

# *Chapter Seven*

## **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

### **Introduction**

Park and recreation opportunities serve as important benchmarks against which the quality of life within a community can be measured. Recreation is increasingly viewed as an important factor in maintaining adult health – both physical and mental; it is perceived as more than just a weekend activity. Recreation is an integral and necessary element of life which needs to be incorporated into a daily routine. In addition to sports, recreation for both adults and children includes physical activities, social contact, experiences in natural environments, and intellectual and cultural experiences. Child behavior and development studies have documented the importance of play, not only for children’s physical development, but also for social, intellectual, and creative growth. Recreation is seen as a means to an end, rather than simply as an end, itself.

Parks and open space, whether designed for passive or active recreation, are important elements in creating a balanced living environment. The increase in dual income households and the pace of life, in general, causes leisure time to often come at a premium. Having recreational opportunities close at hand is important not only for convenience, but to maintain the physical and social strength of the community through active recreational and social interaction with family and neighbors. Provo’s citizens have repeatedly expressed the need and the desire for additional parks, recreational opportunities, and the retention of the open and – in some parts of the city – rural feeling of the community.

In establishing a parks and recreation plan for a community, it is important to provide a variety of recreation experiences through various sizes of parks intended for different types of use and users. Parks should be designed with the users in mind, whether those users be healthy children and adults, senior citizens, or the disabled. It is also important to achieve equitable distribution of basic park lands, recreation facilities, and programs throughout the community by applying standards uniformly and consistently.

This chapter is intended to be an overview of the parks, recreation, and open space goals of the City. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes more detail on these issues. As the Master Plan is updated, an executive summary of the plan should be included in this chapter. Update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan should occur as soon as staff-time and available funding permit.

### **Park Standards**

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) establishes standards for park and open space acreage in relation to population size. Standards vary according to park types which include

neighborhood parks, community parks, and special use/or regional parks. Parks are classified based on their sizes and service areas. Current standards are listed in Table 7.1.

<b>TABLE 7.1 NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION PARK STANDARDS</b>			
<b>Park Type</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Acres/1,000 People</b>	<b>Desirable Size</b>
Neighborhood	½ mile radius	2	4 - 8 acres or more
Community	1 ½ mile radius	4	5 - 60 acres
Special Use/Regional	No applicable standard	4	Variable

A **neighborhood park** will generally provide activities for children (target age of up to fifteen years), their parents and senior citizens. Facilities may include open lawn areas for a variety of informal field sports, tot-lots, playgrounds, picnic tables and/or shelters, drinking fountains, restrooms, horseshoe pits, sand volleyball courts, benches, and possibly tennis or hard-surfaced play areas for basketball. These parks are generally designed as walk-to facilities and, as such, do not include large parking lots or any on-site parking if the site is small.

A **community park** will generally be designed to serve all age groups and persons with disabilities and will provide a wide variety of recreation opportunities. In addition to facilities found in neighborhood parks, community parks may include regulation baseball, football, and soccer fields, multiple tennis courts, multiple picnic pavilions, amphitheaters, and parking lots. Older teens and young adults are better served by community parks than by neighborhood parks.

**Special use/regional parks** are large recreation areas that serve an entire city or region. They usually exceed fifty acres in size and often include a special use facility such as a golf course, nature center, botanical garden, outdoor theater, trails, zoo, or a broad expanse of natural scenery or open space. Regional parks are designed to accommodate large numbers of people for a variety of day use activities. If possible, they should be developed around a unique or significant resource or emphasize regional recreational interests. Regional parks can also serve as buffers and separations between communities or other urban areas.

The National Recreation and Parks Association guidelines recommend ten acres of parks for every 1,000 persons in Provo. Based on the 2009 population of 119,775, this computes to a need of approximately 1,197 acres of park land. As the city continues to grow, this need will increase proportionally. These standards should be viewed as a guide, as they address minimum, rather than maximum or even optimum, goals to be achieved. The need for City parks can be offset by the proximity of State parks.

Utilization of school facilities or privately owned facilities can also address community needs through joint use agreements. This approach should be expanded, especially if there is an identified

shortage of City-controlled facilities in particular geographical areas or shortage of specific uses, such as indoor swimming, tennis, and racquetball.

## **Planning for Parks**

The importance of advance acquisition of park land and open space land cannot be stressed strongly enough. Once general locations have been identified as suitable for parks or open space, as set forth in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, land should be acquired in advance of actual need in order to ensure its protection and availability for future use. Once these lands are acquired, they may be leased for agricultural or other uses until the land is to be developed as a park. The acquisition and/or preservation of prime open space should be a priority.

Not all pieces of land are, however, suitable for park development. As the City considers land to purchase, receives offers of donated land, or requires park land dedication as a condition of development, it should be careful to not become caretakers of unusable or high-maintenance property. All property considered for acquisition should have a reconnaissance report describing zoning, neighborhood conditions, traffic patterns, and site features such as soils, seismic limitations, water availability, development capability, and historical and environmental considerations.

