail West	5	4	3	2	1
North Second Street Trail (Safe Route to Schools).....	5	4	3	2	1
Newport Hill Trail	5	4	3	2	1
Rainwood Trail	5	4	3	2	1
BAL Trail.....	5	4	3	2	1
Papio Creek Trail East (Vermont Greenway to jurisdictional line).....	5	4	3	2	1
Papio Creek Trail West (168 th St. to 180 th St.).....	5	4	3	2	1
Haden Trail (156 th St. to Bennington Road).....	5	4	3	2	1
Community Center Trail (BAL to 168 th St.).....	5	4	3	2	1
East Bennington Trail (Papio Creek to Washington County line).....	5	4	3	2	1
180 th Street Trail South	5	4	3	2	1
180 th Street Trail North	5	4	3	2	1
South Bennington Trail (West Bennington Bypass to 180 th St.).....	5	4	3	2	1
North Bennington Trail (Pawnee Rd. to Papio Creek Trail).....	5	4	3	2	1
Pawnee Trail (138 th St. to Highway 36).....	5	4	3	2	1
Northeast Trail (Ridgewood to East Bennington Trail).....	5	4	3	2	1

Acquisition Green Streets

West Bennington Bypass (156 th St. to Bennington Rd.).....	5	4	3	2	1
Bennington Blvd. (From 156 th St. and 149 th St. to Jurisdictional line).....	5	4	3	2	1
Rainwood Road (From 151 st St. and 149 th St. to Jurisdictional line).....	5	4	3	2	1

Development of Primary Green Streets

Bennington Blvd. (156 th St. to 149 th St.).....	5	4	3	2	1
Rainwood Road (151 st St. to 149 th St.).....	5	4	3	2	1

Development of Secondary Green Streets

156 th Street (Bennington's Southern jurisdiction to 4 th St.).....	5	4	3	2	1
West Bennington Bypass (156 th St. to Bennington Rd.).....	5	4	3	2	1

Development of Neighborhood Green Streets

Rosewater Parkway (Heritage Subdivision).....	5	4	3	2	1
Ashwood Drive (Ridgewood Subdivision).....	5	4	3	2	1



Prioritization Summary

	Priority	5	High	1	Low	Average
Improvements to Existing Mini Parks						
Centennial Park	2	2	2	1	3	2.00
Acquisition of Proposed Mini Parks						
M-1	4	5	4	3	1	3.40
M-2	4	5	4	5	5	4.60
Development/Improvements of Proposed Mini-Parks						
M-1	2	2	2	2	1	1.80
M-2	1	2	3	4	5	3.00
Improvements to Existing Neighborhood Parks						
Tim Ohrt	3	5	4	5	3	4.00
NRD	3	1	3	2	3	2.40
Bennington Elementary	3	5	3	3	5	3.80
Acquisition of Proposed Neighborhood Parks						
N-1	2	3	1	1	1	1.60
N-2	2	2	1	1	1	1.40
N-3	2	2	1	1	2	1.60
N-4 (and future elementary)	2	4	2	3	1	2.40
N-5	3	2	3	3	2	2.60
N-6	4	2	3	1	2	2.40
N-7 (and possible Comm Center and/or Elementary)	5	5	4	4	5	4.60
Development/Improvements of Proposed Neighborhood Parks						
Heritage Park	1	3	3	3	2	2.40
N-1	1		1	1	1	1.00
N-2	1		1	1	1	1.00
N-3	1		1	1	2	1.25
N-4 (and future elementary)	1		2	2	1	1.50
N-5	1		3	1	2	1.75
N-6	2		3	1	2	2.00
N-7 (and possible Comm Center and/or Elementary)	3	4	4	4	5	4.00
Improvements to Existing Community Parks						
Johns-Bohn/Soccer Complex and BAL Sports Complex	4	5	5	5	4	4.60
Acquisition of Proposed Community Parks						
C-1	3	3	1	1	1	1.80
Development of Proposed Community Parks						
C-1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Improvements to existing Special Use Facilities/Complexes						
Newport Landing Fishing Area	3		3	1	1	2.00
Bennington Athletic League Sports Complex	4	5	5	5	4	4.60
Acquisition of Proposes Special Use Facilities/Complexes						
Bennington Community Center	4	5	5	4	5	4.60
Bennington Soccer Complex (South)	3	5	3	2	4	3.40
Development of Proposed Special Use Facilities/Complexes						
Bennington Community Center	1	5	4	4	5	3.80
Bennington Soccer Complex (South)	1	3	2	2	4	2.40
Acquisition of Proposed Greenways						
West Bennington Bypass Greenway	3	5	5	2	4	3.80
Vermont Street Greenway	4	4	3	4	3	3.60
Papio Creek Greenway	3	3	3	4	3	3.20



