

City of Owensboro and Daviess County Combined Parks and Recreation

Master Plan 2012



"Communities are enhanced by its people, parks, and programs that create a sense of place"

**City of Owensboro and Daviess County
Combined Parks and Recreation
Strategic Master Plan 2012
Executive Summary**

City Commission

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Charlie Castlen, Mayor Pro-Tem
Jim Wood, Commissioner
Bill VanWinkle, Commissioner
Olive Burroughs, Commissioner
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Executive Summary

A Starting Place

“Communities are enhanced by its people, parks, and programs that create a sense of place.”

In the year 2001, the City of Owensboro, Daviess County, Daviess County Parks Board, the Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation and respective staff identified the need to update and refine its park and recreation services and facilities for the 21st century. Their goal was to develop a combined City and County Parks and Recreation Master Plan to guide both department’s efforts for the next ten years. Their hope was to engage and encourage the citizens of the city and county and their respective leaders to articulate the community’s needs for recreation and parks. In doing so, they will have helped to shape a Master Plan that will continue to build strong neighborhoods and create destination facilities to improve the quality of life in the City of Owensboro and Daviess County.

Parks and recreation services in the city and the county are at a crossroads. Historically, the two systems carved out separate agendas on how they provided recreation and parks services to their respective service areas. However, in keeping pace with the rapidly changing needs of the community required a careful evaluation of both systems and where they have been and where they need to work towards in the future. The



Metropolitan Parks Foundation provided the leadership role in encouraging both departments to participate in a combined Master Plan that could carry them well into the 21st century. Currently the recreation and park needs of city residents and county residents are changing. They require different demands for parks, recreation programs and facilities. In addition the city has seen the value that recreation programs and events can play on the economic development side of the city. These two departments have prepared this plan to provide a framework to meet these challenges.

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This combined Master Plan will benefit the community, elected officials and parks and recreation staff by providing a clear direction of what residents want both systems to provide in programs, facilities and parks. The implementation of this plan will benefit the citizens of the city and county for many years to come.

This Master Plan is a living document that will require an annual review of work accomplished and outcomes achieved. At a minimum, this plan should be updated every five years to keep pace with the changing Owensboro and Daviess County environment.



Purpose



The City of Owensboro and Daviess County has a diverse population and changing community environment. The Master Plan Steering Committee recognized the importance of long range planning to stay abreast of the needs of its citizens.

The purpose of this Master Plan is to address four primary challenges that are facing both departments.

1. The lack of adequate indoor and outdoor recreation space for people of all ages.
2. Many of the city's recreation facilities are outdated and are at the end of their useful life as it applies to pools, recreation centers and the ice rink.
3. The development of effective partnerships that can maximize each other's resources and eliminate duplication of services.
4. Establish what are the core services that each department should be focused on in meeting the citizens' needs.

In order to meet these challenges, the Master Plan process has been driven by a community vision identified by many sectors including the City Commission, the County Commissioners, the staff, the community at-large and existing users.

This is an exciting time for both parks and recreation departments. This Master Plan confirms that Parks and Recreation are an integral part of the image, character and quality of life in Daviess County and of Owensboro.

The Master Plan

Phase I – Findings and Observations

(Understanding the Owensboro Community and the Parks and Recreation System)

Phase One included a thorough review of the entire parks and recreation system for both departments. The primary focus was to gather information and data. The data collected consisted of public opinions, facts and impressions of the entire parks and recreation system in both departments. This phase helped the consultant identify a baseline for understanding how the departments are organized and managed and how effective they are in meeting the community's needs.

Community Input Process

It was imperative that the Master Plan reflects the desires of the citizens of Owensboro and Daviess County. The community of the future is built on present day planning. The goal of the consulting team was to manage the future instead of managing the past for both departments. To assure the voices of the residents of the city and county were heard in this process, extensive public involvement was encouraged.

- Focus groups were conducted with the community and business leaders to discuss ideas and identify issues.

- Three public forums were held for the community in March 2001 to validate the identified issues and elicit more feedback.
- Partnership meetings were held with the agencies and businesses currently working with Owensboro and Daviess County in operational capacities.
- A community phone and mail survey was conducted in the city and the county to seek more public input into what citizens felt were most important for them as it applied to both park systems.

Results

Key issues were identified and centered on these prevalent themes:

- School and City usage of public facilities.
- What to do with the Ice Arena?
- Development of consistent funding sources to support the necessary operations and resources in order to meet the demands of citizens.
- Marketing of services as it applies to programs and facilities for both the city and the county.
- Land acquisition needs in the county and city as it applies to equity of access.
- Partnerships with other service providers in the city.

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- Maintenance and operational standards that are proactive and preventative.
- Indoor recreational needs as it applies to organized sports, fitness, teens and seniors
- Aquatic facility needs as it applies to existing pools and future pools.
- Recreation game field needs as it applies to soccer, football, softball and baseball.
- Combined City/County Department possibilities.
- Youth Sports entitlement of recreation facilities.
- Recreation program development as it applies to core services for both departments.
- Pricing of services that is consistent between the city and the county.
- How to manage the Sportscenter in the future.



Analysis of Park Operations and Assets

An analysis of both department's operations and assets were conducted to gain insight into current operational and maintenance standards and the quality and condition of the assets under their management. Recreational programs were analyzed for their current capabilities. The organizations were reviewed for their effectiveness in the delivery of services. Demographics

were examined to understand the impacts on the services, facilities and programs. A benchmark survey was completed to compare the two parks systems standards to other park and recreation standards in similar size cities that have been recognized nationally for the excellence in service delivery.

Key Findings

- Parks are not equitably distributed throughout the city or the county.
 - Continue to acquire trail and greenway space to build the trail network around the city.
 - Consistent maintenance standards need to be developed between the city and the county on how each manages sports fields.
 - Older facilities must be refurbished, transferred or eliminated and new facilities developed to maximize the city and county resources.
 - In comparison to other benchmarked systems Owensboro and Daviess County spend less per capita and they have less recreation facilities, operating budget and capital improvement budget monies to serve the needs of city and county residents.
 - The city and county population is growing slowly but is becoming more diverse.
- Pricing of services in both the city and county are below comparable cities for similar type of services.
 - The city and county lack infrastructure money to repair and upgrade existing facilities.
 - There is a lack of recreation programs provided for citizens in the city and the county.
 - Most residents were satisfied with the services offered by the city and the county but there is not enough provided.
 - Citizens in the city and the county see parks first as a priority and recreation programs second which doesn't create a balanced system for either department.
 - Park maintenance standards of care was perceived as very good for the city and higher levels of maintenance standards are desired in the county.
 - Programs targeted for youth and teens are seen as the most important for the city and the county to provide along with new programs targeted towards outdoor adventure.

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- There is a lack of designated indoor space for recreation programs in the city and the county.
- Access to school facilities by either department to use is very limited because of the growth of girls and boys sports in the city and the county.
- Greater partnerships were desired between the other service providers in the city and the county.



Community Survey Results

The data gathered in this phase allowed the consultants to identify key issues in the community and develop a community-wide strategy both in the city and county citizens' survey to test and validate the key issues that have been identified. The citizen survey was mailed to 4000 households with 600 household surveys completed, (300 in the city and 300 in the county). This provides a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 4.0%.

Key City Survey Results

- 29% respondents in the City indicated they participated in programs during the past 12 months.
- 39% of respondents in the City rated community special events as most important.
- Outdoor education and nature programs were rated at 22% as second most important.
- Baseball/softball were rated at 16% as third most important.
- Aquatic programs were rated at 16% as fourth most important.
- 60% of respondents in the City were very supportive or somewhat supportive of



- developing parks and facilities in the southern part of the City.
- Overall, respondents in the City were positive about the physical condition of the parks they had visited, with 88% rating them as either excellent (35%) or good (53%).
- 35% of respondents in the City indicated there are not enough parks, trails and open space areas within walking distance of their household.

Key County Survey Results

- 35% of respondents in the County indicated they had participated in programs during the past 12 months.

- 36% of respondents in the County rated community special events for youth as one of the top 4 most important programs. 30% of respondents rated youth baseball/softball programs as one the top 4 programs, and 26% rated outdoor education/nature programs as one of the top 4.
- 68% of respondents in the County indicated there are not enough parks, trails and open space areas within walking distance of their household.
- Overall, respondents in the County were positive about the physical condition of the parks they had visited, with over 90% rating them as either excellent or good.
- 71% of respondents in the County were either very supportive or somewhat supportive of developing parks and facilities in East County.
- 86% of all respondents had visited a community park during the past year.
- Overall, respondents in all areas were positive about the physical condition of the parks they had visited, with 90% rating them as either excellent or good.
- 37% of all respondents rated community special events for youth as one of the top 4 most important programs.
- 42% of all respondents rated walking and biking trails as one of the top 4 most important facilities.
- Other service providers who respondents indicated they did use, Churches (62%) was the organization used most often by all respondents. Other organizations used most often included: State of Kentucky Parks (41%), local schools (39%), YMCA (32%), private clubs (32%) and youth sports leagues (28%).

Overall Results

- Exactly half (50%) of all respondents had learned of programs through the newspaper.
- Overall, respondents in all areas were positive about the programs, with 85% rating them as either excellent (25%) or good (60%).
- 54% of all respondents indicated there are not enough parks, trails and open space areas within walking distance of their household.
- 36% of all respondents listed drinking fountains as one of the top 3 improvements to be made, and 35% listed additional restrooms. Other improvements residents wanted to see made included: improved lighting (21%); picnic shelters (20%); walking trails (20%); upgraded

playground equipment (16%); and shade trees (15%).

- 64% of all respondents were either very supportive (42%) or somewhat supportive (22%) of developing parks and facilities in East County.
- 43% of all respondents indicated emphasis should be placed on the development of small neighborhood parks and large multi-use community parks.
- The three parks and facilities most important for the City and County Parks and Recreation Departments to develop are multipurpose trails (32%), outdoor pools with water slides (29%), multipurpose indoor sports complex (29%), small parks in neighborhoods (26%), develop large community parks w/passive facilities (23%), and indoor ice-skating rink (15%).



Benchmark Analysis Results

When developing a Master Plan for the City of Owensboro, Leon Younger & PROS studied five cities other than Owensboro (pop. 54,067). Each city was selected for its location, size, and demographics. A benchmark analysis of programs and services of the city is a study that compares services, policy, parks and facilities of cities that are like size and in the same region of the country. The Master Plan Team identified the five cities that were to be used in this comparison. The study was initiated by sending out an eight-page survey to the parks and recreation departments of these cities with the intent to draw comparisons of series, philosophy and practice between the agencies. The survey was comprised of Parks and Facility Standards, Recreation Facilities, Cost Recovery Programs and Strategies, Cooperative Facility Use, Budgeting and Staffing, Non-traditional Recreation Functions, Special Recreation Functions, Program Information, Special Facility Use, and Team Sports Programs for Adults and Youth. Surveys were sent to the following locations Kettering, OH (pop. 57,502), Bowling Green, KY (pop. 49,400), Bloomington IN (pop. 66,000), Lawrence, KS (pop. 82,240), and Germantown, TN (pop. 32, 279).

The primary objective of the Benchmark Analysis was to determine how Owensboro's Parks and Recreation Department compared to the other cities surveyed.

Parks

When benchmarked against the five aforementioned cities, Owensboro is in the middle of the pack based on population. The average population of the size cities is just under Owensboro's reported population of 54,067. Of the cities that reported the total number of acres that they manage, Owensboro (314) is low by comparison to Bowling Green (1561), and Bloomington (1854).

Bowling Green, Kentucky has a large urban park of 658 acres and a golf complex that accounts for another 250 acres. Bloomington is responsible for a natural resource area of 1155 acres. Lawrence has the most miles of park trails with 70 miles. The next highest number was Bloomington with 44.7 miles.

Kettering surpasses the other cities when comparing acreage for neighborhood parks with 122.7. Areas where Owensboro parks appear to be lacking include trail systems, athletic areas other than soccer, and large urban parks and school parks. Owensboro comes up short when comparing the number of acres of open space the city owns or manages. The national standard for park types is 12 to 15 acres per 1,000 people. Owensboro is 50% of the desired standard.

Key comparisons of one city, Bowling Green (pop. 49,400) versus Owensboro as follows. The other City comparisons are a part of the appendix.

City of Owensboro

Park Acres – 316 (does not include Hillcrest Golf Course, but does include new Southwest Park)

Game Courts – 33

Pools – 3 (2 Neighborhood and 1 Community)

Recreation Centers – 1 (Neighborhood)

City of Bowling Green

Park Acres - 776

Game Courts – 37

Pools- 2 (1 Family Aquatics and 1 Community)

Recreation Centers – 2 Community Centers



Phase II -- Recommendations

Once the data collection phase was completed, the information was analyzed and summarized. Needs were identified in several areas of the operation including parks, programs and recreational facilities, equity of services and cost of improvements.

These needs were reviewed and thoroughly discussed with the Master Plan Planning Committee. From this discussion, a future Vision Statement was created for both departments. The Vision Statements, which served as a catalyst and guide for the creation of recommendations, served as a beacon light for the Master Plan.

