

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report is an update of the City of Franklin's previously adopted park plan entitled Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: 2020 for the City of Franklin, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, dated February 2002, prepared by Meehan & Company, Inc. (commonly referred to as the 2002 CORP). As an update, this report is intended to guide the City's park, open space, and outdoor recreation site and facility acquisition and development efforts to the year 2025, and in certain instances, beyond.

This Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan -- or CORP -- update is designed to address projected and prioritized needs in a detailed fashion for the next five years (to the year 2015) and in a generalized fashion for the following 10 years (through the year 2025), with progress reviews annually and a more extensive review and/or update ideally every five years. An up-to-date and adopted CORP is required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in order for communities to be eligible for participation in most cost sharing (grant) programs. The CORP update has also been incorporated by reference into the City's Comprehensive Master Plan.

A Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is a fundamental tool utilized in the acquisition and development of a sound public park, open space, and outdoor recreation system and is a key element of community planning. The City of Franklin has recognized this fact, as evidenced by its adoption of the City of Franklin Comprehensive Master Plan, dated August 1992, prepared by Lane Kendig Inc. (which included a park and open space chapter intended to serve as the City's first park plan), and by its adoption and ongoing implementation of the previously noted 2002 CORP.

Diligent implementation of this plan over time will assure the consistent, cost-effective, and coordinated provision of parks, open space, and outdoor recreation opportunities for both the residents of, and the visitors to, the City of Franklin. Conscientious implementation of this plan will also help assure the continued protection and preservation of the most important natural resource features of the City, will help sustain the City's suburban character, and will help promote the continued health, beauty, and overall well-being of the City and its residents. Particularly note-worthy is this plan's efforts to continue to establish a city-wide inter-connected recreation corridor/trail/open space system comprised of:

- The Root River and its associated floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, and Primary Environmental Corridor;
- Many of the City's smaller streams and their associated floodlands, shorelands, and Secondary Environmental Corridors;

- Some of the City's isolated woodlands and wetlands and their associated linkages and Isolated Natural Resource Areas; and
- Most of the City's existing, and proposed parks, trails, paths, and sidewalks.

The importance of this Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan to the overall quality of life within the City of Franklin cannot be overemphasized. *Implementation of the CORP update would, over time, provide an integrated system of parks, open spaces, and trails within the City that would not only serve to preserve and enhance the City's natural resource features, and suburban character, but would also provide a wide range of wholesome outdoor recreational activities close to home.* However, this CORP update also recognizes that its implementation is dependent upon the availability of increasingly limited financial resources, and therefore, certain recommendations may not be able to be achieved within the time-frame of this Plan.

Population Projections & Forecasts

The City of Franklin is a suburban community with a multitude of recreational needs based upon both its current population and projected year 2025 population. The analysis and establishment of reasonable population projections and forecasts have significant importance in guiding and properly targeting the City's recreational needs through the year 2025, and beyond.

As set forth in Chapter 2 of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update, staff used U.S. Census, Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), and Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) data to update population projections and forecast data to the year 2025 and beyond. Of particular note:

- The DOA population estimate for the City of Franklin for the year 2010 is 33,900 persons. This represents an increase of 4,406 persons or 14.9 % from the year 2000 Census population of 29,294.
- The DOA population projection for the City of Franklin for the year 2025 is 40,564 persons. This represents an increase of 6,664 persons or about 20 percent from 2010.
- The SEWRPC population forecast for the City of Franklin for the year 2035 is 50,660 persons. This represents an increase of 16,760 persons or about 49 percent from 2010.
- Comparison of Census and DOA information indicates the Franklin population 65 years and older in age will increase from 2,920 individuals in the year 2000 to 6,920 individuals in the year 2025, an increase of 4,000 individuals or about 137 percent.

These projections and forecasts serve, in part, as the rationale, or basis, for the development of public park, open space, and outdoor recreation objectives, principles, and standards as presented in Chapter 3 of the CORP update.

This information clearly indicates that the City of Franklin's population is envisioned to continue to grow at a substantial rate, and in particular, that the age group 65 years and older is envisioned to grow at an unprecedented rate. These changes will create significant and unique burdens upon the City's park, open space, and outdoor recreation system in the near future. This CORP update is specifically intended to accommodate those upcoming changes.

Principles, Goals, Objectives, and Standards

The principles, goals, objectives, and standards of this CORP update have been obtained in large part from the current *City of Franklin 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan*, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) standards for individual community park planning in southeastern Wisconsin, the previous *Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: 2020*, and public input obtained during the preparation of this plan.

