



MEETING DATE:

**September 30, 2015**

TIME:

3:30-5:30 PM

PLACE:

Fishers City Hall  
Central Conference Room  
1 Municipal Drive  
Fishers, Indiana 46038

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Rodney Retzner, Cecilia Coble, Corby Thompson, Tim Russell, John Amos, Jocelyn Vare, Natalie Teyema

Members Not Present: Cathy Ferree

Others Present: Caleb Gutshall, Rachel Johnson, Leah McGrath, Connie Nimmo, Todd Gillian, Maria H.

### KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- “Park systems bring added value to the City.” – Tony Elliot
  - Parks add higher quality of life, encourage health/wellness, offer a community gathering space, provide conservation of ecosystems, increase property value and attracts tourism.
- Review of the draft plan
  - Section 1: Vision and Plan Overview
    - The presented document has been approved by the Parks Advisory Board.
    - Accessibility can be defined as easy to get to or meeting ADA requirements.
    - The final draft of the Parks Plan will reflect Fishers 2040’s smart, vibrant and entrepreneurial vision.
  - Section 2: Community Profile and Needs Assessment
    - The community needs connective trails that are safe to cross.
      - For example, a safe solution to crossing 37 may be a pedestrian bridge.
    - Geist Reservoir would be a great location for trails and parks, however most of the parcels surrounding it are private and difficult to acquire.
    - Some current sidewalks will become a ten-foot, asphalt trail.
    - Most residents are within a five-minute drive to a park.
    - Major needs in the community include walking/hiking/biking trails, small neighborhood parks, large community parks and natural areas and wildlife.
    - Satisfaction levels of facilities, etc. are clustered in community.
    - Citizens may not use City amenities, but private neighborhood amenities.
    - Areas east of I-69 lacks amenities, such as soccer fields, neighborhood parks and play equipment.
    - As sports and trends change, the amenity needs and use may change.
    - Residents near Richey Woods were dissatisfied with the amount of parks trails in the area. This could be because there isn’t safe pedestrian access to the park.
    - The addition of amenities are only necessary if comparable amenities aren’t easily accessible in neighboring communities.
  - Section 3: Parks Inventory
    - Accessibility and dog friendliness isn’t indicated on parks inventory.
      - All dogs are welcome in all Fishers parks provided they are leashed and waste is disposed of properly.
    - All parks (public and private) are not accounted for.
      - Neighborhood parks are often owned and maintained privately. School parks and playgrounds are considered a public amenity through a partnership with the City.

- Parks are typically acquired through purchasing or dedication of land.
        - Development standards for open spaces will provide the community with the opportunity to better utilize land.
      - Carmel and Noblesville have a greater public City park space “ratio” than Fishers because they use various private parks in their calculations..
      - I-69 divides the City and limits accessibility to parks. Attention should be given to improve bike/pedestrian connections across the interstate
      - “(Rotary Park, located on 116<sup>th</sup> Street) should personify the community and what we stand for.” – Cecilia Coble
      - Park visibility is low for Rotary Park.
      - An inventory of neighborhood parks may provide a more comprehensive analysis of parks available to residents.
      - Private parks can be difficult to acquire because of maintainence.
    - Section 4: Environmentally Sensitive Areas
      - Sensitive areas can have trails, compostable restrooms and other low impact amenities but no buildings.
- Review of draft plan goals
  - Goal 1
    - ADA equipment (gliders), sensory activities (sandboxes), signage in multiple languages and amenities for vision and hearing impaired will better serve the needs of the community.
    - Activities for all ages is crucial to getting residents to explore the park system. Many park amenities cater to young children. Activities like Frisbee golf and running trails are needed.
    - Amenities for all seasons (warming shed) is important as residents use parks in colder months.
  - Goal 2
    - The addition to a community sports facility is needed as the YMCA is too crowded.
    - Docking stations, bike racks and hydration and tool stations will enhance facilities.
  - Goal 3
    - Parks need more shade and trees.
    - Mature trees should be preserved by inventorying, determining health and creating policy to protect them.
    - American elm trees are pristine in Fall Creek.
    - Campaigns like flagging the biggest tree in the area are good for awareness.
  - Goal 4
    - Adopt-a-park and sponsorship programs will increase awareness and help with maintenance by parks.
  - Goal 5
    - Projects like St. Vincent Hospital’s fitness park, which provides educational elements that motivate, should be accessible by trails.
  - Goal 6
    - Overgrown tree roots pose a safety concern for bicyclists, rollerbladers, etc.
  - Goal 7
    - Geocaching and other hobby organizations will connect residents and encourage them to gather in parks.
    - “Create a rich environment for people to do their ideas.” – Jocelyn Vare
    - “Where adventure meets nature... Meet everybody where they are.” – Leah McGrath
  - Goal 8
    - Online feedback portals make it easier to address maintenance concerns.
    - State of the parks report will keep residents “in the know.”
  - Goal 9
    - Add action item to partner with regional health network.
  - Goal 10

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Make necessary changes to draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Sections 1-4, to reflect decisions made at meeting – Staff
- **Review Sections 6-11 by October 13 – All Members**
- **Bring feedback from October 7 tour (if attending) to next meeting – All Members**

**ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- [Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Sections 1 and 4, Excerpt](#)
- [Measuring the Economic Value of a City Parks System](#)