

2003 Comprehensive Plan

Parks and Recreation

Updated in April 2006 through the
Parks and Recreation Master Plan



Overview

The Nixa Department of Parks and Recreation was established in 1989 and employs eleven full time positions. These positions are as follows: Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Recreation Manager, two Recreation Specialists, one Aquatic Manager/Recreation Specialist, One Building Maintenance and one Grounds Maintenance, two Front Counter Specialists and one Secretary, and one Before and After School Coordinator. Throughout the year approximately seventy-five full and part-time seasonal employees assist in program implementation, lifeguarding, refereeing, etc. The Department's offices are located at McCauley Park inside the new Community Center at 701 N. Taylor Way. The Department also has two buses one of which was donated by McDonald's of Nixa.

Nixa's Community Center and Aquatic Center opened in 2002 on thirty-nine acres of park land located in northeast Nixa. There is also the ten-acre City Park located near Park Street and Highway 160.

Recreational amenities at McCauley Park include:

- Walking trail (which is under construction)
- Handicap accessible playground
- Restrooms
- Pavilion
- Outdoor aquatic center
- Open space

Recreational amenities at the Community Center include:

- One full size basketball court
- Café area
- Class rooms
- Meeting rooms
- Pre-school room
- Vending area
- 12,000 square foot aquatic facility
- Indoor walking track
- St. John's Fitness Center
- Locker rooms
- Family changing area
- Nixa Parks and Recreation Department offices

Recreation facilities at the ten-acre City Park include:

- Open space
- Tennis courts (2)
- Baseball fields (3)
- Playground areas (2)
- Open picnic area
- Picnic pavilion and gazebo
- Concession stand
- Restrooms (handicap accessible)
- Sand volleyball court
- Xeriscape stroll garden

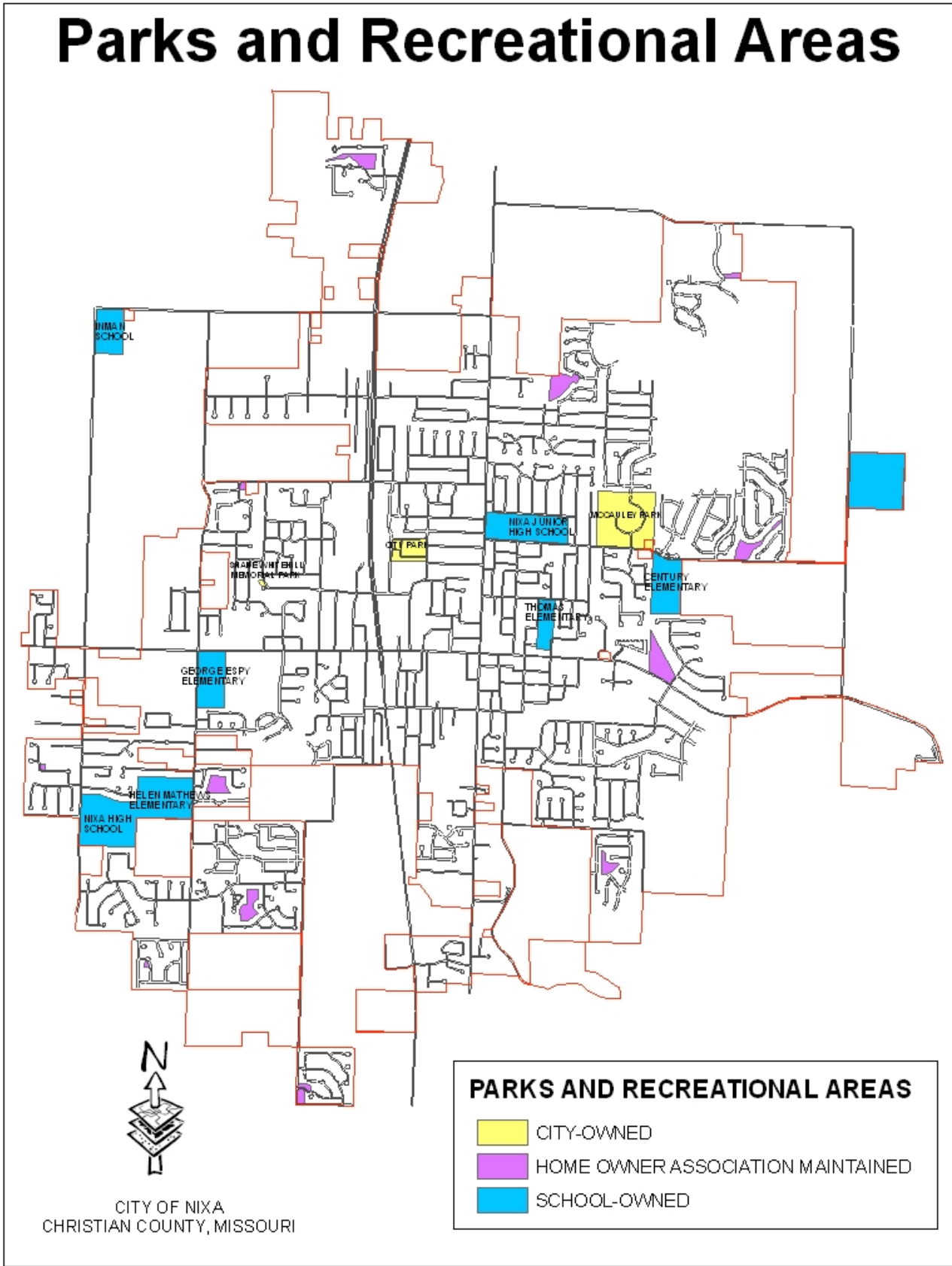
State and federal grants have helped the City of Nixa improve the existing ten-acre City Park so that all equipment is in good quality condition. The City Park is in constant use during the spring, summer and fall and McCauley Park drew an enormous crowd for its first year. The City Park does have a significant parking problem and ball games have to be scheduled late into the night because there are not enough fields available. The Department is currently borrowing five acres near the City Park for its expanding soccer program and the plan is to locate permanent fields at McCauley Park during 2003.