In particular, the technical standards set forth in Chapter 3 are based upon similar standards widely used throughout Wisconsin and the United States. Examples of other communities utilizing these standards within their local park plans include the cities of Brookfield, Greenfield, Milwaukee, New Berlin, Racine, and West Bend.

Implementation of the 2002 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

An inventory of the City of Franklin owned park, open space, and outdoor recreation sites and facilities was completed in August of 2010 as part of the CORP update. Based on the newly collected data, it became evident numerous recommendations from the 2002 CORP were implemented. Highlights of these accomplishments include;

- Development of Jack E. Workman Neighborhood Park located at 3674 West Forest Hill Avenue in the Hunting Park Neighborhood.
- Redevelopment of the former Franklin Fire Station No. 2 located at 11615 West Rawson Avenue into Ken Windl Park.
- Acquisition and Development of Dr. Lynette Fox Memorial Park located at 6860 South Harvard Avenue.
- Acquisition of a 5.7-acre woodland (formerly known as Pleasant View Special Park), a SEWRPC delineated Isolated Natural Resource Feature located in U.S. Public Land Survey Section 12.

- Protection of Fitzsimmons Road Woods, a SEWRPC delineated Regional Natural Area located in U.S. Public Land Survey Section 25 by a combination of acquisition, ownership, and conservation easements by Milwaukee County, MLG/Franklin LLC, the Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy (MALC), and private land owners.
- Permanent protection of natural resource features in Outlot 9 of the Crooked Creek Subdivision (formerly Hunting Park Special Park) located in U.S. Public Land Survey No. 14 through conservation easements. Additionally, the City of Franklin developed the Crooked Creek Walking Trail within a pedestrian access easement in Outlot 9 of the Crooked Creek Subdivision.

Major Recommendations of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Update

In order to simultaneously address the increasing population and the changing demographic conditions envisioned within the City, while still adhering to the Principles, Goals, Objectives, and Standards set forth in this CORP update, it is envisioned that the City of Franklin will need to acquire and develop 10 new parks, to develop one existing undeveloped neighborhood park at an Elementary School site, to develop seven new trails, and to continue to maintain its current parks and trails. The new park sites are summarized in the table below.

While the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Update is primarily focused on those actions for which the City of Franklin will be responsible, the plan does acknowledge that other agencies, organizations, and units of government also provide park, open space, and/or outdoor recreation sites or facilities within the City. If such sites or facilities are typically available to the public, they have been included within this plan, but generally, this plan does not provide recommendations for those sites or facilities. However, when it is determined that a cooperative effort between the City and another agency, organization, or unit of government would be particularly beneficial, some recommendations in that regard have been made. Therefore, the CORP update recommends that acquisition and/or development of three proposed parks (the proposed Southwest Park and two of the proposed neighborhood parks) and one proposed trail (the proposed trail connecting the Oak Leaf Trail to the City of Franklin Bike and Hiking Trail) should be joint ventures with other units of government.

SUMMARY OF PLANNED NEW PUBLIC PARK, OPEN SPACE, TRAIL, AND OUTDOOR RECREATION SITES AND FACILITIES	
Park Type	Approximate Park Size (acres)
Planned New Regional Parks	
Southwest Park	200
Subtotal	200
Planned New Community Parks/Facilities	
Community Recreation Center Building and Site	6.25
Planned Trails, Paths, & Linkages	15.03*
Subtotal	21.28
Planned New Neighborhood Parks	
Forest Hills Neighborhood Park	0.00
Hillcrest Neighborhood Park	19.84
Woodview Neighborhood Park	19.84
Subtotal	39.68
Planned New Mini Parks	
Proposed Mini Park No.1	3.00
Proposed Mini Park No.2	3.00
Proposed Mini Park No.3	3.00
Proposed Mini Park No.4	3.00
Proposed Mini Park No.5	3.00
Subtotal	15.00
Planned New Special Parks	
Mahr Woods Special Park	30.00
Subtotal	30.00
Total	306.56

* Approximately 32,727 lineal feet, or about 6.20 miles of trails.

As an update to the 2002 CORP, this plan carries forward many of the recommendations of the earlier plan. In particular, it can be noted that 9 of the 11 parks noted above, and five of the seven trails recommended in this plan, were first recommended in the 2002 CORP. In addition, this CORP Update also recommends that the City's Impact Fee Ordinance, Unified Development Ordinance, Official Map, Comprehensive Master Plan, and Capital Improvement Program, be updated to reflect the information contained within this plan.

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