The Planning Committee developed the Vision by incorporating the community's core values that will drive the overall vision, goals and management of both parks and recreation departments for their future. The community values that were established for parks and recreation are:

- **Connectivity** – Understanding the value and importance of connecting community neighborhoods through physical elements such as trails, community parks and signature recreation facilities, indoor and outdoor, as well as connecting with groups including public, private and not-for-profit organizations through effective partnerships.
- **Equity of Access** to parks and recreation facilities – Creating two parks systems that support community access physically, economically, and socially to all parks, programs and facilities managed and operated by both the city and the county.
- Developing **signature recreation facilities** – Signature recreation and park facilities help community members embrace product loyalty and promote local tourism and community pride.
- Establish what the **core businesses** are for both departments – To provide the citizens with the most effective quality managed programs and services.
- Develop a **lifetime customer** – Developing and initiating programs that support families, youth, and seniors that encourage lifelong participation and loyalty for both parks and recreations systems.
- **Quality management** of public assets and services – Adopt the most effective and creative methods of managing the community's capital assets by implementing quality standards and preventative maintenance programs that demonstrate a positive image and safety to all users.
- **Creativity in managing** and operating parks and recreation facilities and programs – Adopt

the most effective and creative methods of providing facility and program services in the most efficient manner utilizing effective business and marketing practices.

- **Natural Resource Protection** -- The development of a management strategy to protect natural areas from becoming depleted. Natural resource protection often considers the multiple benefits to the community of flood control and water.



Creating the Vision

The Visioning Process is one that depends on understanding where an organization and community have been in the past and where they choose to go in the future. Parks and recreation community visions are created through effective community involvement. The community outlined, through several input processes, what it values, what parts of the past should be included and updated and the issues it felt were most important to address.

Communities are ever changing entities. In order to understand how a community is to change in the future, it is necessary to appreciate its history and culture. The vision that has been created by the community for both parks and recreation departments provides an overall direction for the future on which to build. It is important to remember that this document is dynamic and must change over time because the makeup and nature of the community is ever changing. As a culture of the community changes, adjustments will be made to the plan to address these changes.

Vision Statement for the City of Owensboro Parks and Recreation

“ The Owensboro Parks and Recreation Department will provide a variety of parks, recreation facilities and program experiences equitably throughout the community. Programs will be developed and maintained to the highest quality, ensuring a safe environment with exceptional service while developing a lifetime customer. Services will demonstrate a positive economic investment through partnerships with other service providers, both public and private, ensuring a high quality of life for citizens of Owensboro.”

Vision Statement for Daviess County Parks and Recreation

“ The Daviess County Parks and Recreation Department vision is to develop a series of signature parks and recreational facilities geographically situated in the County that create opportunities for citizens to engage in a variety of passive and active recreational activities.”

From these two vision statements, and core values of the community, nine vision action strategies were developed to guide the organizations for the future. These vision strategies will become the core of all future planning engaged by both Parks and Recreation Departments.

Recommended Vision Action Strategies

Vision Action Strategy 1:

“Our vision is to maximize use of public facilities through efficient management of permitted parks and recreation space for public, not-for-profit and private use”.

This vision statement addresses the need to expand written partnership policies as it applies to use of public facilities in Owensboro and Daviess County with public/public partners, public/ not-for-profit partners and private partnerships. A priority of use classification is needed based on the community values established for the type of partnerships in place.

Vision Action Strategy 2:

“ Our vision is to develop a joint (city/county) youth and adult sports commission to address consistency in how both the city and county will develop and manage field use with all youth and adult sports groups in the region in the future”.

This vision statement addresses the need for consistent maintenance standards for game fields in the region. It also addresses the need for consistent scheduling of fields for practice and games as it applies to city and county fields. Currently there are inequities on who gets fields there and when, and there is lack of sharing by sports groups of public facilities, which doesn't allow the city or county to maximize use.



Vision Action Strategy 3:

“Our vision is to develop a joint (city/county) pricing policy based on the level of individual and group exclusivity provided”.

This vision statement addresses the inequities and inconsistencies in pricing of recreation services and facilities between the city and the county. It is important that the city and county work together on effective pricing so they do not pit users against them.



Vision Action Strategy 4:

“Our vision is to develop a multi-use intergenerational indoor recreation facility to support the city and county’s needs for ice-skating, swimming, gym sports, fitness, and general recreation program uses”.

This vision statement addresses the need for indoor recreation facilities in Owensboro and Daviess County. It also addresses what to do with outdated and under utilized facilities both indoor and outdoor in the city and the county.

Vision Action Strategy 5:

“Our vision is to acquire parklands in both the city and county to achieve 12 acres per thousand population in the city and 15 acres per thousand in the county”.

This vision addresses the equity issues as it applies to neighborhood parks in the city and regional parks in the county. This vision also addresses the need to continue to acquire trail and greenway space to build the trail network to tie county parks to the trail and continue to link city parks to the trail. This vision also addresses the need for additional parkland in the county and in certain areas of the city that lack parks.

Vision Action Strategy 6:

“Our vision is to establish appropriate and equitable levels of funding to meet the community’s vision for parks and recreation in the city and county”.

This vision addresses the need for additional funding for both the city and county parks and recreation departments as it applies to capital improvement and operational costs that are needed to support the community’s vision. Currently both departments are under funded in relationship to supporting the operational and capital costs to bring the departments’ assets and services up to a year 2002 level.

Vision Action Strategy 7:

“Our vision is to develop equitable partnerships with public and not-for-profit organizations that help serve the recreational needs of the citizens”.

This vision statement addresses the need for the departments to maximize their resources through effective management options as it applies to partnerships. The departments must reach out and establish effective partnerships that are equitable and allow for both partners to grow effectively in the delivery of services.

Vision Action Strategy 8:

“Our vision is to maximize all available resources to generate the funds to develop and operate parks, recreation facilities and program services to their highest efficiency level”.

This vision statement addresses the need to maximize its resources through effective management options as it applies to performance-based outcomes. The performance measures outcomes that both departments need to focus in on are cost per experience, capacity of use, customer satisfaction and resource management. This will ensure the opportunity to explore new funding options, more entrepreneurial thinking and higher levels of accountability and responsibility.



Vision Action Strategy 9:

“Our vision is to maximize the community’s recognition and awareness of the programs and services the City of Owensboro and Daviess County provides”.

This vision statement applies to the need for both departments to create a stronger approach to communicating with the citizens of the region of the services and facilities they offer. Through the community evaluation process, many people interviewed did not know of the services that were provided by both departments. Most of the information on the departments’ services and facilities came from the newspaper in the community but more direct targeting is needed.



Parks and Facilities Guideline Recommendations

With the use of geographic information systems, the parks and facilities were mapped in the city and the county. The information was overlaid with demographic estimates and projections to determine service areas. These service areas identified gaps of parks and facilities within the city and county.

By the year 2012, both departments should acquire and develop the following additional parks and facilities.

Standards and Guidelines – Community Wide Approach

- Acreage Level Standard: City (12 acres per 1,000 population). The City should have 648 acres, it has 316, so the total acres needed to meet standard is 332.
- Acreage Level Standard: County (15 acres per 1,000 population). The County should have 555 acres, it has 233, so the total acres needed to meet standard is 322.
- Football Field Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 10,000 population). The City and

County should have 5 fields, they have 5, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 0.

- Ice Rink Level Standard: City and County (1 ice rink per 50,000 population). The City and County should have 2 ice rinks, they have 1, so the total ice rinks needed to meet standard is 1.
- Playground Level Standard: City and County (1 playground per 2,500 population). The City and County should have 37 playgrounds, they have 15, so the total playgrounds needed to meet standard is 22.
- Soccer Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 fields, they have 14, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 9.
- Baseball Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 5,000 population). The City and County should have 18 fields, they have 23, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 0.
- Softball Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 fields, they have 27, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 0.
- Gym Level Standard: City and County (1 gym per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 gyms, they have 2, so the total gyms needed to meet standard is 21.

- Tennis Level Standard: City and County (1 court per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 courts, they have 28, so the total courts needed to meet standard is 0.
- Basketball Courts Outside Level Standard: City and County (1 court per 2,500 population). The City and County should have 37 courts, they have 10, so the total courts needed to meet standard is 27.
- Golf Course Level Standard: City and County (1 course per 25,000 population). The City and County should have 4 courses, they have 4, so the total courses needed to meet standard is 0.
- Flat Water Pools Level Standard: City and County (1 pool per 20,000 population). The City and County should have 5 pools, they have 3, so the total pools needed to meet standard is 2.
- Aquatic Center Level Standard: City and County (1 center per 50,000 population). The City and County should have 2 aquatic centers, they have none, so the total aquatic centers needed to meet standard is 2.

Capital Improvement Costs Recommendations

The ability to project the costs associated with making the park and facility improvements are necessary in order to plan for the future. Based upon the parks and facilities recommendations, the cost to phase in the land acquisition, development, improvements to existing assets and construction of new facilities is estimated to

be \$24,270,000 for the city over the next 10 years and \$13,333,000 for the county over the next 10 years. If the City of Owensboro and Daviess County would jointly develop facilities, these projects would have greater success in achieving the community's vision.

City of Owensboro Master Plan Capital Improvement Costs (10-Year Plan)

City Summarization	
Improvement Costs to Existing	\$ 2,031,000
New Facilities	\$17,089,000
Land Acquisitions	\$ 5,150,000
Total	\$24,270,000

Daviess County Master Plan Capital Improvement Costs (10-Year Plan)

Daviess County Summarization	
Improvement Costs to Existing	\$ 3,613,000
New Facilities	\$ 5,120,000
Land Acquisitions	\$ 3,600,000
Land Acquisitions Outside Beltway	\$ 1,000,000
Total	\$13,333,000

Phase III—Implementation

Once the staff, the Master Plan Planning Committee, and the Community accepted the recommendations, the final phase of the planning process was the Implementation Phase. Recommendations, strategies, and tactics were summarized and prioritized with the planning committee. Future energies and efforts of both departments will focus on these initiatives by level of priority. Strong links between results from the Findings Phase and Recommendations Phase were considered in the Implementation Phase.

The Implementation Phase reflected the combined efforts of all staff and planning committee members involved in the planning process. Wide acceptance of these strategies and tactics was due to staff and planning committee members' involvement in creating the goals, the vision actions strategies, and tactics of the plan. As a result, this shared vision will help both organizations progress to a changed environment driven to advance through common community goals and common policies between both organizations.

Results

Numerous policies were developed to support the Vision Strategies. These policies enabled staff and the planning committee to assign timelines, budgets, human resources and tactics. The Action Plan Matrix included in the full report delineates numerous actions to ensure both organizations deliver on the full potential of what the community expects. The following components are highlights from each section.

Vision Strategy 1. for both City and County.

Our vision is to maximize use of public facilities through efficient management of permitted parks and recreation space for public, not-for-profit, and private use.

Goal: Maximize Use of Public Facilities

- 1.1 City and County ----- Expand written partnership polices for public/public use, public/non-for-profit use, and public/private use of City and County owned facilities.
- 1.2 City and County ----- Establish a priority of use classification system based on community values and recreational and educational needs.
- 1.3 City and County ----- Establish an effective pricing policy for use based on the level of benefit received and reciprocal investments made between groups who use City and County facilities.

1.4 City ----- Develop a recreation facilities plan for future development between the City and all school systems based on population standards for number of fields and courts needed to meet the recreation demand.

1.5 County ----- Provide existing land for use by the County parks for recreation programs and facilities.

Vision Action Strategy 2. for both the City and the County.

Our vision is to develop a joint (city/county) youth and adult sports commission to address consistency in how both the city and county will develop and manage field use with all youth and adult sports groups in the region.

Goal: Establish a Youth Sports Commission

2.1 City and County----- Establish an equitable field use policy for all groups to meet in order to maximize the public resources available.

2.2 City and County -----Establish a true activity based costing model for field and court use and a consistent subsidy strategy for how each sports group is managed based on equitable standards.

2.3 City and County----- Establish a Youth and Adult Sports Commission to help meet operational issues as it applies to maintenance costs and capital improvements.

2.4 City and County -----Establish maintenance standards for all sports groups to follow and adhere.



2.5 City and County -----Maximize the use of field space through effective practice and game field allocation within the classification and priority of users.

Vision Action Strategy 3. for both the City and the County.

Our vision is to develop a joint (city/county) pricing policy based on the level of individual and group exclusivity provided.

Goal: Establish Effective User Fee Pricing of Recreation Services

3.1 City and County ----- Evaluate true costs of all services provided to measure the level of tax subsidy being provided by each agency for recreation services.

3.2 City and County ----- Allow each agency to establish the levels of tax subsidy they want for individual and group recreation services through the pricing policy established.

3.3 City and County ----- Establish an effective communication plan for all users to demonstrate costs and the level of investments they and the governing bodies are providing to deliver the service.

3.4 City and County ----- Seek to achieve a balance between taxes and user fees for operational costs in both governing bodies budgets.

Vision Action Strategy 4. for the City

Our vision is to develop a multi-use intergenerational indoor recreation facility to support the city and county

residents' needs for ice-skating, swimming, gym sports, fitness, and general recreation program uses.



Vision Action Strategy 4. for the County

Our vision is to develop an outdoor family aquatic center for city and county residents to support the community needs for an updated swimming facility that is regional in size and bather capacity.

Goal: Develop Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Facilities to Serve all Demographic Groups in the City and County.

4.1 City----- Close or transfer existing indoor or outdoor recreation facilities to other service providers where appropriate.

4.2 County----- The County will evaluate where a partnership could exist in developing a large family aquatic facility to serve the residents of the city and county in one pool complex.

4.3 County----- The County Parks Department will continue to work jointly with the county schools in providing recreation playground sports programs on school district properties.

4.4 City----- The City will consider other potential partners to participate in the development of the Rec-plex facility to include the local hospital, school systems, YMCA, or Boys and Girls Club.

4.5 City----- The City will conduct a feasibility study to evaluate space requirements, operating costs, and

revenue strategies to fund the development and operational costs of the Rec-Plex.

