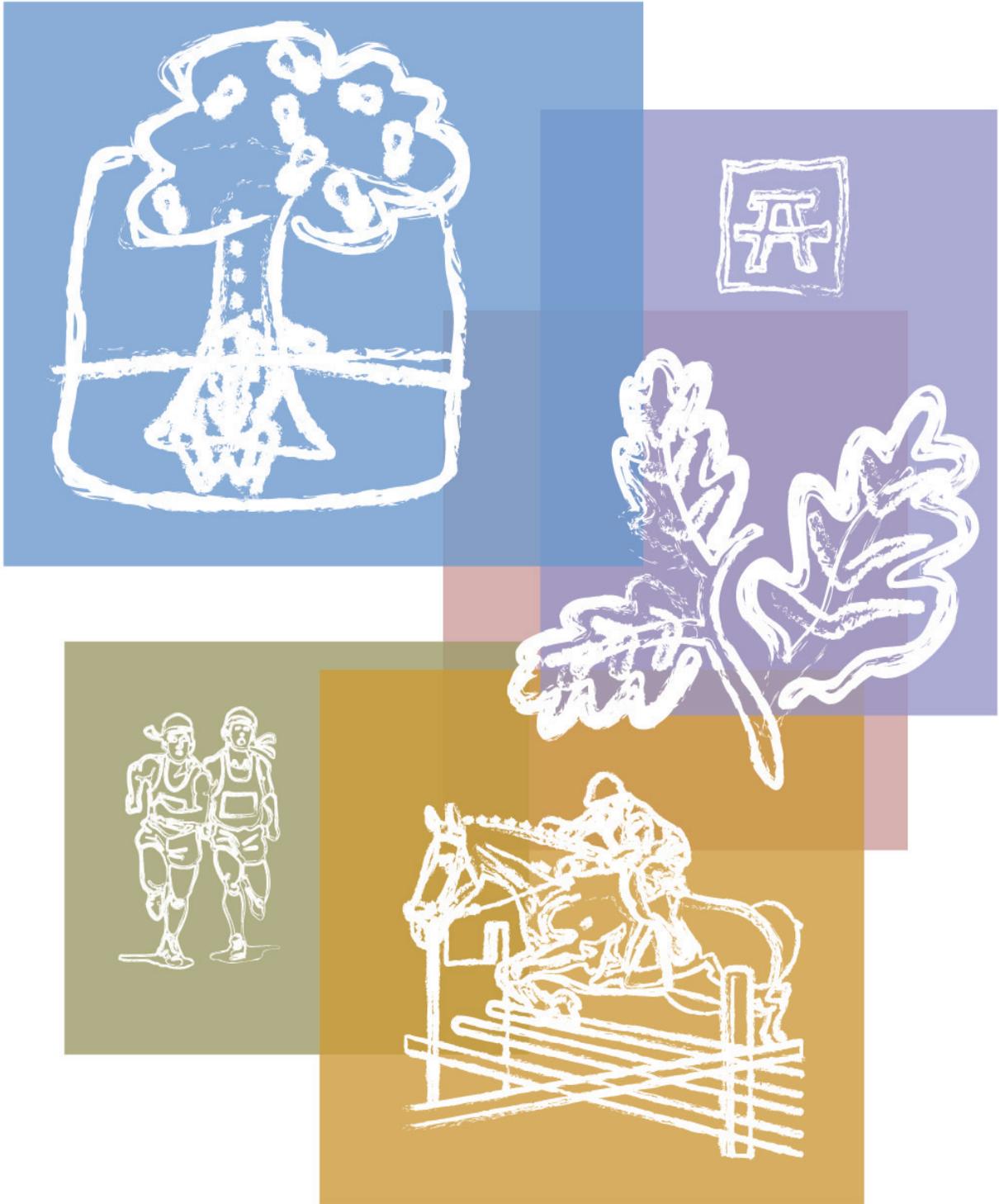


PARKS



HAMILTON, OHIO
COMPRENEHSIVE PLAN



PARKS

LONG-TERM GOAL:

To provide the City of Hamilton with a guide for future growth, especially with respect to the location and design of adequate open space amenities, parks, and recreational facilities.

INTRODUCTION:

Open space amenities, parks, and recreational facilities are important to the health and wellbeing of the community, and the citizens in the City of Hamilton. Open space amenities refer to green and open spaces. Green space is land that is undeveloped, wild or agricultural, natural, or in a restored state usually neighboring or running through an urban area. Open space is undeveloped land or general areas in a community reserved for parks, walking paths, or natural uses. A park can be defined as a piece of land, in or near a city or town used for ornament and/or recreation. Many Parks are kept in their natural state to preserve wildlife. Traditionally, parks are known for bringing beauty to the community and providing the citizens with active and passive recreation opportunities. Active recreation refers to activities that require physical exertion, while passive recreation encompasses the less intensive range of activities. Some of the activities parks are used for are watching nature, reading, walking, jogging, exercising, riding, etc. Many of the activities mentioned displays how parks can be a good source of improving the health of the citizens that partake in similar activities. In terms of physical exercise you might find activities such as yoga and aerobic classes held in parks. “People who participate in regular physical activity reap substantial health benefits. According to the Surgeon General the most significant are as follows:

