

PARKLAND AND TRAILS

“The **vision** for park land and trails is to create exceptional experiences for all age segments in every park and on every trail in the City.”

Goal: “Enhance existing parks and trails to maximize enjoyment for fun, safe and memorable experiences for all users.”

Strategy		Tactics	Group Responsible	Start Date	Performance Measure	Notes
1.1	Continue to update neighborhood and community parks when needed with updated design standards and new park amenities that create a strong sense of place in the City for all residents to enjoy.	Incorporate a formalized trails and pavement rating program. Develop lifecycle amenity 10-year capital improvement plan.	Projects - CIP	10/25/2023	All trails incorporated into a lifecycle maintenance plan by end of	New Project Manager is inventorying and reviewing current condition of multi-use paths to create maintenance plan.
		Update parking lots that need to be repaved pavement rating program and develop lifecycle amenity 10-year capital improvement plan.	Projects - CIP	10/25/2023	All parking areas have a 10-year overlay when needed.	Academy Park parking lot under design development. Review includes the ability to expand the lot by 85 spaces.
		Develop consistency across the system in signage for all types of parks in the system.	Admin-Parks	Jan-23	Replace 10% of the signs each year in the system to keep them updated.	Data collection is complete. A grant will be submitted through ODOT's Special Selection program to expand budget for program.
		Implement new design standards for neighborhood parks and community parks to enhance their experiences with at least 5 experiences in a neighborhood park and 10 experiences in a community park.	Admin-CIP	10/25/2023	Design standards will be incorporated into updating neighborhood parks when needed or developed new.	Technical Assistance grant was submitted through MORPC to coordinate and improve the interdepartmental functions of GIS. This work will help quantify a baseline to establish and improve standards of assets.
1.2	Finish development of Big Walnut Creek Trail throughout the City.	Establish a goal of one mile a year to finish the trail over the next five years.	Projects - CIP - BTAC	11/1/2023	Add at least 5 miles of trail in 10 years. Improve at least 12 miles of trail every 5 years.	Link to Literacy Trail - .7 miles (est.2025) BWT 8 - 1 mile (est. 2026) Coordination began with Franklin County Engineers Office for feasibility studies on Clark State and East Johnstown MUP.
		Link existing parks to the Big Walnut trail system where possible to create a connected system.	Projects - CIP - BTAC/Admin	12/1/2023	Finish linking existing system over the next 20 years	Active Transportation Plan will identify priority gaps in the system. Final draft of the ATP was submitted for City review.
		Manage foliage along the Big Walnut trails that encourage presence of safety along trail for all users.	Parks	On-Going	Completed on a yearly basis	Land Management Plan Standard - Trails are maintained monthly. Formal Fall/Spring review included in trail inspection - ZG
1.3	Maximize the use of existing sports complexes in the City through effective design and drainage.	Update existing concession and restroom area to be more accommodating to all users of the sports complex.	Parks/Projects - CIP	Jun-24	Completed over the next five years	Shelter improvements at Academy Park are incorporated into the design of trailhead and parking lot improvements . Installation of proper storm features are included within the parking lot design at Academy Park