4.6 City-----Either close or incorporate the ice rink into the Rec-Plex.

4.7 City----- The City will transfer the Downtown Parking Garage to the RiverPark Center to manage.



Vision Action Strategy 5 for both City and County

Our vision is to acquire park land in both the city and county to achieve a ratio of 12 acres per thousand population in the city and 15 acres per thousand in the county.

Goal: Acquire Park Land Where Inequities Exist

5.1 County----- The County will acquire land for a third regional park in the south central area of the county.

5.2 City ----- The City will acquire a balance of neighborhood and community parks citywide to support the active and passive needs of residents.

5.3 County----- The County will acquire buffer property around Yellow Creek and Panther Creek Parks to protect the encroachment of development near the existing parks.

5.4 City----- The City will continue to acquire trail and greenway space to build the trail network around the city.

5.5 County ----- The County will work jointly with the local county school system to identify where game field areas are needed in underserved areas of the county for the County to develop for youth and adults.

5.6 City and County ----- The City and County will seek every opportunity to acquire property next to existing parks to expand recreation services.

5.7 County----- The County will work with the City to develop recreation easements to link the county regional parks to the city's trail network.

5.8 City and County----- The City and County will work jointly to develop a partnership with a land trust to assist the city in acquiring and holding property for future parklands.

5.9 City and County ----- The City and County needs to be involved in developer plans to ensure all goals of the master plan can be incorporated into development documents.

5.10 County----- The County needs to develop a strategy to transfer small county parks to specific city groups or associations via a lease.

Vision Action Strategy 6 for both City and County

Our vision is to establish appropriate levels of funding to meet the community's vision for parks and recreation in the city and county.

Goal: Establish Appropriate Levels of Funding

6.1 City and County----- Seek to increase operating funds to adequately support daily operations.

6.2 City and County----- Develop revenue producing recreation facilities to reduce tax subsidy levels.

6.3 City and County----- Consider the development of a park district to maximize efficiency and eliminate duplication of services.

Vision Action Strategy 7 for both City and County

Our vision is to develop equitable partnerships with public and not-for-profit organizations that help serve the recreational needs of the citizens.

Goal: Establish Effective and Equitable Partnerships

7.1 City and County----- Develop an activity based costing program to measure the equity levels of each existing partnership.

7.2 City and County-----Establish three written partnership policies as it applies to public/public, public/private, and public/not-for-profit groups.

7.3 City and County----- Seek partnerships in future program and facility development in the city and the county with all service providers where appropriate.

7.4 City and County----- Establish measurable outcomes of existing partnerships to demonstrate the impact of this goal to the city and county leaders.

Vision Action Strategy 8 for both City and County

Our vision is to maximize all available resources to generate the funds to develop and operate parks, recreation facilities and program services to their highest efficiency level.

Goal: Maximize Community Resources to Fund the Master Plan Vision

8.1 City and County----- Establish true cost of tasks the city and county produces to determine alternatives to achieve more efficiency.

8.2 County----- Develop a request for proposal (RFP) process on those services or tasks the department would like to outsource or competitively bid out.

8.3 City and County----- Establish an updated mission statement with measurable outcomes and objectives that will be updated every two years.

8.4 City and County----- Identify internal customers and establish standards for communication, systems control and measurable objectives that support users needs.

8.5 City and County----- Develop a technology master plan that will evaluate what access is needed, what equipment and software needs to be upgraded and staff training that needs to be conducted to improve use of technology.

8.6 City and County----- Create flow charts for all systems that will reduce operations and streamline efficiency.

8.7 City and County----- Seek all available funding options to help offset operating costs and provide the highest levels of program and maintenance standards.

8.8 County----- Create an outdoor programmer position to create opportunities for citizens to learn and experience county parks.

Vision Action Strategy 9 for the City

Our vision is to maximize the community's recognition and awareness of the programs and services the City of Owensboro provides.

9.1 Develop a marketing plan to improve managing customers' needs.

9.2 Create a marketing position to promote user benefits and program services to meet customer needs.



Conclusion

The City and County Parks and Recreation Departments had the vision to develop this joint Master Plan to create stronger departments and to address the community's vision for recreation and parks in the city and the county. As a result, this 10-year Master Plan was produced. A tremendous amount of time, energy, work and community input has been taken in order to make this Master Plan possible.

The City of Owensboro and Daviess County Parks and Recreation Departments developed their vision by focusing on community values, past history, trends and key issues that need to be resolved. These core values include family, equity of access, convenience, image, quality, safety, youth and trails.

The City of Owensboro and Daviess County have many opportunities to create strong departments. By creating links between the community and parks the departments will create effective levels of advocacy and support for their mission and vision. Developing signature parks and facilities and maintaining existing parks can increase revenue potential and promote livability in Owensboro and Daviess County. Increasing services and programs will develop a lifetime customer. These are only a few of the opportunities listed in this Master Plan.

The Consultants have completed their work and delivered the final report. The City of Owensboro and Daviess County must now use all the data, recommendations and processes to implement this Plan. It is necessary to consistently monitor trends that affect the recommendations and act accordingly.

It is equally important to gain community input and allow for staff training and development when needed.

The consultants' work is finished—the real work of the Owensboro and Daviess County Parks and Recreation Departments, elected officials and the community has just begun.



Purpose of the Master Plan

The Owensboro and Daviess County Parks and Recreation Departments carry a significant record of providing quality services to the communities they serve. They have a history of providing excellent programs and parks over the last 50 years. It is with this level of commitment, that these two organizations and the Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation decided it was time to look at their operations and determine how change can take place to improve operations and services to the community through the development of a joint Park and Recreation Master Plan.

There are many reasons for developing a Master Plan. Over the last ten years demographic changes have occurred in the city and county, which impacts the parks systems. In addition it is important to follow the public's need for recreation facilities and services to add value to the quality of life of Owensboro.

While many park additions have been made in the last decade in an effort to keep up with growth, the additions

have not been sufficient in terms of number of parks and diversity of park amenities needed for the user. Both Parks and Recreation Departments are experiencing aging infrastructure. Most pools were constructed in the 70's. Several program facilities are obsolete in size and usability.

To address these challenges, the Parks and Recreation Departments embarked on a journey of self-assessment with the desire for organizational improvements. This was done through a program of actively listening to interested community groups and individuals to gain their insight and vision for both parks and recreation departments.



Goals and Process of the Master Plan

From the beginning of the planning process, goal setting has been a critical component to ensure the success of the Master Plan. The entire process can be viewed as a goal-setting, consensus-building exercise, with the desire to create strategies for future actions. Strategies are written as a direct reflection of findings from the research process. They provide a fresh look at the core services of the parks and recreation systems and will help define the areas where the departments need to concentrate their efforts and resources toward the future. Tactics are written from these strategies. The tactics are the steps to be taken within each strategy and reflect the immediate activity that needs to be initiated to accomplish the strategy and thus provide positive direction to the future.

To help focus efforts and energy in this process, a framework for planning was adopted to encourage success. The three-step strategic and comprehensive planning process includes the following elements:

1. The Findings and Observations Phase
2. The Recommendation Phase
3. The Implementation Phase

Findings and Observations

This Phase is a process whereby thorough community research and exploration of both Parks and Recreation Departments takes place. The focus of all efforts in this phase was to gather data. The data consisted of opinions, facts, and impressions of both parks and recreation departments and components of their opinions. During this stage, there was no assessment of how well or poorly the departments were working. There were no judgments on how to correct problems or improve their departments. This phase of the planning process was merely an attempt to gather as much information as possible concerning the status of existing conditions. This phase of the process helped the consultant identify the baseline for understanding how both departments worked.

In addition to the exploration of the parks and recreation departments, a variety of information gathering activities were initiated with key department staff, line staff, other department heads, elected officials, community leaders, and recreation groups who are affiliated with both parks and recreation departments. The public was asked to provide input through a number of fact-gathering strategies. These included focus groups, public forums, and a formal mail survey that addressed a balance of input from citizens that lived in the city and the county. Finally, an analysis of the existing local market and comparable markets in selected cities across the nation was conducted to determine how the local parks and recreation departments compared against Gold Medal Award winning departments.

Collected data was analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses in both parks and recreation departments; to measure the effectiveness of service delivery; and gauge the attitudes of staff, citizens, stakeholders and leaders in the city and county. The intent was to hear from people using a multitude of tools and strategies to encourage feedback. The strategies used were:

Public Involvement

It is imperative that the Master Plan reflects the thinking of the citizens of Owensboro and Daviess County. The community of the future is built with present day planning focusing on the future not on the past. Tomorrow's promises are built on dedicated efforts to include the thinking of the people who will be served by both organizations in the future. To assure the voices of the residents of the county and city were heard in this process, extensive public involvement was encouraged.

Public input was garnered through—

- Citizen survey was randomly distributed in the city and county.
- A series of public meetings were held in local schools.
- Focus group meetings were conducted with special interest groups, seniors, teens, partners, and key community leaders.



Agency and Stakeholder Involvement

In order for organization leaders and staff to participate and engage in change for the future, it is critical to involve them in the change process. To assure there was buy-in from these organization's staff and appointed officials, they were involved in the change process from the outset of the project. The steering committee included representatives from both organizations, elected officials, park board members, and Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation Board members.

Organizational input was accomplished by-

- Program, park and facility audits were conducted. The consulting team through visitations and interviews completed audits.
- Interviews were conducted with stakeholders in and outside both organizations and included various department staff from the city and county, administrators from both the city and county, elected officials, community leaders and recreation groups who use city and county parks and recreation facilities.



Comparative Analysis "Benchmarking"

In order to determine if the services that are provided to the community are exceptional, it is necessary to draw comparisons with other organizations that are similar in size and geographic location. Benchmarking is a highly effective method of determining what services are extraordinary and what services need to be improved.

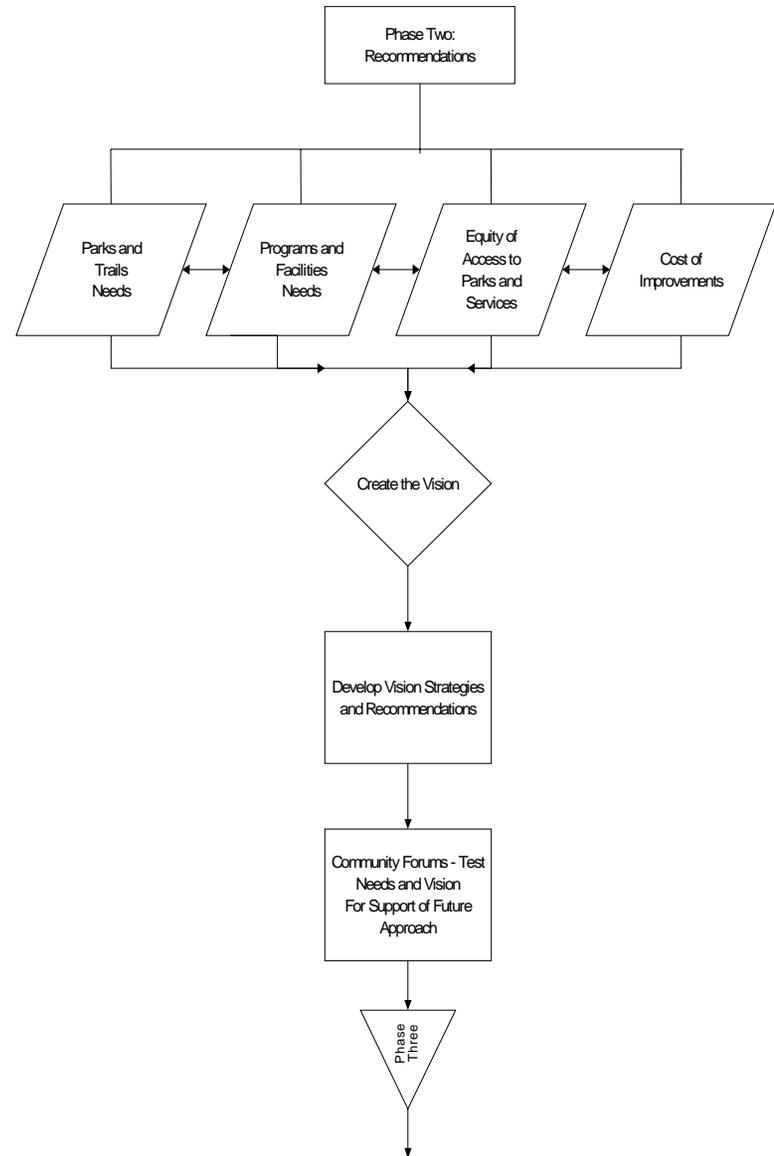
External analysis was completed by-

- The existing local market and comparable markets across the country were reviewed. The market analysis included economics and demographics as they compare to Owensboro and Daviess County.



The Recommendation Phase II

The second phase in the planning process was the Recommendations Phase. Once both parks and recreation departments were researched and factors were identified from the resources described in the Findings Phase, they were analyzed and summary statements were written that describe the observations. Various strategies and tactics were offered as possible solutions to address shortcomings and weaknesses in both departments. The first product of the Recommendations Phase was the creation of the Vision Statements for both departments, which serve as a catalyst and guide for the creation of recommendations. The steering committee assisted the consultant in the Vision Statements that will serve as a “beacon of light” to move both systems into the future.