- “Lower mortality rates for both older and younger adults. Even moderate increases in activity are helpful;”
- “Lower risk for heart disease and stroke;”
- “Prevention or delay of the onset of high blood pressure and actual lowering of blood pressure among people with hypertension;”
- “Decreased risk for colon cancer;”
- “Lowered risk for non-insulin-dependent diabetes;”
- “Weight loss and redistribution of body fat; increase in muscle mass;”
- “Relief of the symptoms of depression and anxiety and improvement of mood; and”
- “Apparent improvement in health-related quality of life by enhancing psychological well-being and by improving physical functioning among people with poor health.” (Jackson)

Parks also contribute to the community by providing social capital. “Social capital – represents subtle but important assets for a community. They provide avenues through which information, values, and social expectations flow, and they empower people to tackle communitywide problems, embark on collective actions, and advocate effectively for their community.” (Walker) In many cases, parks are a good source for job opportunities, youth development, and community building. In addition, parks provide ecological services to the community. Parks help reduce the number of pollutants that collect in the atmosphere. Parks also have economic values. There have been studies that reveal residential homes and businesses located near parks have higher property values than properties that are located farther from parks.

“Open vegetated areas and even street trees can save billions of dollars by providing free ecological services, such as flood control and storm water management, improving water quality and cleaning our air.” (Benotto)

POLICIES STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Overall Objectives:

Section 7.1

- A. The City of Hamilton should provide and maintain open space amenities, parks, and recreational facilities in an orderly, timely, and financially efficient manner that supports public policy and meets the citizen's needs.



Various Parks in Hamilton

Parks and Recreation

Section 7.2

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should adopt the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- B. The City of Hamilton should maintain a high level-of-service on all parks and recreational facilities.
- C. The City of Hamilton should implement a design standard for all parks and recreational facilities to address the lack of unity between city park elements (for example – uniform: signage, receptacles, lighting, and sports facilities [pavilions and restrooms]).

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- Conduct a study on all parks and recreational facilities, in the City of Hamilton, to identify and address areas that have an inadequate level-of-service and/or are in need of improvement.
- “When asked to consider what renovations or new facilities should receive the highest priority, 76% of survey respondents indicated that renovation of existing park facilities should receive top consideration. This was followed by improving maintenance in the parks (69%).” (City of Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Master Plan 3.12)

ACTIONS

- A. Adoption of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- B. Create a set of design standards, in coordination with the Design Review Board and the Parks Department (using Green Building techniques [refer to section 7.8 for information on Green Build]), for parks located in the City of Hamilton. The design standards would improve and create uniform signage, receptacles, lighting, benches, and sporting facilities (pavilions and restrooms) that fit within the urban context of the community.
- C. Implement the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan regarding the creation of partnerships between the City of Hamilton, school district, and other entities for the provision of community recreation services.

Public Facilities and Services

Section 7.3

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should coordinate parks with all public and private facilities and services to maximize the investment to gain the greatest return to the community.
- B. “There is little coordination among natural systems planning, land use planning, and public facilities planning.” (OKI, Strategic Regional Policy Plan p.55)

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- The City of Hamilton should provide the citizens with a variety of sustainable open space amenities and recreation facilities. The open spaces, parks, and recreational facilities, located throughout the City of Hamilton, consist of eleven (11) different types; Baseball Parks, Community Parks, Festival Facilities, Golf Courses, Large Urban Parks, Mini-Parks, Natural Areas, Neighborhood Parks, Sports Parks, Swimming Pools, and Trails and Greenways.
- The City of Hamilton should ensure that all parks and recreational facilities are ADA-accessible and safety compliant.
- Every park located in the City of Hamilton should be properly labeled at the entrance and within the park with standard signage.



Colligan Lodge

- The City of Hamilton should explore the possibility to develop a multi-use community center/aquatics/ice skating complex. The multi-use complex should be located in an area that would best serve the citizens of the City of Hamilton; not creating drastic changes in traffic on surrounding thoroughfares or neighborhoods. The complex would be a good additional source of recreation for the citizens of Hamilton and could possibly serve as a tourist attraction and draw citizens from the region and surrounding areas.
- “The construction of a multi-generation recreation center received a 55% approval vote.” (City of Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Master Plan 3.12)
- According to a survey conducted by the City of Hamilton, for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, thirty-five percent (35%) thought a family leisure aquatic facility should be a high priority for the city.
- The City of Hamilton should work with the Hamilton City School District to acquire land that schools will dispose of in the future.

ACTIONS

- A. Renovate appropriate facilities (including ADA-accessibility and safety compliant) and apply the newly adopted design standards. (Refer to 7.2 Action B)
- B. Label parks at the entrance and within the park with standard signage.
- C. The City of Hamilton should initiate a feasibility study to identify a possible location(s) for a multi-use community center/aquatic/ice skating complex.



Baseball Parks: Serve the sole purpose of baseball/softball use. These areas usually have multiple baseball/softball fields and service the neighborhood.

Location: Strategically located

Size: Varies

Facilities: Typical facilities may include lighting, plantings, signage, baseball/softball fields, benches, trash containers, drinking fountain, picnic areas, small and group picnic shelters, concessions, comfort station, and tournament/event parking.



