

City of Ballwin Parks Master Plan



January 2019



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in association with
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acknowledgments

The City of Ballwin would like to thank all the citizens who provided their time and input necessary for the success of this plan.

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City of Ballwin

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A NOTE FROM THE CITY

This Parks Master Plan process included valuable input from the community as well as thoughtful professional analysis. This document also uses national and industry trends in parks & recreation as a benchmark and guide to our decisions. The Plan represents a collaboration between Ballwin residents and staff who together believe in the same prosperous future for our City's parks and facilities.

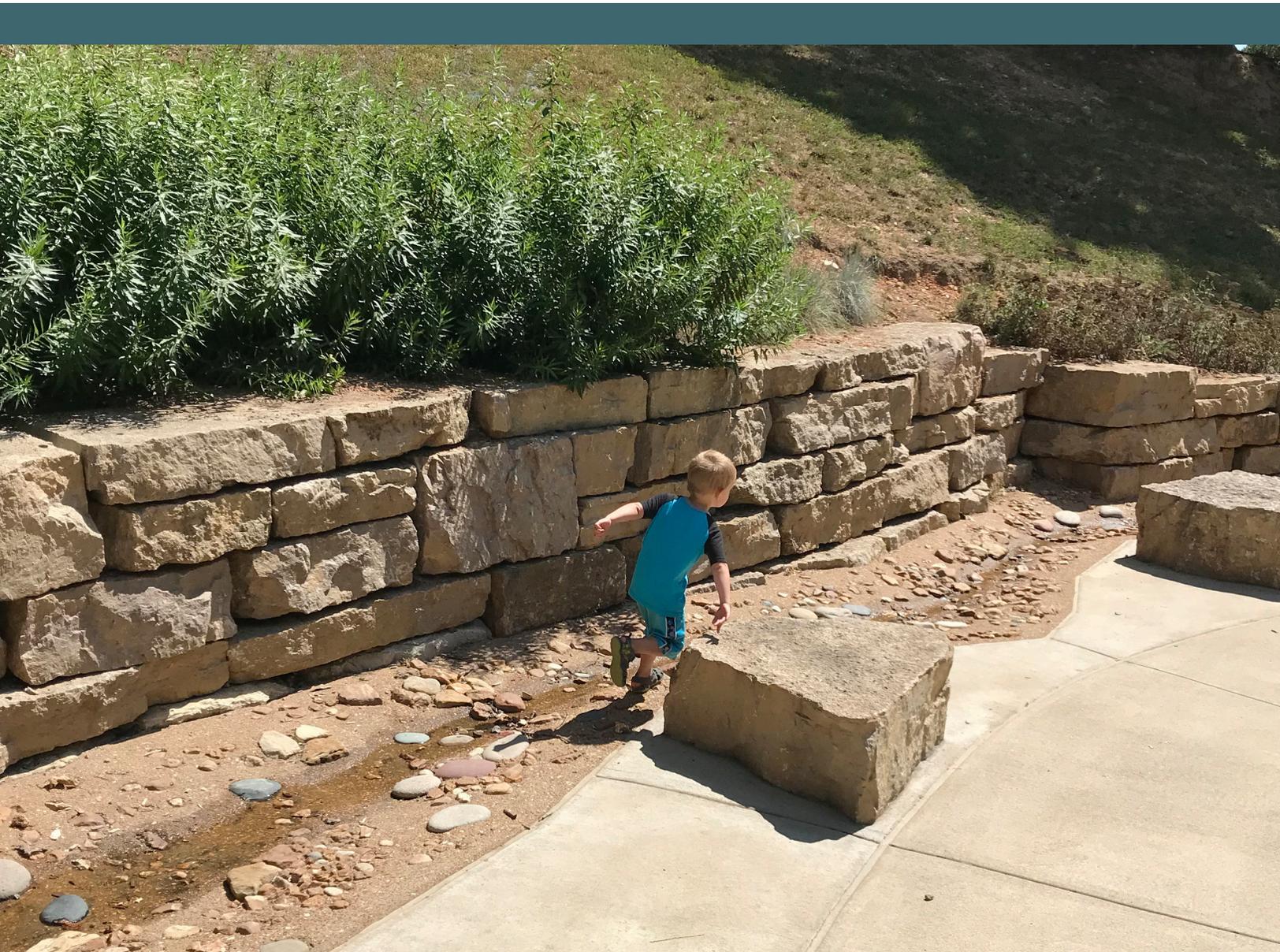
Thank you to our residents who have voiced their opinions through surveys and public meetings. Our commitment to Ballwin is to use this master plan to continually guide our efforts of providing safe, modern, and successful parks and facilities that can help create a higher quality of life for current residents and generations to come.

John Hoffman
Interim Director of Parks & Recreation/
Superintendent of Parks



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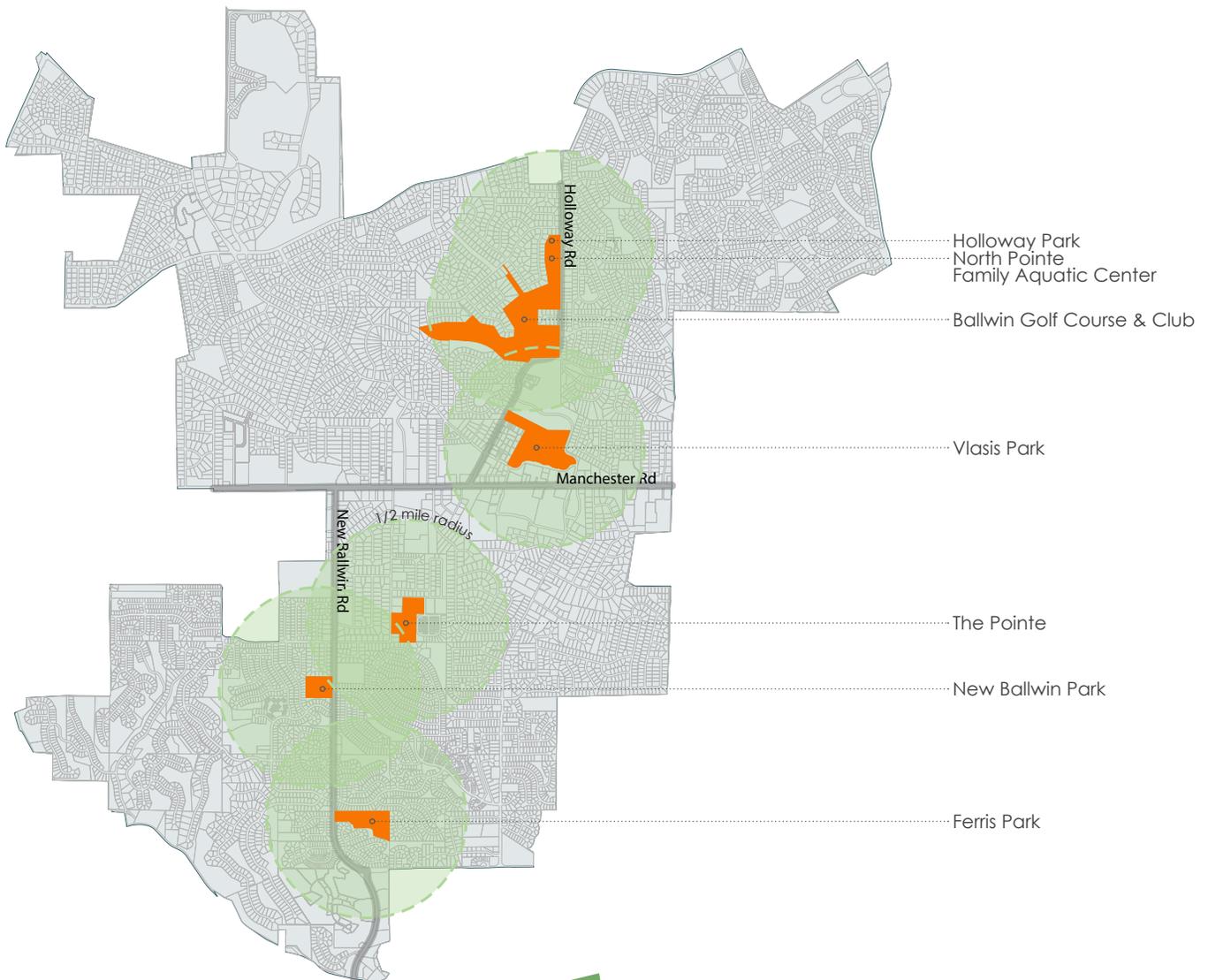
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**INTRODUCTION &
PLAN OVERVIEW**

This is Ballwin's first citywide Parks Master Plan. As a ten-year guide and strategic plan for enhancing park and recreation amenities for the community, the citywide Parks Master Plan establishes a path forward for enabling and enhancing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, open spaces and recreation facilities. This Master Plan was developed with the input and direction of local residents and stakeholders. The process included public meetings and a community survey as baseline data to inform the plan.

goals

- Identify areas of opportunity to existing parks and facilities.
- Identify additional park land / open space opportunities
- System-wide park improvements
- Identify additional greenway, trails and on-street bike routes.
- Provide a safer connection to Castlewood State Park.



process

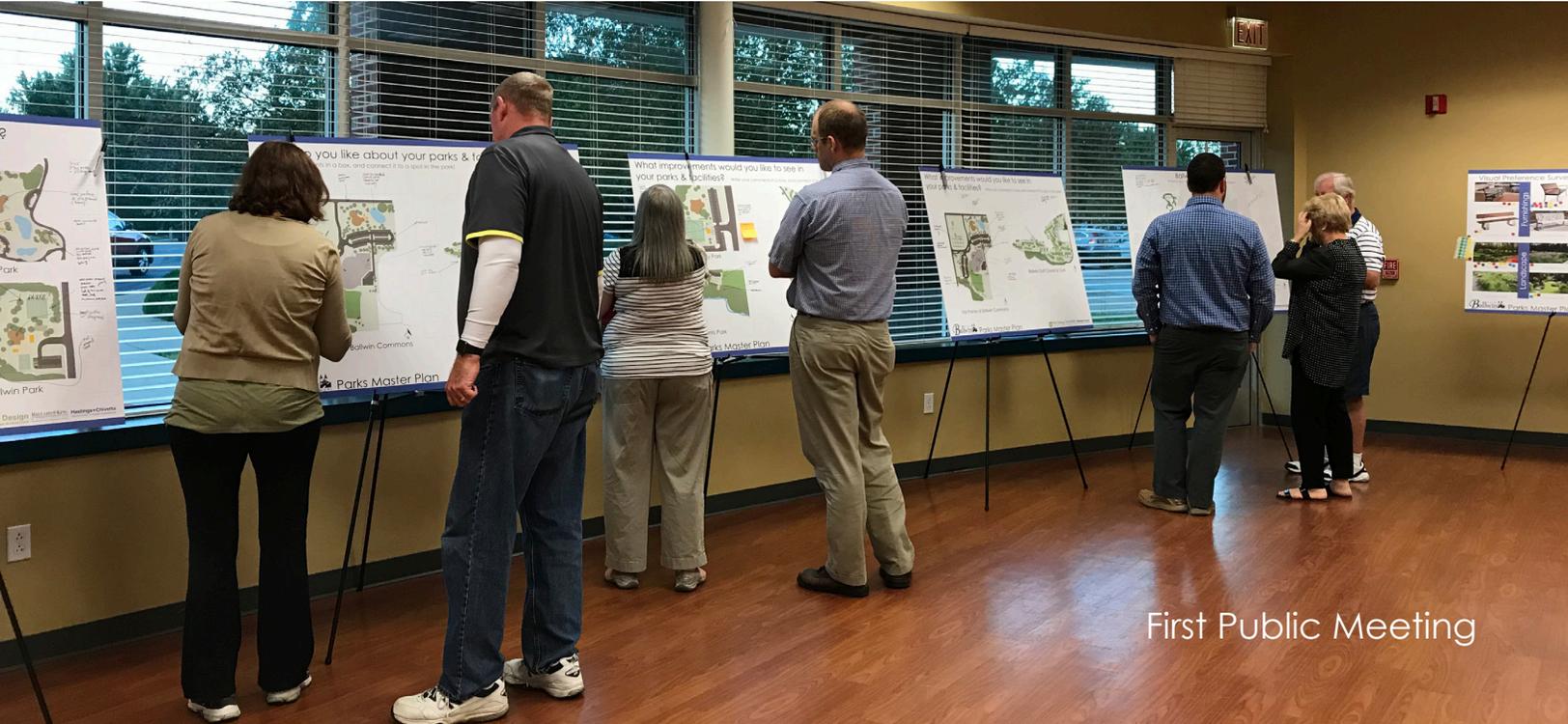
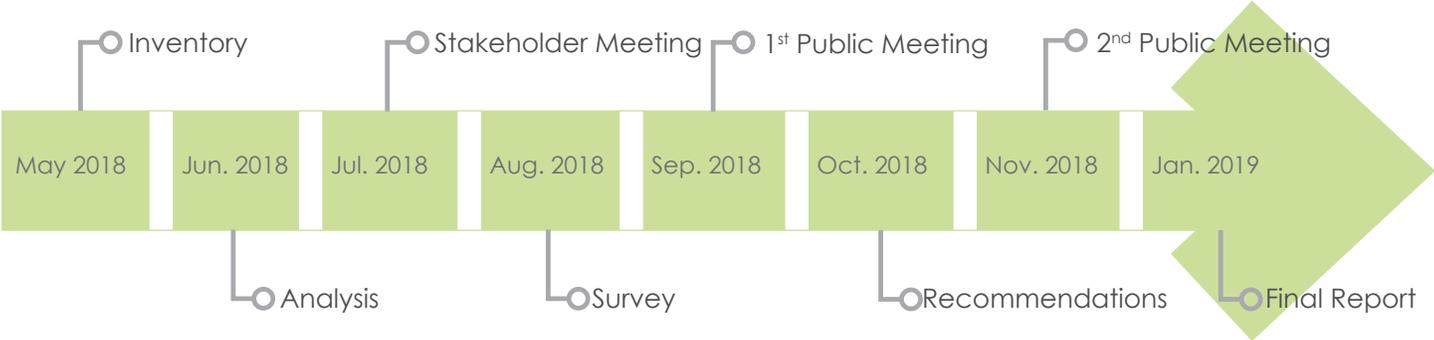
Inventory and Analysis:

The team compiled and reviewed existing plans and documents pertaining to the parks, recreation, open space, trails and cultural resource offerings in Ballwin. The team analyzed existing sources of data, including community demographics, growth projections, geographic distributions and convenience of park and facility locations, quality of existing natural resources, and Ballwin's Parks & Rec. department operations and budget. Evaluation also included comparing Ballwin's parks, trails, facilities and open space system to systems in other similarly sized municipalities.

Community Involvement:

Community input is critical to the plan's implementation. The community helped shape the plan through a variety of forums. The consultant team met with the Master Plan Stakeholder Committee throughout the process to gain insight and guidance on the direction of the plan. Stakeholders engaged in conversations on diverse topics. The consultant team, City parks staff and leaders discussed implications of the findings throughout the planning process.

Additionally, the plan is informed by an understanding of overall citizen values and priorities. Two public meetings and an online survey were designed to receive input from a representative group of the community and facility users.



First Public Meeting

current planning documents

Community plans and relevant documents were reviewed for policy direction and goals as they pertain to the provision and planning for future parks and recreation opportunities in Ballwin.

Ballwin/ Manchester Community Wide Trail Plan:

In 2007, a trail plan for the cities of Ballwin and Manchester aimed to create a safe and interconnected bicycle transportation network to connect to existing surrounding destinations. Many of these proposed enhancements are still viable solutions and should continue to be evaluated.

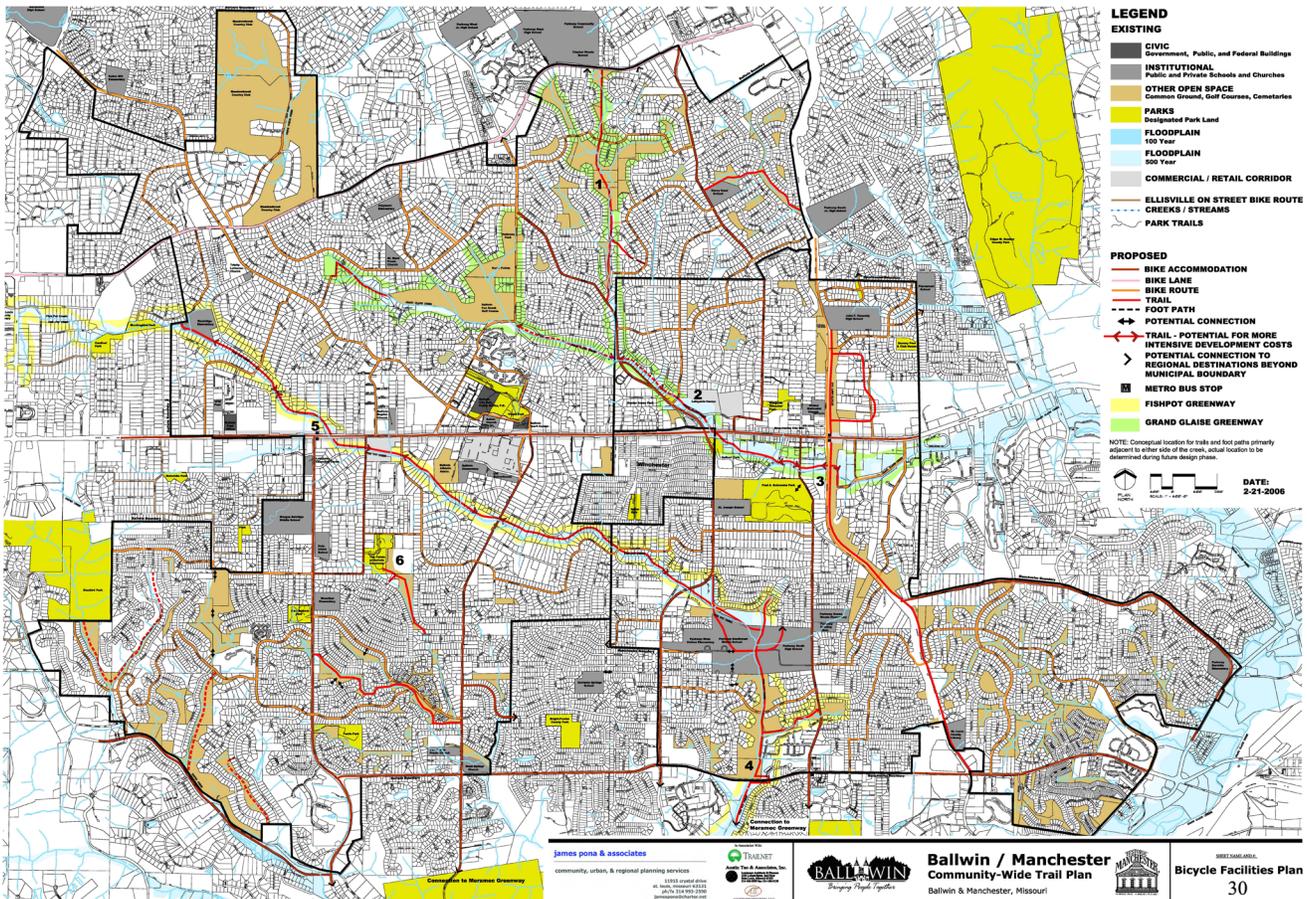
Comprehensive Plan, 2018- 2019:

The team coordinated with The I5Goup who is currently updating Ballwin's comprehensive plan. The comprehensive will be a shared community vision for the next twenty years that will keep and enhance the quality of life while attracting continued economic investment in the City. The teams collaborated on portions of the Comprehensive Plan that overlap with the Parks Master Plan like the trails and pedestrian connections, streetscapes and open space.