Parks and Facilities Analysis

Introduction

Community public park facilities are provided in both the city and in county parks systems, the City of Whitesville, and by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. There are 37 public parks in Daviess County, which cover a total of 984 acres. Each of these parks is categorized as primarily serving one of the following functions, even though a particular park may function as more than one of these types:

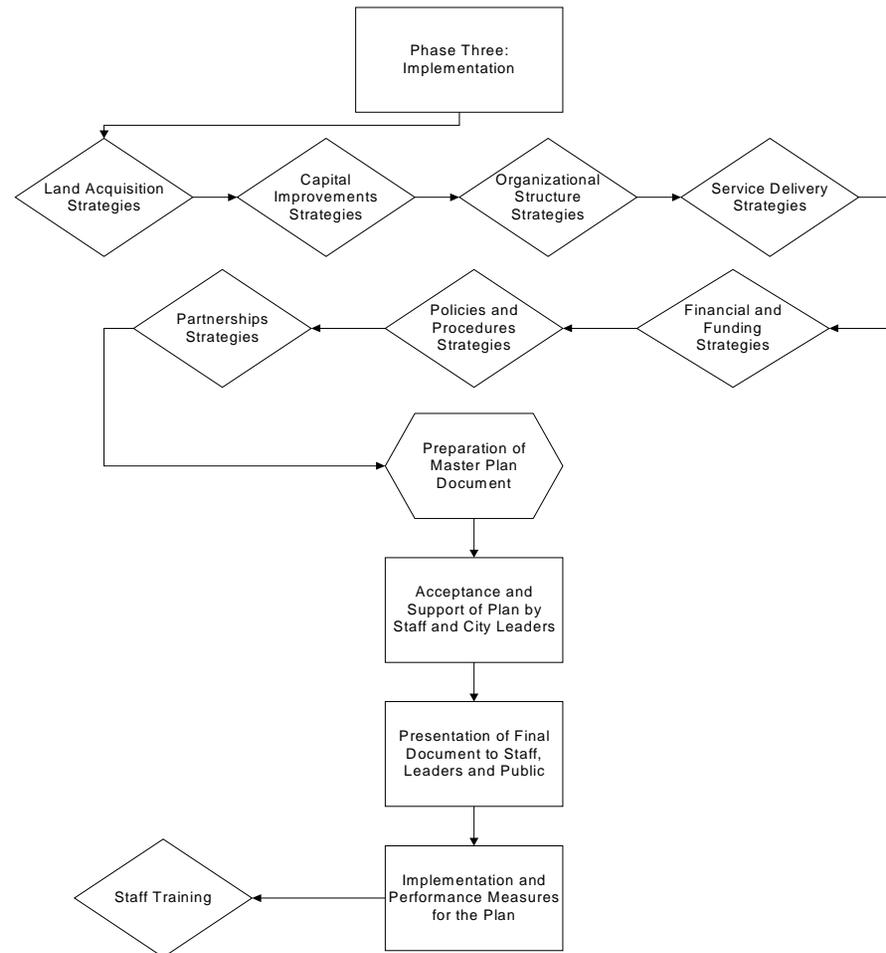
- Neighborhood Parks, which are smaller in size than community parks and are typically designed for a one-hour experience or less and average 5 to 15 acres in size.
- Community Parks, which are generally larger in size (15 to 40 acres), having a broad range of facilities to serve the entire community and are designed for a two or three hour experience.
- Special Use Areas, generally have a limited, specialized use that serve a specific recreation program.

The Parks and Facilities Analysis utilized a computer based Geographic Information System (GIS) program. Data that was incorporated into the program included the city and county's current inventory of parks and facilities. Maps were created for the city's neighborhood parks and community parks based on

equity levels of access or service area. The service area guideline used was one half-mile service radius for neighborhood parks and one mile for community parks. The county park service guideline was four miles. In addition, facility type guidelines were developed to support similar recreation functions based on the type of facility and the population served by the facility. The type of facilities included tennis courts, baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, playgrounds, basketball courts and gyms, football fields, aquatic facilities, golf courses, trail systems and ice rink.

Implementation Phase III

Once recommendations were adopted by the steering committee, the final phase of the planning process was the Implementation Phase. Recommendations, strategies, and tactics were summarized and prioritized by the committee. Future energies and efforts of both departments will focus on these initiatives by level of priority. Strong links between results from the Findings Phase and Recommendation Phase will be recognized in the Implementation Phase. The Implementation Phase reflects the combined efforts of all staff and steering committee members involved in the planning process. Wide acceptance of these results was one of the goals of steering committee members in creating the vision, strategies and tactics of the plan. As a result, key leaders in the city and county were invited to a community meeting to hear the recommendations and strategies of the plan prior to writing the final report. Their support of the shared vision and goals of the Master Plan provided energy for both departments to engage in advancing the community's vision for parks and recreation as it applies to both departments moving forward.



Parks and Facilities Guideline Recommendations

With the use of geographic information systems, the parks and facilities were mapped in the city and the county. The information was overlaid with demographic estimates and projections to determine service areas. These service areas identified gaps of parks and facilities within the city and county.

By the year 2012, both departments should acquire and develop the following additional parks and facilities.

Standards and Guidelines – Community Wide Approach

- Acreage Level Standard: City (12 acres per 1,000 population). The City should have 648 acres, it has 316, so the total acres needed to meet standard is 332.
- Acreage Level Standard: County (15 acres per 1,000 population). The County should have 555 acres, it has 233, so the total acres needed to meet standard is 322.
- Football Field Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 10,000 population). The City and

County should have 5 fields, they have 5, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 0.

- Ice Rink Level Standard: City and County (1 ice rink per 50,000 population). The City and County should have 2 ice rinks, they have 1, so the total ice rinks needed to meet standard is 1.
- Playground Level Standard: City and County (1 playground per 2,500 population). The City and County should have 37 playgrounds, they have 15, so the total playgrounds needed to meet standard is 22.
- Soccer Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 fields, they have 14, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 9.
- Baseball Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 5,000 population). The City and County should have 18 fields, they have 23, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 0.
- Softball Level Standard: City and County (1 field per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 fields, they have 27, so the total fields needed to meet standard is 0.
- Gym Level Standard: City and County (1 gym per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 gyms, they have 2, so the total gyms needed to meet standard is 21.

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- Tennis Level Standard: City and County (1 court per 4,000 population). The City and County should have 23 courts, they have 28, so the total courts needed to meet standard is 0.
- Basketball Courts Outside Level Standard: City and County (1 court per 2,500 population). The City and County should have 37 courts, they have 10, so the total courts needed to meet standard is 27.
- Golf Course Level Standard: City and County (1 course per 25,000 population). The City and County should have 4 courses, they have 4, so the total courses needed to meet standard is 0.
- Flat Water Pools Level Standard: City and County (1 pool per 20,000 population). The City and County should have 5 pools, they have 3, so the total pools needed to meet standard is 2.
- Aquatic Center Level Standard: City and County (1 center per 50,000 population). The City and County should have 2 aquatic centers, they have none, so the total aquatic centers needed to meet standard is 2.

Comparison of Existing Parks and Recreation Facility Standards for City of Owensboro and Daviess County.

Past studies of Daviess County parks and recreation facilities have noted deficits in public parkland acreage. The 1976 *Parks and Outdoor Recreation Area Plan for the Owensboro Metro Area* identified the need for several new parks. In the 1981 *Operations Review Report*, it was noted that Owensboro provided only 4.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, while Evansville provided 13.3, and Lexington 12.5.

In 1988, the *Comprehensive Plan for Owensboro, Whitesville and Daviess County* identified a total of 835 acres of public parkland within Daviess County, which provided 9.3 acres per 1,000 residents. Within the City

of Owensboro there were 282 acres of parks, or 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents.

Current Parkland

In 2000, Daviess County has a total of 984 acres of public parkland, which provides 10.8 acres per 1,000 residents, which includes the state of Kentucky parklands. Within the city of limits of Owensboro there are 316 acres of parks, or 5.8 acres per thousand residents, which is well below the National Standard of 10-12 acres per thousand population. In Daviess County, the park system has 233 acres of parkland, or 6.3 acres per thousand. In the "Benchmark Report" of this plan, the consultant compared the cities of Kettering, OH (pop. 57,502), Bowling Green, KY (pop. 49,400), Bloomington, IN (pop. 66,000), Lawrence, KS (pop. 82,240), and Germantown, TN

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(pop, 32,270) to Owensboro and Daviess County. The total acres of the benchmarked cities are as follows:

- Bowling Green 658 acres (31 acres per 1000)
- Bloomington 1854 acres (28 acres per 1000)
- Kettering 548 acres (9.5 acres per 1000)
- Lawrence 1497 acres (18,2 acres per 1000)
- Germantown 537 acres (16 acres per 1000)

Playgrounds Total - 15	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	14
Legion Park	1
Chautauqua Park	1
Moreland Park	1
Smothers Park	1
English Park	1
Russell Shifley Park	1
Thompson-Berry Park	1
Jack C. Fisher Softball Complex	1
Dugan Best Park	1
Goose Egg Park	1
Kendall-Perkins Park	1
Max Rhoads Park	1
York Park	1
Daviess County Parks and Recreation	2
Panther Creek Park	1
Yellow Creek Park	1

Soccer Fields Total – 14	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	11
Thompson Berry Soccer Complex	11
Daviess County Parks and Recreation	2
Panther Creek Park	2

Tennis Courts Total – 28	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	25
Brescia University	2
Southern Park	4
Moreland Park	12
York Park	1
Kendall-Perkins Park	2
Dugan Best Park	2
Legion Park	2
Daviess County Parks and Recreation	3
Yellow Creek Park	2
Stanley	1

Ice Arenas Total – 1	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	1

STANDARDS AND LEVEL OF SERVICES

Basketball Courts - Outside Total – 10	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	8
Legion Park	1
Chautauqua Park	1
Moreland Park	1
Dugan Best Park	1
Kendall-Perkins Park	2
James Mason Park	1
Max Rhoads Park	1
Daviess County Parks and Recreation	2
Panther Creek Park	1
Yellow Creek Park	1

Golf Courses Total - 4	
Ben Hawes State Park – 18 Hole	1
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	1
Hillcrest Golf Course – 9 Hole	
Panther Creek Golf Club – 18 Hole	1
The Summit – 18 Hole	1

Football Fields Total – 5	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	5
Southwest Park	4
Shifley Park	1

Baseball Fields Total – 23	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	8
Chautauqua Park	3
Moreland Park	2
Southern Park	3
Daviess County Parks and Recreation	15
Panther Creek Park	2
Yellow Creek Park	1
Schools	12

Softball Fields Total – 27	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	8
Dugan Best Park	1
Moreland Park	1
James Mason Park	1
Jack C. Fisher Softball Complex	5
Daviess County Parks and Recreation	19
Panther Creek Park	4
Yellow Creek Park	2
Schools	13

Flat Water Pools Total - 3	
Owensboro Parks and Recreation	3
Kendall-Perkins Park	1
Combest Pool	1
Cravens Pool	1

Coverage Deficiencies

Even though the totals for Daviess County are slightly above the national standard when you include the state park facilities at Ben Hawes, the city and the county are very far below the national guidelines and certainly below the benchmarked cities. Parks can and do provide economic impact to a community and to homeowners who live next to a park, trail or greenway. The City shows a deficiency of 332 acres of parkland based on the national guidelines of 10 acres per 1000 and the County shows a deficiency of 226 acres based on the same 10-acre guideline.

Proposed Parks and Facilities

The purpose of the Parks and Facilities Analysis section of the Master Plan is to determine the needs for new parks and facilities within the city and county. Based on the projected demographic data and the results of the Parks and Facilities analysis, recommendations for new park development fall into three categories: 1) city bond projects, 2) county bond projects, 3) city and county partnerships. The recommendations are prioritized to minimize duplication of programs and facilities between the city and the county while satisfying the needs of all Daviess County residents.

Benchmark Analysis

For the Benchmark Analysis, five cities were chosen for their location, size and demographics. It is valuable to compare the trends affecting parks and recreation departments most similar with the City of Owensboro and Daviess County. This research will help Owensboro and Daviess County make informed decisions about their future based on comparative data. The benchmark process was initiated by sending a survey to administrators of the following cities:

- Kettering, Ohio (pop. 57,502)
- Bowling Green, Kentucky (pop. 49,400)
- Bloomington, Indiana (pop. 66,000)
- Lawrence, Kansas (pop. 82,240)
- Germantown, Tennessee (pop. 32,270)



Table 1: Service Area Analysis Guidelines

Park Type	Owensboro	Kettering	Bowling Green	Bloomington	Lawrence	Germantown
Mini Parks (1-2 acres)	1.5	4.5	5.15	6.3	9.5	3.2
Neighborhood Parks (5-15 acres)	45.8	122.7	54.25	74.5	105	69
School Parks		23	1	0	0	20
Community Parks (15-40 acres)	251.3	90.7	51.3	118.7	214	138
Regional Parks (40-200 acres)	0	188.4	585	89.3	204	107.5
Sports Complexes	0	0	55	293.5	0	114
Natural Areas	14	0	20	1155.5	1143	70
Greenways	0	0	0	71.6	80	0
Other	3.5		359*		0	0
Total Acres	316.1	431.3	776.7/359*	1854	1825.5	537.2

* Golf course (250 acres) and cemetery (109 acres)

Game Fields

The City of Owensboro has 32 game fields, which ranks next to last in the number of fields. When comparing per capita ratio, Kettering ranks first with one field for 1,009 people. Owensboro ranks fourth out of six with one field per 1,689 people.

City	Baseball	Football	Soccer	Softball	Multi-Purpose	Total
Kettering	43	3	14	0	0	60
Lawrence	1	0	14	20	14	49
Owensboro	8	5	11	8	0	32
Germantown	11	4	10	5	0	30
Bloomington	14	12	0	2	1	29
Bowling Green	7	0	13	2	0	22

<i>Cities</i>	<i>Ratio Fields per Capita</i>
Kettering, OH	1:1,009
Germantown, TN	1:1,076
Lawrence, KS	1:1,678
Owensboro, KY	1:1,689
Bowling Green, KY	1:2,245
Bloomington, IN	1:2,276

Game Courts

The City of Owensboro has 35 game courts, which ranks next to last in number of courts. Based on per capita, Germantown is first with one court for 978 people. Owensboro ranks fourth out of six with one court per 1,545 people.