Community Parks: Serves a broader purpose than neighborhood parks. The focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs as well as preserving unique landscape and open space amenities.

Location: determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two (2) or more neighborhoods at a distance of one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) to three (3) miles

Size: As needed to accommodate the desired uses; usually between thirty (30) and fifty (50) acres

Facilities: Typical facilities may include walks, benches, plantings, signage, public art, playground, lighting, drinking fountain, trash containers, picnic areas, small and group picnic shelters, baseball/softball fields, soccer/football field, multipurpose courts, tennis courts, walking-jogging trails, comfort station, community center, and ice skating rink.



Festival Facilities: Serves as a location for community festive activities including indoor and outdoor festivals.

Location: Strategically located

Size: Varies

Facilities: Large and small indoor/outdoor gathering spaces, lighting, comfort station, trash containers, water fountain, benches, plantings, signage, public art, memorials, monuments, tables, and chairs.



Golf Courses: Eighteen (18) – hole municipal golf course.

Location: Strategically located community-wide

Size: Determined by market demand, based on population growth indicators. A minimum of 150 acres is optimal

Facilities: Typical facilities may include clubhouse, eighteen (18) hole course, and maintenance complex.



Large Urban Parks: Large urban parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are inadequate in serving community needs. The focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs as well as preserving unique landscape and open space amenities.

Location: Determined by the quality and suitability of the site; usually serves the entire community

Size: As needed to accommodate desired uses, usually a minimum of fifty (50) acres with seventy-five (75) or more acres being optimal

Facilities: Typical facilities may include walks, benches, plantings, signage, public art, playground, lighting, drinking fountain, trash containers, picnic areas, small and group picnic shelters, baseball/softball fields, soccer/football field, multipurpose courts, tennis courts, walking-jogging trails, comfort station, community center, ice skating rink, buffer area, open space, amphitheatre, roller skating rink, skateboard course, equestrian trails, lakes and ponds.



Mini-Parks: Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.

Location: Less than one-fourth ($\frac{1}{4}$) mile distance in residential setting

Size: Between 2500 square feet and one acre

Facilities: Typical facilities may include walks, benches, plantings, signage, public art, memorials, monuments, playground, lighting, drinking fountain, and trash containers.



Natural Areas: Land set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscape, open space and visual aesthetics/buffering.

Location: Resource availability and opportunity

Size: Variable

Facilities: Typical facilities may include vehicular access, parking, trails, picnic areas, outdoor education areas, wildlife observation decks, arboretums, environmental demonstration areas and open space.



Neighborhood Parks: The Neighborhood Park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as a key neighborhood recreational and social focus. Emphasis is on informal active and passive recreation.

Location: One-fourth ($\frac{1}{4}$) to one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) mile distance from adjacent neighborhoods and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers

Size: Although five (5) acres is considered the minimum size, five (5) or ten (10) acres is optimal

Facilities: Typical facilities may include walks, benches, plantings, signage, public art, playground, lighting, drinking fountain, trash containers, picnic areas, small picnic shelter, informal athletic field, multi-purpose court, and comfort stations.



Sports Parks: Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.

Location: Strategically located community-wide

Size: Determined by projected demand, usually a minimum of twenty-five (25) acres with forty (40) – eighty (80) acres being optimal

Facilities: Typical facilities may include walks, benches, plantings, signage, public art, playground, lighting, drinking fountain, trash containers, picnic areas, small and group picnic shelters, baseball/softball fields, soccer/football fields, multi-purpose courts, tennis courts, walking-jogging trails, concessions, comfort station, and tournament/event parking.



Swimming Pools: Facilities include outdoor aquatic centers and competitive pools.

Location: Strategically located community-wide

Size: Minimum facility size is 12,000 square feet of water area on a site of at least fifteen (15) acres

Facilities: Typical facilities may include aquatic center, splash park, zero depth play pool, competition pool, wading pool, sun bathing deck, observation area, concession facilities, patio, and bathhouse.



Trails and Greenways: Multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrian to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation. These linkages effectively tie park system components together and form a continuous park.

