

February 2016

# Tulsa Park and Recreation Master Plan Update



TULSA  PARKS

## Goals and Strategies

### GOAL 1: MAXIMIZE THE PLANNING EFFORT

**Strategy 1.1:** Incorporate the action items of this plan into the Department and City goals to achieve the recommendations of this plan and to enhance effectiveness of staff effort.

**Strategic Steps:**

**1.1.1** Create a citizen involvement structure to address these five areas: facilities, programs, public relations, finance, and trails by spring 2010

Through a process of open recruitment, citizens were asked to volunteer to serve on a Citizen Committee. Volunteers were assigned to Committees based upon their areas of interest. The Citizen Committee volunteers devoted many hours to dialogue and crafting targeted recommendations all designed to improve the City's Parks and Recreation system. The citizen volunteers were led by the following: Facilities-Teresa Burkett; Trails-Patrick Fox; Finance-Dick Sherry; Programs-Natasha Ball; and Marketing- Barrett Waller and Liz Hunt.

**1.1.2** Assign responsibility and time frame, and allocate resources necessary to complete each action identified in annual work plans.

The committee planning process began working in earnest in September, 2010.

Recommendations were made to the Park Board and the City Council in February 2011.

**Strategy 1.2:** Assure that all levels of staff are informed of and are set up to work together to implement the recommendations and strategies of the plan.

**Strategic Steps:**

**1.2.1** Inform all levels of staff of the direction of the Plan, allow for staff input, encourage buy-in, and encourage input from all staff members.

Copies of the Master Plan and Citizen Committee findings were sent to each staff member. The Master Plan continues to be used as a guide in all planning and capital improvements. Staff reviews the drawings of all new projects and designs. This provides an opportunity to request changes earlier in the design phase. These changes are crucial with the future maintenance and repairs of the Department's facilities and amenities.

**1.2.2** Provide external departmental staff teams/team members, as appropriate, with education development opportunities, necessary equipment, and supplies.

In 2010, the City Council approved the resolution to formally include the Park Master Plan into the City's new comprehensive plan, PLANiTULSA. In 2013, three staff members attended the National Recreation and Park Association Conference. In addition two staff members are current Playground Inspectors. In April 2014, staff took part in a marketing campaign called "Did You Know". The next step is to train employees on being "Did You Know" trainers.

**Strategy 1.3:** Examine existing organizational structure of the Parks and Recreation Department

In 2014, the Park Department reorganized to maximize the delivery of core services.

**Strategy 1.4: Recommend any needed changes to current organizational structure to ensure efficient plan implementation.**

At the time this document was developed, the Maintenance Division was located in the Public Works Department. Maintenance was reassigned to Parks in 2012. Ongoing organizational changes occur on a yearly basis with budget reductions.

**GOAL 2: ENHANCE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**Strategy 2.1: Generate awareness and community engagement regarding Tulsa Parks and Recreation offerings and needs as expressed by the public through this planning process and ongoing annual efforts.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**2.1.1** Hire or contract dedicated staff to coordinate all marketing efforts for the Department.

Due to budget restraints, the Marketing position continues to be unfunded. Staff does work closely with the City of Tulsa Communications Department to provide publications and media coverage.

**2.1.2** Formalize an evaluation and annual in-house benchmarking program to solicit participant feedback and drive programming efforts.

Key Performance Indicators are created on a yearly basis. For 2014 we tracked the creation of four Master Plan Newsletters, worked in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association to become an accredited agency, and collaborated with a variety of organizations and volunteer groups to identify park improvements and related costs.

**2.1.3** Collect feedback data that supports the expressed desire for improvements to programs and activities.

Feedback is gathered from class evaluations for program and service improvements. Program evaluations can be found online and been updated in September 2014.

**2.1.4** Create a "Mystery Shopper" program where secret shoppers evaluate services anonymously and results are tracked.

The Mystery Shopper program will be in place by October 1, 2014. Due to funding, the mystery shopper will be a volunteer or a City of Tulsa Park employee.

**2.1.5** Prepare an annual report providing information to the public about parks and recreation funding, stewardship of tax dollars, and fees and charges. Distribute the report as widely as possible.

Two annual reports have been created. If funding is available, future reports will be created and distributed to a wider audience.

**2.1.6** Update an annual marketing plan for the Parks and Recreation Department.

The City of Tulsa Communications Department is developing an updated marketing plan. The brand "Purely Parks", which is trademarked exclusively for Tulsa Parks, is a part of the marketing plan.

**2.1.7** Develop an evaluation process for marketing media such as newspaper, seasonal brochures, website, direct mail, targeted e-mails, social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.), and

radio and television advertising to continuously determine effectiveness of marketing dollars. An on-line evaluation is in place. The social media has been helpful in promoting recreation programs. To date, there is no funding available for marketing media. We have over 15,000 Facebook friends in the Park Department.

