

# **Chapter 5**

## **Public Sites and Facilities Needs Assessment: Analysis and Forecast of Future Park, Open Space, Outdoor Recreation, and Trail Needs**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Chapter presents a summary of the public park, open space, outdoor recreation, and trail needs of the City of Franklin based upon the standards set forth in Chapter 3, and the methodologies set forth in this chapter. Detailed recommendations are set forth in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

The determination of park needs for the City of Franklin is an important component in the preparation of the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update. Generally, there are four methodologies which can be used to analyze the City of Franklin's current and future outdoor recreation needs as follows:

1. The most common methodology is to relate spatial park needs to the number of people (per capita demand)--the "level of service" approach. The "level of service" approach uses ratios typically expressed as acres per capita (or number of facilities per capita) which represent the minimum amount of ground space (or number of facilities) needed to provide the level of quality park and recreation services desired by the community (see Chapter 3).
2. The second methodology appraises each park's accessibility and its serviceability to the age groups most likely to use the facilities and the geographic service area of each facility.
3. The third methodology determines future demand for facilities and activities based upon recognized public demand--both past and present--and attempts to project those demands into the future. This methodology also often considers new trends beginning to occur in other similar communities, as well as the recommendations of professionals involved in the planning, design, engineering, and construction of parks, open space, and outdoor recreation.
4. The fourth methodology does not attempt to quantify need, but rather to identify and preserve valuable land for parks. The fourth approach is

typically used for the preservation of environmental corridors and/or isolated natural areas due, typically, to the importance of their inherent natural characteristics and passive recreational value.

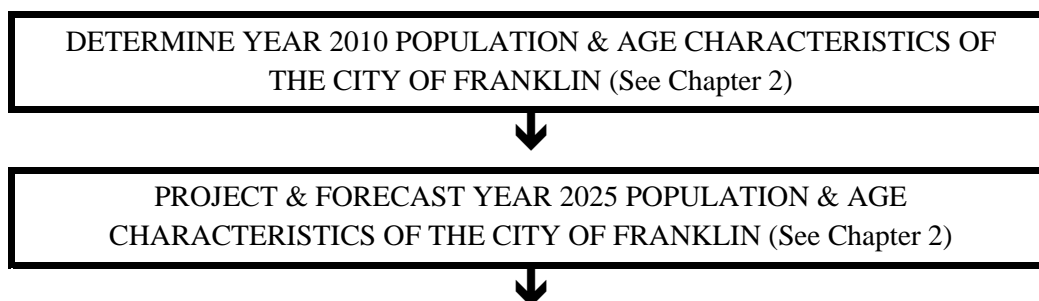
The Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update utilizes, primarily, the first two methodologies mentioned above, and secondarily, the last two methodologies. The third methodology is utilized for those needs and/or situations unique to the City of Franklin, such as the provision of public sanitary sewer service (and attendant increase of population) to the southwestern portion of the City – as set forth in the City of Franklin 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan. The third methodology also incorporates the principles, goals, and objectives, as well as the public input obtained during the preparation of this Plan, set forth in Chapter 3. The fourth methodology is used insofar as the CORP update recognizes past detailed Milwaukee County planning efforts in the City--particularly as these efforts pertain to the preservation of environmental corridors associated with the Root River and the planning efforts of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission for the preservation of environmental corridors and natural areas throughout the City of Franklin. The methodology of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update is described below.