Ferris Park Master Plan

A detailed master plan was completed for Ferris Park in 2012. Elements within this master plan such as a new playground and pavilion were recently implemented. Other elements and recommendations are still viable and will be considered and prioritized in the master plan recommendations.

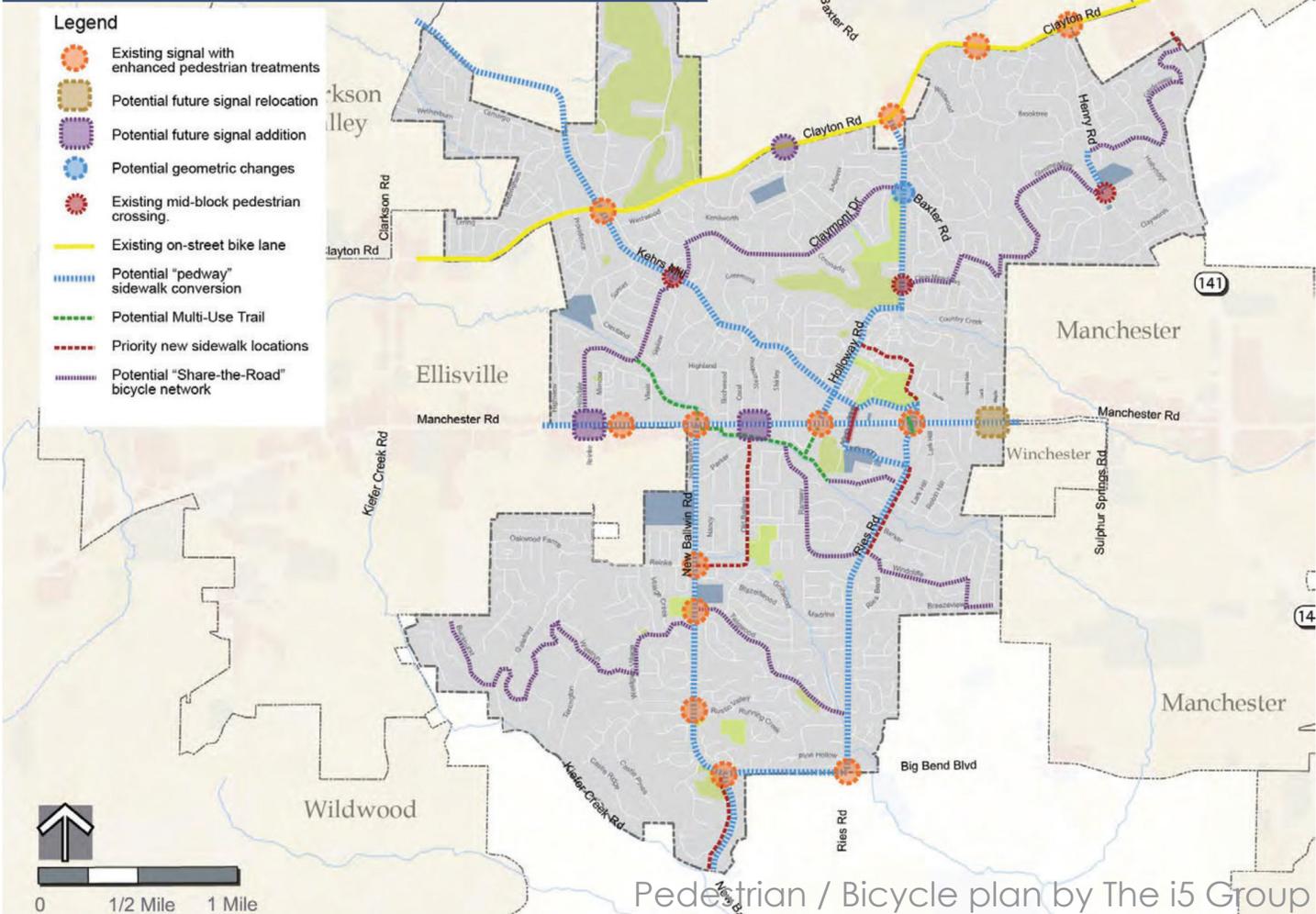
Ballwin trail plan





Ferris Park master plan by SWT Design

Pedestrian / Bicycle



Pedestrian / Bicycle plan by The i5 Group



2 COMMUNITY PROFILE

market assessment

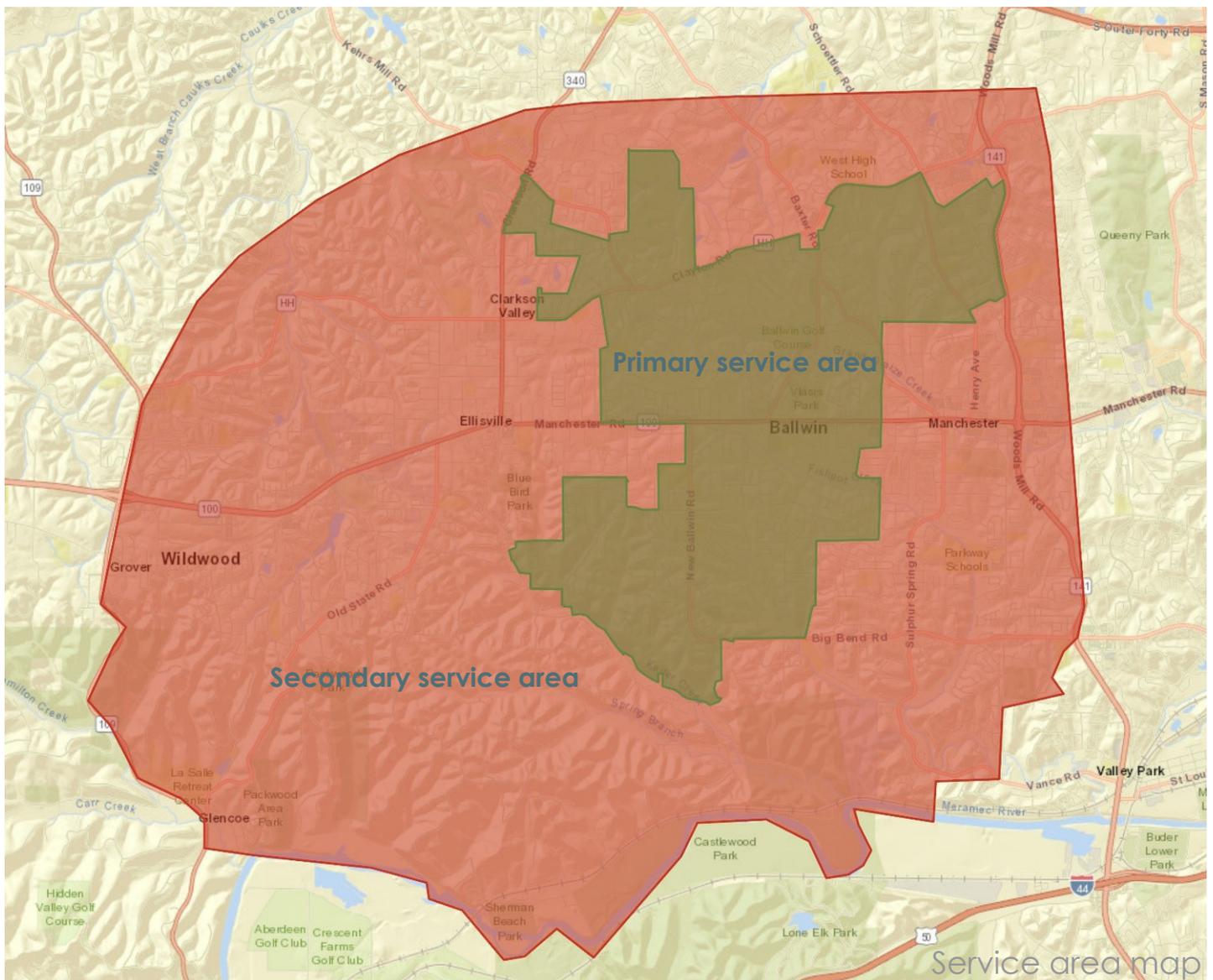
The team performed a market analysis and feasibility study for Ballwin, MO.

The following is a summary of the demographic characteristics within areas identified as Primary and Secondary Service Areas for Ballwin, MO. The Primary Service Area is the current city limits of Ballwin. The Secondary Service Area includes an area east just past Hwy 141, south to the Meramec River, west to Hwy 109 and just north of the Ballwin city limits.

Service Areas:

The information provided includes the basic demographics and data for the Primary Service Area with comparison data for the Secondary Service Area, as well as the State of Missouri and the United States as a whole.

Secondary Service Areas are defined as the distance people will travel on a regular basis (a minimum of once a week) to utilize recreation facilities. Use by individuals outside of this area will be much more limited and will focus more on special activities or events.



Service area map

population

	Primary Service Area	Secondary Service Area
2010 Census	30,408	101,911
2018 Estimate	31,151	103,708
2023 Estimate	31,537	104,692

median age

	Primary Service Area	Secondary Service Area	State of Missouri	Nationally
2010 Census	41.3	41.7	37.8	37.1
2018 Estimate	42.2	43.4	39.0	38.3
2023 Estimate	43.4	44.6	39.9	39.0

households

	Primary Service Area	Secondary Service Area
2010 Census	11,875	38,607
2018 Estimate	12,135	39,154
2023 Estimate	12,264	39,441

households with children

	Number of Households with Children	Percentage of Households with Children
Primary Service Area	4,060	34.2%
Secondary Service Area	14,045	36.4%
State of Missouri	754,287	31.8%

median household income

	Primary Service Area	Secondary Service Area	State of Missouri	Nationally
2018 Projection	89,714	100,100	52,772	58,100
2023 Projection	99,566	106,523	59,541	65,727

age distribution

Ages	Population	% of Total	Nat. Population	Difference
0-5	1,677	5.4%	6.0%	-0.6%
5-17	5,376	17.3%	16.3%	+1.0%
18-24	2,300	7.4%	9.7%	-2.3%
25-44	7,267	23.3%	26.4%	-3.1%
45-54	4,307	13.8%	13.0%	+0.8%
55-64	4,488	14.4%	12.9%	+1.5%
65-74	3,195	10.3%	9.2%	+1.1%
75+	2,546	8.2%	6.4%	+1.8%

race and median age

Race	Total Population	Median Age	% of Population	% of MO Population
White	26,906	44.4	86.4%	81.4%
Black	969	35.0	3.1%	11.7%
American Indian	77	39.6	0.3%	0.5%
Asian	2,184	35.8	7.0%	2.0%
Pacific Islander	10	57.5	0.0%	0.1%
Other	259	25.6	0.8%	1.6%
Multiple	753	16.3	2.4%	2.6%

demographic summary

- The population level of 31,151 people within the Primary Service Area is large enough to support an indoor recreation center when overlaying NSGA participation statistics on to the demographic profile of the community.
- The median age for the Primary Service is higher than the National number. The growth estimated in the older age groups, particularly the 65-74 age group suggests an aging population. Age is one determining factor that drives participation in recreation activities.
- The primary service area experienced a slow, steady increase in population since the 2010 Census. This trend is expected to continue over the next 5 years with population in the service area reaching a population of 31,537 which is a 1.2% increase.

This demographic trend points to a growing population and Ballwin should expect continued strong participation and support for recreation.

- The percentage of households with children in the primary service area is 34.2% compared to the national level of 33.4%.
- The median household income within the Primary Service Area is 54% higher than the national level. Furthermore, the percent of households with income over \$50,000 is 74.4% compared to a national level of 57.2%. **Household income is another primary determining factor that drives participation in recreation activities.**
- The Spending Potential Index for housing in the primary service area is 32% higher than the national level, while the median HH Income is 54% above the national level. This suggests a higher than normal level of discretionary income.
- The Tapestry segments identified in the Primary Service Area point to an active community, which is also supported by the presence of other service providers.
- **Based on the population, age group distribution, household income levels the overall market conditions for recreation activities in the primary service area are favorable.**

recreation industry trends

One of the areas of greatest participant growth over the last 10 years is in fitness related activities such as exercise with equipment, aerobic exercise and group cycling. This is also the most volatile area of growth with specific interest areas soaring in popularity for a couple of years only to be replaced by a new activity for the coming years. Also, showing particularly strong growth numbers are ice hockey and running/jogging, while swimming participation remains consistently high despite recent drops in overall numbers. It is significant that many of the activities that can take place in an indoor recreation setting are ranked in the top fifteen in overall participation by the National Sporting Goods Association.



Due to increasing recreational demands, there has been a shortage in most communities of the following spaces:

- **Gymnasiums**
- **Pools (especially leisure pools)**
- **Weight/cardiovascular equipment areas**
- **Indoor running/walking tracks**
- **Meeting/multipurpose space**
- **Seniors program space**
- **Pre-school and youth space**
- **Teen use areas**
- **Fieldhouses**

Thus, many communities have attempted to include these amenities in public community recreation facilities. With the growth in youth sports and the high demand for school gyms, most communities are experiencing an acute lack of gymnasium space. Weight/cardiovascular space is also in high demand and provides a facility with the potential to generate significant revenues.

The success of most recreation departments is dependent on meeting the recreational needs of a variety of user groups. The fastest growing segment of society is the senior population and meeting the needs of this group is especially important now and will

only grow more so in the coming years. Indoor walking tracks, exercise areas, pools and classroom spaces are important to this age group. Marketing to the younger more-active senior (usually age 55-70) is paramount, as this age group has the free time available to participate in leisure activities, the desire to remain fit, and more importantly the disposable income to pay for such services.

Youth programming has always been a cornerstone for recreation services and will continue to be so with an increased emphasis on teen needs and providing a deterrent to juvenile crime. With a continuing increase in single parent households and two working parent families, the needs of school age children for before and after school child care continues to grow as does the need for preschool programming.

As more and more communities attempt to develop community recreation facilities, the issues of competition with other providers in the market area have inevitably been raised. The loudest objections have come from the private health club market and their industry voice IHRSA. The private sector has vigorously contended that public facilities unfairly compete with them in the market and have spent considerable resources attempting to derail public projects.

However, the reality is that in most markets where public community recreation centers have been built, the private sector has not been adversely affected and in fact in many cases has continued to grow. This is due in large part to the fact that public and private providers serve markedly different markets. One of the other issues of competition comes from the non-profit sector (primarily YMCA's but also JCC's, and others), where

the market is much closer to that of the public providers. While not as vociferous as the private providers, the non-profits have also often expressed concern over public community recreation centers. What has resulted from this is a strong growth in the number of partnerships that have occurred between the public and non-profit sector in an attempt to bring the best recreation amenities to a community.

While the City of Ballwin has a strong foundation of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services, there are unmet needs as identified by the community. This combined with an aging inventory of existing facilities, the presence of a number of new facilities, plus limited financial resources, places a challenge on the City to respond to these needs.

Recreation Program and Service Delivery Trends:

To assist in the process of developing a parks and recreation master plan for the City of Ballwin, it is helpful to understand some of the trends that are being seen nationally with recreation programming. However, it should be noted that each city is unique and the area of the country has a strong bearing on trends and other operational factors.



Image 2



3

PARK & FACILITY

INVENTORY+ANALYSIS

Pavilion Rental

Pavilion rentals have been very popular in Ballwin and in 2017 the overall occupancy rate for pavilions reached 81%. This is a high occupancy rate for rentals and suggests that many people do not get the rental dates they most desire. The high demand for pavilion rental is an indicator that more pavilions are needed in the Ballwin Park system.

Pavilion Rental Occupancy Rate				
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Ferris	80%	87%	71%	84%
New Ballwin Park	73%	69%	58%	74%
The Pointe	75%	69%	68%	71%
Vlasis 1	93%	85%	92%	94%
Vlasis 2	83%	77%	71%	84%
Average	80.8%	77.4%	72.0%	81.4%



Pavilions at Vlasis Park

ballwin parks & recreation

Overall Strengths:

- Strong youth activities program
- Substantial number of aquatic programs
- Large number of senior participants through Silver Sneakers
- A significant number of special interest classes are offered in a number of areas
- There has been an emphasis on developing family-based programming
- Strong number of special events

Overall Weaknesses:

- Limited fitness and wellness programs
- Competitive swimming
- Limited indoor sports (especially leagues) for youth and adults (due to lack of gym space)
- Lack of senior programs focused on younger and more active seniors

Overall Deficiencies:

- General lack of facilities (especially indoor) to support programming growth and variety of hard-court activities
- General lack of space to expand group fitness opportunities.
- Dedicated birthday party rooms
- General lack of lap swimming and competitive swimming programs. Although lap swimming is available to The Pointe, the water temperatures do not meet the standard requirement for to support lap swimming or competitive swimming interest.

level of service benchmark

Level of Service and Identifying Gaps:

The purpose of a Level of Service (LOS) analysis is to determine how well the existing City of Ballwin facilities are meeting the needs of city residents. Several strategies may be used to measure the need for parks and recreation facilities and programs. One method compares the inventory of park and recreation facilities against a NRPA standard (Nation Recreation and Parks Association). The challenge with utilizing NRPA standards is that the standards have not been updated since the mid 1990's. As a result, many agencies look to other methods and tools for comparison purposes. Another option is to compare the inventory of facilities against other communities of similar size and

demographics. These communities can be neighboring communities or regional but typically have similar population base and demographics. In this case the communities of Maryland Heights, Chesterfield and Wentzville were selected for comparison with Ballwin base on similar population and demographic attributes. The City of Ballwin compares favorably to the benchmark communities with the exception of outdoor rectangular sport fields for soccer, football and lacrosse. The number of outdoor sport fields in Ballwin is well under the benchmark communities and suggests that activities served by outdoor rectangular field is under-served.

Level of Service Comparison				
	Maryland Heights	Chesterfield	Wentzville	Ballwin
Sand Volleyball	5	6	1	2
Pavilion	5	4	6	5
Splash Pad	2	0	1	1
Outdoor Basketball	2	0	2	1
Dog Park	1	1	2	0
Soccer/ LAX/ Football	15	22	6	1
Tennis	2	0	2	8
Outdoor Pool	1	1	1	1
Baseball	Private	18	4	Private
Softball	Private	4	3	1
Senior Center	1	1	1	0
Recreation Center	1	0	1	1
Gymnasium	3	0	1	1
Indoor Pool	1	0	0	1

Bench mark survey of other recreation centers

A bench mark survey of other recreation centers in the area was conducted as a means to measure the operations of the Pointe to other centers.