Development of Proposed Greenways

West Bennington Bypass Greenway	1	3	4	1	4	2.60
Vermont Street Greenway	1	1	2	3	3	2.00
Papio Creek Greenway	1	1	2	3	3	2.00

Acquisition of Proposed Trails

West Bennington Bypass Greenway Trail	4	5	3	1	4	3.40
Vermont Street Greenway Trail	4	4	2	3	3	3.20
Rainwood Trail	4	3	1	1	3	2.40
BAL Trail	5	5	5	5	5	5.00
Papio Creek Trail East (Vermont greenway to ten)	4		3	1	2	2.50
Papio Creek Trail West (168th to 180th)	4	3	1	1	3	2.40
Haden Trail (156th to Bennington Rd)	4	4	3	3	4	3.60
Community Center Trail (BAL to 168th)	4	4	3	3	4	3.60
East Bennington Trail (Papio Creek to Washington Co line)	1	3	1	1	2	1.60
180th St Trail South	1	2	1	1	2	1.40
180th St Trail North	1	1	1	1	2	1.20
South Bennington Trail (West Bennington Bypass to 180th)	1	2	1	1	4	1.80
North Bennington Trail (Pawnee Rd to Papio Creek Trail)	1	2	1	1	1	1.20
Pawnee Trail (138th to Hwy 36)	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Northeast Trail (Ridgewood to East Bennington Trail)	2		1	1	1	1.25

Development of Proposed Trails

156th Street Trail	5		4	5	3	4.25
Heritage West Trail	2	4	3	5	2	3.20
Heritage East Trail	2	2	2	2	2	2.00
Ridgewood Trail East	1	3	3	5	2	2.80
Ridgewood Trail West	3	3	3	4	2	3.00
North Second Street Trail (safe route to school)	5	5	3	2	5	4.00
Newport Hill Trail	2	3	1	4	1	2.20
Rainwood Trail	1	2	1	1	3	1.60
BAL Trail	5	5	5	5	5	5.00
Papio Creek Trail East (Vermont greenway to ten)	1	3	2		2	2.00
Papio Creek Trail West (168th to 180th)	1	2	1	1	3	1.60
Haden Trail (156th to Bennington Rd)	3	4	3	2	4	3.20
Community Center Trail (BAL to 168th)	3	3	3	2	4	3.00
East Bennington Trail (Papio Creek to Washington Co line)	1	2	1	1	2	1.40
180th St Trail South	1	2	1	1	2	1.40
180th St Trail North	1	2	1	1	2	1.40
South Bennington Trail (West Bennington Bypass to 180th)	1	2	1	1	4	1.80
North Bennington Trail (Pawnee Rd to Papio Creek Trail)	1	2	1	1	1	1.20
Pawnee Trail (138th to Hwy 36)	1	2	1	1	1	1.20
Northeast Trail (Ridgewood to East Bennington Trail)	1	2	1	1	1	1.20

Acquisition of Green Streets

West Bennington Bypass (156th to Bennington Rd)	4	5	4	4	5	4.40
Bennington Blvd (156th and 149th to ETJ)	4	5	1	2	4	3.20
Rainwood Road (151st and 149th to ETJ)	4	5	2	2	3	3.20

Development of Primary Green Streets

Bennington Blvd (156th and 149th to ETJ)	1	5	1	4	4	3.00
Rainwood Road (151st and 149th to ETJ)	1	5	2	2	3	2.60

Development of Secondary Green Streets

156th Street (Southern ETJ line to 4th St)	1	2	3	5	5	3.20
West Bennington Bypass (156th to Bennington Rd)	1	2	3	4	5	3.00

Development of Neighborhood Green Streets

Rosewater Parkway (Heritage Subdivision)	1	2	2	4	3	2.40
Ashwood Drive (Ridgewood Subdivision)	1	2	2	4	4	2.60