**2.1.8** Create seamless product delivery for park and recreation services that delivers from a consumer vantage point.

Central Community Center is the main location for park rentals and park reservations. RecPRO is the new software system that staff uses to reserve shelters, rooms and parks, schedule course programs, and to log financial information. The RecPRO ID card system is used for all patrons that utilize our centers, programs, and other park activities. Each card has a barcode that is unique to each individual or family that participate in park activities. Each time the card is swiped it records the activity for attendance purposes.

**2.1.9** Develop a comprehensive cross training program for all staff and key instructors including knowledge of all program areas and customer service.

Many employees have the experience and knowledge in several different facets of maintenance management. The process has proven to increase the productivity and efficiency of the Maintenance Division. The Rec Staff have mainstreamed operations so staff can easily work at any site and be able to take enrollment, etc. To date, 6 park managers, 14 recreation coordinators and 2 recreation specialists are all cross trained in the areas of special events, youth and adult sports and various recreation programs. They are able to open, operate and close each recreation center. In the maintenance area, every employee in the general site area knows how to operate a refuse truck. If we are short handed to clean shelters, the heavy equipment operators and the small engine mechanic are available to help. In the park structure area, all staff are cross trained in playground repair, roof repair, welding, concrete work, fence repair, and door installation. The horticultural cross trains staff by rotating all duties and areas on a regular basis. The forestry section staff trade between operating the bucket truck and the grapple loader. All staff are well versed in proper operation of both as well as the chipper, stump grinder and pulling equipment.

**2.1.10** Use program tracking and evaluation tools to capacity by designing reports to readily identify life cycles of programs, identify programs not meeting minimum capacity (review all program minimums for cost effectiveness), identify waiting lists, etc. Report has been created to document program life cycles.

### **GOAL 3: UPDATE PARKS AND FACILITIES TO ADDRESS CHANGING NEEDS AND DESIRES**

**Strategy 3.1: Improve existing parks to meet community standards.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**3.1.1** Add comfort and convenience features to parks where they are lacking. These include benches, shade, drinking fountains, etc.

The Park Department requests the addition of new park benches, shade structures, trees, drinking fountains and signage on every new project. Staff is currently developing a policy for donated benches that are and will continue to be installed as memorial features. The Department has and will continue to accept donated trees through the Up with Trees Program, local businesses and citizens. Recently completed projects have taken place at Schlegel, Vining, Admiral, Turner, Heller, Reed and Archer Parks where new amenities were

installed. Some parks required new types of playground equipment, some shelters and benches and others new sidewalks, resurfacing sports courts and picnic tables. Park staff are developing a comprehensive list of parks that need updated convenience features. As funding becomes available, the park list of needs will be considered for replacement.

**3.1.2** Use the park inventory and scoring spreadsheet to identify specific park components that need to be updated or replaced.

Tulsa Parks produces and maintains a compendium of all parks and all park assets. This is continually updated as features are replaced or updated. The compendium is used to identify items that are in immediate need or within a few years of requiring replacement. If the repair/replacement is over 100K, it is placed on the capital improvement list. Tulsa Parks will be spending \$34.9 million dollars over the next 7 years to replace or rehabilitate components within the park system. Projects are identified, scored and prioritized for construction.

**3.1.3** Develop a schedule, budget, and methodology to complete these improvements.

Tulsa Parks uses the Master plan CIP list as a guide to new park amenities. The Park Department has approved and installed new interactive water playgrounds at the following locations: Chamberlain-replaced an antiquated pool, Maxwell, Owen, and Manion Park -replaced a pool with a water playground. Kendall Whittier-replaced an existing splash pad.

In 2015 at Springdale Park The existing community center, swimming pool, water playground, tennis courts and playground was demolished. The new water playground was constructed with a Bomanite pad and vortex equipment....it sits in the approximate location of the old building. A large shelter was added with new sidewalk, benches and water fountain. A 2-5 and 5-12 playground was added with poured and place safety surfacing. At Hunter Park The 5-12 playground was replaced with the new playground standard. Existing 2-5 Kompan play features are being refurbished and reinstalled. The equipment will be replaced in approximately 2 years. In Maxwell Park improvements include 4 park shelters with concrete paving and sidewalk improvements, disc golf course, picnic tables, benches, landscaping, security gates, tennis court renovation into a sports court, park signage, drinking fountain, and electrical improvements. B.C. Franklin park the scope of work includes a themed playground, 2 basketball courts, a walking trail, an outdoor fitness area, pavilions and various site amenities. At Graham and Tracy parks improvements include installation of new wind screens and resurfacing / repainting the tennis courts. Improvements to Fred Johnson and Newblock Park Playgrounds and safety surfacing improvements to Zink, Hall, Veterans, Loving, Cowan Manion and Pielsticker Park Playgrounds.