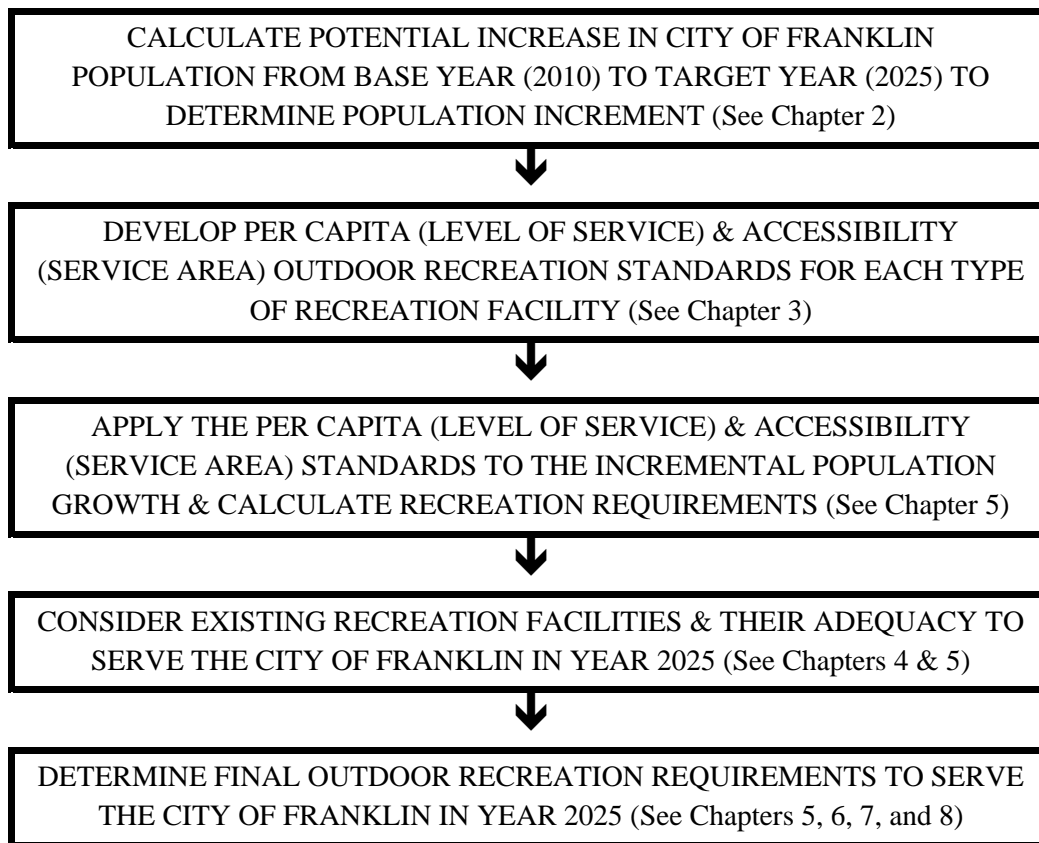
## METHODOLOGY

Figure 5.1 outlines the process used to determine year 2025 park, open space, and outdoor recreation needs for the City of Franklin based upon the first two methodologies noted in the previous section of this Chapter. In the case of the City of Franklin's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update, the park, open space, and outdoor recreation requirements of the probable future resident population of the City of Franklin were determined by applying two basic types of planning standards: namely, per capita standards (i.e., level of service standards), expressed as the number of acres of a given type of park or park facility per thousand population, and accessibility standards expressed as maximum service area radii for each park type and/or recreational facility.

Figure 5.1

### PROCESS USED FOR DETERMINING YEAR 2025 OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS FOR THE CITY OF FRANKLIN





*Source: Meehan & Company, Inc.*

The per capita (level of service) standards help estimate the total number of acres of land needed to satisfy the basic land area requirements for parks through the year 2025. The various park accessibility standards, on the other hand, assure that the park land allocations are spatially distributed in a manner convenient and efficient to the population which they are to serve. The accessibility standards, as outlined in Chapter 3, as well as the per capita standards (also outlined in Chapter 3) are embodied in the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update presented in Chapter 7. It should be recognized that in some situations, however, while per capita standards may seemingly be met, a need may still exist for additional park sites or recreational facilities because of the relative inaccessibility or distance of an existing park or recreational facility to some of the resident population in the City of Franklin.

There is some danger in adhering to the per capita and accessibility standards exclusively. A purely quantitative measurement of recreation acreage says nothing about the provision of private recreational facilities available in a community, the diversity of park land available, the type and condition of the land and facilities provided, the need for additional acreage at some of the existing parks or whether residents are best served by the existing acreage, or whether unique park, recreation or open space demands or constraints exist within the local community. For these reasons, the

recommendations in the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update (see Chapter 7) are based upon more than a need for additional acreage or proper accessibility, but are also tempered by public input and professional judgment as well as financial and political capabilities.

## Land Needs Based Upon Per Capita Standards

Table 5.1 summarizes the future community-, neighborhood-, and mini-park public outdoor recreation land area needs for the City of Franklin through the year 2025, based upon the City's existing park, open space, and outdoor recreation system. Table 5.1 utilizes the per capita public outdoor recreation standards set forth in Table 3.1 of Chapter 3 as well as a forecast year 2025 population for the City of 40,564 persons as indicated in Chapter 2.