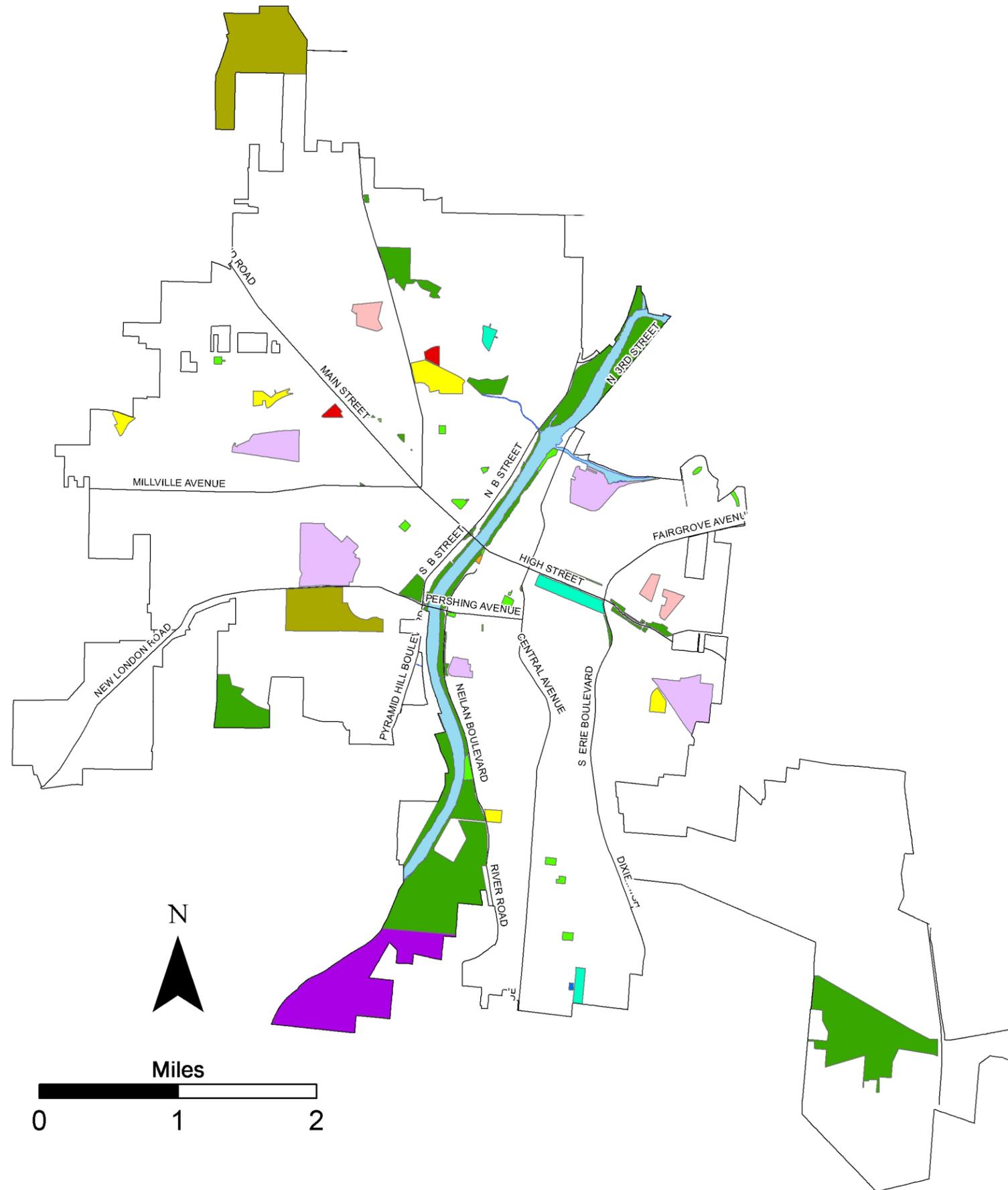
Location: Separate, single-purpose, hard surface trails for pedestrians or bicyclists and in-line skaters; resource availability and opportunity

Size: Variable

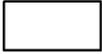
Facilities: Typical facilities may include walking trail, bicycle trail, skating trail, benches, plantings, signage, public art, playground, lighting, drinking fountain, trash containers, picnic areas, and small picnic shelters.

Existing and Proposed Parks

Figure 7.3



Legend

-  City Boundary
- Existing Parks and Open Spaces**
-  Baseball Park
-  Community / Regional Park
-  Community Park
-  Festival Facility
-  Golf Course
-  Mini Park
-  Natural Area
-  Neighborhood Park
-  Sports Park
-  Swimming Pool
-  Proposed Parks and Open Spaces
-  Main Streets

Date: 01.01.2008

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Open Space Amenities

Section 7.4

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should preserve and enhance the existing open space, natural resources, greenways, parks, and environmentally sensitive habitats that are essential to the quality of its communities.
- B. “We all live in a watershed – the area that drains to a common waterway, such as a stream, lake, estuary, wetland, or ultimately the ocean – and our individual actions can directly affect it.” (US EPA, Wetlands, Oceans, & Watersheds)
- C. “Although wetlands are often wet, a wetland might not be wet year-round. In fact, some of the most important wetlands are only seasonally wet. Wetlands are the link between the land and the water. They are transition zones where the flow of water, the cycling of nutrients, and the energy of the sun meet to produce a unique ecosystem characterized by hydrology, soils, and vegetation—making these areas very important features of a watershed. Using a watershed-based approach to wetland protection ensures that the whole system, including land, air, and water resources, is protected.” (US EPA, Wetlands Overview)
- D. “Wetlands can be found in every county and climatic zone in the United States.” (US EPA, Wetlands Overview)

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- The City of Hamilton, in coordination with the Parks and Recreation department, should create a list of critical environmental areas that should be protected such as watersheds, wetlands, heavily mature vegetated areas, open and green spaces, parks etc.
- “Avoid building in fragile ecosystems or ecologically significant environments, such as wetlands, old-growth forests or remnant stands of native prairie. If you can’t avoid it, minimal alteration to the land must be a high priority.” (Ohio EPA, Pollution Prevention by Building Green, 2004)
- “Local governments will utilize the efforts of local watershed planning groups in the development of comprehensive plan goals, objectives, policies, and implementing regulations.” (OKI, Strategic Regional Policy Plan p.58)

ACTIONS

- A. The City of Hamilton should ensure the list of sensitive habitats such as; existing, heavily mature vegetated areas, watersheds, wetlands, etc. are preserved.