One level of service metrics that the survey highlights is staffing levels. One of the contributing factors to the financial success of the Pointe is the staffing model utilized at the Pointe. Simply stated, the City of Ballwin operates the Pointe in a very efficient manner with maximum output from the staff assigned to that operation. The bench mark survey conducted as part of the master plan process (below) clearly illustrates that Ballwin has the fewest number of full-time staff and total FTE's when compared to other similar centers. On one hand, the bench mark survey identifies the Pointe as being an efficient operation from a full-time staffing perspective. On the other hand, the low number of full-time staff will become an issues in efforts to grow the number of recreation programs and services offered. Adequate staffing levels are required to increase programming levels in the future or



North Pointe aquatic center

Benchmark Survey of Area Recreation Centers					
	Des Peres	Richmond Heights	O'Fallon	Rolla	Ballwin
# of FT Employees	21	13	10	8.6	7
Total FTE's	39.96	27	28.68	24.5	26
Membership Units	3,265	4,400	1,969	2,104	2,130
Revenue Total	\$3,204,442	\$2,374,601	\$1,886,642	\$1,212,380	\$1,738,507
Expense Total	\$3,821,154	\$2,340,122	\$2,062,692	\$1,524,157	\$1,506,847
Marketing Budget	\$8,800	\$29,500	\$27,000	\$38,700	\$13,000
Transfer Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$375,000	\$72,125	\$ -

alternative staffing plans must be developed to supplement existing staffing levels. Without strategically adding more full-time staff the City of Ballwin will be forced to contract out recreation programs and services or partner with other service providers in the area to meet future programming demands. There is no capacity for expanding programs or services with the existing full-time staff levels.

Another metric that is important is the comparison of expenses and revenues. The City of Ballwin is distinguished as one of the centers that recovers its operating expense through revenue from admissions and programs. This is significant because most public recreation centers require some level of financial support or transfer of revenue to off set operating costs. Additionally, the level of marketing budgets suggest that the City of Ballwin is on the lower end on what other recreation centers are spending on marketing.

Note:

- The Lodge in Des Peres combines the Park budget with the Lodge budget into one cost center. The Park budget portion of the cost center generates a operating surplus of \$392,443. Consequently, there is no revenue transfer from the City to the Lodge budget.
- The total FTE's for Richmond Heights does not include the aquatic program. Richmond Heights contracts their aquatic operation to Midwest Pool Management.
- Richmond Heights is part of a multi-city cooperative that includes Brentwood, Maplewood and Richmond Heights.
- O'Fallon and Rolla share many of their full-time staff with other City departments. The full-time numbers in the bench mark survey reflect the portion of full-time staff assigned to the center's operation.

existing trail system

Ballwin has the opportunity to connect to a number of existing trails surrounding the community. The high utilization of existing trails within Ballwin parks and the large amount of community support in the survey and public engagement supports the need for additional trails and pedestrian connections.



Ferris Park



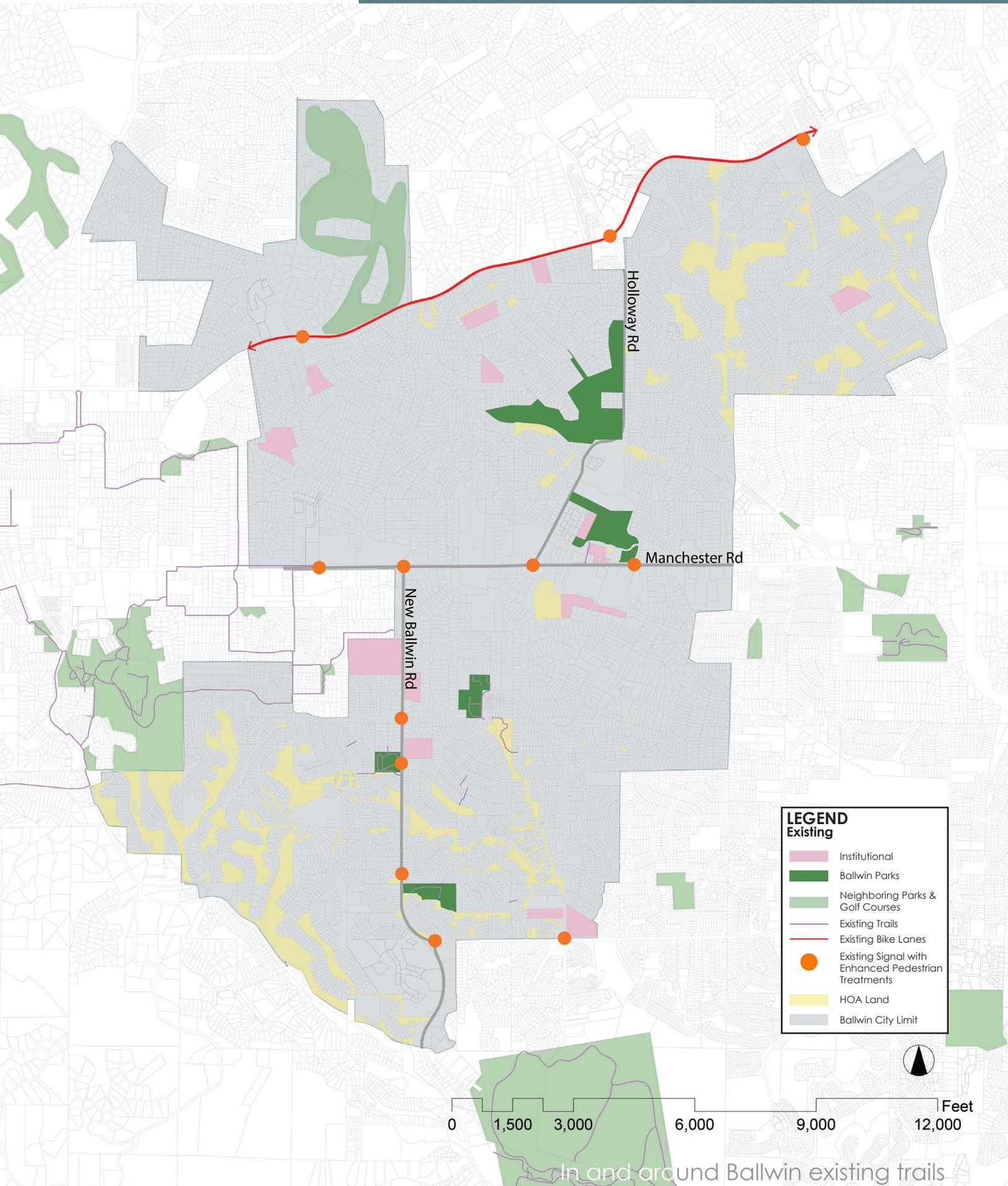
Vlasis Park



New Ballwin Park

63%

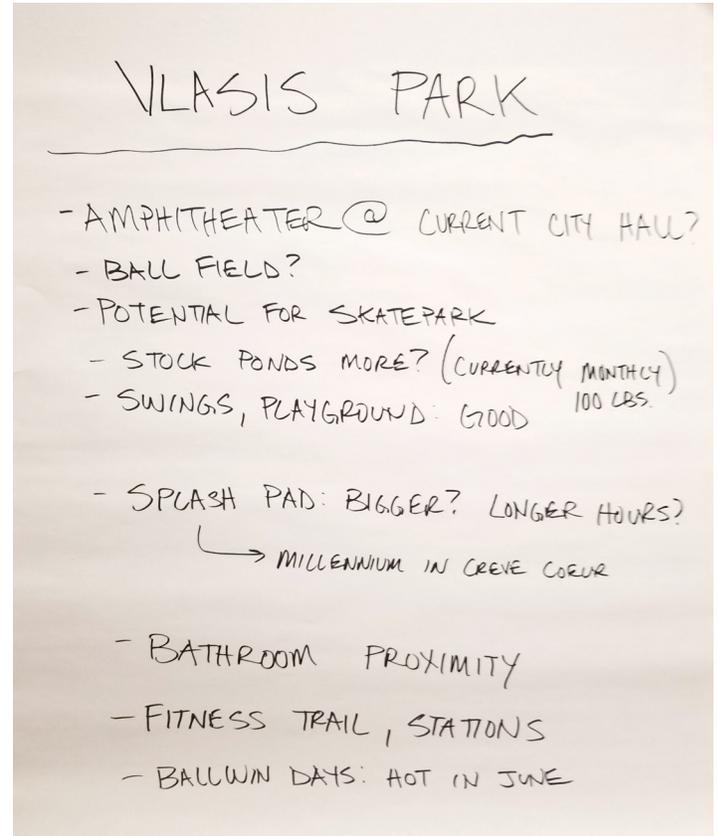
listed walking/jogging as their top household activity



stakeholder meeting

Interviews and a meeting with stakeholders were conducted to broadly assess the opportunities for park system enhancements. Stakeholders were identified by City staff based on their past coordination with the City and their involvement or interest in the future of Ballwin's park, outdoor recreation or trail facilities. The stakeholder meeting was held in July 2018.

Community engagement and input played a crucial role in revealing the current demands and needs for park and recreation provision as well as establishing the future recreational framework that reflects community priorities. This planning process leaned on community outreach, stakeholder meetings, surveys, demographics and inventorying to provide a baseline of demand and need. Input from citizens that use City services, properties and facilities often, as well as those who rarely or never use them was provided to gain an understating of current perceptions, priorities and needs.



Meeting notes



Stakeholder meeting

stakeholders

Linda Bruer – City of Ballwin
 Hedy Boone – City of Ballwin
 John Hoffman – City of Ballwin
 Matt Struempf – City of Ballwin
 James Boyd – City of Ballwin
 Paul Battis – Resident
 Lucy Hey – Resident
 Jamie Bode – Resident
 Norman Sewing – Resident
 Melissa Meier – Resident
 Adam Meier – Resident
 Andrew Svoloopoulos – Resident

FERRIS PARK

- PLAYGROUND IS GREAT, PLAY VALUE
 - ALL AGES
- NO PARKING NEAR PAVILION, PLAYGROUNDS
 - MORE?
- CONNECTIONS TO NEIGHBORHOODS?
 - ACCESSIBLE ROUTE NEEDED TO PLAYGROUND
 - WALKING PATH
- NATURE TRAILS?
- IMPROVE SOCCER FIELD
- HIDDEN GEM
- SHOWCASE PARKS IN THE POINTE? JOURNAL?

THE POINTE @ BALLWIN COMMONS

- PICKLEBALL IS THRIVING!
- INDOOR SOCCER FACILITY? COURTS, BATTING CAGES
- MORE GYM SPACE, M.P. ROOM, FREE WEIGHT AREA
- BASKETBALL COURT SURFACE SOFT?
 - INJURY PREVENTION
- COFFEE BAR?
- MORE LAP LANES
- PLAYGROUND: SAND GREAT FOR LITTLE ONES
- TOT TIME ON WEEKNIGHTS OR WEEKENDS?
- WAYFINDING
- WAVE POOL?
- RESTROOMS ONLY IN POINTE BLDG.
- PARTY SPACE: GREAT VALUE
 - USE CONCESSION AREA?
- AWKWARD ENTRANCES @ PARKING LOTS
- MORE PAVILIONS (OVERALL)
- SHOWERS IN LOCKERROOMS, DARK UPDATE?
 - BIKE ACCESS IS TRICKY

NEW BALLWIN PARK

- PLAYGROUND IS OLD, NEEDS UPDATE
- GOOD NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS
- BRING FOUNTAINS BACK?
- PARKING DURING CONCERTS (SHARE WITH SCHOOL)
- RESTROOMS: - PROXIMITY IS GOOD
 - NEED UPDATES
- UPDATE BASKETBALL COURT
- SURVEYS: SHOP BALLWIN FIRST
- ASPHALT PATHS ERODING
- CONCRETE SCABS, ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES
- FENCE @ BOTTOM OF HILL?
 - SLOPES AROUND POND.
- SLEDDING HILL?
- BENCHES
- DECKING ON POND GAZEBO



First public meeting

first public meeting

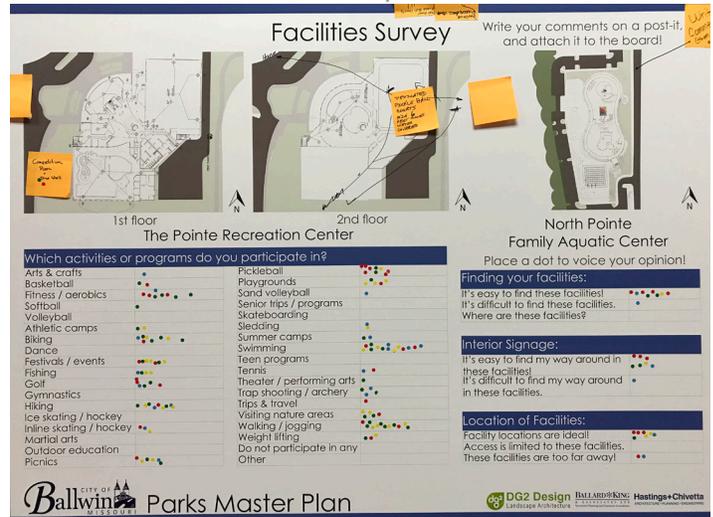
Throughout this process, citizens provided information and expressed opinions about their needs and priorities for parks, trails and recreation opportunities in Ballwin. Approximately 30 people attended an open house at The Pointe on September 27, 2018 and participated in exploring the general needs and analysis for park and recreation facilities in Ballwin. A brief presentation introduced the planning process and reviewed the current park facilities and amenities. Boards were available after the presentation for citizens to comment and vote for potential new amenities.



Improvement board

Sample Comments

- Provide more walking trails
- Prefer wood surface for playgrounds (EWF)
- Update pond and deck at New Ballwin Park
- Update playground equipment at The Pointe
- Provide more restrooms
- More pickleball courts
- Dog park
- More lap lanes in pools



Facility survey board

second public meeting



Proposed improvement- The Pointe



Proposed improvement- Vlasis Park

A second public meeting was held at the Ballwin Golf Club on November 27, 2018. Community members weighed in on their overall priorities as well as their thoughts regarding the initial plan recommendations. Participants provided additional information and comments of the plan recommendations through a series of boards.

Sample Comments

- More connections throughout the city
- Prefer wood surface for playgrounds (EWF)
- Restrooms closer to playgrounds
- More pickleball courts
- Expand the walking track at The Pointe
- More lap lanes in pools
- Provide a better senior center



survey results

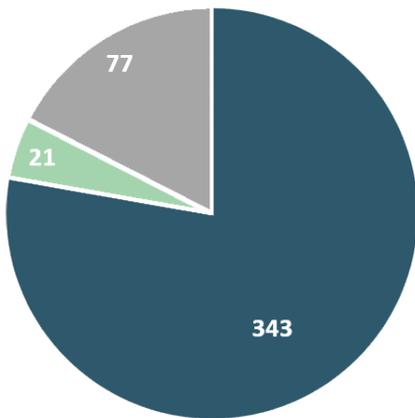
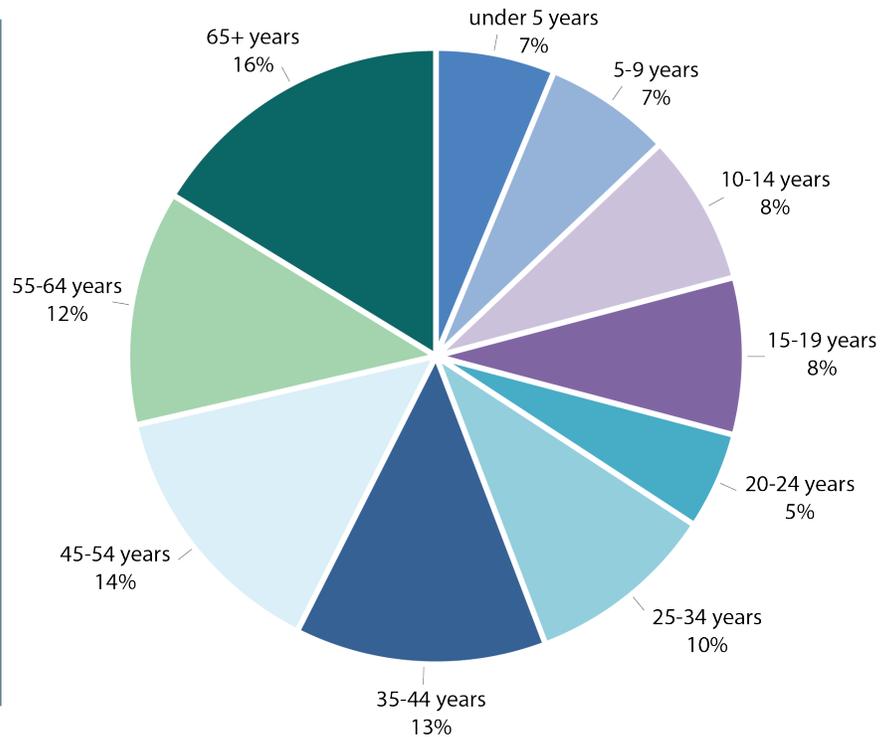
17 questions were posted to an online survey, which collected 441 responses. Similar questions were also asked during the public meetings. The survey responses were a statistically valid representation of the community. The survey answers provided insight into user group interests and provided a platform for everyone in the community to share ideas.