There are slightly over 18 acres of open space for recreational use through the residential subdivision platting process. One of these open space areas is a ¼ acre in the Wasson Park subdivision west of Highway 160, which has been dedicated to the City. In addition, seven acres, including walking trail, is located inside the Forest Park subdivision, which is owned and maintained by the respective neighborhood associations.

Standards established by the National Park and Recreation Association recommend that community parks provide a minimum of 2.5 acres per 1,000 people, with a minimum size of 20 acres (NPRA, 1988). Application of these acreage standards indicates that the present City Park acreage is inadequate to meet the recreational needs of Nixa's current population.

While park acreage standards certainly are valid criteria, perhaps a more appropriate measure of the adequacy of park and recreation facilities in a smaller city such as Nixa is the range or type of facilities and the accessibility of park land. With the development of McCauley Park, the Community Center and the Aquatic Center, Nixa has moved closer to meeting the recreational needs of the community; however, there is still need for additional open park space. Future planning should incorporate a variety of passive recreation activities, such as walking, and biking trails, all of which would better meet the interests of Nixa's various population groups.

Parks and Recreational Areas



Nixa will need additional park land in appropriate locations to meet the recreational interests of its growing population. The city should consider one large tract of land and perhaps several smaller lots in each quadrant of the city. With the aide of developers including open space in new developments, such as the Forest Park and The Park subdivisions, neighborhood parks could be established.

The city is currently looking at alternative ways to acquire park land. Faced with the all-too-real fact that land inside the city is quickly being developed, it is imperative that the City initiate discussions to acquire parkland within the corporate limits before it is developed.

Strategic Issues

The following strategic issues were developed by the Parks and Recreation Focus Group and were prioritized by the Board of Aldermen and the Planning and Zoning Commission, where a score of “1” was the highest priority and “8” was the lowest priority:

Goals and Objectives

Issue	Score
1 Funding sources	20
2 Staffing and volunteers	25
3 Maintenance of facilities	27
4 Land acquisition and preservation/set-aside & expansion	37
5 Evaluation of programs and trends	45
6 Communication and marketing	46
7 Develop and maintain partnerships with other organizations	58
8 Serving pedestrians and bicyclists	66

Goal #6: The City's parks and recreational facilities will be capable of providing diverse recreational and cultural opportunities for the community in harmony with preserving and improving the natural setting, resources and habitat.