Land Use

Section 7.5

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton, in coordination with The Future Land Use Map, should promote and provide open space, green space, and parks for the different land use classifications to create a sustainable and healthy environment for the city and its citizens.

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan's Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- Incorporates sufficient amounts of attractive open space, green space, parks, and recreational facilities that can lead to sustainable and healthy growth for all neighborhoods in the future.
- With the compactness of land uses such as mixed-use, it is important to provide the citizens with open space, green space, and parks. Community parks, mini-parks and/or neighborhood parks would be ideal for most compact areas inside of the City of Hamilton.
- The City of Hamilton should locate larger parks such as large urban parks and sports parks at a central location (depending on availability of land) to better service all land uses.

ACTIONS

- A. The City of Hamilton should designate specific areas of land to allow the possibility of growth and future development of open spaces, green spaces, parks, and recreational facilities in and/or around the different zoning and land use classifications.

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton, in coordination with the Pedestrian/Bicycle Thoroughfare Plan, should make parks easily accessible for all citizens through safe pedestrian and bicycle connections, to create an efficient interconnected multi-modal community.

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan's Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- The City of Hamilton should review its pedestrian/bicycle connection to ensure that all neighborhoods are appropriately connected to the city park system.
- The City of Hamilton should enhance the bikeways and pathways throughout the parks with the possibility of connecting to abutting jurisdiction trails and parks.
- “Evaluation of other survey responses found that 63% of respondents drive to the park facility they use most often. Of those polled, 64% said they would be willing to walk up to 2 miles to a park if safe routes were available.” (City of Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Master Plan 3.13)
- “62% giving high priority to an enhanced bikeway/greenway system.” (City of Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Master Plan 3.12)

ACTIONS

- A. Upgrade existing pathways between park elements and extend networks to increase connectivity.
- B. The City of Hamilton should ensure sidewalks and/or bike path connections to open spaces, green spaces, parks, recreational facilities, as well as abutting land uses to allow access to pedestrians.
- C. The City of Hamilton should initiate a feasibility study on connecting trails and parks with the trails and parks of abutting jurisdictions.

Housing

Section 7.7

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should provide and promote open space, green space, and parks in existing and future residential areas to enhance the quality of the communities.
- B. “Trees, parks and open space within communities are essential elements contributing to quality of life, right after low crime and safe streets, ... Residential neighborhoods well endowed with mature trees and open space are exceptionally desirable places to live and contribute to the stability and vitality of a community.” (Benotto)
- C. “Natural open space and trails are prime attractions for potential home buyers in 1995. According to research conducted by American Lives, Inc. for the real estate industry, 77.7 per cent of all homebuyers and shoppers in the study rated natural open space as either “essential” or “very important” in planned communities. Walking and bicycling paths ranked third.” (National Park Service)

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- A quality system of green space, open space, and parks can attract new residents to the City of Hamilton.
- Encouraging new residential development to be strategically located and developed next to existing open space, green space, parks, and recreational facilities can maximize these assets.

ACTIONS

- A. Coordinate the planning of future residential development with existing open spaces, green spaces, parks, recreational facilities, and utilities to maximize the use of current infrastructure and give the greatest return to the community.
- B. The City of Hamilton should develop incentives that will encourage new residential developments to incorporate open spaces, green spaces, parks, and recreational facilities and/or connections to existing open space, green space, parks, and recreational facilities.



Examples of parks and recreation near housing

OBJECTIVES

- A. “The term “green building” describes more than just an actual building. “Green building” is a concept that includes the design of the structure, site selection, building methods, building materials and landscaping practices. Green building may also be referred to as “sustainable design” or “high-performance building.” (Ohio EPA)
- B. The City of Hamilton should use Green Building techniques in existing and future; green spaces, open spaces, parks, and recreational facilities.
- C. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “The built environment has a vast impact on the environment, human health, and the economy. By adopting green building strategies, we can maximize both economic and environmental performance. Green construction methods can be integrated into buildings at any stage, from design and construction, to renovation and deconstruction. However, the most significant benefits can be obtained if the design and construction team takes an integrated approach from the earliest stages of a building project. Potential benefits of green building can include:”
- Environmental benefits
 - a) “Enhance and protect biodiversity and ecosystems”
 - b) “Improve air and water quality”
 - c) “Reduce waste streams”
 - d) “Conserve and restore natural resources”
 - Economic benefits
 - a) “Reduce operating costs”
 - b) “Create, expand, and shape markets for green product and services”
 - c) “Improve occupant productivity”
 - d) “Optimize life-cycle economic performance”

- Social benefits
 - a) “Enhance occupant comfort and health”
 - b) “Heighten aesthetic qualities”
 - c) “Minimize strain on local infrastructure”
 - d) “Improve overall quality of life”
- (US EPA, Why Build Green?)