Survey Summary: 441 Responses 312 Completed

Respondent Mean Age 52.3
Male 27.7% / Female 43.1%
No Answer 29.3%

Home Ownership (67.6%)
3.2% Renter / 29.3% No Answer

People in Household
3 = Median & Mean

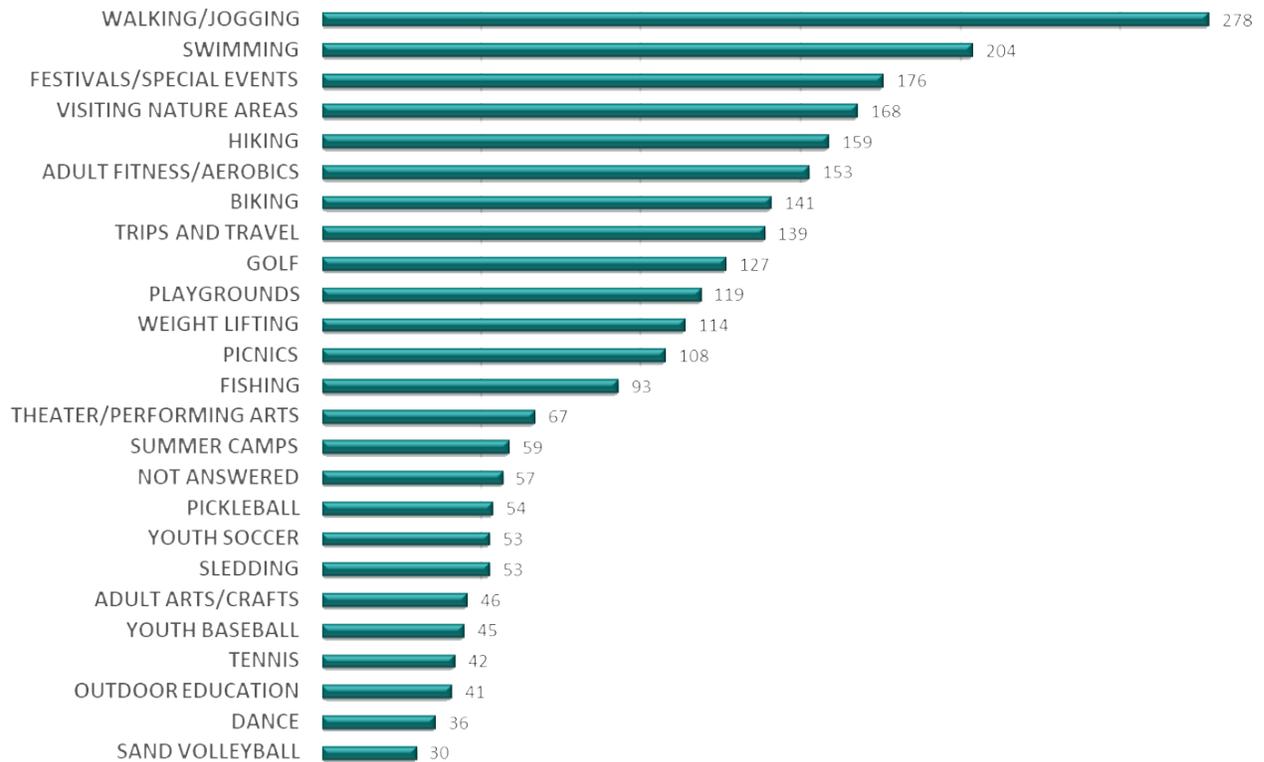


■ Yes ■ No ■ Not Answered

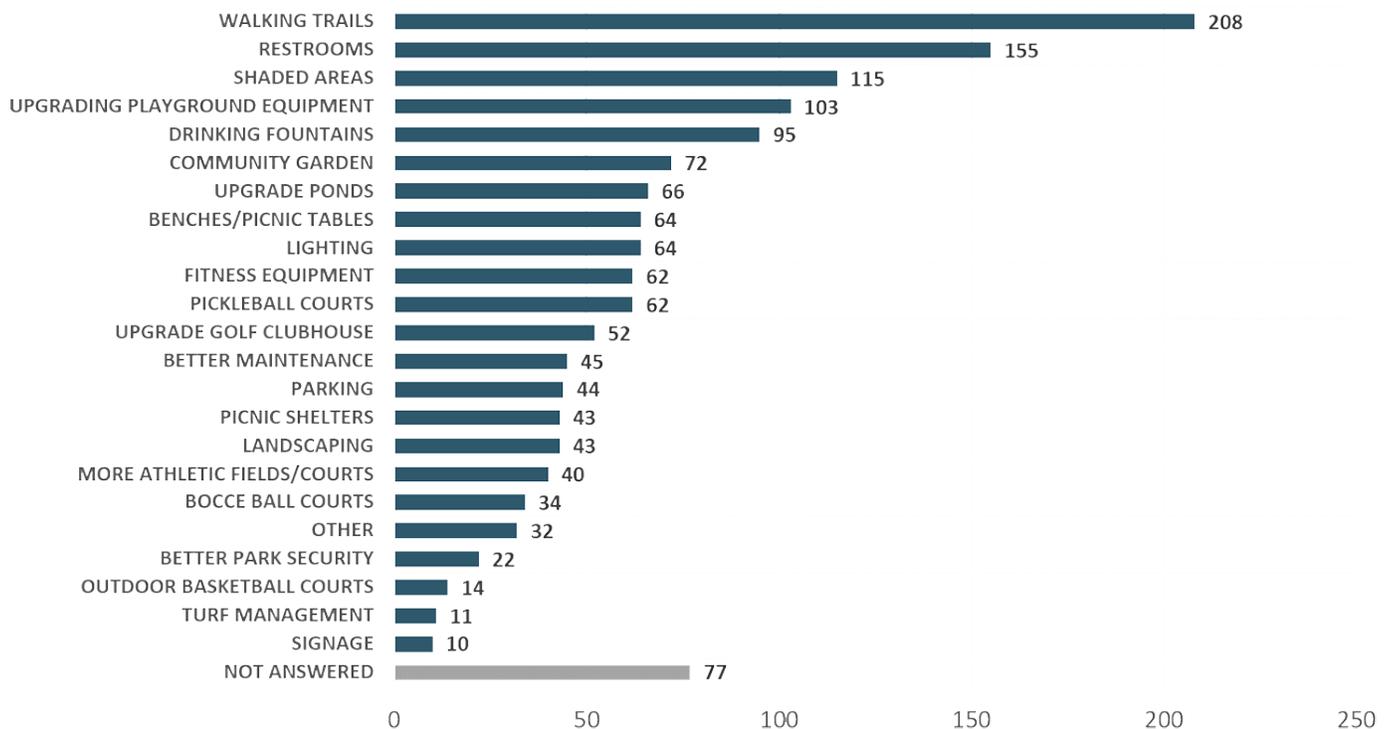
Did household members visit parks last year?

78%
visited parks last year

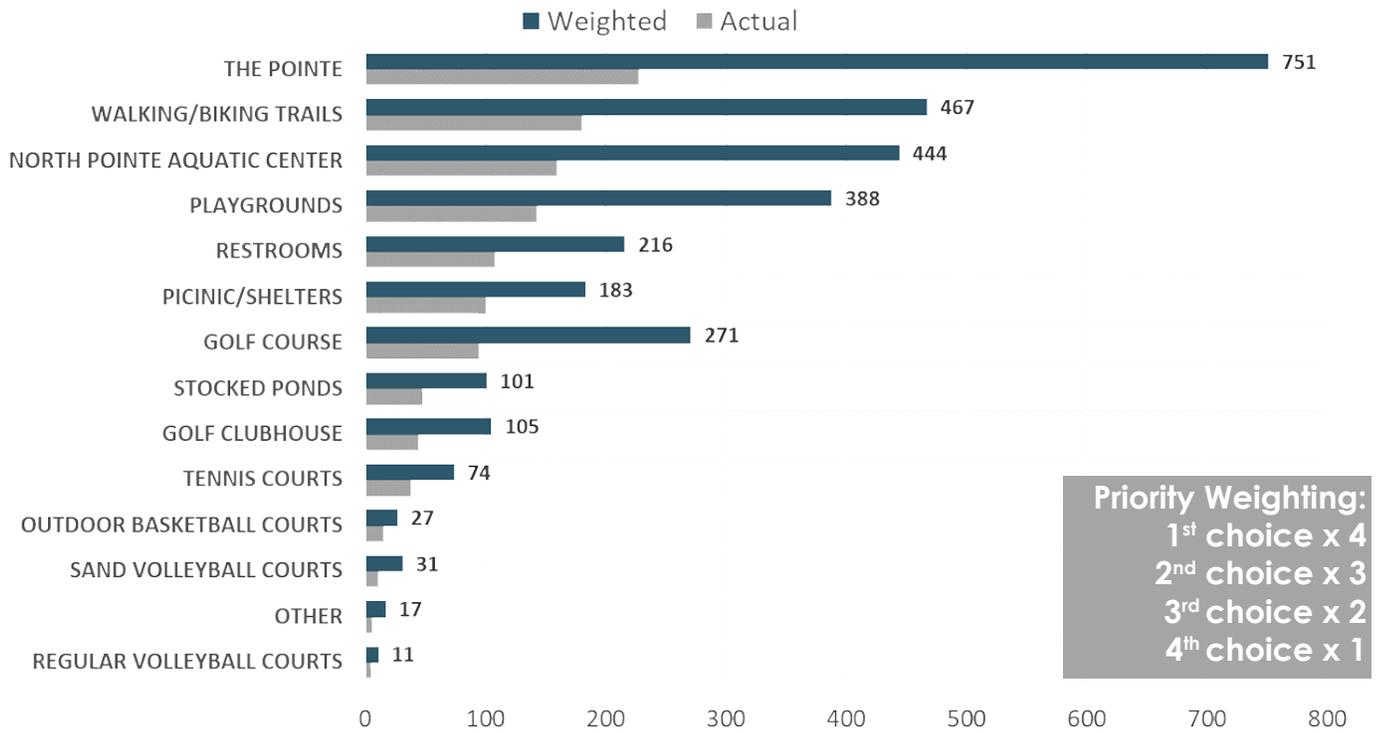
Household Activity Participation: Top 25



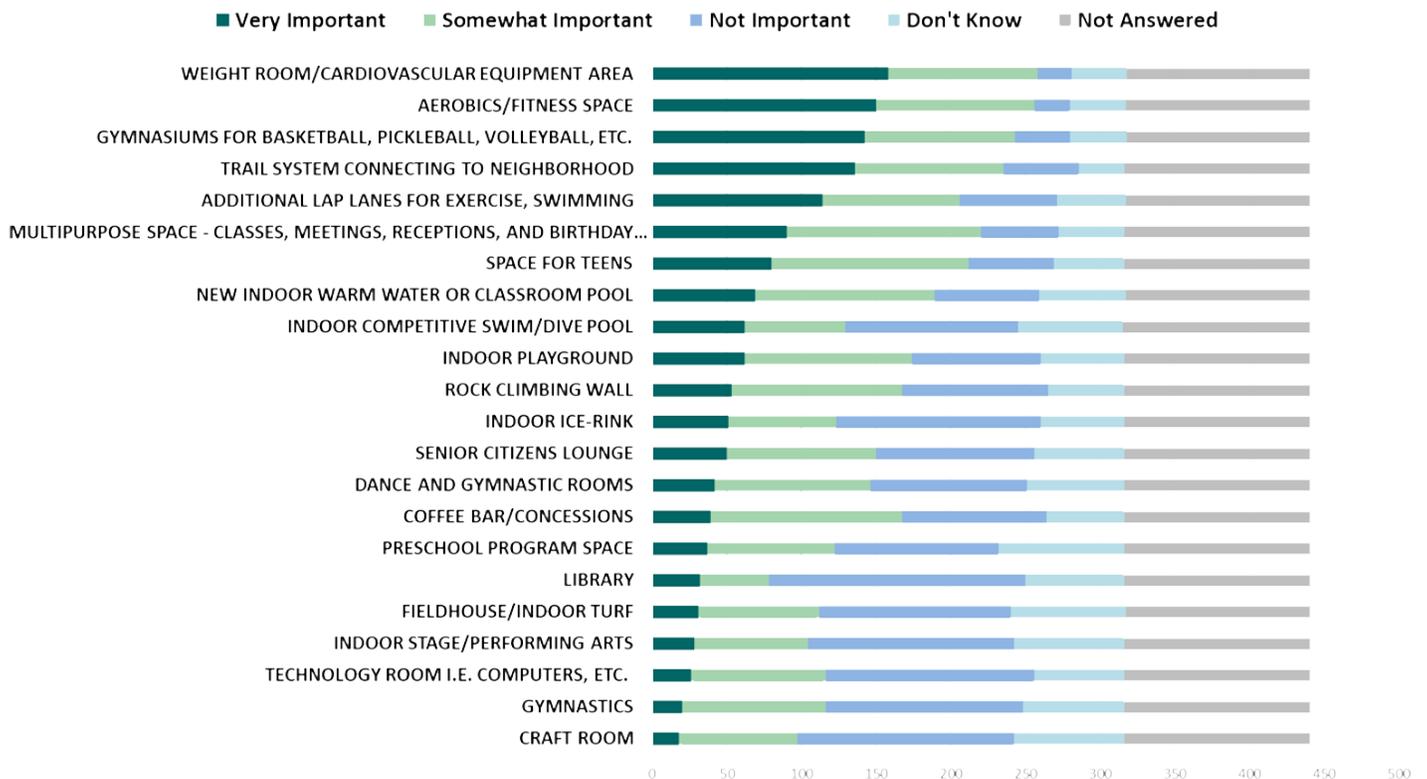
Most Important Potential Improvements



Four Most Important to Your Household



Summary of Considerations for The Pointe



Site Inventory + Analysis:

Along with the online survey, stakeholder discussions, and public meetings - the team performed site analysis and inventory studies of the physical components of the Parks & Recreation system. Each of Ballwin's parks and facilities was analyzed and studied. City staff provided additional insight into some of the common management considerations that are dealt with on a regular basis for each park or facility. The following pages provide a detailed inventory of all amenities and assets associated with each park or facility, as well as a site analysis and rating for each.



Site visit

HOLLOWAY PARK

Neighborhood Park

address:
335 Holloway Road
2.6 acres

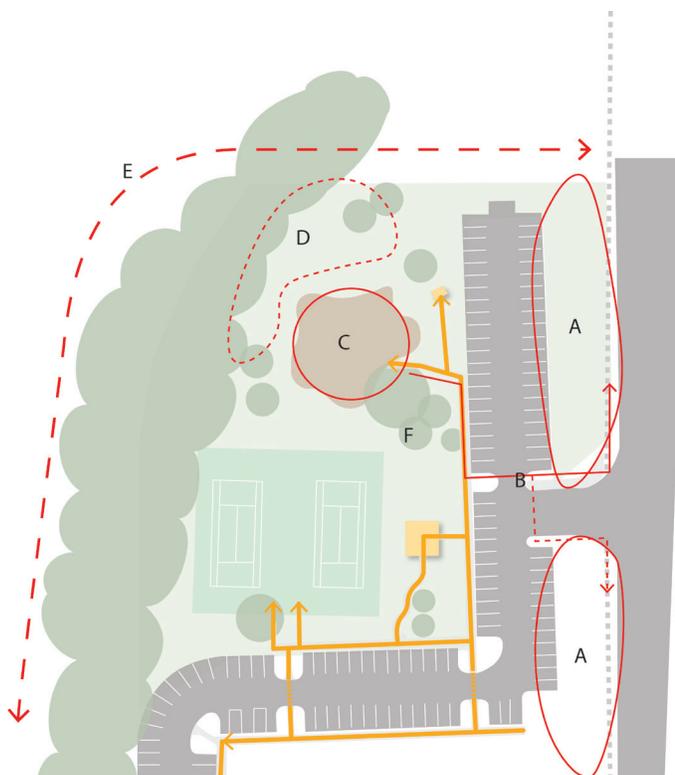


Playground

Amenities

- playground
- pavilions
- benches
- pickleball courts
- paved pathways
- tennis court (2)
- basketball hoops (2)
- electrical outlets

Site Analysis Plan



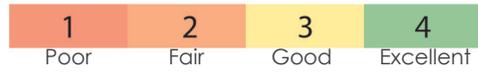
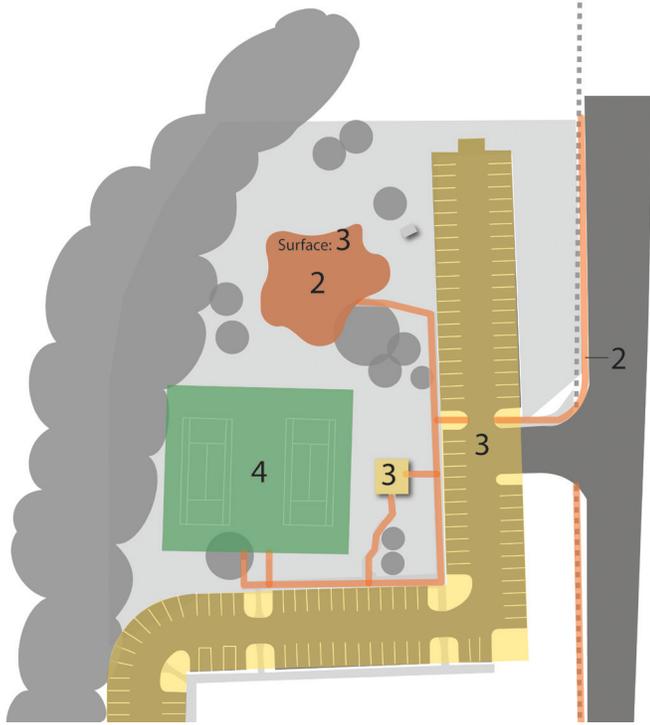
Key

- Pedestrian circulation
- A "Curb appeal" needed
- B Limited pedestrian accessibility
- C Aging play equipment, lack of shade
- D Unutilized slope
- E No neighborhood connections
- F No restroom access when pool is closed



Observations

- Minimal pedestrian access
- Playground equipment is dated



Lack of pedestrian pathways



Playground exposed to sun



Lack of pedestrian pathways

NORTH POINTE AQUATIC CENTER

Recreation Center

address:
335 Holloway Road
6.18 acres

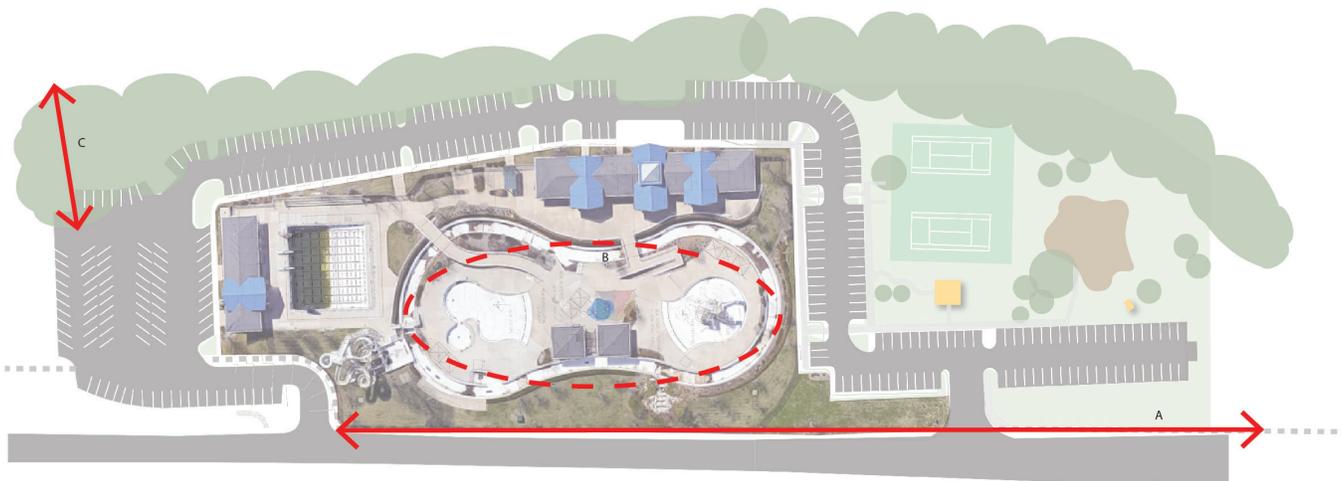


Lazy river

Amenities

- splash pad
- bucket falls
- tree swing
- climbing wall
- pavilions
- benches
- trash cans
- restroom
- shade trees
- competition pool
- lazy river
- drinking fountains

Site Analysis Plan



Key

- A Limited pedestrian connections
- B Lack of shade
- C Lack neighborhood connections