It should be recognized, however, that while forecasts of future population levels must be prepared and utilized in the application of public outdoor recreation land standards, these forecasts involve uncertainty and, therefore, must be used with caution and tempered by the City's policies and the desires of City residents in general. Population forecasts cannot take into account events which are unpredictable but which may have major effects upon future conditions. The validity of the public outdoor recreation needs and requirements determined through the application of standards to forecast population levels must, therefore, be periodically reexamined by the City's Planning Department, Park Commission, and the Plan Commission. Chapter 10 indicates, at a minimum, when such reexamination of the City of Franklin Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan should take place.

In order to provide the greatest flexibility of the Per Capita Standards, within this Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update, each park which exceeds the typical minimum required site area, as identified in Table 3.2, was evaluated as more than one type of public outdoor recreation facility. For example, Franklin Park exceeds the minimum required site area of 100 acres for a Multi-Community Park. Therefore, this park could also be evaluated as a Community Park (with a minimum required site area of 25 acres), a Neighborhood Park (with a minimum required site area of 21.5 acres), and as a Mini Park (with a minimum required site area of 1 acre).

Based upon per capita standards exclusively, Table 5.1 indicates that by the year 2025 there will be a need for the following:

- No additional land area need for regional/multi-community level public outdoor recreation land in park sites. This does not, however, preclude the need for additional regional/multi-community level public outdoor recreation land at a new or existing park site to serve the southwestern portion of the City (should future land use and population densities be greater than anticipated when public sewer and water service become

available).

- The need for a minimum of 34.99 additional acres for community level public outdoor recreation land in either park sites or middle school or high school sites. This does not, however, include the need for additional community level public outdoor recreation land at a new middle school and/or new high school site to serve a new middle school or new high school student population (if such should be built within the 15 year time-frame of this CORP update). Nor does it include the need for a community level park site upon which to build a proposed Community Recreation and/or Cultural Center.
- The need for a minimum of 11.6 additional acres of neighborhood level public outdoor recreation land in either park sites or elementary school sites. It should be borne in mind, however, that if a new additional elementary school(s) is/are not constructed by the year 2025, this need for additional land would have to be filled at neighborhood park sites used exclusively for recreational purposes and not necessarily associated with an elementary school. Based upon the standards set forth in Table 3.5 of Chapter 3, the minimum area for a full-function neighborhood park (without elementary school facilities) should be 19.84 acres.
- The need for a minimum of 12.42 additional acres of mini park sites.



*Victory Creek Drive looking north towards Pleasant View*

Table 5.1

YEAR 2025 REGIONAL/MULTI-COMMUNITY,  
COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL  
PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION LAND AREA NEEDS FOR THE  
CITY OF FRANKLIN BASED UPON PER CAPITA STANDARDS

Facility Category	Development Standard (Gross Acres per 1,000 Persons)	Year 2025 Land Area Needs Based Upon Forecast Population (a) (Gross Acres)	Year 2010 Existing Land Area (Gross Acres)	Additional Land Area Needed by Year 2025 Based On Per Capita Standards Only (Gross Acres)
Regional/Multi-Community (in park sites)	5.3	214.99	3,363.90+/-	0
Community (in park sites)	2.2	89.24	54.25+/-	34.99+/-
Community (in middle school or high school sites)	0.9	36.51	116.92+/-	0
Neighborhood (in park sites)	1.7	68.96	70.4+/-	0
Neighborhood (in elementary school sites)	1.6	64.90	53.30+/-	11.6+/-
Mini Parks (in park sites)	1.0	40.56	28.14+/-	12.42+/-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>515.16</b>	<b>3,686.91+/-</b>	<b>59.01+/-</b>

(a) Based upon the Wisconsin Department of Administration's projection of 40,564 persons in the City of Franklin by the year 2025.

It is important to note that the year 2010 existing land area consists of the gross acreage of all public sites. Specifically, this includes not just land typically used for recreational purposes, but also associated buildings, parking, and roads. This also includes all public sites, not just City of Franklin sites. As such, some sites have limited access (such as Franklin Park which has no public access and no facilities), and some sites have limited utilization for public recreational uses (such as school buildings with limited public recreational facilities and limited hours).