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- Green Build should be used on park elements (such as facilities, lighting, etc.) in order to maximize the efficiency of benefits that the citizens receive.
- “Local governments will enable the use of environmentally sensitive building practices⁵⁶ to integrate growth with protection of the region’s natural systems.” (OKI, Strategic Regional Policy Plan p.56)
- “⁵⁶ Environmentally sensitive building practices typically involve fewer materials, less energy consumption, less pollution, less natural habitat loss and better indoor air quality.” (OKI, Strategic Regional Policy Plan p.59)

ACTIONS

- A. On adiam, commy nis accummy nonsectet wis acipit eugait vullandiam, veniat wis nisis num augue min henim quis dolobor incing euissi. Gue min heniam, volore venis aciliscing etueriuscip

Environmental Quality

Section 7.9

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should promote and adopt a variety of programs to conserve and protect green and open spaces, existing parks, and land designated for future parks and recreational facilities.
- B. “By placing values on the region’s natural systems, local governments can begin to value and prioritize their assets. In the tri-state region, however, few local governments address some natural systems issues in long-range plans. Their approaches are typically site-specific, narrowly focused, or not part of truly comprehensive plans. Where they exist, such plans typically focus on criteria for protection of individual parks, preserves, water resources, wildlife, plant life, and other discrete open spaces or environmentally sensitive areas. They typically do not include measurable policies that address the maintenance of intrinsic, economic, environmental, and social values of natural systems within their boundaries or in neighboring jurisdictions.” (OKI, Strategic Regional Policy Plan p.53)



Preserved Natural Area

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- The City of Hamilton, in coordination with the current and Future Land Use Map, should document current stock and future green space, open space, parks, and natural environments that need to be conserved.
- “The value and preservation of diverse natural systems, which includes air, water, wildlife, plant life, and land are not always examined in local, state, regional, and federal planning processes.” (OKI, Strategic Regional Plan Policy p.53)
- “Local governments will use the outcomes of a regional economic/environmental model to establish comprehensive plan policies that protect valuable natural systems such as wetlands, water recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, riparian zones, flood plains, and steep slopes.” (OKI, Strategic Policy Plan p.55)
- The City of Hamilton should educate its citizens as well as public and private establishments on the value that the green space, open space, and parks provide.

ACTIONS

- Green space, open space, and parks provide ecological and social values. Some of these values are:
 - Parks provide hidden environmental benefits. “Urban parks improve air quality, create habitat for wildlife, reduce storm water runoff, and cool the temperatures of heat islands in the cities.” (Frampton Jr.)
 - Trees provide hidden environmental benefits. “They increase home energy efficiency through shading and cooling, filter air pollution, buffer noise and wind, and provide wildlife habitat as well as pleasant visual relief.” (National Association of Home Builders)
 - Trees and plants improve air quality. “One tree can remove 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere annually, equaling 11,000 miles of car emissions. Landscape plants, including shrubs and turf, remove smoke, dust, and other pollutants from the air. One study showed that 1 acre of trees has the ability to remove 13 tons of particles and gases annually.” (Virginia Tech University)
- A. Ensure the existing stock of open space, green space, parks, and land that may be used in the future for the development of parks and recreational facilities is preserved and well kept.
- B. The City of Hamilton should initiate a program that educates citizens about the benefits that they receive from green space, open space and parks and the reason to protect these specific areas.
- C. The City of Hamilton should implement a program to plant trees and flowers throughout the community.

Trees and flowers along a street for aesthetic and environmental reasons



Economic Development

Section 7.10

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should provide strategic, high quality development in terms of existing open space, green space, and parks; renovate existing parks; and develop new parks throughout neighborhoods to provide both the city and the citizens with the maximum fiscal gain and make it more desirable.
- B. “Proximity to greenways, rivers, and trails can increase sales price, increase the marketability of adjacent properties, and promote faster sales. Clustering the residential development to allow for establishment of a greenway might also decrease overall development costs and result in greater profits for the developer.” (National Park Service 1-8, 1-9)
- C. “Greenways, rivers, and trails can play an important role in increasing a community’s quality of life, and are attractive to businesses and corporations. Office site locations adjacent to rivers, trails and greenways are also likely to be more attractive to prospective tenants than sites lacking such amenities.” (National Park Service 7-4)
- D. Trees increase property market value. “The value of a single, mature tree can account for a minimum of \$10,000 of the resale value of a home and typically is 15 percent of the property’s value, according to the National Arbor Day Foundation. On residential streets lined with large mature trees, the total economic impact is greater than the sum cost of the individual trees.” (Benotto)
- E. “Trees are aesthetically pleasing and are well known to increase real estate values by as much as 15 percent.” (National Association of Home Builders)

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- The City of Hamilton, with the use of open spaces, green spaces, parks, and recreational facilities should create an environment that will beautify the community as well as attract new businesses and residents.

ACTIONS

- A. The City of Hamilton should further explore the economic value of green space, open space, trees and parks and implement a strategy that maximizes this economic return on investment.

Economic Benefits of Parks Case Study

Section 7.11

“This principle is illustrated by the hypothetical 50-acre park shown in Figure 1. It is a natural, resource-oriented park with some appealing topography and vegetation. The cost of acquiring and developing it (fencing, trails, supplementary planting, some landscaping) is \$20,000 an acre, so the total capital cost is \$1 million. The annual debt charges for a 20-year general obligation bond on \$1 million at 5% are approximately \$90,000.