Observations

- Lack of shade
- Poor pedestrian connections

Park Location	Facility	Exterior Condition					Exterior Accessibility	Interior Condition							
		Walls	Windows	Doors	Roof	Floors		Partitions	Ceilings	Interior Doors	Interior Windows	Lighting Fixtures	Exterior Accessibility		
North Pointe Aquatic Center	W. Aquatic Building	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	2.7	4.0	4.0	2.3	4.0
North Pointe Aquatic Center	E. Pavilion/Pump Bldg.	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.0	3.4	3.5	4.0	2.3	4.0	4.0	2.0	4.0
North Pointe Aquatic Center	S. Pavilion/Mech. Bldg.	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	2.7	4.0	4.0	2.0	4.0

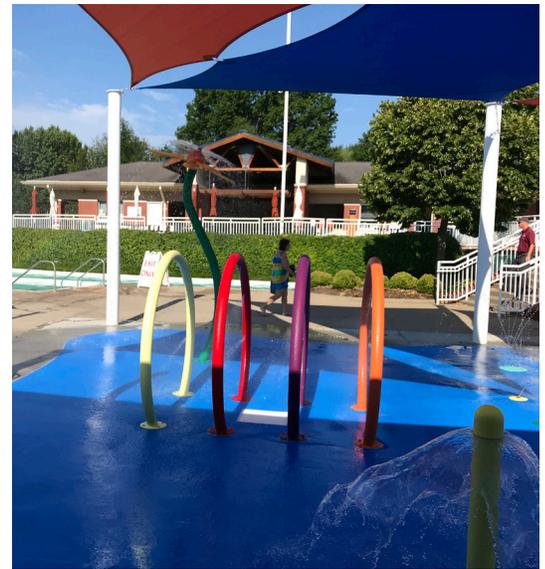
Building assessment



Bucket falls



Tree swing



Splash pad



Competition pool

BALLWIN GOLF COURSE & CLUB

Golf Course & Club

address:
333 Holloway Road
69.02 acres

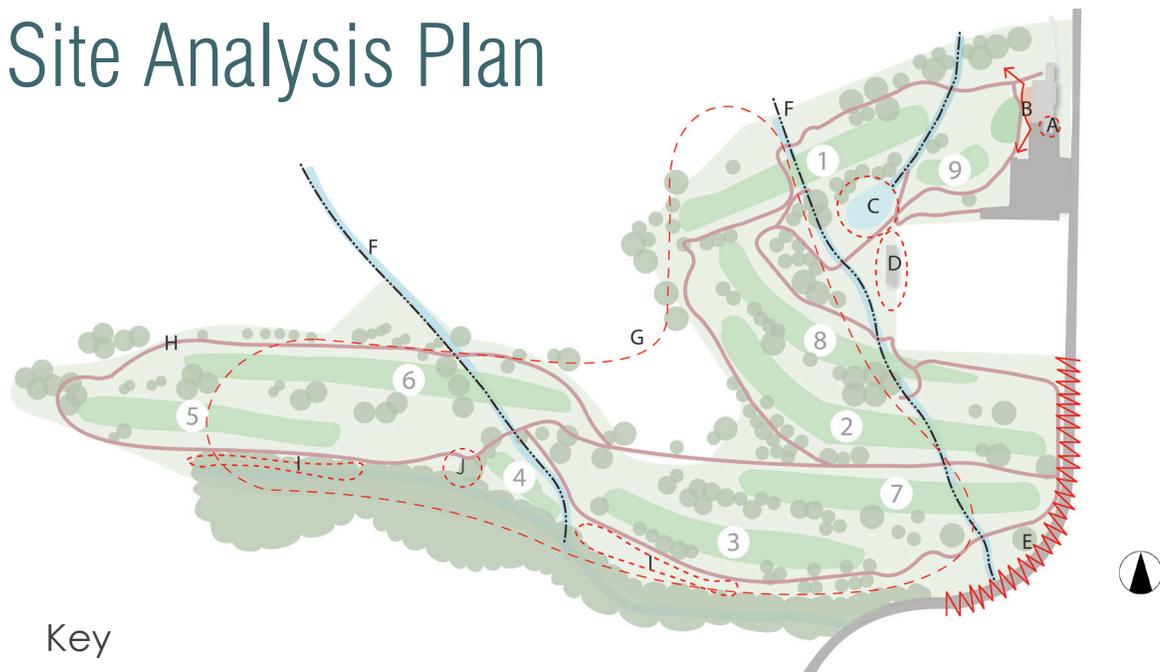


Putting green

Amenities

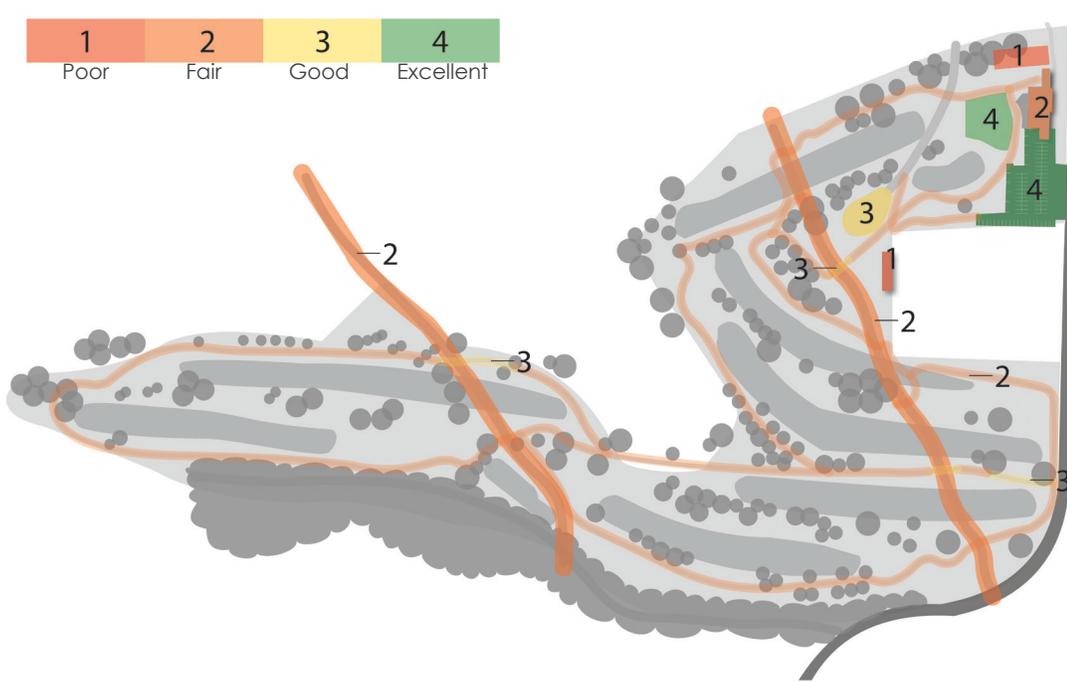
- pavilions
- benches
- drinking fountains
- trash cans
- pond
- shade trees
- grass lawn
- paved pathways
- restroom
- bar
- pro shop
- golf course office
- multi-purpose room
- patio
- parking lots

Site Analysis Plan



Key

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| A | Low porte cochere to be raised when improvements are made to building | G | Mostly mature trees, lack of species diversity |
| B | Views | H | Cracked and aging asphalt paths |
| C | Algae problems | I | Lack of buffer to the creek |
| D | Aging maintenance facility | J | Update/ improve on course restrooms |
| E | Improve buffer to road | | — Cart circulation |
| F | Eroding and unstable banks | | |



Observations

- Cart path needs improvement /drainage system
- Erosion problem at channels



Pond with periodic algae bloom problem



Poor drainage



Creek bank

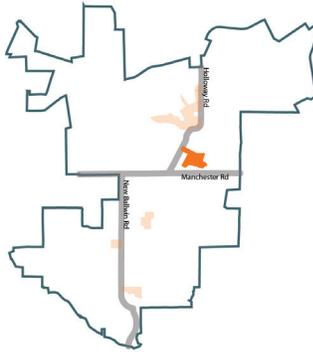


Potential native landscape

VLASIS PARK

Community Park

address:
Kehrs Mill Road
28.47 acres

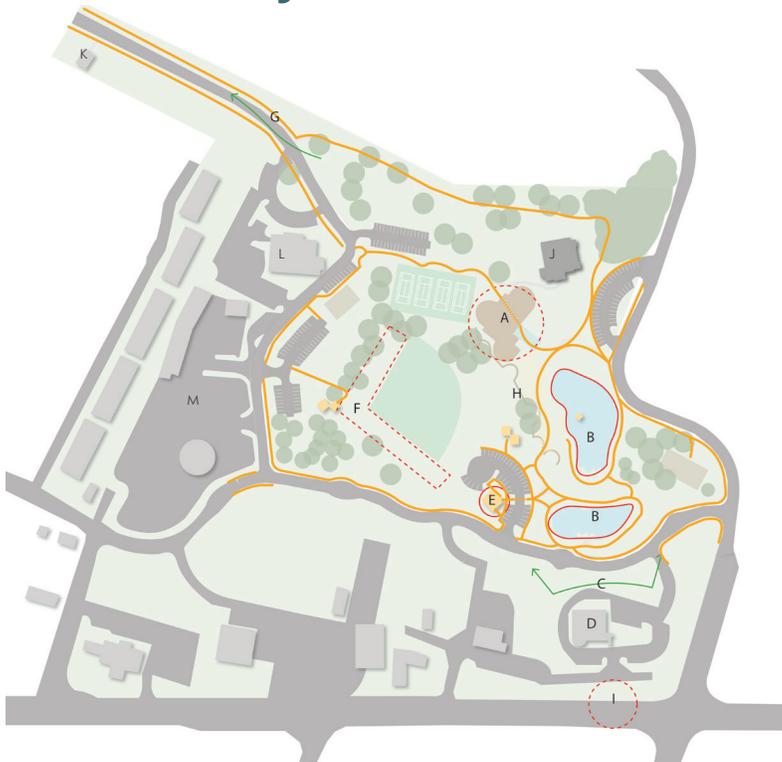


Playground

Amenities

- playground
- swings
- splash pad
- pavilions
- benches
- tennis courts (4)
- drinking fountains
- sand volleyball (1)
- restroom
- deck over pond
- stocked ponds
- public art
- paved pathways
- ballfield (1)
- electrical outlets

Site Analysis Plan



Key

- Pedestrian circulation
- A Surface tiles are deteriorating
- B Concrete banks, algae problems
- C Views
- D Opportunity area/ city administration
- E Restroom is not centrally located
- F No seating, limited shade
- G Neighborhood connection
- H Wall divides site circulation
- I Pedestrian obstacle
- J New city hall
- K Harrison-Schmidt-Dahlke log house
- L Police/ court building
- M Maintenance facility



Observations

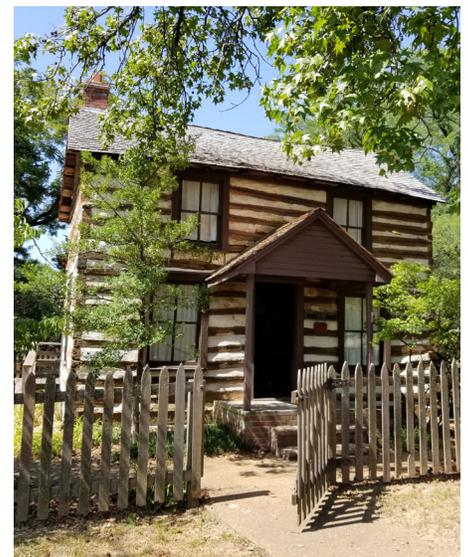
- Green Space:
 - Traditional park atmosphere
 - Entrances lack consistent landscape palette
- Upper pond has algae problem
- The pond banks need to be updated
- No seating or shade structure on ballfield
- Parking lots need to be resealed



Pavilions



Existing City Hall



Log house



pavilion and plaza

THE POINTE

Recreation Center

address:
1 Ballwin Commons Circle
66,000 square feet

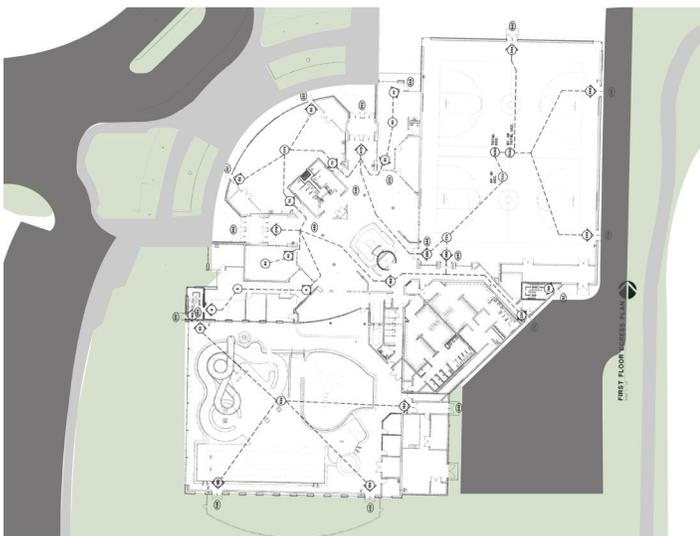


The Pointe

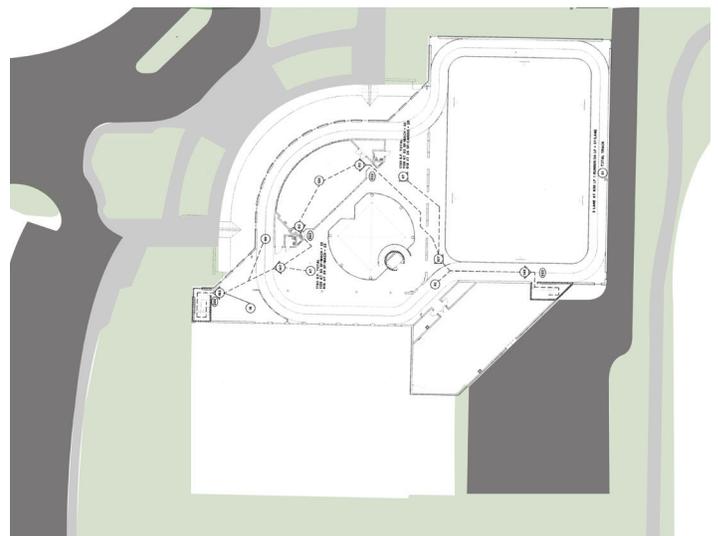
Amenities

- drinking fountains
- trash cans
- restrooms (within the pointe)
- gymnasium
- indoor pool
- fitness center
- classes
- party room
- babysitting room
- PAC room
- walking track
- aerobics studio
- cybex equipment

Existing Building Plans



Existing floor plan-first floor



Existing floor plan-second floor

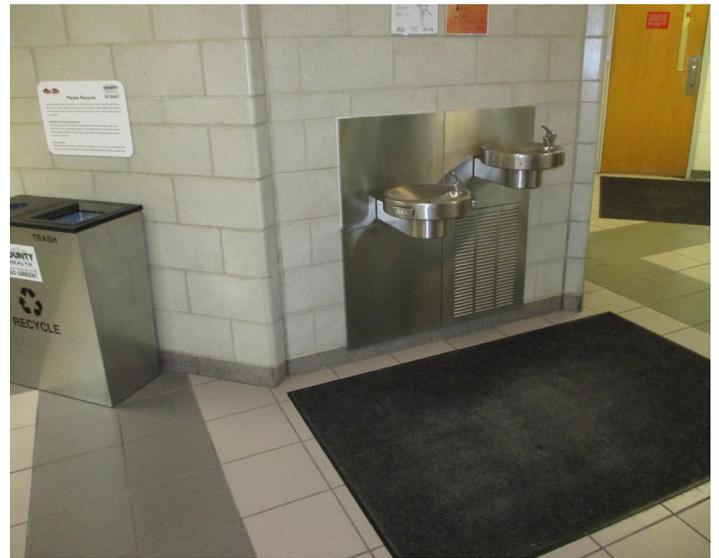


Park Location	Facility	Exterior Condition					Exterior Accessibility	Interior Condition							
		Walls	Windows	Doors	Roof	Floors		Partitions	Ceilings	Interior Doors	Interior Windows	Lighting Fixtures	Exterior Accessibility		
The Pointe	Community Center	3.6	3.8	3.3	3.5	3.3	4.0	3.5	3.1	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.0	3.8
The Pointe	Pavilion	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	4.0

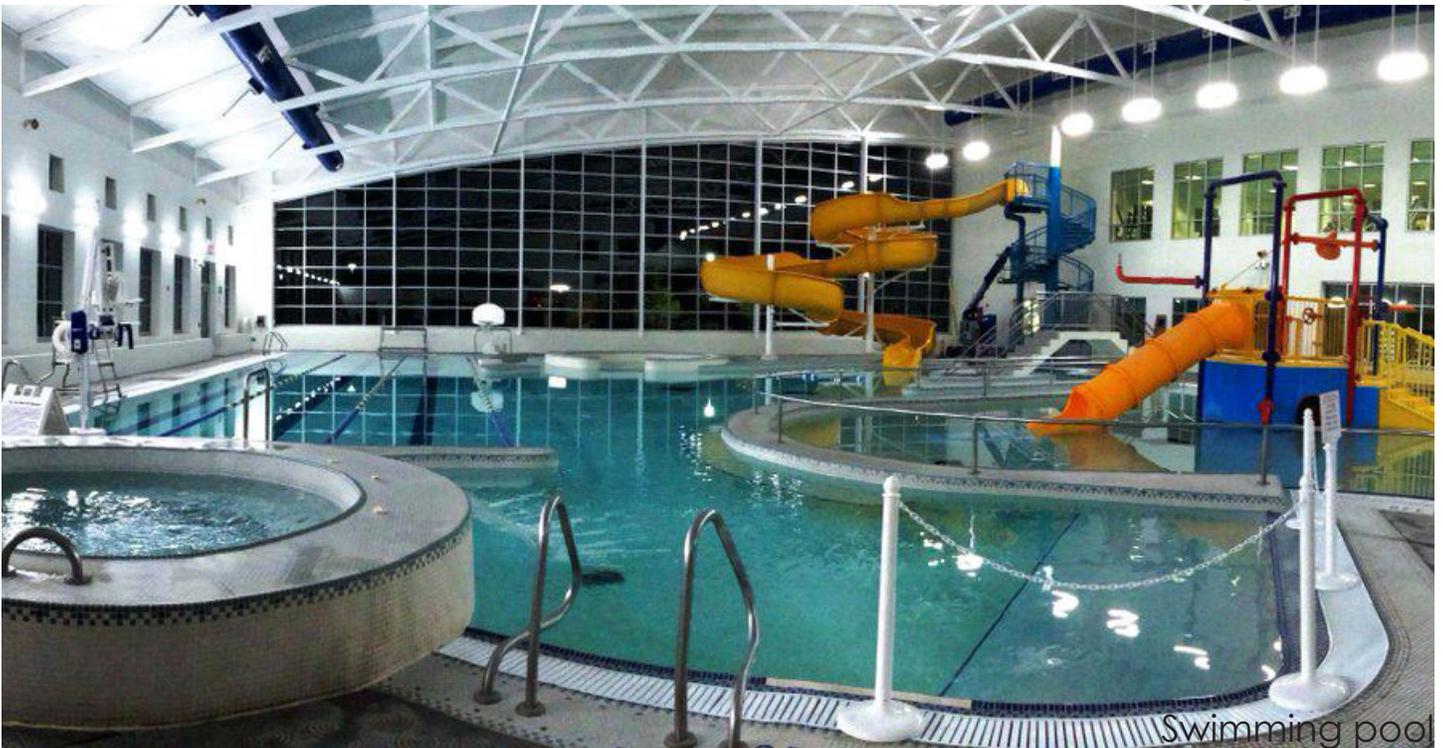
Building assessment



Gymnasium



Drinking fountains



Swimming pool

THE POINTE at BALLWIN COMMONS

Community Park

address:
1 Ballwin Commons Circle
12.79 acres



Playground

Amenities

- playground w/ safety surface
- swings
- pavilions
- benches
- soccer field
- drinking fountains
- stormwater management pond
- paved pathways
- electrical outlets