One of the major difficulties in any park plan is to establish funding sources for acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of the park system. Although federal and State funding programs for recreation exist, these sources have dwindled in recent years and some programs have ended altogether. Cities are having to depend more and more on local revenues, donations, and volunteerism to develop parks and recreation programs. The key to park funding is to establish an annual commitment within the capital improvement program for park property acquisition, new park development, and existing park renovation.

### **Existing and Proposed Parks**

Map 7.1 Provo City Developed Parks Map shows the many wonderful parks that Provo City has developed. There are many existing and proposed parks within Provo City's boundaries. They include neighborhood parks, community parks, and special use/regional parks. Table 7.2, Neighborhood Parks, lists the City's current and proposed neighborhood parks, with acreage. The list is alphabetized, and the order in which these parks are developed is not defined.

**TABLE 7.2 NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
Carterville Park	5	0	5
Exchange Park	16	0	16
Grandview Park (Provo City School District)	8	0	8
Harbor Park	4	0	4
Joaquin Park	1	0	1
Lakeview Park	4	9	13
Maeser Park	2	0	2
Neighborhood Park	1	0	1
Pioneer Park	4	0	4
Provost Park	6	0	6
Powerline Parks (5)	4	5	9
Riverside Park	8	0	8
Riverview Park	14	0	14
Roadside Park	0.5	0	0.5
Ron Last Park	2	0	2
Rotary Park	12	0	12
Sherwood Hillside Park	6	0	6
Stutz Park	0	6	6
West Park	2	0	2
One additional park in Central Provo	0	5	5
One additional park in Central Provo	0	3	3
One additional park in Northeast Provo	0	5	5
One additional park in Southeast Provo	0	5	5
One additional park in Southeast Provo	0	3	3

<b>TABLE 7.2 NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS</b>			
<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
One additional park in Southwest Provo	0	5	5
One additional park in West Provo	0	5	5

Table 7.3, Community Parks, lists the City’s current and proposed community parks with acreage. The list is alphabetized, and the order in which these parks are developed is not defined.

<b>TABLE 7.3 COMMUNITY PARKS</b>			
<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
Bicentennial Park	24	16	40
Foothill Park	0	65	65
Footprinters Park	15	16	31
Fort Utah Park	15	1	16
Fox Field (Provo City School District)	7	0	7
Harmon Park	5	0	5
Kiwanis Park	21	0	21
Lions Park	16	1	17
Memorial Park	7	0	7
North Park	18	0	18
Rock Canyon Park	30	25	55
Sertoma Park	14	0	14
Slate Canyon Park	0	40	40
Southwest Soccer Fields (Provo City School District)	6	0	6
Sunset View Park	14	6	20
Timp Kiwanis Park	11	0	11
Wilderness Park	17	4	21
One additional park in Northeast Provo	0	20	20
One additional park in Northeast Provo	0	60	60

<b>TABLE 7.3 COMMUNITY PARKS</b>			
<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
One additional park in Northwest Provo	0	10	10
One additional park in Southwest Provo	0	20	20
One additional park in West Provo	0	20	20

Table 7.4, Special Use/Regional Parks, lists the City’s current and proposed special use/regional parks with acreage. The order in which these parks are developed is not defined.

<b>TABLE 7.4 SPECIAL USE/REGIONAL PARKS</b>			
<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
Bonneville Shoreline Trail	19.4	3.9	23.3
Indian Road Trailhead	3	0	3
4800 North Trailhead	0	0.5	0.5
4000 North Trailhead	0	0.5	0.5
Rock Canyon Trailhead	4	4	8
“Y” Mountain Trailhead	0.5	0.5	1
Foothill Park Trailhead	0	0.5	0.5
Slate Canyon Trailhead	1	19	20
Buckley Trailhead	0	1	1
South State Trailhead	0	1	1
Despain Property	0	383	383
East Bay Wetland Nature Area	1	167	168
Landfill	0	28	28
Multi-use Pathways (Ten feet or more paved)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Geneva Road Pathway	0	4.85	4.85
Carterville Pathway	1.94	4.85	6.79
Lovers Lane	0	2.9	2.9
College Connector	5.8	0	5.8
4800 North Connector	0	1.9	1.9

**TABLE 7.4 SPECIAL USE/REGIONAL PARKS**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
Multi-use Trail (Six feet or more paved or unpaved)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Independence Boulevard	0	3.9	3.9
East Union Canal Trail	0	1.9	1.9
Timpanogos Canal Trail	0	1.9	1.9
Dike Trail	0	3.9	3.9
Division of Wildlife Resources Trailhead	0	1	1
Provo Bay/Airport Nature Area	0	100	100
Provo Canyon Parkway System	n/a	n/a	n/a
Canyon Glen Park	10	20	30
Bridal Veil Park	3	0	3
Bridal Veil Falls Parkway	0	40	40
Upper Falls Park	0	2	2
Provo City Cemetery	44	14	58
Provo/Jordan River Parkway	13.6	0	13.6
West Gate Trailhead	0	1	1
Geneva Road Trailhead	1	0	1
Wilderness Park Trailhead	1	0	1
Willow Estates	1	0	1
Rivers Park	0	5	5
Riverside Park Trailhead	0.25	0	0.25
Exchange Park Trailhead	0.25	0	0.25
Moon River	2	0	2
3800 North Trailhead	0	1	1
North University Avenue Greenway	0	17	17