### **Strategy 3.2: Address existing swimming pools.**

#### **Strategic Steps:**

**3.2.1** Utilize an inventory analysis of existing pools to determine which ones are functional, which need repairs, and which should be replaced or decommissioned.

Tulsa Parks used the 2009 Aquatic Facilities audit from Selser Schaefer Architects as a road map for needed improvements. The audit was comprehensive and analyzed 21 pools and identified the improvements needed with the associated budget. To date, the City of Tulsa Park Department operates five swimming pools. In 2014, voters approved \$13.1 million in improvements for the five remaining pools.

**3.2.2** Formulate a plan to take appropriate action at each pool based on the inventory analysis. Tulsa Parks is implementing the recommendations from the Aquatic Facilities Audit. The audit inventoried and provided analysis on our entire pool infrastructure. Tulsa Parks will be spending \$13.1 million to implement these improvements over the next seven years. Pools will have interactive play features, shade and zero depth entry to attract all ages.

In late 2014 a series of meetings were held with user groups on desired improvements at McClure pool. From these meetings, which continued until spring 2015, a design was developed and completed in September 2015. Advertising for construction began in January 2016 and construction is anticipated to begin in March 2016 and be completed in spring of 2017. Preliminary meetings have been held on the design concept of Lacy pool and currently construction isn't set to begin until summer 2017.

### **Strategy 3.3: Improve water playgrounds**



#### **Strategic Steps:**

**3.3.1** Identify at least one park per subarea as the location for an upgraded water playground (i.e. themed, multi-jet customized interactive spray pad).

Water playgrounds have been installed at Chamberlain Park (north), Mohawk Park (north), Maxwell Park (northeast), Hunter (south) and Helmerich Park (south). New water playgrounds were installed the summer of 2012 at Whiteside Park (midtown) and in the summer of 2014 at Manion Park (south). New water playgrounds identified and approved in the 2014 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) include Penny Park (west), Reed Park (west) and Lacy Park (north).

In 2015 a new water playground was installed at Springdale (north) Design will begin on the water playground at Penney Park (west) and Lacy park (north) in 2016 with construction preliminarily scheduled for 2018.

**3.3.2** Develop an action plan for completing the upgrades. Update the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) as needed.

The CIP is updated on an annual basis. New projects are identified and the proposed list is populated with the project and project budget. The projects are prioritized and a final budget established prior to the vote. If approved, the projects are scheduled and managed as they come up for funding.



The CIP was updated in late 2015.

**Strategy 3.4: Increase access to natural areas and open space.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**3.4.1 Improve** access to undeveloped parklands with trails, interpretive signage, and other amenities.

Park trails are continually updated. Recent trail upgrades include Lubell, Langenheim, Turner, and Braden Parks. New interpretive trails with signs are under design for Cousins Park.

In 2015 the CIP was updated to reflect rehabilitation of all Tulsa Parks trails.

**3.4.2 Integrate** and connect existing undeveloped and natural areas in parks into the developed parts.

The City of Tulsa has several examples of underdeveloped park areas integrated to a developed park. These include Oxley, Mohawk, Redbud Valley, North Tulsa Soccer Complex, Carl Smith and Cousins Park. In 2015 design started on the Cousins Park improvements.

**3.4.3 Look** for opportunities to convert parts of existing parks to more natural conditions as means of increasing the availability of natural areas.

Cousins Park is an excellent example of how a park was identified and is being converted to better showcase its natural setting. The site sits adjacent to the Arkansas River and is a nesting area for bald eagles. The proposed plan will add an elevated boardwalk that winds through and down the river bank to an observation deck. This will allow patrons to better view and enjoy an unspoiled natural environment. Oxley Nature Center has adopted this park and is heavily involved in its conceptual design and will play a key role in implementing the project.

**Strategy 3.5: Create a series of destination parks throughout Tulsa.**



**Strategic Steps:**

**3.5.1 Using** the parks identified as potential destination parks, select at least one per subarea to be the initial prototypes.