1.4	Remove unused or outdated park amenities and provide new amenities that meet the park user needs for people of all ages to experience Gahanna's Parks.	Develop a value score for each park in the city based on who benefits from the park with how many experiences they get in the park.	Admin/Parks	1/1/2024	Outdated amenities are removed within one year of being obsolete	Formalize rating system - Utilize GIS and Placier Data as function - 3.5.24 planning to begin updating assets after GIS is updated
		Incorporate at least 50% of available Capital Improvement money for lifecycle replacement of amenities in the existing system.	Admin	10/25/2023	Achieved in the first five years of the Master Plan	CIP - Lifecycle replacement - Review quarterly - SBF 2024 Capital Request = 57%
1.7	Adopt a land management plan for park natural areas in the system to manage them properly.	Adopt a natural resource management plan for managing invasive plant species in the parks.	Parks	Adopted by 2024	Natural resource management plan put into place within five years of the plan approval.	Revisit edits and format of the Land Management Plan - Final draft under City review.
		Continuously manage invasive plants in parks and incorporate a Volunteer Corp to help remove these species in parks.	Parks	In progress	Training for volunteers completed in the first year of the master plan.	Ambassador Program available at request for invasive removals.
		Create and implement a volunteer parks and trails ambassador program	Admin/Parks/Rec	In progress/ Julie	Create and implement an ambassador programs for all Community Parks by 2028	Use framework of Columbus Academy students to build program. - JP & CH
		Install interpretive signage in natural areas throughout the parks	Admin/Parks	2024	Interpretive signaled is updated on an annual basis	Gahanna Woods improvements - 2024 Improve damaged signs immediately. New signs are fourth phase of signage improvements - ZG & JP, JP working on plan for immediate; long term will be included in phased approach.
		Complete a Forestry master plan and expand the street tree program	Admin/Parks	2025	Completed and adopted by 2026	Draft scope for 2025 fiscal year implementation. Chapter 9 Code language will be amended with the expertise and guidance of ZoneCo.
		Improve wayfinding within the parks and trails network	Admin	ATP - adopted in 2024	Review existing conditions annually. Establish an action plan and budget for service gaps by end of 2024.	Active Transportation Plan will make recommendations to action - Utilize MORPC trail signage study as well as trail town framework for context. - RFQ drafted for design for improved park kiosks and trail signage.
1.10	Establish a snow removal priority program for park roads, parking lots and trails across the system.	Mark and sign areas in the parks in order of priority for snow removal so the community understands the limitations the department has in snow removal.	Parks/M&C	2024	During snow removal signs in order of priority are place at park entrances to the public understands the city priorities.	Work collectively with the Service department to make improvements to current process. ZG- in process of updating snow plan. GPRD does not plan to sign parking lots for snow.

FACILITIES

“The **vision** for recreation facilities is to maximize the outdoor and indoor use of these facilities to meet the needs of residents in the Gahanna City.”

Goal: “Recreation facilities will be updated, replaced, or built new to serve year-round use of the park system for the next 50 years.

Strategy		Tactics	Group	Start Date	Performance Measure	Notes
2.1	Create an indoor recreation facilities feasibility study and business plan for a potential new community center to house indoor programs spaces for seniors, youth, teens, adults in aquatics, sports, fitness, arts, teens, and for people with disabilities.	Consider appropriate community partnerships that can and will invest fairly in the facility with City investments to make this a reality.	Admin	2024	Partners build 50% of the building	A proposal is under review to facilitate a conversation with the City and the YMCA
2.3	Update the Gahanna Swimming Pool and site with a replacement aquatic center and improved site amenities.	Update the site plan for the park that incorporates all the recreation facility needs in one site.	Admin - Projects-CIP	2024	Total replacement of the pool in 5 years	Aquatics Master Plan is under contract with Brandstetter Carroll. The project is in action and is anticipated to wrap up the first quarter of 2025
		Seek to acquire the church property site next to the park for a field house or recreation center site.	Admin	2023	Enter into a long-term agreement within next 2 years	St. Mathews school is participating on the steering committee for the aquatics master plan.
2.4	Develop an outdoor learning center.	Complete the renovation of the Price Road house for recreational programming.	Projects - CIP	2021	Open the facility by the end of 2025	Final construction drawings as well as permits are outstanding prior to releasing for sealed bids.

PROGRAMMING

“The **vision** for programming is to increase parks and recreation program offerings for all demographic groups that unite the community and creates a lifetime user of the park and recreation system.”

Goal: “Activate the indoor and outdoor park spaces through inviting residents to participate in programs that meet their needs and builds a sense of community.”