A projected annual income stream to service the bond debt was based on the following assumptions:

- If properties around the park are 2,000 sq. ft homes on half-acre lots (40 yd x 60 yd) with 40 yard frontages on the park, then there would be 70 lots in Zone A (30 lots along each of the 1,210 yard perimeters and 5 lots along each of the 200 yard perimeters).
- Assume total property taxes payable to the city, county, and school district are 2% of the market value of the property.
- Assume the market value of similar properties elsewhere in the jurisdiction beyond the immediate influence of this park is \$200,000.
- Assume the desire to live close to a large natural park creates a willingness to pay a premium of 20% for properties in Zone A; 10% in Zone B; and 5% in Zone C, and that there are also 70 lots in Zones B and C.

Table 1 shows that, given the above assumptions, the annual incremental property tax payments in the three zones from the premiums attributable to the presence of the park amount to \$98,000. This is sufficient to pay the \$90,000 annual bond debt charges.

TABLE 1. PROPERTY TAXES PAY THE ANNUAL DEBT FOR ACQUISITION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK

The flows of this investment cycle are shown in Figure 2: (i) the council invests \$90,000 a year for 20 years (annual debt charges on a \$1 million bond) to construct or renovate a park; (ii) which causes the values of properties proximate to the park to increase; (iii) leading to higher taxes paid by the proximate property owners to the council; (iv) that are sufficient to fully reimburse the \$90,000 annual financial investment made by the council.” (Crompton 9-11)

Zone	Market Value of Home	Value Added by Park	Property Taxes at 2%	Tax Revenues Attributed to Park	Additional Revenues from 70 Affected Units
Outside the park’s influence	\$200,000	\$0	\$4,000	\$0	\$0
A (20% premium)	\$240,000	\$40,000	\$4,800	\$800	\$56,000
B (10% premium)	\$220,000	\$20,000	\$4,400	\$400	\$28,000
C (5% premium)	\$210,000	\$10,000	\$4,200	\$200	\$14,000
Total Increase in Tax Revenue Attributed to Park:					\$98,000

The flows of this investment cycle are shown in Figure 2: (i) the council invests \$90,000 a year for 20 years (annual debt charges on a \$1 million bond) to construct or renovate a park; (ii) which causes the values of properties proximate to the park to increase; (iii) leading to higher taxes paid by the proximate property owners to the council; (iv) that are sufficient to fully reimburse the \$90,000 annual financial investment made by the council.” (Crompton 9-11)

Festivities

Section 7.12

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should provide opportunities for the citizens to come together and enjoy the parks and other recreational facilities that are in the community.

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan's Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- Hosting festivities in the City of Hamilton can be beneficial. Festivals not only attract citizens from the City of Hamilton but also could draw citizens from abutting neighborhoods and jurisdictions. The additional volume of people could increase the fiscal gains of businesses located throughout the City of Hamilton.
- In coordination with Parks and Recreation Department, the City of Hamilton should explore the possibility of creating and hosting new festivities for the citizens.
- The City of Hamilton should explore hosting city events such as:
 - Touch A Truck
 - a) Generally attracts children ages (2-8)
 - b) Set a pre-determined admission fee
 - c) Children get a chance to explore different types of trucks. (sit in the drivers seat and honk the horn, etc.)
 - Movies in the Park
 - a) Attracts people of all ages
 - b) Free admission
 - c) Have small concession stands set up that sell juice, pop corn, cotton candy, slushies, etc.
 - d) Show movies in different parks located throughout the City of Hamilton



Damfest at the Great Miami River

- Tour de Hamilton
 - a) Attracts people of all ages
 - b) Set a pre-determined admission price and use the proceeds for Parks and Recreation funding or scholarship funds (optional).
 - c) Set a maximum number of participants (ex 2500) and use proceeds for Parks and Recreation funding or scholarship funds.
 - d) Bike ride (not race) along five (5), ten (10), and twenty (20) mile routes throughout the City of Hamilton, spotlighting the parks. Along the ride, have rest stops set up at different parks where riders can receive healthy snacks, fruit, drinks, and entertainment. At the end of the ride host a celebration with refreshments and entertainment.
- Family Fun Campout
 - a) Attracts people of all ages
 - b) Set a pre-determined admission price that would cover the cost services provided.
 - c) Set a specific time frame for the entire event (ex. 4:30pm – 9:00am Fri-Sat)
 - d) Set up tents (participants must provide their own tents, bug spray, and flashlights) in a specified park. Participants would receive dinner (beans, hot dogs, hamburgers, etc.) and a small breakfast in the morning. Multiple activities would be available and a movie would be shown at night. For those that enjoy staying up late, there would be an optional night hike around the park.
- Increasing the promotion of current festivities could provide the citizens of Hamilton and the region a better knowledge of activities being held in the community.

ACTIONS

- A. The City of Hamilton should investigate creative ways to increase the awareness of festivities being held throughout the city for its citizens and the region.
- B. Initiate a survey that would give the City of Hamilton feedback, from the citizens, about ongoing festivities, and providing new festivities throughout each season of a calendar year.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Section 7.13

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should seek coordination and notification of open space, parks, and recreation issues with abutting jurisdictions and expect the same in return.
- B. The City of Hamilton, an integral part of the larger OKI Region, should continue participating in local and regional organizations concerned with open space, green space, park, and recreational facility issues.
- C. “Sustaining economic prosperity and protecting the environment require partnerships and cooperation, not only between federal, state and local governments, but also with the private sector.” (Frampton Jr.)