Destination parks are parks where users can go and spend the whole day in the park. These parks have a unique distinction such as sports fields, golf courses, museums, or a special historical significance. Destination parks also have ample parking, and restroom facilities. The designation of Super Center represents parks that have functioning community centers. Reed, Lacy, Hicks and Whiteside are identified as Super Centers. It is likely that a Destination Park could also

accommodate a Super Center. Through the master planning process, each park has been given a numerical designation based on existing amenities. Park levels range between level 1 and level 6. Level 1 parks have few, if any amenities and are often natural areas. While level 6 parks are Destination Parks. Park Levels are used to analyze parks in each quadrant of the City on features that need to be added or repurposed. In North Tulsa, projects include: the Sea Lion, Rhino, and North American Living Museum Exhibits as well as the curator's building roof repair at the Tulsa Zoo; construction of the North Tulsa Sports Complex; new playgrounds and safety surface at Crawford, Cheyenne, Bullette, Benton, Admiral, Ute, Vining, Crutchfield, Sequoyah and Chamberlain Parks; Chamberlain Park was also the recipient of a new water playground and a new roof for the center; Lacy Park received a badly needed kitchen expansion and remodel; Ute and Admiral parks had old tennis courts converted into a multi-use sports court; Chamberlain and Springdale Parks tennis courts will be converted into a multi-use sports courts.

In East Tulsa, projects include: Maxwell Park- new shelter, playground and water playground; new playgrounds and safety surface at Norberg, East Tulsa, Terwilliger, Norvell and Rose Dew Parks; McClure Park- new shelter; Hilti Sports Complex- new restroom facility; Jingle Feldman Park- new shelter; Carl Smith Sports Complex- new playground and safety surface and new shade structure.

In West Tulsa, projects include: new playgrounds with safety surface at Philpot, Owen, Carbondale, Howard and Reed Parks; WaterWorks Art Studio renovated the east storage facility for classroom space; Owen Park Community Center was repurposed into the Children's Museum; Page Belcher Golf Course parking lot was renovated; Owen Park received a new water playground; Lubell Park- trail renovation; and West Highland Park tennis court renovation.

In South Tulsa, projects include: Woodward Park new learning facility construction; new playgrounds and safety surface at Florence, Braden, Whiteside, Leake, Lloyd, Fred Johnson, Gary, Turner, Riggs, Manion, Maple, Heller, Leake, Highland, Hunter Parks; Whiteside and Manion Parks new water playground; Cousins Park new interpretive park construction; Heller and Turner Parks trail rehabilitation and new shelters; Whiteside Center- new roof installation; Henthorne Theatre- HVAC upgrade; Tracy, Manion and Graham Parks- tennis courts rehabilitation.

**3.5.2** Use design charrettes to develop concepts, guidelines, or strategies for these parks. Each park should have unique and identifiable elements that reflect the character and context of its surrounding neighborhoods. It should also serve a range of ages, interests, and abilities.

Tulsa Parks holds several public meetings with neighborhood organizations when major changes are proposed for a particular park. Extensive meetings were held with Lacy Park groups regarding the adopted Lacy Park master plan. Tulsa Parks also spoke with Turner, Zeigler, Manion, Heller, Franklin, Springdale, Hill, and Clark Park groups to get input on proposed changes. Groups were given a pallet of amenity options to choose from along with a budget to work within. Completed projects include Manion and Turner Parks with ongoing construction happening at Heller, Springdale, Cousins, Franklin, Springdale, and Clark Parks.

In 2015 Tulsa Parks held several meetings with user groups at McClure and Lacy parks for input on the design of new pools at these parks.



**3.5.3** Include a strong public process in the development or redevelopment of the destination parks.

Tulsa Parks is creating several destination parks in different areas of the city. Cousins Park is being converted from open space pasture land into an interpretive park with many interactive amenities. **The approved design solution was established after 2 years of meetings with the community, the Cousins family and City officials.** Vining Park recently was upgraded with a parking lot, multi-use sports court and new 5-12 year-old playground to complement its existing water playground. Maxwell and Manion Parks' dilapidated community centers were demolished along with demolition of the swimming pools, and the space converted into a water playground with an adjacent traditional playground. Reed Park had an old dive tank associated with its existing pool. The tank was demolished and the area converted back into park open space. Zeigler Park also had a dilapidated community center and swimming pool. Both have been demolished and are being replaced with amenities that were voted on by local school children. All of the above mentioned projects were developed with heavy community involvement. **Neighborhood groups often want amenities that are unique to their neighborhood. Tulsa Parks works with groups within neighborhoods so that projects reflect the communities interests and requests, as well as meet the standards established by the park department.**

**3.5.4** Update the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) as needed.

The CIP is updated on an annual basis. New projects are identified and the proposals are populated with projects and a project budget. The projects are prioritized and a final budget established prior to being voted on. If approved, projects are scheduled and managed as they come up for funding. **In 2015 Tulsa Parks updated its CIP list.**

**3.5.5** Look for ways to get the local community involved in the creation of destination parks.

Tulsa Parks continually gets input from the public through public meetings, City Councilors and the Park Board. Public meetings are held to get input on the creation of new parks with many concepts being discussed. Tulsa Parks went through a lengthy process of meetings to tie down and refine the Pioneer Farm destination park at Cousins Park.