Strategy		Tactics	Group Responsible	Start Date	Performance Measure	Notes
3.1	Incorporate more unique events in the City during the spring, summer and fall as a core service of the Department and to promote cultural enrichment in the City.	Make special events a core program of the department.	Recreation	On-going	Developed in the first year (by 2024) of the budget for implementing the Master Plan.	Farmer's Market, Holiday celebration, Tea Party and Murder Mystery all budgeted for 2025
3.2	Develop an adult sports program for people of all ages to provide organized sports for young and older adults in tennis, golf, pickleball, softball, flag football, basketball, cycling, running events and soccer.	Consider developing one or two core sports a year for adults 20+ and older for both men and women that brings the community together in a fun environment.	Recreation	2023	Adult sports program starts in 2024 budget year.	Cornhole League (Expanded to 2 Dates) - Adult programming expanded with golf and pickleball programs in 2024 summer program guide.
3.3	Develop events for the community that helps them understand the strengths and limitations of the park system so they can advocate for improvements in the department.	Work with the school district and the YMCA to host the events as well as using City own streets, parks, and sports facilities.	Recreation	2024	Corporate Challenge Event is hosted with support of the YMCA and School District in the first three years of the master plan. (Event in 2026)	Healthy Kids Day (YMCA), Educational Programming - BG Communication Panels will be installed at 4 Parks as part of a partnership with the Parks and Recreation Foundation, GJPS Education Foundation, GJPS School Distrcit and the City of Gahanna.

3.4	Continue to grow the existing core programs in the City as it applies to senior services, youth sports, arts and education, special events, aquatics, day camps, nature education programs, golf, fitness, outdoor education programs and paddling programs.	Build a yearly program plan for each core program area to maximize use by residents and to activate park spaces in the City.	Recreation	On-Going	One new core program is added per year to the system over the next ten years.	Program growth over 10% in all sections of division.
		Widen the age segment appeal for each core program area where possible.	Recreation	2024	Age segments are developed for underserved people in the City that are not currently being provided.	Created new summer camp option for teens. The program sold out for all available slots.
		Build advocacy through programming to find permanent indoor program space to host programs in the future.	Recreation/Admin	2024	Seek to develop a steering committee of key leaders in the City to develop a community center in Gahanna	Partner with YMCA to create a committee to discuss forward progress in partnership - Participating in community conversation hosted by the YMCA.
3.5	Develop an updated pricing policy to support cost recovery goals for program services to meet the budget expectations for each core program area.	Track direct and indirect cost of programs and determine cost recovery goals based on the individual value a user receives over a general taxpayer.	Recreation	On-going	Pricing policy is reviewed yearly and updated every three years.	Continue to use budget worksheets to establish cost recovery outcomes- BG
		Teach staff to use all pricing options available to them to maximize use of programs by the community.	Recreation/Admin	On-going	Staff training on pricing is done on a yearly basis	Budget Review completed for all Recreation Division. Each section will determine a cost recovery goal for 2024.
		Teach staff how to interpret price to users so they understand why they are paying the price for programs and services for parks and recreation in the City.	Recreation	2024	Teach staff how to interpret price on a yearly basis.	Budget review with established goals completed in Q1 of 2024.
3.6	Incorporate partnership policies for public/public partners, public/not-for- profit partners, and public/private partners to maximize the value and fairness across the system.	Update partnership policies every other year based on cost and partnership equity.	Admin	2024	Polices are updated every other year with partners.	Update partner and sponsor agreements - BG

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS:

“The **vision** for administration and operations is to operate their parks system with the right mix of full-time, part-time and seasonal staff to meet the public’s expectation for delivery of safe, clean, and inviting recreation experiences.”

Goal: “Create the right balance between operational dollars and capital needs to support the community’s expectation for parks and recreation in the City.”

Strategy		Tactics	Group Responsible	Start Date	Performance Measure	Notes
4.1	Develop a functional organizational structure to maximize every position’s value and responsibility in the system.	Track staff time and cost against desired outcomes for each division within the system.	Admin	2024	Implement the organization structure in 2024.	Completed through employee evaluations annually
		Find the right balance between fulltime, part-time, and seasonal staff to meet the community’s expectations for quality parks and quality recreation experiences.	Admin	2024	Complete in the 2024 budget year.	5 year staffing report was introduced to Council on 8/26 and will be on agenda again on 9/23.