## Land Needs Based Upon Accessibility Standards

Map 5.1 summarizes the future community-, neighborhood-, and mini-park accessibility needs for the City of Franklin through the year 2025, based upon the City's existing park, open space, and outdoor recreation system. Map 5.1 utilizes the accessibility standards set forth in Table 3.2 of Chapter 3. It can be noted that the City of Franklin has previously, and remains, fully served by the existing and proposed supply of Regional Parks, therefore, this information is not identified on Map 5.1.

In order to provide the greatest flexibility of the Accessibility Standards, within this Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update, each park has been evaluated in regard to the outdoor recreation facilities it actually provides or is envisioned to provide. For example, while Lions Legend Park is classified as a Community Park, neighborhood-, and mini-park level service radii have also been identified for this Park, as it provides community-, neighborhood-, and mini-park level facilities. Although this method was not utilized in the previous Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, it is consistent with the methodology used in the Per Capita Standards, as noted earlier in this section. For purposes of the Accessibility Standards, many of the parks within the City have had multiple service radii identified for them (see Maps 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4).

Based upon accessibility standards exclusively, Map 5.1 indicates:

- Areas of the City of Franklin served by existing public parks with the existing or envisioned outdoor recreation facilities associated with a community park.
- Areas of the City of Franklin served by existing public parks with the existing or envisioned outdoor recreation facilities associated with a neighborhood park.
- Areas of the City of Franklin served by existing public parks with existing or envisioned outdoor recreation facilities associated with a mini park.
- Areas of the City of Franklin not served by an existing public park with existing or envisioned outdoor recreation facilities associated with a

community park, neighborhood park or mini park.

More detailed information is provided on Maps 4.1 through 4.4 of Chapter 4 relative to the location and extent of existing parks serving as community, neighborhood, and mini parks and their respective 2-mile, 1/2-mile, and 1/4-mile service radii.

The per capita land area needs described earlier in this chapter notwithstanding, Map 5.1 indicates community park needs based upon the accessibility standards set forth in Chapter 3 in both the far northwest corner of the City and the far southeast corner of the City. With respect to the community park accessibility deficiency associated with the far northwest corner of the City, this need may be accommodated by public park facilities at the nearby Whitnall Park (a 388-acre regional park facility) and by traveling an additional 1/4 to 3/4 mile to access the City of Franklin's Lion's Legend Park. With respect to the community park accessibility deficiency associated with the far southeast corner of the City, this need may be accommodated by traveling an additional 1/2 mile to the north to existing public park facilities at Froemming Park.

The per capita land area needs described earlier in this Chapter notwithstanding, Map 5.1 indicates the following neighborhood park and mini park land area deficiencies and needs based upon the accessibility standards set forth in Chapter 3:

- With the exception of areas located in the far northwest corner of the City and the far southeast corner of the City noted above, all other areas of the City of Franklin are served by existing public parks with existing or proposed outdoor recreation facilities typically associated with community parks (as defined in Chapter 3) and there is significant overlap of those community level park service areas (see Map 4.2 of Chapter 4).
- All existing public parks with existing or proposed outdoor recreation facilities typically associated with neighborhood parks are located north of W. Ryan Road and all but four neighborhood parks are located north of W. Puetz Road. Those areas of the City not served by neighborhood parks are:
  - The area of the City located south of W. Puetz Road and west of S. 68th Street.
  - The entire northern 1/6 of the City located north of W. Rawson Avenue, with the exception of the area served by Ken Windl Park, which has many outdoor recreation facilities characteristic of a neighborhood park.
- All but one existing public park with existing or proposed outdoor



recreation facilities typically associated with mini parks are located north of Ryan Road, and all but five are located north of Puetz Road. In addition, the mini level park service radii are only ¼ mile in size. These factors explain why there is a need to develop numerous mini parks of 1 to 5 acres in size in those areas of the City which cannot effectively be served. It can further be noted that many of these same areas are also not served by a neighborhood level park facility due to inadequate and/or insufficient vacant land being available. However, new mini-parks were developed in 2004 and 2007. The City of Franklin redeveloped the former Fire Station No. 2, a 2.54-acre parcel at 11654 West Rawson Avenue, into a mini-park known as Ken Windl Park. In addition, the City acquired and developed the 0.42 acre Dr. Lynette Fox Memorial Park at 6860 S. Harvard Drive. It can be noted that Ken Windl Park helps serve the park needs of the area near Forest Home Avenue and West Rawson Avenue. This area was identified in the previous CORP as having the greatest need for such a facility. The acquisition of additional park lands of less than 5 acres to accommodate new mini parks will be difficult to achieve in developed areas of the City.