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- The City of Hamilton should participate in regional organizations such as the MetroParks of Butler County, Miami Conservancy District, Hamilton County Park District, Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA), Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), Regional Greenspace Initiative (RGI), and any other organization that relates to issues regarding parks, open space, and green space regulation.

ACTIONS

- A. The City of Hamilton should continue to meet and exchange information and ideas with neighboring jurisdictions, regional organizations, and other governmental units that have an impact on the community green space, open space, parks, and recreational facilities.
- B. The City of Hamilton should coordinate with other jurisdictions to maximize its green space, open space, and parks.

Fiscal Responsibility

Section 7.14

OBJECTIVES

- A. The City of Hamilton should generate the fiscal capability to sustain the upkeep and high level-of-service of all open space amenities, parks, and recreational facilities.

STRATEGIES

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan's Parks Section, the following strategies should be pursued by the City of Hamilton:

- In coordination with the local, state, and national park regulations, the City of Hamilton should generate a list of areas such as green space, open space, and parks that would fall under the proper criterion to receive funding for protection and maintenance.
- The City of Hamilton should look into the possibility of assessing impact fees on new developments.

ACTIONS

- A. Apply for funding at the local, state, and federal levels to acquire, protect, and maintain green space, open space, and parks in the City of Hamilton.
- B. Further explore the possibility of assessing impact fees to offset the impacts new developments may have on open space amenities, parks, and recreational facilities.

ACTION STEPS

Parks and Recreation:

- A. Adoption of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- B. Create a set of design standards, in coordination with the Design Review Board and the Parks Department (using Green Building techniques [refer to section 7.8 for information on Green Build]), for parks located in the City of Hamilton. The design standards would improve and create uniform signage, receptacles, lighting, benches, and sporting facilities (pavilions and restrooms) that fit within the urban context of the community.
- C. Implement the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan regarding the creation of partnerships between the City of Hamilton, school district, and other entities for the provision of community recreation services.

Public Facilities and Services:

- A. Renovate appropriate facilities (including ADA-accessibility and safety compliant) and apply the newly adopted design standards. (Refer to 7.2 Action B)
- B. Label parks at the entrance and within the park with standard signage.
- C. The City of Hamilton should initiate a feasibility study to identify a possible location(s) for a multi-use community center/aquatic/ice skating complex.

Open Space Amenities:

- A. The City of Hamilton should ensure the list of sensitive habitats such as; existing, heavily mature vegetated areas, watersheds, wetlands, etc. are preserved.

Land Use:

- A. The City of Hamilton should designate specific areas of land to allow the possibility of growth and future development of open spaces, green spaces, parks, and recreational facilities in and/or around the different zoning and land use classifications.

Connectivity:

- A. Upgrade existing pathways between park elements and extend networks to increase connectivity.
- B. The City of Hamilton should ensure sidewalks and/or bike path connections to open spaces, green spaces, parks, recreational facilities, as well as abutting land uses to allow access to pedestrians.
- C. The City of Hamilton should initiate a feasibility study on connecting trails and parks with the trails and parks of abutting jurisdictions.

Housing:

- A. Coordinate the planning of future residential development with existing open spaces, green spaces, parks, recreational facilities, and utilities to maximize the use of current infrastructure and give the greatest return to the community.
- B. The City of Hamilton should develop incentives that will encourage new residential developments to incorporate open spaces, green spaces, parks, and recreational facilities and/or connections to existing open space, green space, parks, and recreational facilities.

Green Build:

- A. The City of Hamilton, in coordination with the park design standards, should incorporate Green Building throughout its parks. This should apply to both newly constructed and renovated facilities.

Environmental Quality:

- A. Ensure the existing stock of open space, green space, parks, and land that may be used in the future for the development of parks and recreational facilities is preserved and well kept.
- B. The City of Hamilton should initiate a program that educates citizens about the benefits that they receive from green space, open space and parks and the reason to protect these specific areas.
- C. The City of Hamilton should implement a program to plant trees and flowers throughout the community.

ACTION STEPS CONTINUED

Economic Development:

- A. The City of Hamilton should further explore the economic value of green space, open space, trees and parks and implement a strategy that maximizes this economic return on investment.

Intergovernmental Cooperation:

- A. The City of Hamilton should continue to meet and exchange information and ideas with neighboring jurisdictions, regional organizations, and other governmental units that have an impact on the community green space, open space, parks, and recreational facilities.
- B. The City of Hamilton should coordinate with other jurisdictions to maximize its green space, open space, and parks.

Festivities:

- A. The City of Hamilton should investigate creative ways to increase the awareness of festivities being held throughout the city for its citizens and the region.
- D. Initiate a survey that would give the City of Hamilton feedback, from the citizens, about ongoing festivities, and providing new festivities throughout each season of a calendar year.

Fiscal Responsibility:

- A. Apply for funding at the local, state, and federal levels to acquire, protect, and maintain green space, open space, and parks in the City of Hamilton.
- B. Further explore the possibility of assessing impact fees to offset the impacts new developments may have on open space amenities, parks, and recreational facilities.

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