City	Basketball	Sand Volleyball	Tennis	Multi-Purpose	Racquetball	Total
Kettering	18	4	32	1	0	55
Lawrence	22	0	18	0	0	40
Bloomington	8	2	6	2	21	39
Bowling Green	12	4	19	0	2	37
Owensboro	8	2	25	0	0	35
Germantown	3	1	26	0	3	33

<i>Cities</i>	<i>Ratio Courts per Capita</i>
Germantown, TN	1:978
Kettering, OH	1:1,045
Bowling Green, KY	1:1,335
Owensboro, KY	1:1,545
Bloomington, IN	1:1,692
Lawrence, KS	1:2,056

Flat Water Pools

Owensboro and Lawrence both have 3 flat water pools. Owensboro has one pool per 18,022 people. Kettering has 2 Family Aquatic Centers and Bowling Green and Bloomington both have 1 Family Aquatics Centers.

City	Indoor	Outdoor
Owensboro, KY	0	3
Lawrence, KS	1	2
Bowling Green, KY	0	2
Kettering, OH	1	1
Bloomington, IN	0	2
Germantown, TN	1	0

<i>Cities</i>	<i>Ratio Pools per Capita</i>
Owensboro, KY	1:18,022
Bloomington, IN	1:22,000
Bowling Green, KY	1:24,700
Lawrence, KS	1:27,413
Kettering, OH	1:28,751
Germantown, TN	1:39,279

Recreation Centers

Lawrence ranks first with one center for every 13,700 residents. The centers in Kettering and Germantown are state of the art facilities that offer opportunities for all ages in the community. The recreation center in Owensboro is old and does not have the opportunity for diversified programs that are available in other communities.

City	Recreation Center
Lawrence, KS	6
Bowling Green, KY	2
Bloomington, IN	2
Owensboro, KY	1
Kettering, OH	1
Germantown, TN	1

<i>Cities</i>	<i>Ration Centers per Capita</i>
Lawrence, KS	1:23,707
Bowling Green, KY	1:24,700
Bloomington, IN	1:33,000
Germantown, TN	1:39,279
Owensboro, KY	1:54,067
Kettering, OH	1:57,502

Local Findings

This section provides a brief summary of the process undertaken by the consulting team to seek input from the community, staff, elected officials on city and County Park and recreation issues. Key findings reports are in the appendix of this Master Plan report in their entirety.

Focus groups, key stakeholder interviews and citizen mail surveys were used to effectively gain a comprehensive understanding of how people perceive the parks and recreation departments and their respective future directions.

After focus group interviews were completed, mail surveys were distributed randomly to residents of the city and county. Interviews were conducted with internal and external partners. Internal partners are other departments within the city and county that work closely with the parks and recreation departments. External partners are groups who utilize the services and facilities of the city and county for recreation purposes.

From the analysis of the data, key findings were written to reflect the research team's understanding of what people feel, think and desire for the future of the parks and recreation departments.

Findings are sorted into several categories including:

- Program Analysis
- Recreation Property Inventory
- Neighborhood and Community Park Analysis
- Polices
- Communication

Methodology

The data was provided by the US Census Bureau and Claritas Inc. a national firm specializing in population projections and market trends reports. For this project, the area analyzed was the County of Daviess and the City of Owensboro. The raw data is supplied by Claritas. This information has been put into tables, charts, and graphs to clarify the market segments and recognize shifts.

Understanding the demographic environment is important for the following reasons:

1. To have knowledge of the market area being served and distinguish customer groups.
2. To determine changes that are occurring in the area and make proactive decisions to accommodate these shifts. People's wants change with age.
3. To consider the department's own objectives and resources in relationship to the demographic makeup.

Demographics

1. The County of Daviess 1990 population was at 87,189, at 91,545 in 2000, and projected to increase to 92,684 by the year 2005. This is an increase of approximately 6.3% from 1990 and 1.5% from 2000 in the population, which is estimated to equal 1,353 persons over the next five-year period.

2. The City of Owensboro 1990 population was at 53,549, at 54,067 in 2000 and projected to decrease to 53,595 by the year 2005. This is a slight decrease of approximately 0.2% from the 2000 and 1990 population, which is estimated to be a decrease of 93 persons over the next five-year period.
3. In Daviess County, the 40-49 year-olds represent the most populous age group at 14.6% of the total population followed by 5-14 year-olds at 14.4% and the 50-59 year-olds at 13%. The 50-59 year-olds are also projected to have the highest percentage growth of all the age groups.
4. In Owensboro, the 40-49 year-olds represent the most populous age group at 14.4% of the total population followed by 5-14 year-olds at 13.8% and the 50-59 year-olds at 12.6%. The 55-64 year-olds indicated the highest percentage growth in an age group.
5. By the year 2005, approximately 58% of the county's population is projected to reside in the City of Owensboro.
6. The median age of the area is increasing in both the County and the City with the median projected to be 37.1 for Daviess and 38.3 for Owensboro by the year 2005. This indicates a younger middle-age composition to the area and is common with the aging of the baby boomers. There is also an indication that the age groups of 25-39 are declining in growth percentage, which impacts the median age.

7. The three highest income levels will stay fairly consistent for the next 5 years, both for the County and City. The following table summarizes the ranking of the income levels. The area comprises mostly lower middle class income households. The incomes of less than \$10,000 and the \$10-24,999 are generally householders ages 15-24 and 75+.
8. For both the County and the City, the highest household median income level will consist of the 45-54 year-olds followed by the 35-44 year olds by the year 2005.

Daviess County

<i>Rank</i>	<i>1990 Census</i>	<i>2000 Census</i>	<i>2005 Projected</i>
Highest	\$10 – 24,999	\$10 – 24,999	\$10 – 24,999
Second	Under \$10,000	\$50 - 74,999	\$50 - 74,999
Third	\$25 - 34,999	\$35 - 49,999	\$35 - 49,999

City of Owensboro

<i>Rank</i>	<i>1990 Census</i>	<i>2000 Census</i>	<i>2005 Projected</i>
Highest	\$10 – 24,999	\$10 – 24,999	\$10 - 24,999
Second	Under \$10,000	\$35 - 49,999	\$50 - 74,999
Third	\$25 - 34,999	\$50 - 74,999	\$35 - 49,999

9. The Daviess County and City of Owensboro racial population is projected to remain consistent through 2005. Owensboro is projected to be slightly more diverse than the County. The projected racial makeup for the County is 94% white, 4% black, 1% Hispanic, and 1% other. The City's racial make up is projected to be 91% white, 7% black, 1% Hispanic, and 1% other. Over the ten year period, most of changes in the racial makeup were between 1 and 1.5%
10. The sizes of households are decreasing slightly for both Daviess County and Owensboro. Daviess County has household sizes decreasing from 2.53 in 2000 to 2.51 by 2005. Owensboro has household sizes decreasing from 2.34 in 2000 to 2.32 by 2005. This follows the national trend of decreasing family sizes.
11. The number of households is increasing slightly for both Daviess County and Owensboro. Daviess County is projected to have the number of households increase from 2000 estimate of 35,227 to 36,053 by the year 2005. This is an increase of about 2.3%. Housing units are also projected to increase at the same rate of 2.3%. For Owensboro, the number of households is projected to increase from 22,161 in 2000 to 22,338 by 2005. This is an increase of 0.8%, which is also reflected in housing units increase of 0.8%.



Finding 1. Program Analysis

1.1 The survey respondents and focus group participants expressed a desire to increase the recreation program opportunities for both the City and County in variety of areas that would positively impact all segments of the community. Overall the residents of the city and county have low participation levels in city and county programs. Many residents do not utilize or are not aware of the program services provided by the City and County. There is an articulated need to increase programs to specific age groups and tailor them to meet their needs based on the population and what other service providers are providing in the city and county. Overall ratings from citizens for programs offered by the City and County were very high at 85% rating them as excellent or good. A consistent feedback process on the quality of users' experiences from the programs needs to be enhanced and fully implemented.

Strategic Action Conclusion

Recreation programs drive the image and success of an organization. In order to provide the cutting edge program services for the community, it is necessary to continually review the product and service mix and determine which programs will best match the community in the city and county.

Policy Directive

- Survey the program participants before, during and after the program activity.
- Conduct focus groups with participants to determine new or changing needs in providing services.

- Train staff to apply marketing principles to programs and services to reach program's capability and capacity.

1. 2 All recreation programs, centers and services should be marketed to the public to increase awareness and participation levels.

Strategic Action Conclusion

A lack of consistent equity in promoting programs exists in both the City and County Agencies. A marketing plan needs to be developed for all core programs and services the city and county provide. Both departments need to establish marketing strategies and promotional efforts to encourage the public to use the services provided.

Policy Directive

- Create a marketing unit to support recreation and park services in the city.
- Define the specific market segments and promote to those separately based on their geographic needs.
- Create advertising opportunities for the program brochure to offset costs.
- Develop a joint city/ county program brochure and distribute four times a year.

1.3 New programs need to be developed that target outdoor recreation in the County. New programs need to be developed in the city to provide services targeted towards youth after-school programs, special events, senior adult services, fitness and wellness programs, teen programs, arts, aquatics, family- type programs and sports.

Strategic Action Conclusion

Population studies indicate that the older adult market in the city and county is going to grow to over 15% of the population base by year 2005. This group can become a significant advocacy group for both parks and recreation departments to draw from. Providing useful services for youth and adults in the new program categories outlined will increase the opportunities for more operational revenues and support the development of the new recreation facilities outline in the Master Plan.

Policy Directive

- Begin designing specific recreation programs targeted for ages 50-60,60-70,70-80+.
- Consider creating programs to accommodate the competitive spirit of the baby boomer age group.
- Identify youth program service gaps in the city and county and develop new programs to service those gaps as it applies to outdoor recreation, after school programs, arts, teens, sports and family type activities.
- Identify recreation needs and promote programs that meet those needs.
- Design new or redesign existing facilities to serve these targeted age groups.
- Partner with other service providers in the city and county to deliver and coordinate new programs without duplication unless there is a need to duplicate to cover the program gaps.

1.4 The lack of program facility space accounts for not providing needed programs.

Strategic Action Conclusion

New recreation facilities are necessary to enhance programs and fill gaps that exist in the community. There is a need to close existing facilities because they are at the end of their useful life. New facilities for aquatics, a regional recreation center to serve many ages, and a new ice rink need to be developed in the community now.

Policy Directive

- Determine where new facilities are needed in the community.
- Identify through a feasibility study the features and amenities that are most needed in these facilities to accommodate the user base and the demographics.
- Develop partnership agreements with other service providers to help support the capital and operational costs of the new facilities.

Finding 2 – Recreation Property Inventory

2.1 Overall, recreation facilities in the city and county are most in need of new and or renovated improvements due to the age and overuse. Park facilities by far are being managed more efficiently in the city than recreation facilities as it applies to capital improvements. In the county the park facilities at Yellow Creek Park are in the most need of improvement.

Strategic Action Conclusion

An effective maintenance and improvement program for older facilities is needed. Several facilities are expensive to keep open and are unable to provide a return to users on quality or operational revenues.

Policy Directive

- Create a capital improvement schedule as outlined in the Master Plan to upgrade all existing facilities to year 2002 standards.
- Close or transfer existing recreation facilities and build new state-of-the-art facilities that can operate more efficiently and serve a wider demographic appeal.

2.2 There is a desire to add regional facilities with many amenities that will meet the community’s needs in a more efficient manner.

Strategic Action Conclusion

A regional recreation center is needed in the community to serve residents in a variety of activities in one location. Indoor aquatic, gymnasiums, fitness and wellness areas, senior and teen spaces and an ice rink are the most important user needs from the resident’s perspective. An outdoor family aquatic facility is needed to serve the city and county residents as well. An outdoor soccer complex is needed to serve the growing soccer population.

Policy Directive

- Determine the best locations where the regional recreation facilities should be developed and create a partnership between the city and county on who will be responsible for developing the signature facilities.

- Develop feasibility studies for each signature attraction to determine the optimal size, capital costs and operational costs to manage against to achieve the highest levels of return to the residents.

2.3 Pools are not being used to capacity.

Policy Directive

- Identify a location for a new family aquatic facility on county parkland near the city corporate boundaries.
- Generate the funding options needed to support the facility through a feasibility study.
- Establish an effective pricing policy for admission rates to aquatic centers.

Finding 3 – Neighborhood and Community Park Analysis

3.1 Owensboro residents would like more neighborhood parks in the northwest area, the southeast area and northeast area. In the county there is a need for a community park in the south central part. They also would like to have more soccer and game fields and improvements to older parks.

Strategic Action Conclusion

As many older parks are upgraded, include the features that will motivate the neighborhood and community to use. Amenities should be targeted to the demographics of the area surrounding the park. Both the City and County received low ratings for citizens’ satisfaction with the number of neighborhood and community parks available. The improvements they most want to see in the parks were

drinking fountains, additional restrooms, improved lighting, walking trails, picnic shelters and upgrading of park equipment. Generally, parks require several features in order to ensure neighborhood and community use.

Policy Directive

- Create desirable design features in future neighborhood and community park developments to meet the demographic needs of the community.
- Establish through the design process what each park needs to do for the neighborhood and the community served by the park as it applies to program access, economic impact and safety.

3.2 Long-term planning is needed for neighborhood and community park development. Citizens and neighborhood associations should be involved in the design and construction of parks both new and renovated.