		Develop lead and support functions within the department. Establish a goal of 30-32 acres of maintained parks per FTE maintenance employee for maintaining the parks in the City to enhance their value and look.	Admin/Parks	2024	Completed in 2024.	Develop baseline - ZG. Parks is currently structured with lead staff already identified. Will utilize CityWorks to report EOY data for 2024.
4.2	Develop a stronger volunteer program to supplement staff costs to deliver services and build advocacy for the Department.	Hire a volunteer coordinator to recruit, train and place volunteers in the system to add support to existing staff responsibilities and to build advocates.	Admin	2024	Staff training for hiring volunteers in 2024.	Request for Coordinator II in 2024 budget was approved in March.
		Track time of volunteers to be used for in-kind dollars on grant applications at \$29.45 per hour.	Recreation	2024	Implement during the year 2024. Establish 2% of paid hours of the staff to be supported by volunteer time.	Continue to develop the volunteer software - BG & CH
4.3	Hire program contractors to teach recreation program classes to build a strong program base.	Build a collection of program contractors in each core program area the City provides to the community.	Recreation	On-going	Evaluate contractors' capability and capacity within 2024.	2023 - Pickleball, Art
4.4	Create a customized Gahanna Parks and Recreation Training program for people in the City that can work on a part-time and seasonal basis especially in key positions like lifeguards and maintenance staff.	Recruit and train staff in all areas of the work that the department provides services in the City.	Admin	2023	Start in 2023 and fully develop in 2025.	Expanded the Future Leaders program to offer a Year 2 to invest time and energy into staff. The 2024-25 will be the largest class to go through the program.
4.5	Build efficiency and effectiveness in all full-time and part-time positions through effective training.	Track all key staffing indicators on staffing utilization as it applies to work completed, drive times and use of equipment.	Admin	2024	Utilize staff input to develop in 2023 and implement in 2024.	Establish key performance indicators for each service. - SBF
		Incorporate all costs for parks into a maintenance management software that can track staff time, lifecycle management and equipment cost for managing the system.	Admin/Parks	2024	Develop a training program to use the maintenance management software for work orders and inventory in 2023.	CityWorks software serves the main function for this use - ZG; ongoing weekly/biweekly; anticipate roll out through EOY 2023, full adoption beginning 2024. Implementation set for 1/26. City works is up and going, continue to meet with GIS to refine.
4.6	Develop an operational proforma for all revenue producing facilities so that the staffing expectations are determined in advance of the facility opening in a given year so that the facility can operate in the most efficient manner.	Adjust operational philosophy of the facility, when necessary, based on the support by the community for using the facility.	Admin/Recreation	Q1 2024	Teach the staff to understand direct and indirect costs to determine how to maximize efficiency.	Refresh staff on functions of the Tyler financial software. - BG

FINANCE

“The **vision** for financing is to adequately support the park and recreation system with operational and capital dollars to meet the public’s expectations for providing a first-class park and recreation system.”

Goal: “Achieve a per capita spending level for parks and recreation in the City that is within 20% of the best practice parks and recreation agencies in the Columbus region for comparable size cities”.

Strategy	Tactics	Group Responsible	Start Date	Performance	Notes
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5.1	Seek a goal to support the park system with at least the Ohio Park and Recreation per capita spending from \$56 dollars \$82 per person for parks and recreation services in the city for operational costs based on the local comparative market for comparable size cities.	Establish what the per capita spending is in the department now against the state per capita spending for parks and recreation services in the City as it applies to operational and capital dollars.	Admin	On-going	Try to make a 4% improvement within 5 years. 2028 \$16.40 per year.	(2023) \$53 - Revenue included
		Create the right balance of tax dollars and earned income dollars for the operational budget of the City.	Finance	Completed annually	Establish method to understand earned income in 2023.	
5.3	Determine new funding sources for the Department to draw from the community to build the park and recreation system forward.	Continue to develop alternative funding sources outside of user fees and taxes	Admin/Foundation		Begin the process in 2023 within the City, other organizations, and the private sector. Seek naming rights for buildings and facilities.	Draft naming policy created for review and approval.
5.4	Continue to develop a capital improvement plan that the City Council can support for the park system to move the agency forward for the next 20 years.	Look at what other cities in the Columbus area are doing to fund and support their park system that could be applicable to the Department.	Admin	2023	Evaluate what other cities are doing on a per capita basis for capital improvements.	Capital funding request will be presented to Council in Oct.
5.5	Seek, evaluate, and incorporate other local jurisdiction and non-profit organizations to become financial partners.	Seek and develop new partnerships.	Admin/Foundation	2024	Start seeking partners in 2023.	Include the Parks and Recreation Foundation in strategy. Development committee initiative.