Objective #6.A (Issue 1)

Provide a stable funding source for parks and recreation properties, facilities and programs.

Activity #6.A.i

Research the possibilities of various types of funding sources that are available to the City that could be specifically allocated to parks and recreation.

Activity #6.A.ii

Forecast and examine the financial needs of parks and recreational opportunities in both the long-term and short-term to determine what type(s) of funding sources would be appropriate.

Activity #6.A.iii

Work with the appropriate City staff and elected officials to obtain funding through the City's capital planning and annual budget processes.

Activity #6.A.iv

Continue to assess the actual costs of providing programs and assure that appropriate cost-recovery goals are being met for each program.

Objective #6.B (Issues 2, 3)

Maintain high-quality, professional staff and volunteers to plan, develop, and implement recreational programs and to maintain the City's parks and recreational facilities.

Activity #6.B.i

Develop and implement an employee salary and benefits survey as part of the City's overall human resources management processes to determine if the City is keeping pace with local and comparable communities.

Activity #6.B.ii

Continue professional development activities for employees as required or needed to maintain high levels of employee efficiency and productivity.

Activity #6.B.iii

Determine what type(s) of trainings are needed for volunteers and other non-paid program assistants and assure that all required trainings are available.

Objective #6.C (Issue 3)

Maintain all City parks and recreational facilities at a level that increases the benefit and useful life of the parks and recreational facilities within the City.

Activity #6.C.i

During the Capital Improvements Plan process and annual budget cycle, allocate funding for maintenance of parks and recreational facilities so that the value or useful life is maintained.

Objective #6.D (Issue 4)

Plan for future needs by acquiring and/or setting aside land for new parks and recreational facilities.

Activity #6.D.i

Work with developers to assure that land can be set aside for open space, neighborhood parks or other recreational uses.

Activity #6.D.ii

When possible and economically feasible, acquire land to be used for parks or recreational facilities.

Objective #6.E (Issue 5)

Continue to monitor and evaluate trends in recreational opportunities and adjust program offerings and recreational opportunities accordingly.

Activity #6.E.i

Research professional journals, publications, professional association materials and other data sources to remain current on trends in parks and recreation.

Activity #6.E.ii

Develop and implement evaluations for programs offered through the Department to determine the level of satisfaction with the program and other program factors.

Objective #6.F (Issue 6)

Increase levels of communication and marketing using various methods to reach the widest possible audience of potential participants and users.

Activity #6.F.i

Continue to provide information to families through the school district's distribution methods, such as flyers for children to take home, monthly school newsletters, etc.

Activity #6.F.ii

Increase the number of signs for parks and recreational facilities, including directional signs and informational signs.

Activity #6.F.iii

Work with local media outlets, as appropriate, to provide information about facilities, events and programs available through the Department.

Activity #6.F.iv

Continue to monitor and gather information concerning the regional users of Nixa parks and recreational facilities so that appropriate marketing methods can be directed most effectively.

Objective #6.G (Issue 7)

Continue to develop and maintain partnerships with other public, private and non-profit associations in order to provide the highest quality programs at the least possible cost.

Activity #6.G.i

Actively search for new partner organizations for the provision of programs and services, where duplication of service is avoided, if possible.

Activity #6.G.ii

Maintain current partnerships with other organizations so that the level of program quality is not decreased and program costs are not increased, where possible.

Objective #6.H (Issue 8)

Provide passive recreational opportunities geared toward pedestrians and bicyclists.

Activity #6.H.i

Complete walking trails and bicycle paths currently in development or construction.

Activity #6.H.ii

Work with Ozarks Greenways and other organizations to plan and begin development of a regional trail system.

Activity #6.H.iii

Continue to work with the school district and other organizations in the City to develop passive recreation opportunities in each quadrant of the City.