Strategic Action Conclusion:

The community wants to participate in park planning, design and development. This strategy will help the departments develop parks that are customized to fit the needs of Owensboro and Daviess County residents in order to increase park advocacy and usage.

Policy Directive

- Create neighborhood and community park planning teams for park development to work with neighborhood and community residents on park design and standards for care.
- Identify methods for funding park acquisition, development and renovation.

- Develop parks based on a set of principles for what the park needs to do for the community who will be using it.

Finding 4 - Policies

4.1 Partnership opportunities should be explored.

Strategic Action Conclusion

There are a number of partnering opportunities available for the departments that should be explored and maximized to meet program services demands. The diversity of potential partners in the community presents different complications for many levels in both organizations. Staff must look beyond their own realm of responsibility when considering the benefits that partnerships bring to both parks and recreation departments. Existing partnerships should be reviewed to ensure they are equitable for all parties involved.

Policy Directive

- Review existing partnerships to determine their makeup and degree of equity.
- Identify areas where new partnerships can be explored in order to help the parks and recreation departments improve services to the community as a result of the relationship.

4.2 A fees and charges policy needs to be communicated with all programming staff in both organizations to gain a clear understanding of direct and indirect costs and how to effectively price services.

Strategic Action Conclusion:

Current pricing and fees for classes do not include both direct and indirect costs. Formulas for establishing program pricing are not subjective to each program area and are not based on the level of benefits received.

While many community leaders and staff feel there is a need for free and highly subsidized programs in the city, it appears there is a desire for the organization to move toward fee based programs to fund the operational costs of recreation facilities and programs. Half of the community surveyed was either very or somewhat supportive of charging fees for recreation services and facilities. There is good support by the community for increasing the parks and recreation budgets for both departments. It will be necessary to increase the revenues over time rather than overnight. There are a number of ways revenues can be generated to create new opportunities for recreation programs and facilities in the future. These new opportunities can be classified as earned income opportunities, grants, alliances, partnerships, and sponsorships.

Policy Directive

- Create a revenue policy that addresses several pricing strategy levels for public fees.
- Consider public, merit and private fee structures that allow access for people who are unable to pay.
- Based on effective criteria, develop scholarships and partnerships to assist in paying for recreation programs for those who are unable to pay.

Finding 5 - Communication

5.1 Communication and cooperation between the Parks and Recreation Departments and other organizations in the city and county needs to improved.

Strategic Action Conclusion

Consistent external communications within the city and county are critical to improve services for residents to embrace the services provided.

Policy Directive:

- Create communication improvement teams within both parks and recreation departments to encourage effective communication with residents on services provided.
- Establish effective performance measures to track the impact of communications.

5.2 Marketing efforts should be improved in both parks and recreation departments.

Strategic Action Conclusion

Program descriptions in the program brochures and flyers need to be enhanced. It is difficult to explain the features and benefits of the programs in limited space available. More marketing strategies of facilities and programs are needed. The ultimate goal is to enhance the public support and increase advocacy for the parks and recreation departments.

Policy Directive

- Determine methods to improve marketing of both organizations.
- Develop a marketing plan for both departments.
- Develop site-specific marketing plans for the department's facilities and core recreation services.

Goals

The Vision for Owensboro and Daviess County Parks and Recreation Departments

The consulting team worked twelve months actively listening to the Owensboro and Daviess County community, collecting important data and projecting trends for the future. From this work, the parks and recreation departments' staff and the Master Plan Steering Committee created the plan to move both organizations into the future.

The next step in the planning process was to create a vision that reflected the collection of input and data from the community and the departments. The Steering Committee and the Consulting team participated in a two-

To achieve this vision, the department must develop key concepts that drive the overall management of the parks and recreation system. Key concepts are:

1. Connectivity
2. Equitable access to parks and recreation facilities
3. Developing lifetime customers
4. Developing signature facilities
5. Establish core services
6. Creativity in managing and operating parks, recreation facilities and programs
7. Quality management of public assets and services

day workshop to create the visions and vision action strategies. The visions for both departments will drive the organizations in the desired direction the community desires.

The vision was created from the overall findings of the community analysis through a series of steering committee meetings with the consultant. Once the findings presentation was completed, discussions ensued on the importance of principles, values, and the creation of themes and trends. The group was asked to prioritize staff and community values and incorporate those values into the process of creating the Master Plan. Once values were established, findings from each area of both parks and recreation departments were reviewed to create potential themes for the vision.

Vision Statement for the City of Owensboro Parks and Recreation

“ The Owensboro Parks and Recreation Department will provide a variety of parks, recreation facilities and program experiences equitably throughout the community. Programs will be developed and maintained to the highest quality, ensuring a safe environment with exceptional service while developing a lifetime customer. Services will demonstrate a positive economic investment through partnerships with other service providers, both public and private, ensuring a high quality of life for citizens of Owensboro.”

Vision Statement for Daviess County Parks and Recreation

“ The Daviess County Parks and Recreation Department vision is to develop a series of signature parks and recreational facilities geographically situated in the County that create opportunities for citizens to engage in a variety of passive and active recreational activities.”

Vision Policy Directives

City

1. The City will continue to develop the trails system that will connect the city’s parks, recreation facilities and destination attractions to people of all ages while ensuring safe access for all citizens.
2. The City will create equitable access for all citizens by developing neighborhood and community parks in under-served areas.
3. The City will establish core recreation services for all citizens that create a lifetime user in programs targeted to youth, teens, adults, families and community-wide events.
4. The City will develop a signature recreation center that will serve residents of the city and county in a variety of recreation experiences in one setting to maximize the cost benefit of the investment and frame the city’s image of livability.

5. The City will maximize all available resources in operating and maintaining parks and programs, utilizing creativity that incorporates partnerships, key trends, efficiency and acceptable funding sources.

County

1. The County will develop a third regional park in the south central part of the county.
2. The County will develop a family aquatic center that supports all residents of the city and county.
3. The County will develop a signature soccer complex to serve youth and adults.
4. The County will maximize all available resources in operating and maintaining parks and programs utilizing creativity that incorporate partnerships, key trends, efficiency and acceptable funding sources.
5. The County will continue to develop recreation programs targeted to outdoor recreation services.

To realize this vision and respond to the issues raised in the Findings and Observations Phase of this Master Plan, both departments and their elected officials must commit to the action strategies.



Capital Improvement Costs Recommendations

The ability to project the costs associated with making the park and facility improvements is necessary in order to plan for the future. Based upon the parks and facilities recommendations, the cost to phase in the land acquisition,

development, improvements to existing assets and construction of new facilities is estimated to be \$24,270,000 for the city over the next 10 years and \$13,333,000 for the county over the next 10 years.

City of Owensboro Master Plan

Capital Improvement Costs (10 Year Plan)

Recreation Center	\$14,450,000
85,000 Square Feet x \$170 Square Foot 3 multi-purpose gym space that can be used for basketball, volleyball, inline skating, and soccer; one sheet of ice, weight room, fitness area, game room, locker rooms, running track, senior and teen area, community rooms.	
Thompson – Berry Park	\$ 235,000
Restroom / Concession Facility	\$ 125,000
Expanded Parking	\$ 110,000
Jack C. Fisher Park	\$ 125,000
Restrooms	
English Park	
Improvements need to be tied to Riverfront Plan	
Southern Park	\$ 125,000
Restrooms	

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Jack Fisher Softball Complex		\$ 558,000
Build New Field House	\$ 250,000	
Concessions, scorekeepers area, umpires room, office, and storage		
Shaded Structures over Bleachers	\$ 8,000	
Renovate Fifth Field	\$ 300,000	
 Shifley Park		 \$800,000
Acquire Land next to Park –20 acres		
 Legion Park		 \$ 30,000
Additional Parking –Add 30 Spaces		
 James Mason Park		 \$ 40,000
Improve Rest Room		
 Smothers Park		
Improvements need to be tied to River Front Plan		
 Chautauqua Park		 \$ 60,000
Light One Field		
 Moreland Park		 \$ 20,000
Add (4) Picnic Pods		
 Yewell Heritage Park		 \$360,000
Development		
 Dugan Best Park		 \$350,000
Acquire Adjacent Land		

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Hillcrest Golf Course		\$183,000
Upgrade Irrigation System	\$100,000	
Rebuild Greens	\$ 50,000	
Fence around Golf Course	\$ 33,000	
Southwest Park		\$1,634,000
Development – Sprayground, playground, shelters, parking		
Sportscenter		\$1,300,000
Phase II		
Add (5) New Neighborhood Parks		\$1,000,000
@ 5 Acres minimum @ \$40,000/Acre		
Add (1) New Community Park		\$2,000,000
50 acres @ \$40,000/Acre		
Trail Access Properties		\$1,000,000

City Summarization	
Improvement Costs to Existing	\$ 2,031,000
New Facilities	\$17,089,000
Land Acquisitions	\$ 5,150,000
Total	\$24,270,000

Daviess County Master Plan

Capital Improvement Costs (10 Year Plan) Based on Year 2001 Costs

Panther Creek Park Improvements		\$ 980,000
Buildings (Shelters, concessions)	\$ 50,000	
ADA Playground (new)	\$ 60,000	
Maintenance/Offices	\$ 150,000	
Connector Trails	\$ 720,000	\$3,600,000 Federal and State funding will be sought to provide 80% match
\$400,000/Mile x 9 Miles		
10 Feet Wide, Paved to tie into the Greenbelt Park		
 Yellow Creek Park Improvements		 \$1,633,000
Building Improvements	\$ 150,000	
Amphitheatre	\$ 250,000	
Air Condition Concession Booths	\$ 3,000	
Walking Trails	\$ 800,000	
\$200,000/Mile x 4 Miles		
8 Foot Wide, Asphalt		
Improve Signage	\$ 30,000	
Connector Trails	\$ 400,000	\$2,000,000 Federal and State funding will be sought to provide 80% match
\$400,000/Mile x 5 Mile		
10 Feet Wide/Paved to tie into the Greenbelt Park		
 Two Playgrounds @ \$60,000		 \$ 120,000
 Outdoor Aquatic Center Option (1)		 \$5,000,000
1000 Bather Load		

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

New South Central Regional Park – Soccer Complex	\$5,716,500
Retention Pond	\$ 500,000
Trails	\$ 400,000
\$200,000/Mile x 2 Miles	
Concession/Restroom/Shop	\$ 250,000
1250 square feet x \$200/sq. ft.	
12 Soccer Fields	\$3,000,000
\$250,000 each includes: Seeding, Drainage, Irrigation, Grading, Lights	
Driving Range Net	\$ 75,000
Bury Utility Lines	\$ 100,000
2 Playgrounds	\$ 160,000
5 Shelters @ \$60,000 each	\$ 300,000
Pavilion	\$ 100,000
Pond Fountain	\$ 10,000
Parking	\$ 450,000
450 Spaces @ \$1000 each	
Bleachers 24 @ \$2000 each	\$ 48,000
6 Foot Bridges @ \$6,000 each	\$ 36,000
25 Picnic Tables @ \$400 each	\$ 10,000
15 Benches @ \$100 each	\$ 1,500
Park Signage	\$ 30,000
Landscaping and Trees	\$ 150,000
Goals 24 x \$4,000 each	\$ 96,000

Daviess County Summarization	
Improvement Costs to Existing	\$ 3,613,000
New Facilities	\$ 5,120,000
Land Acquisitions	\$ 3,600,000
Land Acquisitions Outside Beltway	\$ 1,000,000
Total	\$13,333,000

Potential Revenue Sources to Support Operational and Capital Costs

Funding

After the vision strategies and recommendations were reviewed and agreed upon, financial funding options were outlined to support the Master Plan’s Vision for both the City and the County. The following funding strategies and overall outcomes desired to fund these projects are included in this section of the Plan.

The Master Plan Team evaluated seventy different funding options that are used by other cities and counties across the United States. Many of these funding options are not allowed under Kentucky law. The consultant team and Master Plan Team evaluated funding options to determine the most viable options that incorporate the community values.

Corporate Sponsorships

This revenue-funding source allows corporations to invest in the development or enhancement of new or existing facilities in park systems. Sponsorships are also highly recommended for programs and events.

Partnerships

Partnerships are a joint development funding source or an operational funding source between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a city department, or a private business and a city department. Two partners jointly develop revenue-producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner.

Dedication/Development Fees

These fees are assessed for the development of residential and/or commercial properties with the proceeds to be used for parks and recreation purposes, such as open space acquisition, community park site development, neighborhood parks development, regional parks development, etc.

Foundation/Gifts

These dollars are raised from tax-exempt, non-profit organizations established with private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gifts catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, sales of items, etc.

Recreation Service Fees

This is a dedicated user fee, which can be established by a local ordinance or other government procedures for the purpose of constructing and maintaining recreation facilities. The fee can apply to all organized activities, which require a reservation of some type, or other purposes as defined by the local government. Examples of such activities include adult basketball, volleyball, and softball leagues, youth baseball, soccer, and softball leagues, and special interest classes. The fee allows participants an opportunity to contribute toward the upkeep of the facilities being used.



Intermodal Transportation and Efficiency Act

This funding program, commonly called TEA-21 Grants was authorized by the Federal Government in 1991. Funds are distributed through the State. There are several million dollars in enhancement revenues available for transportation related projects, including bicycle and pedestrian trails, rail depot rehabilitation, landscaping, and beautification projects.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

These funds are awarded for acquisition and development of parks, recreation and supporting facilities through the National Park Service and the State.

General Obligation Bonds

Bonded indebtedness issued with the approval of the electorate for capital improvements and general public improvements.

Industrial Development Bonds

Specialized revenue bonds issued on behalf of publicly owned, self-supporting facilities.

Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Tax

Tax based on gross receipts from charges and meal services, which may be used to build and operate sports fields, regional parks, golf courses, tennis courts, and other special park and recreation facilities.

Grants

A variety of special grants either currently exist through the federal and state governmental systems or will be established through the life of current and proposed facilities.

Special Improvement District/Benefit District

Taxing districts established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, the erection of fountains, and acquisition of art, and supplemental services for improvement and promotion, including recreation and cultural enhancements.

Interlocal Agreements

Contractual relationships entered into between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.

Revenue Bonds

Bonds used for capital projects that will generate revenue for debt service where fees can be set aside to support repayment of the bond.

Private Concessionaires

Contract with a private business to provide and operate desirable recreational activities financed, constructed, and operated by the private sector with additional compensation paid to the city.

Creation of an Authority

The city and county should adopt the creation of a park and recreation authority or district to create an atmosphere that would allow both departments to initiate long-term successes. Many successful park districts exist throughout the country and facilitate creative business approaches to leisure services that some governmental entities cannot provide. The planning team views this action as key to future success.

Conclusion

The City and County Parks and Recreation Departments had the vision to develop this joint Master Plan to create stronger departments and to address the community's vision for recreation and parks in the city and the county. As a result, this 10-year Master Plan was produced. A tremendous amount of time, energy, work and community input has been taken in order to make this Master Plan possible.

The City of Owensboro and Daviess County Parks and Recreation Departments developed their vision by focusing on community values, past history, trends and key issues that need to be resolved. These core values include family, equity of access, convenience, image, quality, safety, youth and trails.

The City of Owensboro and Daviess County have many opportunities to create strong departments. By creating links between the community and parks the departments

will create effective levels of advocacy and support for their mission and vision. Developing signature parks and facilities and maintaining existing parks can increase revenue potential and promote livability in Owensboro and Daviess County. Increasing services and programs will develop a lifetime customer. These are only a few of the opportunities listed in this Master Plan.

The Consultants have completed their work and delivered the final report. The City of Owensboro and Daviess County must now use all the data, recommendations and processes to implement this Plan. It is necessary to consistently monitor trends that affect the recommendations and act accordingly. It is equally important to gain community input and allow for staff training and development when needed.

The consultants' work is finished—the real work of the Owensboro and Daviess County Parks and Recreation Departments, elected officials and the community has just begun.

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Daviess County Vision Strategy

Goal: Maximize Use of Public Facilities

Vision Action Strategy 1: *Our vision is to maximize use of public facilities through efficient management of permitted parks and recreation space for public, not-for-profit, and private use.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
1.1 Expand written partnership policies for public/public use, public/not-for-profit use, and public/private use of city and county owned facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish an internal partnership committee to develop the partnership policy format. b. Meet with key partners to gain insight and input into the partnership policies. c. Establish working agreements and measurable outcomes with each partner. d. Develop a five-year lease policy. e. Develop a sports group policy to create equitable partnerships. f. Invite community service groups to become more involved in projects and develop contracts and agreements. (See appendix for example.) 			
1.2 Establish a priority-of-use classification system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Criteria should focus on County programs as first 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
<p>based on community values and recreational and educational needs.</p>	<p>priority for public facility access. Other public agencies should be second priority and not-for-profits should be third priority. Private groups and agencies should be fourth priority.</p>			
<p>1.3 Establish an effective pricing policy based on the level of received benefits and reciprocal investments made between groups who use County facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish the true cost to maintain the facilities managed by the county. (See pricing example.) b. Establish an ABC model to determine the true cost of a service based on set standards and tie costs to cost per experience or cost per unit. c. Determine the level of cost per hour by type of facility and establish primetime and non-primetime rates. d. Establish subsidy rates, if any, by group classification. e. Develop special event pricing. f. Establish base service pricing. 			
<p>1.4 Develop a recreation facilities plan for future development between</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meet with City and school district officials to establish the level and 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
<p>county and school systems based on population standards for number of fields and courts needed to meet recreation demand.</p>	<p>number of courts and fields needed based on national guidelines and participation levels in Daviess County.</p> <p>b. Establish a strategy and capital plan to finance the development of facilities for games and practice use.</p> <p>c. Establish an operational plan and pricing plan to maintain facilities when built.</p> <p>d. Base facilities plan on the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgrounds: 1 per 1,250 population • Soccer: 1 per 4,000 population • Baseball: 1 per 5,000 population • Gyms: 1 per 2,500 population • Tennis: 1 per 4,000 population • Basketball: 1 per 2,500 population • Golf: 1 per 25,000 population • Flat water pools: 1 per 20,000 population • Aquatic Centers: 1 per 50,000 population 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Rink: 1 per 50,000 population • Football Fields: 1 per 20,000 population • Softball Fields: 1 per 4,000 population 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish a Youth Sports Commission

Vision Action Strategy 2: *Our vision is to develop a joint (City/County) youth and adult sports commission to address consistency in how both the City and County will develop and manage field use with all youth and adult sports groups in the region.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
2.1 Establish an equitable field use policy for all groups to maximize the public resources available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meet with all organized sports groups in the county to evaluate their field use needs for practices and games. b. Establish a baseline standard to serve their needs on an equitable basis. c. Establish consistent policies on games by classification levels. (See guidelines.) 			
2.2 Establish a true activity-based costing model for field and court use and a consistent subsidy strategy in order to manage sports groups based on equitable standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop an activity-based costing system to determine the level of investment the county is making in each sport provided. b. Establish a subsidy strategy per youth for county partnerships with youth sports groups. c. Develop a communication plan to inform parents of any pricing changes. 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
2.3 Establish a Youth and Adult Sports Commission to help address operational issues such as maintenance costs and capital improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a work session with all youth and adult sports groups to gain their insight and support for developing a combined sports commission. b. Establish by-laws and structure format to achieve the outcomes desired. c. Develop maintenance standards of care that are consistent with city and county facilities. d. Target 50% of youth and 100% adult. 			
2.4 Establish maintenance standards for all sports groups to follow when utilizing County facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish maintenance standard guidelines for sports groups to follow regarding use of county facilities. 			
2.5 Maximize the use of field space through effective practice and game field allocation within the classification and priority of users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Designate practice-only and games-only fields to reduce stress on game fields. b. Eliminate field entitlement by various groups. c. Use water retention basins for soccer, softball, and baseball practice fields. 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish Effective User Fee Pricing of Recreation Services

Vision Action Strategy 3: *Our vision is to develop a joint City/County pricing policy based on the level of individual and group exclusivity provided.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
3.1 Evaluate true costs of all provided services to measure the level of tax subsidy being provided by each agency for recreation services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish an activity-based costing model consistent with the county to measure direct and indirect costs. (See example in appendix.) b. Train staff and elected officials how to establish effective pricing of services based on subsidy levels. 			
3.2 Allow each park and recreation governing body to establish the levels of tax subsidy desired for individual and group recreation services through the established pricing policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish an updated pricing policy for each agency and seek support from elected officials to implement new prices for services based on the level of benefit received. b. Develop a strategy to meet the targeted goals for earned income to help offset operational costs. 			
3.3 Establish an effective communication plan for all users demonstrating costs and the level of investments they and the governing bodies are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Train staff to communicate pricing changes to parents and users. b. Provide tiered levels of services for users from 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
providing to deliver service.	baseline and beyond. c. Provide work sessions for elected officials, Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation, Daviess County Parks Board and user groups on how to price parks and recreation services.			
3.4 Seek to achieve a balance between taxes and user fees for operational costs in both City/County budgets.	a. Establish subsidy levels by type of program activity or group to maximize the county's resources. b. Establish a resource-to-tax ratio goal for each agency.			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Acquire Park Land Where Inequities Exist

Vision Action Strategy 4: *Our vision is to acquire parklands in both the City and County to achieve 12 acres per thousand population in the City and 15 acres per thousand in the County.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
4.1 Acquire land for an additional regional park in the south central area of the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meet potential landowners to acquire property for a regional park in the south central part of Daviess County. b. Partner with the city for a combined site for Rec-Plex in this area. 			
4.2 Acquire buffer property around Yellow Creek and Panther Creek Parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek to acquire the nursery property east of Yellow Creek Park. b. Seek to acquire additional property north and south of Panther Creek Park as buffers to existing sites. 			
4.3 Work jointly with the local county school systems to acquire game field areas where needed in underserved areas of the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The county and school system will work to jointly purchase and develop game field sites for youth and adults to use in the county. 			
4.4 Work with the city to develop recreation easements to link the county regional parks to the city trail network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify all utility and road easements where trails could be developed to assist the city in their efforts to develop the trail system. 			
4.5 Seek every opportunity to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek the right of first 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
acquire property next to existing parks to expand recreation services.	refusal on property next to existing parks should the owners decide to sell.			
4.6 Develop a partnership with Land Trust to assist the county in acquiring and holding property for future parklands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Utilize an existing land trust or use the Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation as a land trust to help the county acquire targeted properties until money becomes available to purchase them. b. Seek to acquire the recreation rights via an easement on targeted properties to connect the city trails to county parks. 			
4.7 Increase involvement with developers to ensure all goals of the Master Plan can be incorporated into development planning documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meet with local developers to share the county's Master Plan goals and determine potential partnerships by linking trails to their properties as part of an overall network of trails. 			
4.8 Develop a strategy to transfer small County parks to specific City groups or associations via lease.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a list of potential partners who may be interested in managing the small county park sites and meet with them. b. Develop working agreements with those interested. 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish Appropriate Levels of Funding

Vision Action Strategy 5: *Our vision is to establish appropriate levels of funding to meet the community’s vision for parks and recreation in the city and county.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
5.1 Seek to increase operating funds to adequately support daily operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop new revenue sources besides taxes to support operational and maintenance costs. b. Funding options include reservations, user fees, gaming tax, sponsorships, grants, partnerships, utility tax, insurance tax on fire, solid waste fee, recreation/vending video fee, an occupational tax (1%), ticket tax, food and beverage tax, wheel tax, license plate, real estate transfer fees, non-resident fees, concession fees, leagues, electrical and water fees, gas fees. 			
5.2 Develop revenue producing recreation facilities to reduce tax subsidy levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop and maximize existing recreation facilities to their highest levels of earned income to support operations and maintenance cost. 			
5.3 Consider the development of a park district to maximize efficiency and eliminate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to explore opportunities to maximize efficiency and 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
duplication of services.	<p>resources through effective planning and joint development of lands similar to fire districts.</p> <p>b. Establish consistent criteria for awarding scholarships to underprivileged citizens to access city and county services.</p> <p>c. Explore opportunities to allow the city to manage the county's food operations, including vending, at their regional park sites.</p> <p>d. Utilize the Owensboro Metropolitan Park Foundation already established to raise additional funds for capital and operational needs.</p>			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish Effective Partnerships

Vision Action Strategy 6: *Our vision is to develop equitable partnerships with public and not-for-profit organizations that help serve the recreational needs of the citizens.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
6.1 Develop an activity-based costing program to measure the equity levels of each existing partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Measure equity levels of investments made with existing partners by developing an Activity Based Costing model. b. Annually track levels of investment made. 			
6.2 Establish three written partnership policies for public/public, public/private, and public/not for profit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop partnership policies to maximize the county investments involving public, not-for-profit or private partners. b. Involve each type of partner in the policy development. 			
6.3 Seek partnerships in future program and facility development in the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek all available partners in the county to help meet the recreation needs of county residents. b. Train staff on effective negotiation strategies to develop working agreements and partnerships in the county. 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
6.4 Establish measurable outcomes of existing partnerships to demonstrate the impact of this goal to the County leaders.	a. Develop outcome measurements regarding customer satisfaction, efficiency of facility use, revenue to expense budgets, cost per experience, and leverage dollars.			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Maximize Community Resources to Fund the Master Plan Vision

Vision Action Strategy 7: *Our vision is to maximize all available resources to generate funds to develop and operate parks, recreation facilities and program services at their highest efficiency level.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
7.1 Establish true cost of tasks produced by the county to determine alternatives to achieve more efficiency.	a. Consistently evaluate costs in delivery of services and who should provide the service.			
7.2 Develop a request for proposal (RFP) process for those services or tasks the department would like to outsource or competitively bid out.	a. Develop process with purchasing. b. Inform employees of the county's efforts to outsource tasks. c. Measure county work against bid work. d. Determine when to proceed. e. Potential area for outsourcing is mowing.			
7.3 Establish an updated mission statement with measurable outcomes and objectives that will be updated every two years.	a. Develop tracking system on all recommendations. b. Develop program impact statements. c. Develop facility impact statements.			
7.4 Identify internal customers and establish standards for communication, systems control, and measurable objectives that support users' needs.	a. Establish written operational standards on park maintenance, recreation facilities, and program services that can be tracked and measured for effectiveness.			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Establish tracking system to measure impacts. c. Train staff on how to track and implement standards. 			
<p>7.5 Develop a technology master plan that will evaluate necessary technology, potential equipment and software upgrades, and staff training required to improve use of technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Work with the technology department to upgrade computers and tools to improve efficiency. b. Improve communication technology and utility technology to maximize efficiency. c. Include evaluating Escom's Class software or Facility (Rec-Trac), maintenance and scheduling into Master Plan. 			
<p>7.6 Create flow charts for all systems that will reduce operations and streamline efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish system flow charts on budgeting, program development, purchasing, human resources, work orders and other systems to improve efficiency. 			
<p>7.7 Seek all available funding options to help offset operating costs and provide the highest levels of program and maintenance standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aggressively develop funding options to full implementation levels. 			