**TABLE 7.4 SPECIAL USE/REGIONAL PARKS**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Proposed Acres</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>
5600 North Trailhead	0	0.25	0.25
Provo Recreation Center and Pool (School/City)	0.5	0	0.5
Provo River Central Utah Project Corridor	0	170	170
Provo River Equestrian Trail	0	10	10
Reserve at East Bay Golf Course	209	0	209
South Fork Nature Area	0	150	150
South Fork Park	6	4	10
South Fork Homestead	0	20	20
Big Springs Park	5	15	20
Big Springs Camp	1	1	2
South Fork Equestrian Trailhead	1	4	5
Squaw Peak Nature Area	0	80	80
Golf Course	0	200	200
Provo Gun Range	5	5	10
Squaw Peak Trailhead	0	0.5	0.5
Trails	0	9.7	9.7

## Major Recreation Facilities

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) lists standards for major recreation facilities per 100,000 people. Table 7.5, Major Recreation Facilities, lists fourteen major recreation facilities, the national standard for number of facilities needed per 100,000 residents, the Provo City standard, the number of existing facilities, and the number of facilities still needed to meet the City's standard.

A community recreation center may be a viable method for accommodating a portion of the recommended major recreational facilities listed in table 7.5. A feasibility study was conducted and the City is currently moving forward with a bond election for the November 2010 election.

<b>TABLE 7.5 MAJOR RECREATION FACILITIES</b>				
<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>NRPA Standard per 100,000</b>	<b>Provo City Standard per 100,000</b>	<b>Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Facilities Needed</b>
Basketball	20	12	10	2
Racquetball (four-wall)	5	9	10	0
Ice Hockey	1	1	2	0
Tennis	50	36	27	9
Volleyball	20	12	10	2
Baseball	20	20	12	8
Soccer	10	20	12	8
Softball	20	16	11	5
Skeet and Trap Field (8 stations)	2	1	1	0
Golf	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Par 3 (18-hole) Course	No standard	1	1	0
18-hole Standard Course	2	1	1	0
Driving Range	2	1	1	0
Swimming Pools	5	4	3	1
Community Recreation Center	None	1	0	1
Center for the Arts	1	1	0 <del>1</del>	1 <del>0</del>
Senior Citizen Center	1	1	1	0

The Provo City Parks and Recreation Department has proposed the following major regional recreation facilities for future development as found in Table 7.6, Proposed Regional Recreation Facilities.

<b>TABLE 7.6 PROPOSED REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES</b>
Community Recreation Center
Performing Arts Center Expansion
Expansion of the Peaks Ice Area
Senior Center Facility Enhancements
Additional Five-field Adult Softball Complex
Additional Four-field Little League Baseball Complex in Northeast and Southeast Provo
New Official Size Baseball Field
50 Meter Swimming Pool
Additional Four-field Youth Soccer Complex in Northeast and Southeast Provo
Community Skate Parks

## **Provo City Parks and Recreation Goals**

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan outlines the eleven goals listed here. That plan also contains extensive policies to be followed in the achievement of these goals. For a complete listing of those policies, please refer to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

- Goal 1:** Provide a system of attractive and accessible parks and recreation facilities that will provide a complete range of activities for all age groups.
- Goal 2:** Encourage and provide increased public access to natural amenities such as the Provo River, Utah Lake, Rock Canyon, Slate Canyon and Provo Canyon, and mountain open space.
- Goal 3:** Protect and enhance Provo’s cultural, historic, and architectural resources.
- Goal 4:** Promote efficiency and resource conservation in the selection, design, operation and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.
- Goal 5:** Encourage the use of trails for walking and bicycling as alternative modes of transportation and for recreation.

- Goal 6:** Provide a well-rounded selection of recreation programs and activities that will provide uplifting, healthful, enjoyable, and personally satisfying experiences for Provo City residents of all ages.
- Goal 7:** Pursue special events of regional, statewide, national, and international significance to intensify community pride, enhance economic development, and assist in providing lasting facilities to be used by City residents.
- Goal 8:** Strengthen the role of the cultural arts in recreation programming.
- Goal 9:** Maintain progressive urban forestry and community beautification programs.
- Goal 10:** Develop funding sources and strategies to supplement appropriation from the City general fund to provide parks and recreation facilities.
- Goal 11:** Provide a burial park that meets the needs of the citizens in times of bereavement and which also adds to the beauty and dignity of the community.
- Goal 12:** A feasibility study should be conducted to evaluate an expansion of facilities at the Covey Center for the Performing Arts.
- Goal 13:** Seek to expand the Peaks Ice Arena as a city-wide recreational resource.

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