Site Analysis Plan

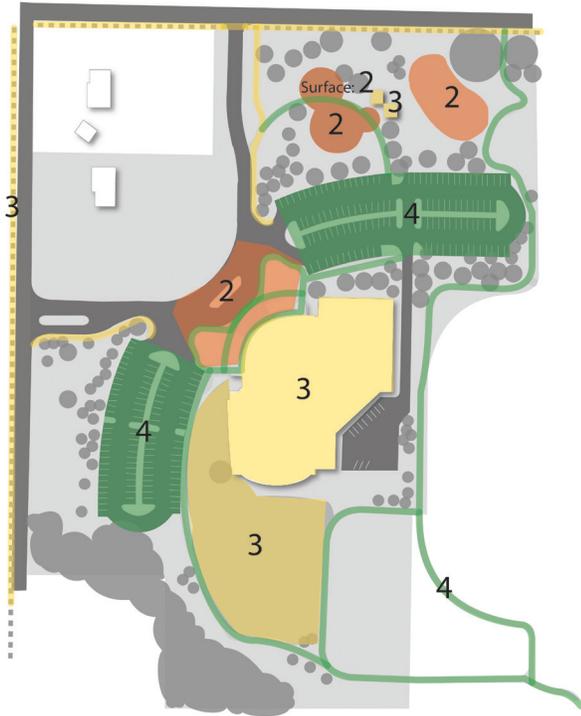


Key

- Pedestrian circulation
- A Erosion on banks
- B No restroom near playground
- C Sand migration problems
- D Pedestrian circulation through parking Lot
- E Confusing vehicular circulation
- F Opportunity area
- G No sidewalk
- H Geothermal wells
- I Neighborhood connection

Observations

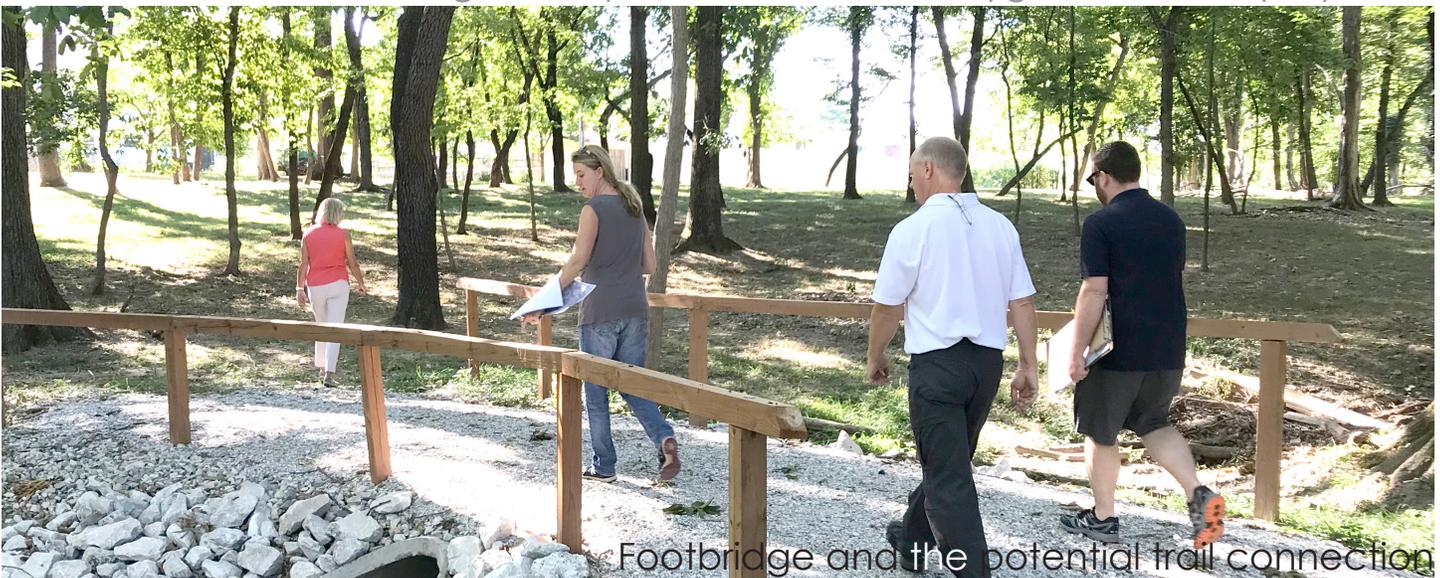
- Green Space:
 - The landscape needs to be improved to highlight The Pointe as Ballwin's main facility
 - Remove mature shrubs
- Vehicular circulation need to be improved
- Improve pedestrian access
- Erosion problem with pond



Stormwater management pond



Playground/ sand play area



Footbridge and the potential trail connection

NEW BALLWIN PARK

Neighborhood Park

address:
329 New Ballwin Road
7.36 acres

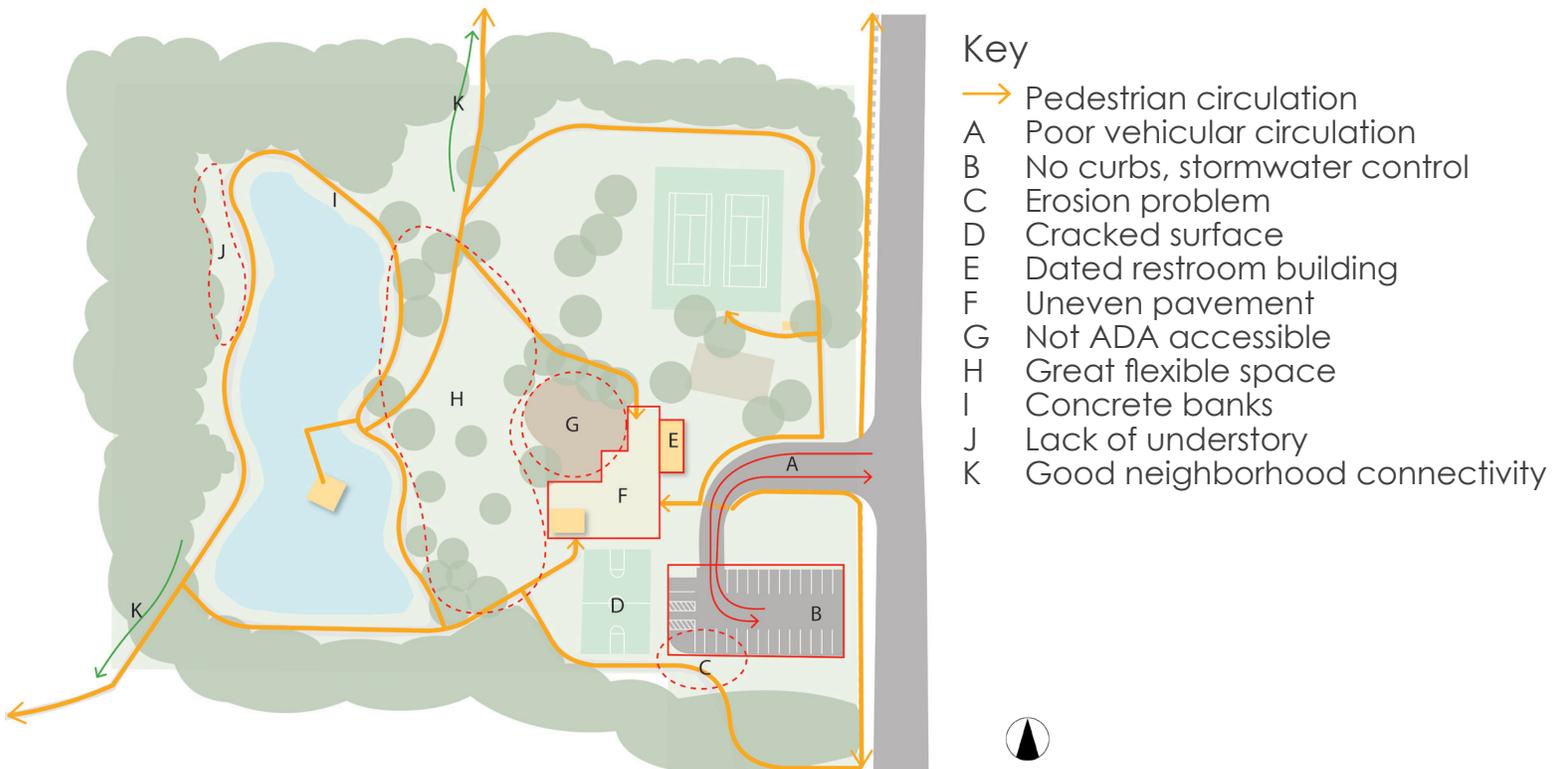


The Pond

Amenities

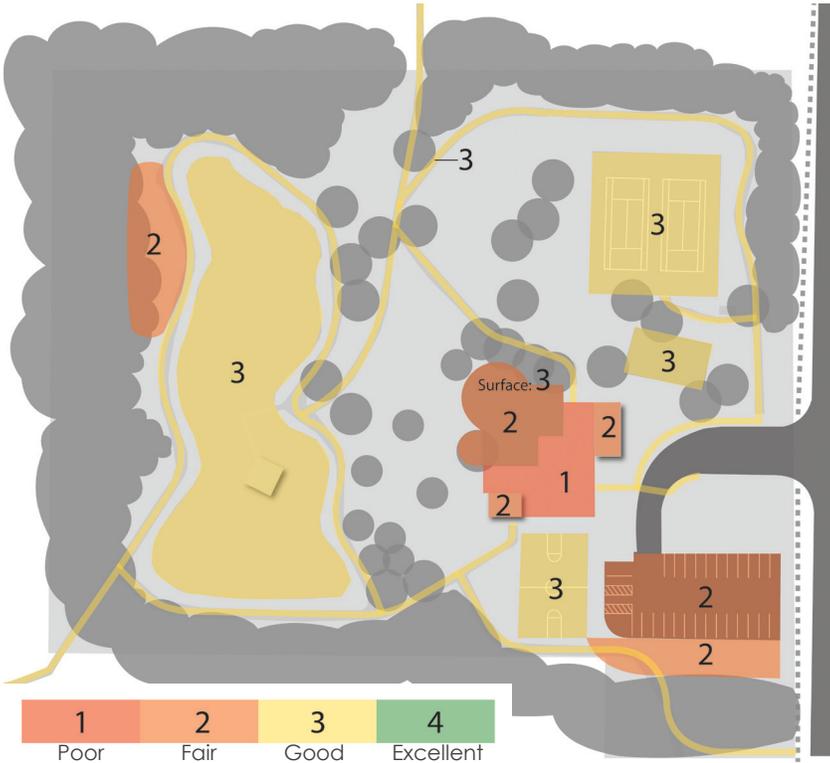
- playground
- basketball hoops (4)
- plaza and pavilions
- stocked pond
- paved pathways
- tennis courts (2)
- sand volleyball (1)
- benches
- restroom
- memorial trees
- grass lawn / concert seating
- bridge and island

Site Analysis Plan



Observations

- Green Space:
 - Maintained trees
 - Nice views to pond
 - Plant species need to be updated, increase diversity
- Safety surface at the playground is wood chips instead of EWF
- No lighting at tennis court
- Playground is not ADA accessible
- Parking lot:
 - no curb
 - poor circulation
 - needs to be resealed
- Basketball court needs to be resealed, replace timber edge
- Bridge needs to be updated
- Understory landscape needed at park edge
- Lack of permanent stage area



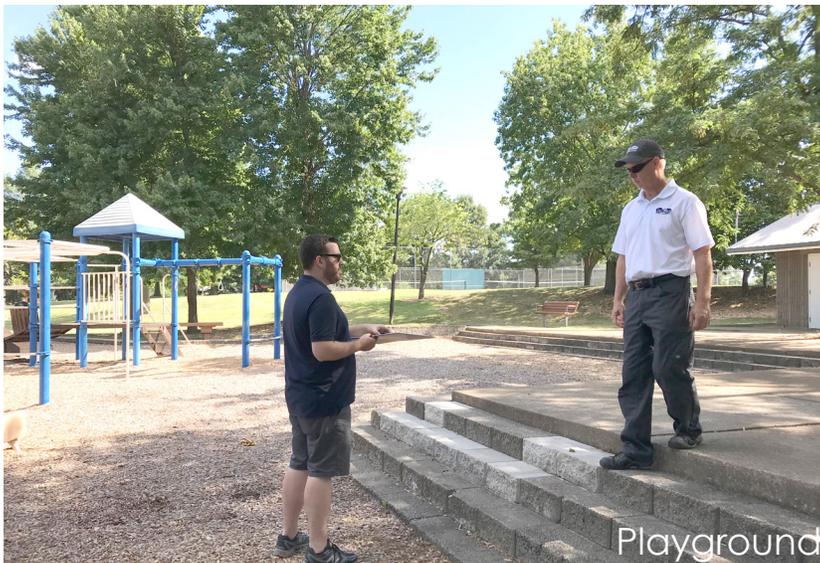
Plaza pavement



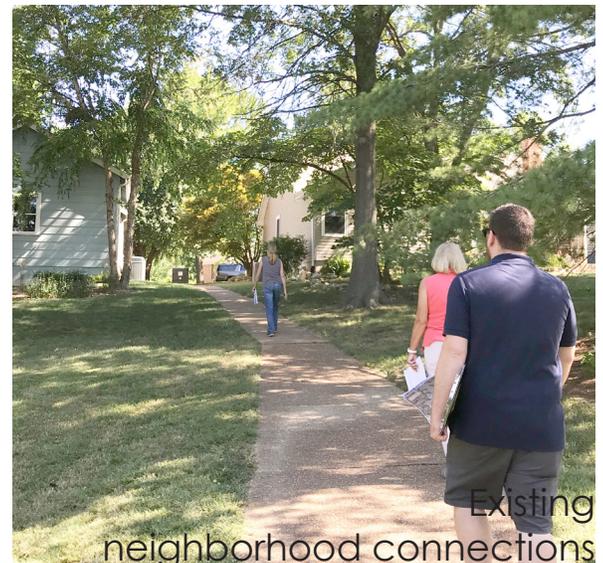
Tennis court



Stone bank with concrete



Playground



Existing neighborhood connections

FERRIS PARK

Neighborhood Park

address:
500 New Ballwin Road
12.65 acres



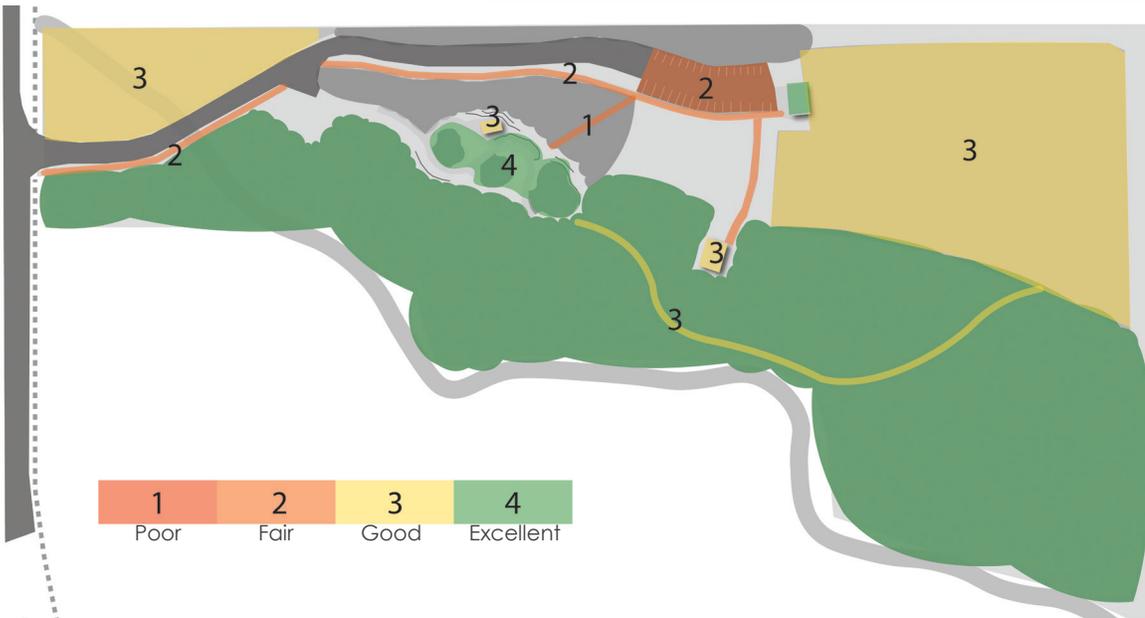
Playground

Amenities

- playground
- pavilions
- benches
- soccer field
- drinking fountains
- trail along creek
- pollinator garden
- restroom
- paved sidewalks

Site Analysis Plan





Observations

- Lacking connections from parking lot to playground
- Erosion shown in creek channel
- No seating or shade structure on the field
- Drainage problem at the pollinator garden and entrance road
- Lack of parking
- Restroom is far from the playground



Pollinator garden



Restroom



Water play area



Pavilion



4

PARK SYSTEM

RECOMMENDATIONS

After thoroughly reviewing all aspects of Ballwin's Parks and Recreation system, the team was able to begin the next phase of the Master Plan: Recommendations.

Recommendations included in this section will include a detailed assessment and recommendation of Ballwin Parks and Recreation Department's programs and services. Additionally, improvement recommendations for each individual physical park and facility has been provided. Many of the recommendations provided may be simple in nature, such as "Add another pavilion here", while other programmatic recommendations may require long term planning and strategic decision making from Ballwin staff and leadership.



