



Updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Focus Group Summary

February 4 - March 28, 2010

The Planning Team:

City of Elgin Parks & Recreation Department

JJR, LLC

PROS Consulting

Executive Summary

focus groups

Strengths of Elgin's Parks and Recreation System

- State of the art facilities, diversity in recreational facilities
- Availability of natural assets, recreational facilities and great parks
- Availability of spaces and facilities, such as, Trout Park, Hawthorne Park, Lords Park, the sports complex, center, pools, band shells, skate parks etc.
- Elgin's central location was considered as good for bringing tournaments to the City (economic development)
- Park District is engaged and there is a desire to bring tournaments to Elgin that is good for businesses
- Most felt that the facilities are well maintained and caters to all age groups

Weaknesses of Elgin's Parks and Recreation System

- Pedestrian access to parks is not sufficient (Wing Park and Lord's Park doesn't have much Bike access/route)
- Lack of adequate playgrounds in the Northeast
- Older neighborhoods do not have ample park space
- Misconception of unsafe parks, division of east and west
- Not enough facilities to hold National tournaments
- Not enough facilities for soccer, tennis, softball
- Parking in downtown is an issue.
- Affordability of services at the Center is a concern. Not everyone can afford those.
- Not enough activities during winters.



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15 Focus Group Meetings

- Churches
- Education
- Youth Sports Groups
- ECN / Neighborhoods
- Business Community
- City Staff
- Sustainability Group
- Latino Community
- Natural Resources
- Elected Officials
- Miscellaneous
- Not-for-Profit Organizations
- Teen Representatives
- City Council



Suggestions for adding or renovating parks/recreational facilities

- Emphasize periodic maintenance in neighborhood parks
- Desire renovation of Grolich Park diamond, improvements to Douglas park, Kirk & Kramer Park (bridge/pedestrian paths), and St. Francis Park shelter.
- Desire indoor tennis in south west
- Desire more neighborhood park where kids can play and soccer fields in the east
- Improvements to east side recreation facility
- Desire a teen center - kids would like their own place instead of coming to the center
- Take advantage of the river, create look-outs/river walks/boat launches
- Lagoons in Lords Park need to be fixed to mitigate run-off
- Desire an additional entry to Wing park (along 31), access to Bluff Spring Fen.
- Desire improvements to existing pedestrian/bike access & trail heads.
- Desire additions of park space on Southeast side, Southwest (just west of the river), SWAN (neighborhood organization) area, near west (around Mark Avenue), lower income neighborhoods and older neighborhoods, near east side, and others areas that currently lack adequate park space.
- Desire more recreation facilities to the far west area, west of Randall.
- Elgin competes with Peoria, Rockford & Bloomington. Great opportunity at old Mental Health Center, great acreage with potential to expand. It's close to route 31, can connect to downtown and Metra and potentially could result in economic regeneration.
- Park along Dundee & Kimball needs amenities.
- Desire more facilities to the east – soccer, sand volleyball, basketball
- Desire more boys and girls club to the west. There is one to the east.
- Desire more parks in neighborhoods around route 31 and 20 (south central district). This neighborhood is landlocked.
- Areas around Mark Avenue/Lyle Street (north central district). Concern with railroad as a physical barrier.
- Desire more parks around the Poplar Creek area (south east district).

General

- Desire more collaboration between different departments
- Integrate maintenance/operational considerations into design
- Consider plant material when planning/designing, maintenance of small plant beds is an issue, especially during winters with ploughing
- Affordability of services was a concern
- Desire improvement in communication - website, flyers (english and spanish)
- Capitalize on partnerships with churches/schools/neighborhood organizations.
- Desire additional fields to attract more tournaments.
- Desire programs to keep kids busy, fight gangs and keep the kids busy! Desire gang intervention program (expand them), computer programs for at-risk youth and skills training.
- Desire senior citizen programs (in schools with seniors as aids/mentors).
- Meet the needs of the low income families (free programs).
- Additional parks and recreation facilities addressed health issue, enhance quality of life and will result in increased tourism (revenue generation).
- Desire having Elgin's reputation as a sports destination