**Strategy 3.6: Coordinate Parks and Recreation Department Capital Improvement Program (CIP) existing and future projects with the City Finance and Public Works Departments.**

**Strategic Step:**

**3.6.1** Work to insure inclusion of parks projects within the City's CIP at appropriate levels

The CIP is updated on an annual basis. New projects are identified and the proposed list is populated with the project and the project budget. Input is gathered through public meetings, City Councilors and the Park Board. Public meetings are held to get input on the creation of new parks. Meetings are also held on a regular basis to discuss park CIP projects with internal city departments to ensure project operations are managed efficiently.

**Strategy 3.7: Achieve and maintain appropriate levels of service for all parts of Tulsa.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**3.7.1** Maintain what you have. Make sure that all components found here function as intended and do not appear to be neglected.

Tulsa Parks has a comprehensive approach regarding maintenance of existing facilities. Several projects have been funded to upgrade HVAC systems on a routine basis. In the last few years, Tulsa Parks has completed many roof, HVAC and painting rehab projects. Park staff also identify park amenities such as playgrounds, shelters, benches, etc., that are in need of repair and replacement. In the summer of 2014, several tennis and sports courts are being repainted through donated funds. If funds are not available to complete repairs, and the amenity is a safety concern, the amenity may be removed and placed on a future CIP package.

**3.7.2** Provide additional components in areas with relatively low LOS for the population found there, particularly in the middle and southern parts of Tulsa. If additional parkland is needed to accomplish this but unavailable, consider partnering with schools and others to provide the additional components.

Partnering with Jackson Elementary School, and with donated funding, Tulsa Parks transformed an old tennis court into a multi-use sports court, which sits in Ute Park next to the school. In addition, two soccer goals were placed on school grounds. Vining Park was also enhanced with a new playground, sports court and pavilion through CDBG grant funding. In midtown Tulsa, we have partnered with Tulsa University and the Kaiser Foundation for the Kendall-Whittier improvements. The Kaiser Foundation paid for the improvements within the park and Tulsa University agreed to maintain the park with little or no cost to the citizens of Tulsa. Cousins Park, located in south Tulsa is being utilized through donated land and city funds to develop a pioneer farm reflecting life in the late 1800's. This park will be developed with an old schoolhouse, plantings, age appropriate costumes, etc. Oxley Nature Center board has adopted the park and will assist with the design as well as staffing once complete.

**3.7.3** Provide new parks and additional components in the eastern part of Tulsa to match population growth and changing demographics.

With the current budget restraints, the park department cannot provide additional funding for new parks in East Tulsa. However, two adult soccer fields are going to be developed and built in Wright Park to address the lack of adult soccer fields in the community. In addition, a new shelter and bike rack was recently added to Jingle Feldman Park which makes the park more attractive to visitors.

**GOAL 4: MAXIMIZE RECREATION PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**Strategy 4.1: Enhance recreation program planning methods.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**4.1.1** Establish service objectives to ensure that a program, activity, or event is needed or desired and that it is measured to determine success and effectiveness.

The "Lifecycle of a Program" form was established and implemented to measure how park staff can determine if a class needs to continue, be adjusted or discontinued. In 2014, we have eliminated 9 programs to make room for new and innovative program ideas.

**4.1.2** Conduct standard and consistent formative (mid-term) and summative (post) participant evaluations for each program, activity, and event that addresses participant satisfaction, facility appropriateness, and future interest.

On-line surveys are available for participants to rate the level of satisfaction. Surveys are also handed out to participants at the completion of the program.

**4.1.3** Consider an incentive for completion and return of evaluations as a way to increase response.

Sites have given pencils with the department logo to participants who successfully fill out an evaluation. In some programs, participants may receive park t-shirts, mugs and pens to participants who bring back a completed form.

**4.1.4** Conduct staff evaluations that include an objective review and analysis of the program, activity, or event. Analysis should include budget information including revenues and expenditures (consistently applied for each service), participant evaluation data, and future recommendations.

“Lifecycle of a Program” evaluates information that includes budget, revenue and expenses. The information would determine the future progress needed.

**Strategy 4.2: Conduct a program life cycle analysis.**

**Strategic Step:**

**4.2.1** Measure each program or program area to determine where it is in its program life cycle. For programs in the saturation or decline phases, consider adjustments to, or discontinuation of the program.

Programs are monitored each season. In 2013, classes achieved on average a score of 76% which means that staff may need to make program adjustments for the program to continue. A life cycle score of 70% and up means that there is still value in the program offering.

**Strategy 4.3: Implement new programs based on research and feedback.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**4.3.1** Develop new programs after examining need/demand/trends, budget requirements for staffing and materials, location and instructor availability, and marketing effort required.