Golf course practice green

Current Recreation Programs and Services Assessment:

The Ballwin Parks and Recreation Department offers a number of recreation programs and services to the residents of Ballwin and the surrounding area. Important issues with programming include:

- The Recreation Department focuses much of its programming efforts on youth, sports, special events and activities that operate out of the community centers.
- Recreation programs and services are generally planned and delivered on a community center level to be responsive to varying needs and expectations.
- Current Parks and Recreation Department programs and services include these general areas:

Area	Focus	Programs
Sports	Youth Sports	Basketball, Tennis, Tumbling, Soccer, Golf Lessons, Swimming, Ballwin Race Series (Bike)
	Adult Sports	Volleyball, Tennis, Pickleball, Golf Lessons, Golf Leagues and Tournaments, Ballwin Race Series
Fitness Wellness	Youth Fitness	Exercise Classes, Dance Classes, Ballwin Youth Movement, MyTRYathlon, Taekwondo
	Adult Fitness	Group Exercise Classes, Weight Training, Spinning, TRX, Yoga, Taekwondo, Swimming, Basic Training and Fitness Assessments
Cultural Arts	Youth	Dance, Arts & Crafts, Music, Used Book and Bake Sale, Art Displays
	Adult	Painting, Trivia, Bridge, Themed Classes, Lunch and Bingo, Festivals, Arts & Crafts, Historical Society Commission Speaker Series, Concerts
Youth(Non-sports)		Babysitting Classes, Home Alone Classes, Kids Night Out, Day Camp and Specialty Camps, NERF Wars, Fishing, Seasonal Themed Programs, Special Events
Seniors		Fitness, Yoga, Bridge, Lunch and Bingo, Silver Sneakers Fitness, Senior Trips, LOAP Programs, Medicare Supplement and Advantage Membership Program
Aquatics	Youth	Swim Lessons, Little Splashers, Swim and Dive Team, Disco Swim, Lifeguard Training, WSI Training
	Adult	Swim Lessons, Little Splashers, Swim and Dive Team, Disco Swim, Lifeguard Training, WSI Training
General Programs		One Day Specialty Programs, Birthday Parties, First Aid/CPR
Special Events		A variety of community, seasonal, holiday events that includes Easter Event, Family Bingo, Potluck Socials, Moon Light 5K, Daddy Daughter Dances, Halloween Events, Tons of Trucks, Party at the Pointe, Family Hayrides, Family Campouts, Movies in the Park and Summer Concerts
Outdoor Recreation		Ballwin Race Series, Tennis, Walking/Jogging Trails, Splash Park Pavilions, Ball Fields, Soccer Fields and Open Space
Special Needs		FT inclusionary staff shared with seven other communities' departments that is responsible for facilitating the inclusion of people with disabilities into recreation programs

The Parks and Recreation Department will need to determine if the focus on the major program areas should continue into the future or should move in another direction. The following is a general assessment of the major program areas.

Youth Sports:

With a number of youth sports organizations in the area (baseball, girls softball, soccer, football and volleyball) taking on the responsibility for organized youth team sports activities, the Recreation Department should re-evaluate their role in the future. However, there may be opportunities to expand youth sports camps and clinics to support sports run by other organizations. In many communities there is an increasing interest in individual sports such as golf, tennis, archery, and even fencing. It may be necessary for recreation to provide some of these activities in concert with other community organizations that focus on team sports. **In addition, recreation may need to increase its focus on the development of adventure sports (skateboarding, BMX, mountain biking, etc.)**

Adult Sports:

The City is a provider of adult sports leagues in the community and due to the fact that adult sports can often generate significant revenue this focus should remain. Designating certain facilities or time periods for adult sports may be necessary if greater emphasis is going to be placed on this program area. The Parks and Recreation Department may also want to concentrate on developing individual adult sports.

Youth (Non-Sports):

The Park and Recreation Department has the experience and facilities to continue to support these programs. However, the YMCA, JCC, School District and other community organizations also provide

programming in this area. **The Recreation Department should work closely with these organizations to develop a realistic plan for this program area in the future. There appears to be limited teen programming.**

Aquatics:

With a large pool at the North Pointe and The Pointe, the Recreation Department will need to continue to emphasize aquatic programming, especially learn to swim classes for children, as a primary program area. Aquatic exercise programs should also be emphasized.



Special Events:

The Parks and Recreation Department has a focus on special events on a city-wide basis.

Increasingly recreation departments across the United States are seeing a greater emphasis placed on special events that draw communities together as well as attract individuals from outside the community.

At times the focus on special events has resulted in other traditional recreation programming being neglected. Special events will certainly remain a core program area for the Parks and Recreation Department but the support for non-City sponsored events should not be the primary area of emphasis. The cost of these events should be covered directly by the group that is putting on the event. Other community groups should be encouraged to be the

primary funders and organizers of as many community wide events as possible.

Fitness/Wellness:

Without a doubt, this is one of the greatest areas of growth in public recreation programming. With a society that has an increasing awareness of the benefits of good health and a realization that obesity (especially among children) is a major risk for Americans, there is a much higher demand for programming in this area. The Parks and Recreation Department has a reasonably strong program that operates out of The Pointe but this area may need additional focus in the future. The Department should also continue to emphasize the importance of integrating wellness initiatives into other program areas (seniors, youth, etc.) as well. Partnering with health care providers for more medically based services will be essential.

Cultural Arts:

This is currently a rather small program area for the Parks and Recreation Department and it is anticipated that further emphasis in this area is probably not a priority at this time with other non-profit cultural arts organizations present in the area. However, exposing youth and seniors to basic introductory cultural arts programs through services provided at the center level will still need to occur.

Seniors:

While the Parks and Recreation Department offers numerous programs for seniors, the Department will need to take a more active role with this age group. It should be noted that as the Baby Boomer generation ages they are bringing new needs and expectations to senior services that is more in line with more active recreation pursuits that they have grown up with. This will require

different types of senior services and a change in facilities as well.

General Programs:

Programs in this area can cover everything from self-improvement to education and other classes. This should be a program area that receives increased emphasis in the coming years.



Outdoor Recreation:

There does not appear to be much emphasis given to this program area by the Parks and Recreation Department. With many outdoor areas and resources available, there will need to be a greater emphasis on these activities. Specific programs could still be offered primarily by other community-based organizations with some coordination by the Department.

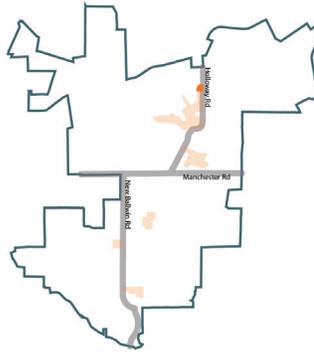
Special Needs:

The Parks and Recreation Department is part of a multi-agency collaborative to provide the support and resources for inclusionary programming. It is difficult for most recreation agencies to have a broad special needs program on their own.

HOLLOWAY PARK

Neighborhood Park

address:
335 Holloway Road
2.6 acres



Tennis courts

Improvement Opportunities

High Priority

- Add a small restroom for the users at the tennis court and the playground.
- Re-stripe tennis courts to include pickleball.
- Update the playground to include enhanced play value for multiple age groups.

Medium Priority

- Create a minimum 5' wide pedestrian path from Holloway Road to the playground.
- Improve the sidewalk along Holloway Road to trail standards.
- Create a secondary trail system with neighborhood connections.

Low Priority

- Add new shade structures and canopy trees to provide shade for the play areas.



Restroom



Limestone chat trail



Shade structure

NORTH POINTE AQUATIC CENTER

Recreation Center

address:
335 Holloway Road
6.18 acres



Water play

Improvement Opportunities

High Priority

- Add more shade structures over seating areas.

Medium Priority

- Update park signage to a new and unified signage for the City parks.

Low Priority

- Consider updating landscape with a pool-friendly plant palette.



Shade structure



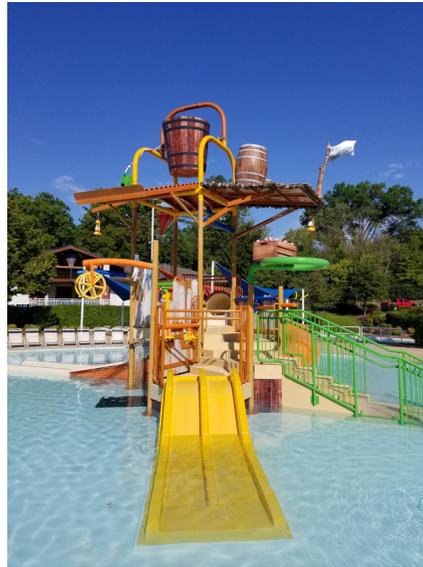
Shade structure



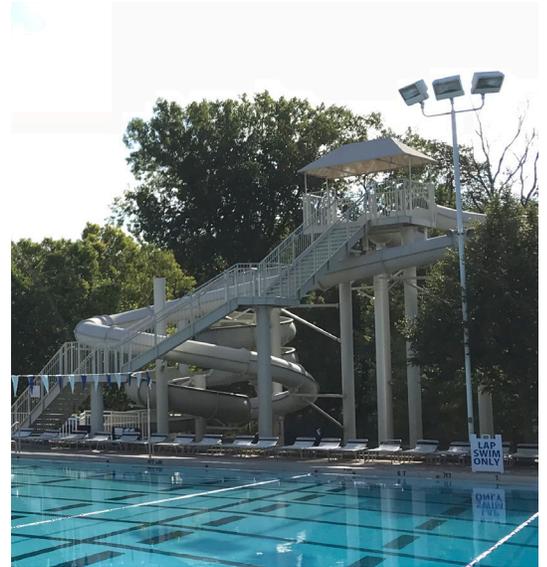
Shade structure



Climbing wall



Water play



Water slide



Pool



Image 11

Pool-friendly landscape

BALLWIN GOLF COURSE & CLUB

Golf Course & Club

address:
333 Holloway Road
69.02 acres



Putting green

Improvement Opportunities

High Priority

- Cart paths need to be repaved and sloped for positive drainage.
- Add a large driving practice cage west of the parking lot.

Medium Priority

- Add a buffer along the pond edge to reduce fertilizer input.
- Add native landscape and screening along the boundary of the golf course.
- The pond needs to be dredged to combat periodic algae blooms.
- Replace the maintenance facility.
- Use gabions to stabilize creek banks.

Low Priority

- Update the Golf Club building.
- Improve pedestrian access to facility from Holloway Road.
- Add private restrooms separate from the pro shop and golf course office.

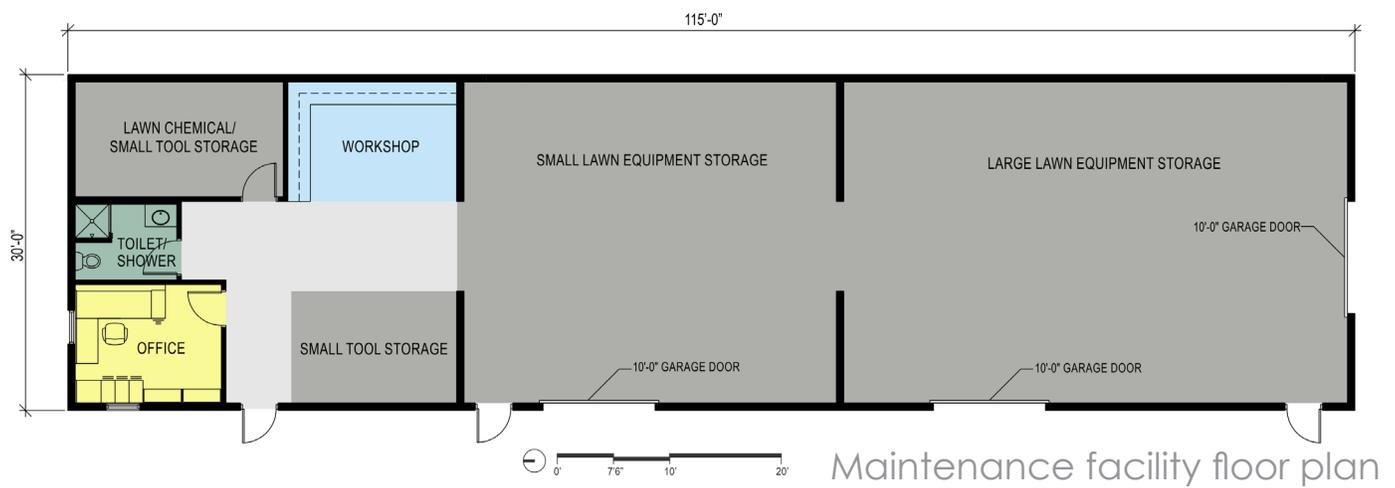
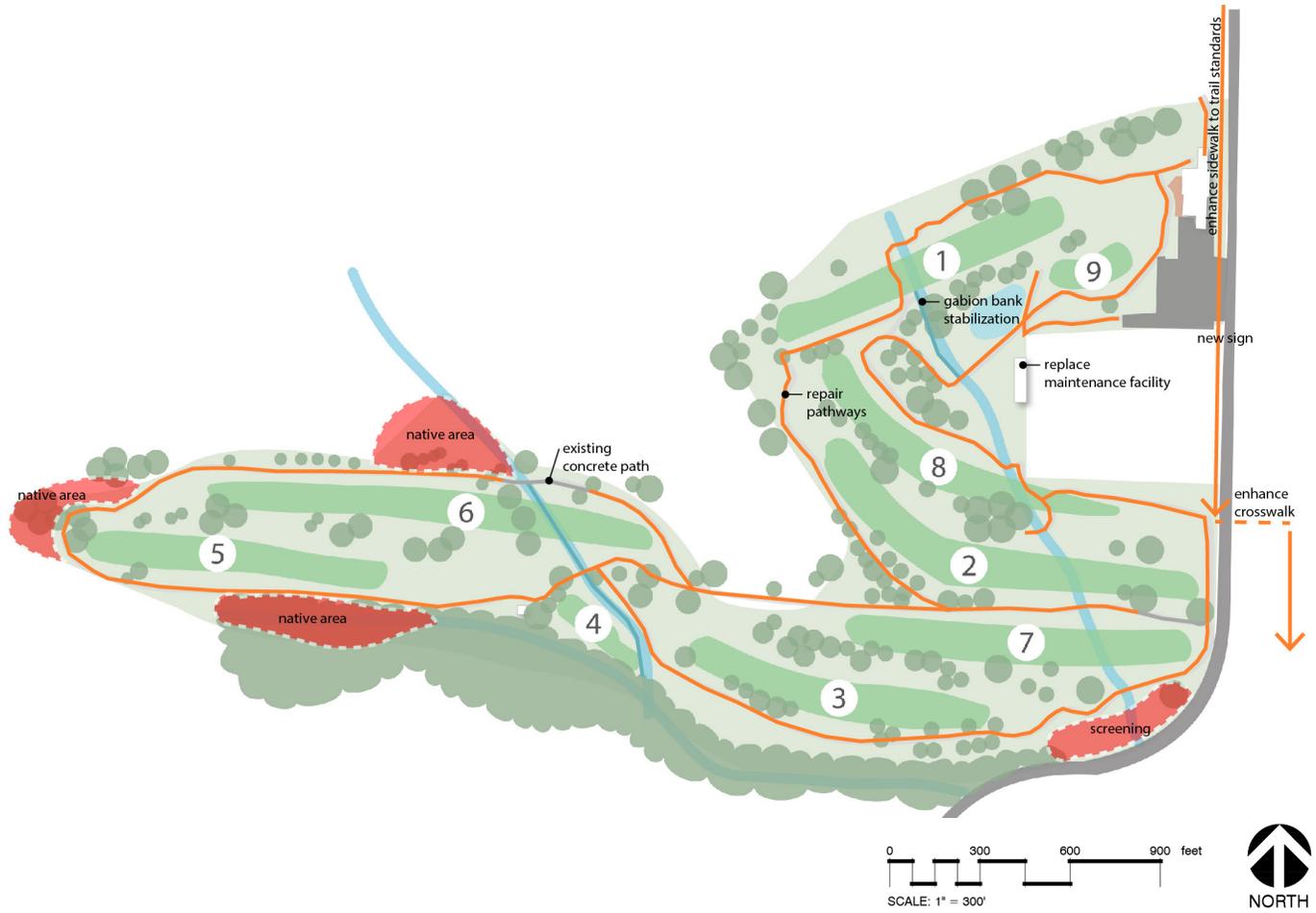


Gabion creek stabilization



Native area

Concept Plan

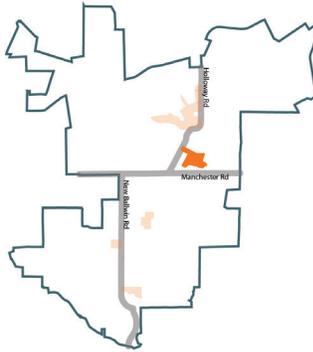


Maintenance facility floor plan

VLASIS PARK

Community Park

address:
Kehrs Mill Road
28.47 acres



Water Feature

Improvement Opportunities

High Priority

- Complete a detailed Park Master Plan.
- Enhance ballfield.
- Add pickleball courts.

Medium Priority

- Add a large amphitheater for concerts and events.
- Dredge ponds and improve edge treatment.
- Update/ relocate playground.
- Add parking.

Low Priority

- Add a restroom closer to the playground.
- Add trails and neighborhood connections.



Image 14
Amphitheater

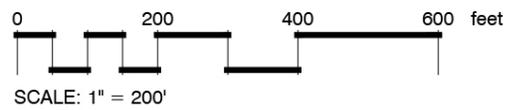


Image 15
Field improvement



Image 16
Greenway

Concept Plan



THE POINTE

Recreation Center

address:
1 Ballwin Commons Circle
66,000 square feet



Lobby

Improvement Opportunities

Medium Priority

- Add additional lap lanes.

Low Priority

- Add gymnasium and multipurpose room.
- Renovate babysitting/ PAC room, spinning room and party room.
- Expanded weights/ cardio space.