- As indicated on Maps 4.2 (Chapter 4) and 5.1, much of the area of the City of Franklin located outside the 1/2-mile service radius of neighborhood parks and neighborhood playgrounds are served by community parks and community playfields. However, many of these facilities do not individually fulfill the need for the provision of "*neighborhood-centralized*" neighborhood parks which are about 21.5 contiguous acres in area serving a 1/2-mile radius (see Table 3.2 of Chapter 3).
- Because of steady population growth projections and the lack of neighborhood park facilities in the relatively undeveloped southern portions of the City, the acquisition of sufficient additional lands of about 21.5 acres in area to accommodate new *neighborhood parks* is particularly important to achieve at an early date, prior to rezoning for residential uses, and prior to the submission of a preliminary plat for development.

## Land Needs Based Upon Public Demand and Natural Resource Preservation Methodologies

As noted at the beginning of this Chapter, four methodologies are commonly used in the determination of current and future park, open space, and outdoor recreation needs. While the previous sections dealt primarily with quantitative factors – per capita and accessibility – this section

deals primarily with qualitative factors. Consideration of such factors is consistent with the National Recreation and Park Association's standards and guidelines.

In regard to public demand, it can be noted that the recently adopted 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan indicated a strong desire on the part of City residents in general, and in the southwest portion of the City in particular, to maintain as much as possible the rural/suburban character of the southwestern portion of the City. The Comprehensive Master Plan achieves this in part by the protection of additional natural resource features, and in part, by identification of a "Southwest Park" adjacent to Franklin Park. In addition, numerous citizens have indicated that the current location of the Fourth of July Civic Celebration (at City Hall and environs) is too small, and that a larger area would not only be safer, but would potentially provide additional land for parking as well as for the various activities associated with the Fourth of July Civic Celebration. Again, the Comprehensive Master Plan envisions that the proposed "Southwest Park" could in part address that need.

As this methodology also considers trends and projections, as well as professional input, it is particularly important to note that as the City of Franklin's population continues to age, the demand for -- and value of -- trails is envisioned to increase. Not only can trails provide a relatively cost-effective means of transportation, recreation, and exercise for almost all age groups, but trails can also serve as a bridge between active recreational uses and passive recreational uses through provision of access to some of the City's most scenic parks, open spaces, and natural resources. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Master Plan recommends, and the public input obtained during preparation of this CORP update generally supports, additional trails within the City.

In regard to Natural Resource Preservation Goals, it can also be noted that the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan proposed the "Southwest Park" to address the need for maintenance of the rural/suburban character of the southwestern portion of the City. More specifically, acquisition and development of the proposed Southwest Park would enable some of the envisioned outdoor recreation facilities such as ball fields, playgrounds, and parking proposed for Franklin Park (as set forth in the Milwaukee County Park Plan) to instead be provided within the Southwest Park. This would allow protection and restoration of more of the valuable natural resources present within Franklin Park.

Since the adoption of the 2002 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Parks Commission has continuously received public input relating to the City's outdoor recreation needs. The most common input by citizens is a desire for more active park facilities including; baseball/softball diamonds, tennis courts, soccer fields, and football fields.

In regard to public input obtained during the preparation of this Plan, it can be noted that five individuals also indicated a desire for the acquisition and/or protection of additional lands for natural resource preservation or rural/suburban community character preservation purposes, either generically within the City or specifically within the southwestern portion of the City.