New and innovative programs were implemented based on the Lifecycle of a program evaluations that were completed after each program took place. Examples of new programs that have been or are being added are Snag Golf, Ranger Rick Geocaching, DogGone Easter Egg Hunt. New programs are constantly being developed following recreation trends, best practices, and demands of the public.

**Strategy 4.4: Assess services to determine the City’s responsibility for the provision of each type of service offered.**

**Strategic Step:**

**4.4.1** Conduct a service assessment using the Service Assessment Tool to provide an intensive review of each program, activity, event, and facility. (See **Table 28: Service Assessment Matrix**)

An assessment was filled out on programs that were offered in Sports, Aquatics, Special Events,

Youth, Adult, Seniors, Visual Arts, etc. The results showed a lack in Senior Programs. Current programing efforts are underway to increase senior activities.

**Strategy 4.5: Develop procedures and policies to accurately track program participation and drop-in facility use.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**4.5.1** Institute written policies that provide direction to staff to consistently and accurately track and report program and facility participation, particularly ones that utilize existing Safari® (RecWare) registration software.

The Park and Recreation Department software has recently been changed to RecPro which tracks and reports on the program attendance and revenue information. Staff were trained, new policies were put into place, and the new software was distributed to staff in April 2013.

**4.5.2** Invest in a program like Safari® (RecWare) “Attendance Module” to electronically track, through card swipes, and drop in use of facilities. Coordinate with IT Department.

The RecPro software program was purchased which allows each site to track attendance and revenue. RecPro also provides a card swipe process for participant’s convenience. In March of 2013, staff was trained and RecPro went live in April 2013.

**Strategy 4.6: Create and implement a Cost Recovery Philosophy and Policy.**

**Strategic Step:**

**4.6.1** Use the Core Services and Resource Allocation Pyramid Methodology to develop ongoing systems that help define and set cost recovery goal:  
Cost recovery goals will be in place by January 2015.

**Strategy 4.7: Track performance measures for all park and recreation activities and services.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**4.7.1** Establish service standards for all community services activities addressing staffing, volunteers, programs components, and major maintenance tasks.  
Service Standards are being developed through the CAPRA effort.

**4.7.2** Evaluate and develop a scoring system for each task to meet desired and consistent service levels.  
A scoring system will be developed to help meet CAPRA standards.

**4.7.3** Involve staff in the development of the standards and scoring system.  
Staff are involved in the planning of standards and the scoring system.

**Strategy 4.8: Track performance measures for all park and recreation maintenance services.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**4.8.1 Set goals for maintenance standards training for all staff.**  
Standards are being developed that meet CAPRA requirements.

**4.8.2 Establish and monitor record keeping procedures to document the actual hours and material costs for each maintenance operation.**

Tracking takes place with the TMA software system. The TMA information is a year behind due to lack of staff for input.

**4.8.3 Apply appropriate maintenance standards and define setup/tear down requirements for all special events, tournaments, or other activities that currently stress resources.**

Standards have been developed, but are being revised per the CAPRA requirements.

**GOAL 5: ENHANCE FINANCIAL STRATEGIES**

**Strategy 5.1: Create a task force for strategic planning, finance, and development.**

**Strategic Step:**

**5.1.1** Implement by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2010 or an appropriate timeframe

A Finance group of citizen volunteers was developed in 2010.

**Strategy 5.2: Research potential traditional funding opportunities.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**5.2.1** Work with residents and partners to establish additional revenue through a combination of funding sources, located in **Section IV** in this report, to implement the recommendations of the Master Plan.

The Finance Committee vetted funding sources and researched additional recommendations for funding.

**5.2.2** Investigate support for establishing a dedicated funding source for the Tulsa Park and Recreation Department operations.

Due to recent budget cuts, support is being gathering to investigate additional funding sources to support and preserve the Park and Recreation Department.

**5.2.3** Investigate support for establishing a dedicated funding source for capital improvements identified in this Park and Recreation Master Plan.

There is an active group seeking input for a dedicated funding source. Dick Sherry, the Finance Master Plan Committee Chair, continues to vet options to benefit park funding.

**Strategy 5.3: Pursue alternative funding to implement the Master Plan.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**5.3.1** Identify opportunities to increase community support and revenue opportunities such as grants, partnerships, sponsorships, volunteers and earned income (See **Section IV** for Alternative Funding Sources).

Several successful partnerships have been created since 2009. We have Tulsa Zoo Management Inc. who manages the zoo and has made major improvements in zoo operations, Billy Casper Golf manages both Mohawk and Page Belcher Golf courses, First Tee is a golf program for

disadvantaged youth and is managed through Southern Hills Country Club, the Garden Center is a volunteer group located in Woodward Park and oversees hundreds of volunteers and is responsible for the oversight of the Linnaeus demonstration garden, The Tulsa Children’s Museum is programming Owen Recreation Center, The Clark Council is planning to take on the theatre operations of Clark youth theatre at Henthorne PAC, and Tulsa Athletics is working towards an agreement to manage Wright Park.