DAVISS COUNTY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
7.8 Create an outdoor programmer position.	a. Target camps, special events, youth sports, adult sports, outdoor recreation, and environmental education programs.			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

City of Owensboro Vision Strategy

Goal: Maximize Use of Public Facilities

Vision Action Strategy 1: *Our vision is to maximize use of public facilities through efficient management of permitted parks and recreation space for public, not-for-profit, and private use.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
1.1 Expand written partnership policies for public/public use, public/not-for-profit use, and public/private use of city owned facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish a partnership committee within staff to develop the partnership policy format. b. Meet with key partners to gain insight and input into the partnership policies. c. Establish working agreements and measurable outcomes with each partner. d. Create a policy specifically for schools. e. Develop a sports group policy to create equitable partnerships. f. Invite community service groups to become more involved in projects and develop contracts and agreements. (See appendix for example.) 			
1.2 Establish a priority-of-use classification system based on community values and recreational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Criteria should focus on city programs as first priority for public facility access. Other public 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
and educational needs.	agencies should be second priority and not-for-profits should be third priority. Private groups and agencies should be fourth priority.			
1.3 Establish an effective pricing policy based on the level of received benefits and reciprocal investments made between groups who use city facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish the true cost to maintain the facilities managed by the city. (See pricing example.) b. Establish an Activity Based Costing model to determine the true cost of a service based on set standards and tie costs to cost per experience or cost per unit. c. Determine the level of cost per hour by type of facility and establish primetime and non-primetime rates. d. Establish subsidy rates, if any, by group classification. e. Develop a special event pricing program for festivals provided in the city. f. Establish base service pricing. 			
1.4 Develop a recreation facilities plan for future development between the	a. Meet with county and school district officials to establish the level and			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
<p>city and all school systems based on population standards for number of fields and courts needed to meet recreation demand.</p>	<p>number of courts and fields needed based on national guidelines and participation levels in Owensboro.</p> <p>b. Establish a strategy and capital plan to finance the development of facilities for games and practice use.</p> <p>c. Establish an operational plan and pricing plan to maintain facilities when built.</p> <p>d. Base facilities plan on the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgrounds: 1 per 1,250 population • Soccer: 1 per 4,000 population • Baseball: 1 per 5,000 population • Gyms: 1 per 2,500 population • Tennis: 1 per 4,000 population • Basketball: 1 per 2,500 population • Golf: 1 per 25,000 population • Flat water pools: 1 per 20,000 population • Aquatic Centers: 1 per 50,000 population 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Rink: 1 per 50,000 population • Football Fields: 1 per 20,000 population • Softball Fields: 1 per 4,000 population 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish a Youth Sports Commission

Vision Action Strategy 2: *Our vision is to develop a joint City/County youth and adult sports commission to address consistency in how both the City and County develop and manage field use with all youth and adult sports groups in the region.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
2.1 Establish an equitable field use policy for all groups to maximize the public resources available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meet with all organized sports groups in the City to evaluate their field use needs for practices and games. b. Establish a baseline standard to serve their needs on an equitable basis. c. Establish consistent policies on games by classification levels. (See guidelines.) 			
2.2 Establish a true activity-based costing model for field and court use and a consistent subsidy strategy in order to manage sports groups based on equitable standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop an activity-based costing system to determine the level of investment the city is making in each sport provided. b. Establish a subsidy strategy per youth for city partnerships with youth sports groups. c. Develop a communication plan to inform parents of any pricing changes. 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
<p>2.3 Establish a Youth and Adult Sports Commission to help address operational issues such as maintenance costs and capital improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a work session with all youth and adult sports groups to gain their insight and support for developing a combined sports commission. b. Establish by-laws and structure format to achieve the outcomes desired. c. Develop maintenance standards that are consistent with city facilities. Classify each type of field as practice, recreational, and competitive. d. Target 50% of youth and 100% adult. 			
<p>2.4 Establish maintenance standards for all sports groups to follow and adhere.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish maintenance standard guidelines for sports groups to follow regarding use of city facilities. 			
<p>2.5 Maximize the use of field space through effective practice and game field allocation within the classification and priority of users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Designate practice-only and games-only fields to reduce stress on game fields. b. Eliminate field entitlement from various groups. c. Use water retention basins as practice fields 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	for soccer, softball and baseball.			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish Effective User Fee Pricing of Recreation Services

Vision Action Strategy 3: *Our vision is to develop a joint City/County pricing policy based on the level of individual and group exclusivity provided.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
3.1 Evaluate true costs of all provided services to measure the level of tax subsidy being provided by each agency for recreation services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish an activity-based costing model consistent with the county to measure direct and indirect costs. (See example in appendix.) b. Train staff and elected officials how to establish effective pricing of services based on subsidy levels. 			
3.2 Allow each department to establish the levels of tax subsidy desired for individual and group recreation services through the established pricing policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish an updated pricing policy for each department and seek support from elected officials to implement new prices for services based on the level of benefit received. b. Develop a strategy to meet the targeted goals for earned income to help offset operational costs. 			
3.3 Establish an effective communication plan for all users demonstrating costs and the level of investments they and the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Train staff to communicate pricing changes to parents and users. b. Provide tiered levels of 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
governing bodies are providing to deliver service.	<p>services for users from baseline and beyond.</p> <p>c. Provide work sessions for elected officials, Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation, and user groups on how to price parks and recreation services.</p> <p>d. Establish consistent criteria for awarding scholarships to underprivileged citizens to access city and county services.</p>			
3.4 Seek to achieve a balance between taxes and user fees for operational costs in both city/county budgets.	<p>a. Establish subsidy levels by type of program activity or group to maximize city resources.</p> <p>b. Establish a resource to tax ratio goal for each agency.</p>			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Develop Indoor Recreation Facilities to Serve all Demographic Groups in the City and County

Vision Action Strategy 4: *Our vision is to develop a multi-use intergenerational indoor recreation facility to support the city and county’s needs for ice-skating, swimming, gym sports, fitness, and general recreation program uses.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
4.1 Close or transfer existing indoor or outdoor recreation facilities to other service providers where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek other recreation providers to see if they are interested in leasing recreation facility space from the city before a new facility is started or agreed to be developed. b. Evaluate existing space for other program purposes. c. Evaluate alternatives for the city’s flat water pools before a new family aquatic facility is developed. 			
4.2 Evaluate where a partnership could exist in developing one Rec-plex facility to serve city and county residents as one.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The city and county governing bodies will meet to evaluate the need and potential to jointly develop a multi-dimensional recreation center to meet the needs of City and County residents. b. Potential partners include YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, hospital, and schools. Evaluate each 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	<p>provider's role and level of capacity for meeting the recreation needs in the community.</p> <p>c. Meet with all area users to determine ways to enhance the site and maintain the operational costs for the future.</p>			
<p>4.3 Conduct a feasibility study to evaluate space requirements, operating costs, and revenue strategies to fund the development and operational costs of the Rec-Plex.</p>	<p>a. Develop a Request For Proposal (RFP) for a feasibility study to build and operate a facility of this type.</p> <p>b. All partners will be evaluated to their level of commitment to the project as part of the feasibility study.</p> <p>c. Establish a location as part of the study.</p>			
<p>4.4 Sell the Sportscenter.</p>	<p>a. Develop a RFP for selling the Sportscenter.</p> <p>b. Utilize the sale of the property and operational cost savings to help fund the Rec-Plex.</p>			
<p>4.5 Determine whether to close or incorporate the Ice Rink into the Rec-Plex.</p>	<p>a. Incorporate into the Rec-Plex feasibility study the value of developing an ice rink considering that Evansville is building a two- sheet ice complex.</p>			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	b. If not feasible, close the rink and demolish it.			
4.6 Parking Garage should be managed by RiverPark Center.	a. Outsource the management of the Parking Garage to another agency.			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Acquire Park Land Where Inequities Exist

Vision Action Strategy 5: *Our vision is to acquire parklands in both the city and county to achieve 12 acres per thousand population in the city and 15 acres per thousand in the county.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
5.1 Acquire a balance of neighborhood and community parks citywide to support the active and passive needs of residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Acquire neighborhood park property where areas of the city are currently underserved by parks. b. Acquire one community park in an area underserved by a community park. 			
5.2 Continue to acquire trail and greenway space to build the trail network around the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a trail strategy to acquire and develop trails that will connect city and county parks. b. Meet the trail mileage goals within the next ten years. c. City should network with the county to Panther Creek Park and Yellow Creek Park and the proposed Southern Regional Park to Ben Hawes State Park. 			
5.3 Seek every opportunity to acquire property next to existing parks to expand recreation services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek the right of first refusal on property next to existing parks to purchase should the owners decide to sell. 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
<p>5.4 Develop a partnership with Land Trust to assist the city in acquiring and holding property for future parklands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek an existing land trust or use the Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation as a land trust to help the city acquire targeted properties until such time that money is available to purchase them. b. Seek to acquire the recreation rights via an easement on targeted properties to connect the city trails to county parks. 			
<p>5.5 City needs to be involved in developer plans to ensure all goals of the Master Plan can be incorporated into development planning documents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meet with local developers to share the city's Master Plan goals and determine potential partnerships with the city by linking trails through their properties as part of an overall network of trails being created. b. Meet with local developers to share the city's Master Plan goals and determine potential partnerships with the city in acquiring land for parks. 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish Appropriate Levels of Funding

Vision Action Strategy 6: *Our vision is to establish appropriate levels of funding to meet the community’s vision for parks and recreation in the City and County.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
6.1 Seek to increase operating funds to adequately support daily operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Define a consistent funding source to finance the Parks and Recreation Department. b. Develop new revenue sources besides taxes to support operational and maintenance costs. c. Funding options include reservations, user fees, gaming tax, sponsorships, grants, partnerships, utility tax, insurance tax on fire, solid waste fee, recreation/vending video fee, an occupational tax (1%), ticket tax, food and beverage tax, wheel tax, license plate, real estate transfer fees, non-resident fees, concession fees, leagues, electrical and water fees, gas fees. 			
6.2 Develop revenue producing recreation facilities to reduce tax subsidy levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Develop and maximize existing recreation facilities to their highest levels of earned income to support operations 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	and maintenance cost.			
6.3 Consider the development of a Park District to maximize efficiency and eliminate duplication of services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Continue to explore opportunities to maximize efficiency and resources through effective planning and joint development of lands similar to fire districts. f. Utilize the Owensboro Metropolitan Parks Foundation that is already established to raise additional funds for capital and operational needs. 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Establish Effective Partnerships

Vision Action Strategy 7: *Our vision is to develop equitable partnerships with public and not-for-profit organizations that help serve the recreational needs of the citizens.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
7.1 Develop an Activity Based Costing program to measure the equity levels of each existing partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Measure equity levels of investments made with existing partners by developing an Activity Based Costing model. b. Annually track levels of investment made. 			
7.2 Establish three written partnership policies for public/public, public/private, and public/not-for-profit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop partnership policies to maximize city investments involving public, not-for-profit, or private partners. b. Involve each type of partner in the policy development. 			
7.3 Seek partnerships in future program and facility development in the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek all available partners in the city to help meet the recreation needs of city residents. b. Train staff on effective negotiation strategies to develop working agreements and partnerships in the city. 			
7.4 Establish measurable outcomes of existing partnerships to demonstrate the impact of this goal to the city leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop outcome measurements regarding customer satisfaction, efficiency of facility use, revenue to expense 			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
	budgets, cost per experience, and leverage dollars.			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Maximize Community Resources to Fund the Master Plan Vision

Vision Action Strategy 8: *Our vision is to maximize all available resources to generate the funds to develop and operate parks, recreation facilities and program services to their highest efficiency level.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
8.1 Establish true cost of tasks produced by the city to determine alternatives to achieve more efficiency.	a. Consistently evaluate costs in delivery of services and who should provide the service.			
8.2 Establish an updated mission statement with measurable outcomes and objectives that will be updated every two years.	a. Develop tracking system on all recommendations. b. Develop program impact statements. c. Develop facility impact statements.			
8.3 Identify internal customers and establish standards for communication, systems control, and measurable objectives that support users' needs.	a. Establish written operational standards on park maintenance, recreation facilities, and program services that can be tracked and measured for effectiveness. b. Establish tracking system to measure impacts. c. Train staff on how to track and implement standards.			
8.4 Develop a technology master plan that will evaluate necessary technology, potential equipment and software upgrades, and staff training	a. Work with the technology department to upgrade computers and tools to improve efficiency. b. Improve communication technology and utility			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
required to improve use of technology.	technology to maximize efficiency. c. Include evaluating recreation program software such as Escom's Class software or Facility (Rec-Trac), maintenance and scheduling into Master Plan.			
8.5 Create flow charts for all systems that will reduce operations and streamline efficiency.	a. Establish system flow charts on budgeting, program development, purchasing, human resources, work orders, and other systems to improve efficiency.			
8.6 Seek all available funding options to help offset operating costs and provide the highest levels of program and maintenance standards.	a. Aggressively develop funding options to full implementation levels.			

CITY OF OWENSBORO FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Goal: Improve Resident Communication and Feedback

Vision Action Strategy 9: *Our vision is to maximize the community’s recognition and awareness of the programs and services the City of Owensboro provides.*

Strategy Recommendation Policy	Tactics	Operational Impact	Staff Group Responsible	Start Date
9.1 Develop a marketing plan to improve management of customer needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop an image strategy for the department. b. Develop a consistent customer feedback program targeted to pre- and post evaluations, citizen surveys, focus groups, and user trailer calls. c. Develop a promotional plan for all publications, fliers and ad campaigns. d. Develop consistent color schemes. e. Develop a consistent theme and slogan for the department 			
9.2 Create a marketing position to promote user benefits and program services to meet customers needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hire a marketing professional to manage the plan. 			