## Land Needs/Facility Needs Based Upon Per Capita Standards

It can be noted that the land/facility needs associated with Regional and Multi-Community Parks, based upon the per capita standards set forth in Chapter 3, are generally well met within the City of Franklin

Tables 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 in Chapter 3 address minimum public outdoor recreation facility requirements for typical Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks with Neighborhood Elementary School Facilities, and Neighborhood Parks without Neighborhood School Facilities. These tables indicate the minimum per capita standards for facilities such as baseball diamonds, playfields, and tennis courts when using a population service area of approximately 6,500 people. According to the tables, the minimum total area required for each Community Park, when accounting for all needed amenities, ranges between 27.29 to 29.29 acres. The minimum total area for Neighborhood Parks with Neighborhood Elementary School Facilities and for Neighborhood Parks without Neighborhood School Facilities, when accounting for all needed park amenities, equals 21.38 acres and 19.84 acres, respectively. Based upon this information:

- The four existing Community Parks within the City of Franklin range in size from the 16.25 acre Froemming Park to the 76.92 acre Franklin High School, for an average size of 42.8 acres, well above the typical average community park size of 28 acres.
- The 10 existing Neighborhood Parks within the City of Franklin range in size from the 6.5 acre Christine Rathke Memorial Park to the 23.76 acre Pleasant View Neighborhood Park, for an average size of 12.37 acres, slightly less than the typical average neighborhood park size of 20.61 acres.

Review of the typical facilities within Community and Neighborhood Parks (baseball diamonds, basketball courts, playfield, soccer fields, softball diamonds, tennis courts, and trails) based upon per capita standards for the City overall, indicates that:

- There are 6 more baseball diamonds than the per capita standards recommend.<sup>1</sup>
- There are 21 fewer basketball courts than the per capita standards recommend.
- There are 2 more playfields than the per capita standards recommend.

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<sup>1</sup> It can be noted that staff has counted five baseball diamonds at the Franklin Little League Complex towards the per capita standards for the City of Franklin. Milwaukee County's current contract with Franklin Little League does not make access to the facilities at the Franklin Little League Complex available for the general public.

- There are 14 fewer soccer fields than the per capita standards recommend.
- There are 14 fewer softball diamonds than the per capita standards recommend.
- There are 10 fewer tennis courts than the per capita standards recommend.

## Overall Needs for Continued Park Land Acquisition

Regional and Multi-Community Park Needs: Based on the previous information, it is apparent that land for a Regional Park is needed within the southwestern portion of the City. Provision of the proposed “Southwest Park” could address the outdoor recreation facility needs for Franklin Park as stated in the Milwaukee County Park Plan while preserving important natural resource features located within the Park, and would help address the commonly expressed desire to maintain the City’s rural/suburban community character, particularly within the southwestern portion of the City. More detailed discussion of recommended acquisition and improvements for this regional park site is presented in Chapter 7.

Community Park Needs: Based upon the foregoing analyses and findings, there does not appear to be a need for additional land for active recreation-oriented community parks. There is a need, however, for improvements to be made at existing community parks and community playfields. More detailed discussion of recommended improvements at various community park sites is presented in Chapter 7.

The lack of need for additional active recreation land for community parks, however, does not preclude the need to implement those portions of the *A Park and Open Space Plan for Milwaukee County and the A Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities System Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2010* which call for the acquisition of passive community-oriented open space sites and/or trail and/or bicycle path areas. The acquisition of passive community-oriented open space sites and/or trail and/or bicycle path areas, as set forth in these Milwaukee County and regional plans, would further the linkage of both active and passive recreational lands forming an open space framework for the City and surrounding environs.

Community Recreation Center/Building Needs: Chapter 8 sets forth the various standards for the provision of an indoor community recreation center building to serve indoor active and passive recreational needs for a variety of age groups. Based upon those standards, the provision of a centrally located and adequately sized community recreation center building should be considered by City of Franklin officials during the 15-year planning period.

Neighborhood Park Needs: The need for the provision of neighborhood parks within a reasonable distance from the population being served (the per capita requirements described earlier in this Chapter notwithstanding) should be fulfilled as outlined earlier in this chapter. Detailed discussion of recommended improvements at various existing neighborhood park sites is presented in Chapter 6. Detailed discussion of recommended new neighborhood park site locations is also presented in Chapter 7.

Mini Parks and Specialized Recreational Area Needs: As stated earlier, there is a need to develop more mini parks of 5 acres or less in size in those areas of the City which are currently not served by existing mini park facilities. As stated earlier, the acquisition of sufficient additional park lands of less than 5 acres to accommodate new mini parks will be difficult to achieve in certain developed areas of the City. Detailed discussion of recommended new mini park site locations is presented in Chapter 7.

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