**5.3.2** Develop a “Wish List” to identify philanthropic opportunities that align with these needs. Once identified, aggressively apply for grant funding.

A Park Friends brochure has been developed to identify park needs in both the city and the county park departments.

**5.3.3** Consider expanding and formalize a volunteer program to include standards, recruiting, training, retaining, and rewarding volunteers in all program areas.

The My Backyard program has transitioned into the Adopt-a-Spot program in 2012 to communicate volunteer opportunities and provide consistency in volunteer opportunities.

**5.3.4** Create an annual “Sponsorship Manual” listing all the opportunities for the year and distribute within the community in a menu format that creates a sense of urgency within the business community.

Park Friends brochure

## **GOAL 6: STRATEGICALLY INCREASE PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Strategy 6.1: Increase partnerships and collaborative efforts.**

#### **Strategic Steps:**

**6.1.1** Investigate partnerships with local medical and health organizations to increase fitness and health programming for the aging population within the community.

Tulsa Parks received a donation from the Oklahoma Surgical Hospital Foundation to build an outdoor fitness center at Manion Park. There will be 12 fitness stations that will serve ages 14 and older. Project should be complete in August.

Oklahoma Surgical Hospital Foundation donated an outdoor fitness at BC Franklin park with 18 fitness stations. The project will be completed in late spring 2016.

**6.1.2** Strengthen and expand Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with schools for use of fields, gyms, and multipurpose spaces.

Tulsa Parks has a reciprocating agreement in place with Tulsa Public Schools. Tulsa Public Schools utilize the City’s golf and tennis courts for practices. The City utilizes school buildings for neighborhood meeting and large sports tournaments. Tulsa Parks also collaborates with Union Public Schools and the use of Hicks Park. Hicks Park staff recently hosted a meeting with Tulsa Park staff, Union school staff, and the Tulsa Police Department’s Hispanic Outreach officers to discuss area opportunities. Included in topics of discussion were- Spanish speaking volunteers/students and employees to assist park patrons who speak Spanish, Community safety and crime prevention, and Fall programs and special events.



**6.1.3** Explore the possibility of promoting an adopt-a-park program to help with park maintenance, beautification, and civic pride.

The Adopt-A-Spot program has helped clean up neighborhood parks through large volunteer groups from the business and church communities.

**6.1.4** Explore the possibility of promoting a Neighborhood Work Day for each park to give a face-lift to the park in one day.

Park workdays have been popular over the last couple of years. Projects include spreading mulch on playgrounds, cleaning creek banks and painting cyclone fences.

**6.1.5** Explore the possibility of collaborating with local artists and neighborhood groups to paint murals on neighborhood park facilities historically significant to the neighborhood.

A policy is being created for murals on park facilities. Once the policy is vetted and approved, we will seek local artists.

**6.1.6** Explore the possibility of implementing a WORKREATION program to allow children to complete everyday tasks in park facilities in exchange for “Play Dough” they can use in place of fees. This program can also be used in addition to the scholarship program for those unable to pay.

A “Work-To-Swim” program is in place. Each summer, youth can earn free swim passes by completing work tasks.

**6.1.7** Support the Backyard Partner Program.

We have 13 backyard partners. Adopted sites are Admiral, Benedict, Braden, Centennial, Dawson, East Park Tract, HA Chapman Green, Leake, Plaza de Americas, Sequoyah, Terrace, Veterans, Zink and Kendall-Whittier Parks. Several organizations to date have had park cleanup days in 2014- Asbury United Methodist- 300 volunteers, Tulsa First Baptist-30 volunteers, Redeemer Covenant Church-200 volunteers, Southern Hills Methodist-20 teens, and Tulsa county 4-H-20 youth. Oxley Nature Center has a volunteer program with 60 volunteers that support the center. In addition, we are working with the Herb Society, rose Society, Tulsa Garden Club, TU students, and Boy Scouts of America. In 2013, Woodward Park volunteers logged 494 hours.

**Strategy 6.2: Align agency philosophies with City Council goals and objectives.**

**Strategic Step:**

**6.2.1** Engage City Council in the discussion and seek consensus about pricing and cost recovery goals.

Discussions have taken place with the Park Board and the City Council on the current park fee structure, cost recovery and subsidy.

**Strategy 6.3: Evaluate and manage existing partnerships to ensure benefit is appropriate to the City and Parks and Recreation Department**

**Strategic Step:**

**6.3.1** Analyze existing partnerships based upon value to citizens and the Department. Partnerships have been analyzed, and new contracts ensure that it is a win-win for both groups - the City and the partner. A good example is the Children’s Museum and Tulsa Parks.

In 2015 The Oklahoma Thunder donated a full size sports court, fencing and “Thundering Up” both sports courts at BC Franklin Park.

**Strategy 6.4: Maximize and manage potential partnerships and alliances with public and private schools, neighborhood organizations, foundations, and volunteers.**

**GOAL 7: IMPROVE TRAIL CONNECTIVITY AND WALKABILITY**

**Strategy 7.1: Work with other government agencies and community partners to improve walkable access to parks and recreation opportunities throughout Tulsa.**

**Strategic Steps:**

**7.1.1** Make parks desirable destinations for walking by providing comfort and convenience facilities, especially drinking fountains, wherever possible. This may be done in partnership with other entities next to the park, such as schools, churches, or businesses.

Most park renovations projects include shelters, benches, sidewalks and water fountains to provide a better park experience for patrons.

**7.1.2** Partner with schools, libraries, and other public places to provide park and recreation amenities throughout neighborhoods and close to homes.

Tulsa Parks currently has a good partnership with the Kendall- Whittier School, and the University of Tulsa for Kendall-Whittier Park. Also in place is the partnership with Tulsa Parks and the Children’s Museum for Owen Park.

**7.1.3** Consider opportunities for trails in areas that have little or none currently. The long-term goal should be to connect with existing trail network where possible.

Cousins Park is being designed with a looped interpretive trail that connects to the future River Parks trail alignment. The proposed Cousins Park trail will have a boardwalk spur that directs patrons over the river levy and down the bank to a viewing platform. The platform will be positioned to view existing nesting eagles and provide a buffer to background city noise. We are looking at the feasibility of connecting the B.C. Franklin Park trail with the Osage Trail in the future. Tulsa Parks worked closely with the Trail Committee as it related to recommendations to the master plan.

**7.1.4** Provide additional trails and loop walks within existing parks where feasible, especially in undeveloped and natural areas

See above.

**7.1.5** Develop partnerships and user agreements with utility companies to develop trail corridors in easement right-of ways where safe and appropriate.

Partnership and user agreements with utility companies using easements to develop trail corridors has not presented itself to date.

**7.1.6** Work with other City departments and community groups to ensure safe pedestrian access across physical barriers to parks and recreation facilities. Incorporate traffic calming strategies at access points to parks, open space, and trail heads.

Public work signage has been put in place to reduce parking on the street while using the Torchia-Oliver Soccer Complex. We are currently working with the Engineering Department to reduce the speed limit and put up crosswalks in front of the Mohawk Sports Complex.

All renovation projects that are undertaken take into account access to different amenities within the park. Tulsa Parks is continually implementing designs to make areas more accessible.

**7.1.7** Create walking /bicycle maps with routes and mileages of park and trails. Make these available online and in printed form. Provide way finding signage along trails and walking routes to make them more useful to visitors.

Tulsa Parks has improved signage in our parks. A Marketing position is needed to create maps of bicycle of routes and mileage and trails. Currently, trail maps can be obtained by accessing the INCOG web page.

**7.1.8** Look for opportunities to provide trail links to specific destinations like schools, parks, indoor recreational facilities, and businesses.

Vining Park improvements recently linked school sidewalks with park amenities.

**7.1.9** Add and improve sidewalks between designated connections.

All new park projects go under review for side walk accessibility to park amenities.

## **GOAL 8: CONSIDER COMBINING THE EXISTING CITY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT WITH THE RIVER PARKS AUTHORITY AND THE TULSA COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT**

**Strategy 8.1:** Begin dialogue with the Mayor, City Council, Park Board, Park Director, River Parks Authority Board of Trustees and Executive Director, the Tulsa County Commissioners, Tulsa County Park Board, and the Director of the County Parks to determine potential desirability, feasibility, and benefits of combining the three entities into a single entity, department, or district.

### **Strategic Steps:**

**8.1.1** Identify Task Force to examine potential and issue a report by the end of 2010.

A task force has been recently formed by the City and the County to discuss the feasibility of a joint park system. It will take place in three phases. The first phase is FINDINGS. In this phase, expectations of services provided, park maintenance, recreation centers, recreation programming, golf courses, special events, etc. will be among topics discussed. Phase 2 will be FEASIBILITY. The identification and confirmation of assets, analysis of existing entities, missions, visions, values, and budgetary impact of combining services will be areas under examination. After Phase 2, a decision

will be made to stop the efforts to combine entities or to move forward with combining Tulsa Parks and the County Parks. If there is a Phase 3, it will be the IMPLEMENTATION phase. This phase will create a Transition committee, identify all sites and services under the control of the new structure, real and personal property, develop a transfer agreement, identify funding and the new organizational structure.