Image 17
Running track



Image 18
Pickleball/ multi-use courts

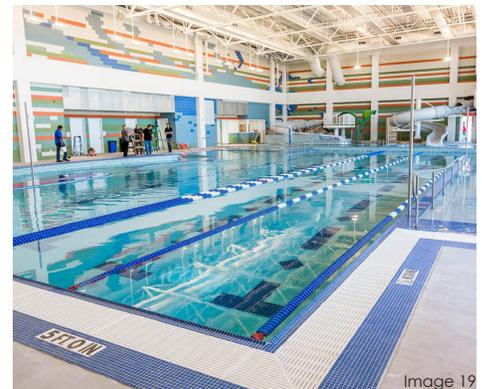
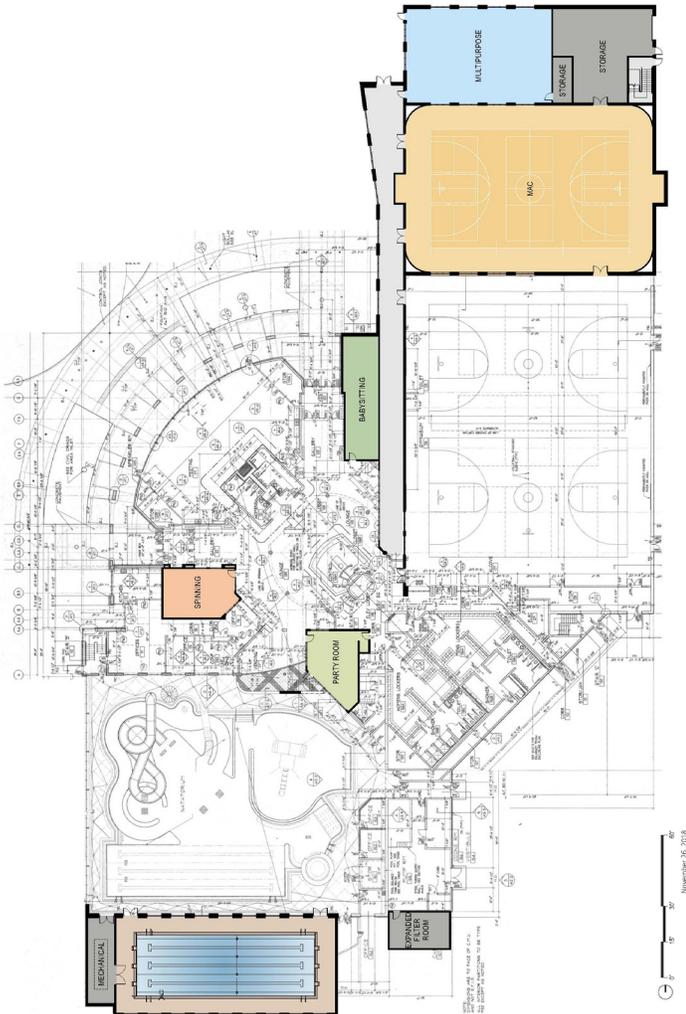
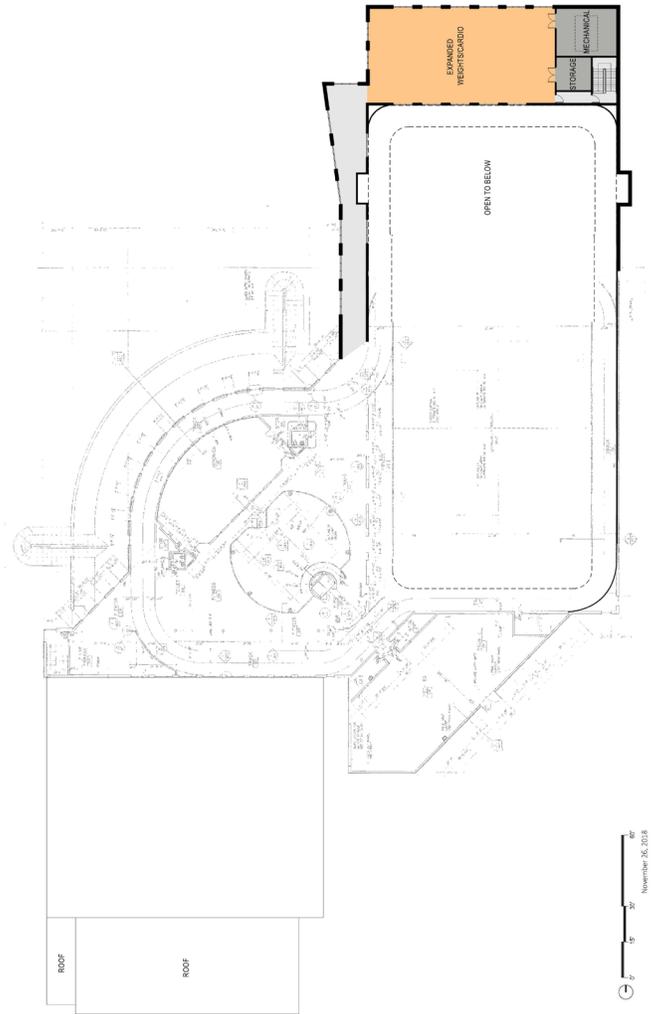


Image 19
Lap pool

Concept Plan



First floor plan



Second floor plan

Expanded cardio space

There is possibility of enclosing the upper balcony overlooking the pool. The current balcony space is part of the pool environment so a supplement mechanical system would need to be expanded off of the existing system furnishing the fitness area on the second level. A mechanical engineer would need to confirm if this system has the capacity. A separate DX roof unit could be required which would require roof penetrations and additional electrical. The space would also need completely new separated enclosure that is either all glass or glass and wall. The wall would have to be completely sealed at the floor and deck to prevent moisture from the pool environment getting into the new fitness space. Depending on the anticipated fitness equipment in the new area the electrical might need to be updated. A ceiling with new lighting would probably need to be installed to also control the acoustics in such a small space and provide adequate lighting.

THE POINTE at BALLWIN COMMONS

Community Park

address:
1 Ballwin Commons Circle
12.79 acres



Swings

Improvement Opportunities

High Priority

- Enhance the pond edge.

Medium Priority

- Add multi-use courts.
- Add irrigation system.

Low Priority

- Move entrance from Ballwin Commons to the east.
- Update/ relocate playground.
- Improve pedestrian access.
- Add plaza and pavilion.
- Improve vehicular circulation and parking.
- Utilize newly acquired adjacent land to improve pedestrian access and amenities.
- Enhance the landscape to highlight The Pointe as Ballwin's premier facility.



Image 20

Multi-use courts



Image 21

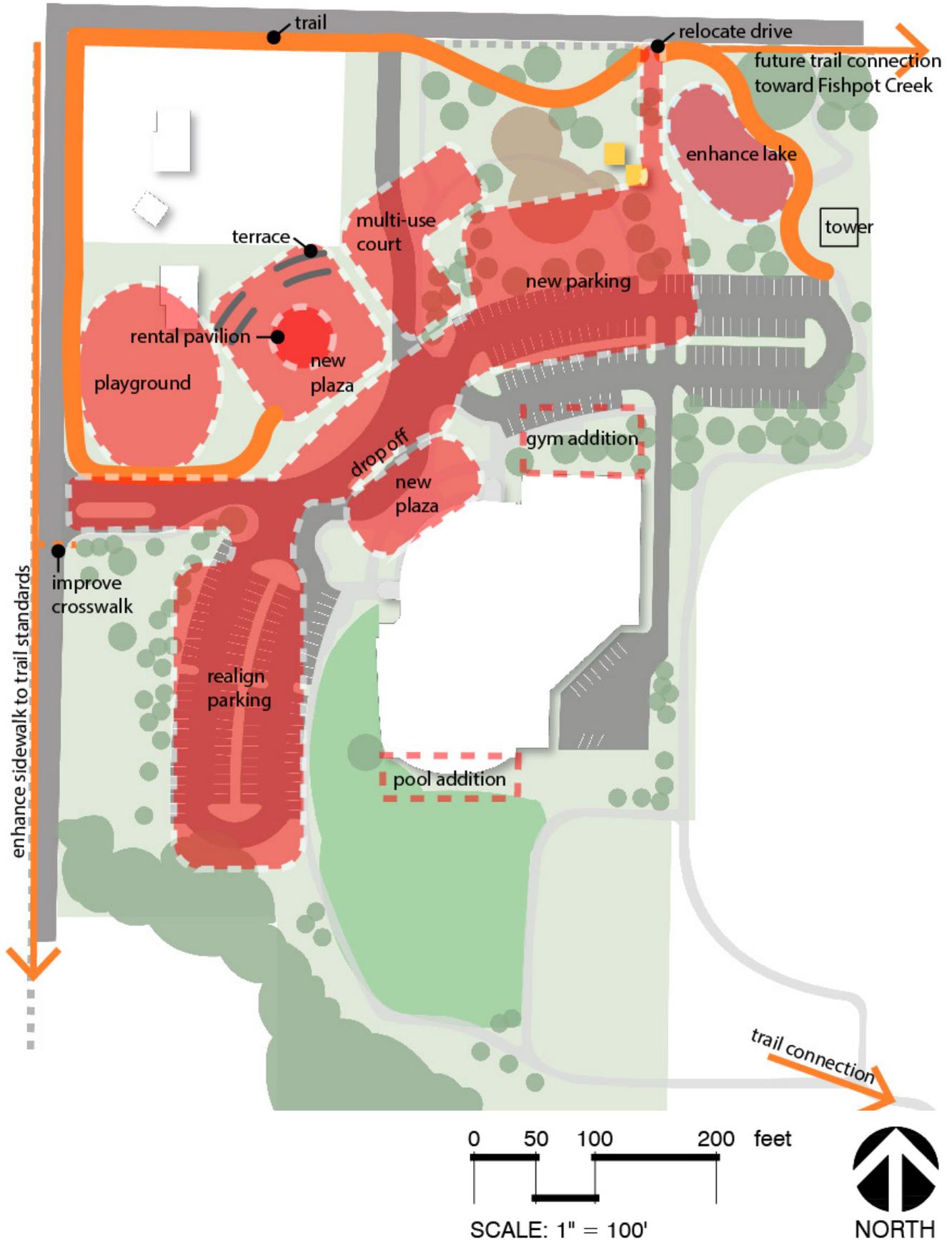
Lake edge



Image 22

Plaza

Concept Plan



NEW BALLWIN PARK

Neighborhood Park

address:
329 New Ballwin Road
7.36 acres



Playground

Improvement Opportunities

High Priority

- Create a native vegetation buffer to prevent bank erosion with designated access points.
- Replace playground and plaza/ trees.
- Update restroom.
- Realign walkway.
- Reseal/ re-stripe multi-use court (basketball and pickleball).

Medium Priority

- Improve circulation and update parking lot with modern stormwater BMPs.
- Add a more permanent structure or area for concerts near the lake.



Playground



Sustainable lot



Lakeside plaza

Concept Plan



FERRIS PARK

Neighborhood Park

address:
500 New Ballwin Road
12.65 acres



Field Entrance

Improvement Opportunities

High Priority

- Add permeable parking with modern stormwater BMPs.
- Add access to playground from parking lot.

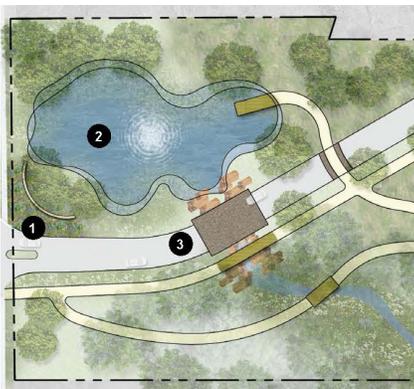
Medium Priority

- Add multi-use courts (tennis/ volleyball/ pickleball courts)south of the restroom.
- Improve pedestrian access and interior trails.

Low Priority

- Add bridge and stormwater feature at entrance.
- Field enhancements.

Below images from Ferris Park Master Plan by SWT Design



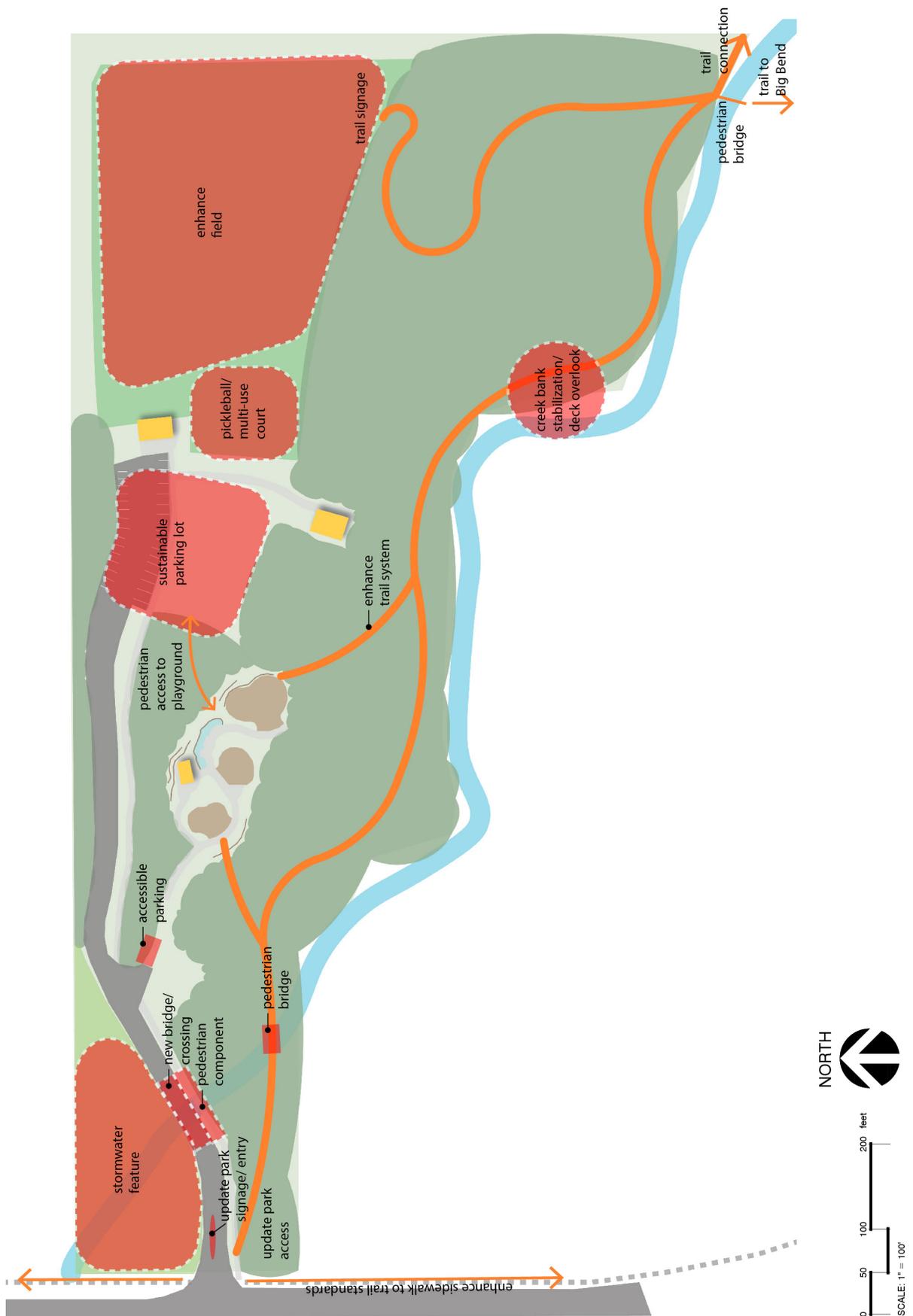
Entrance



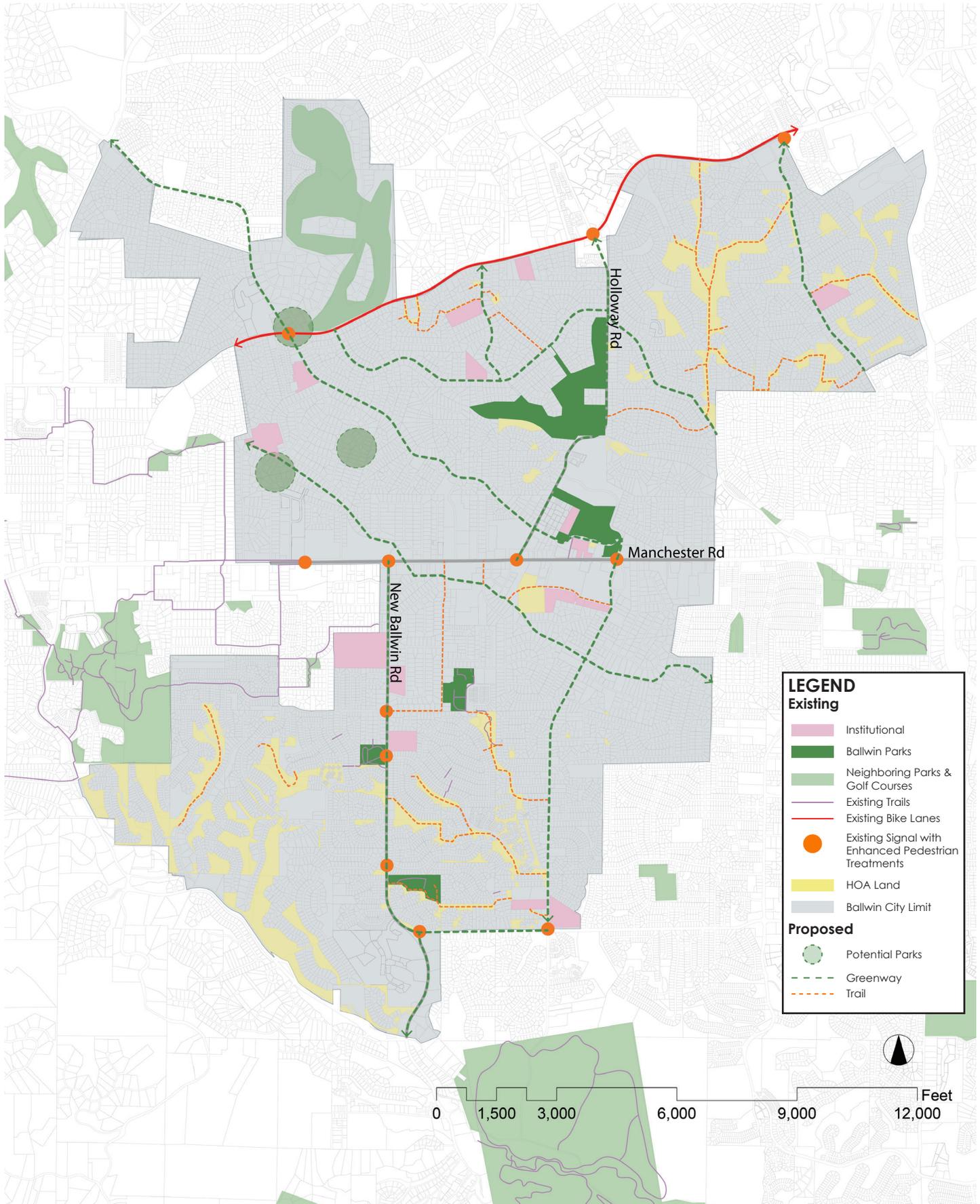
Parking lot

Field

Concept Plan



trail plan



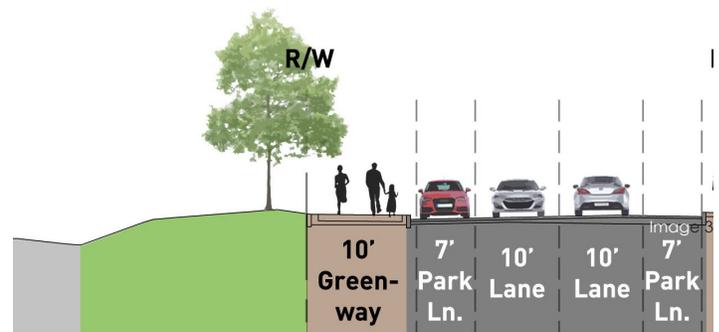
Throughout Ballwin’s community engagement trails and greenway development consistently ranked as the number one improvement request within the parks system. Some comments regarding the lack of trails include, but are not limited to, lack of safe paths for kids to walk or bike to school, lack of alternative modes of transportation to commute, and the need to improve walkability within the community.

In 2007 The Cities of Ballwin and Manchester worked with James Pona and Associates to establish a Community wide Trail Plan. Building on the previous efforts; this plan was updated to include new trails within the City. Establishing and maintaining a network of public trails, multi-use, non-motorized trails and Greenways provides Ballwin an opportunity to add to their park system and program of providing outdoor recreation amenities and community wide connections that serve the health and welfare of the Ballwin residents.

A connected city-wide trails network can provide several benefits to Ballwin residents:

- **Improve the health of residents of all ages by providing opportunities to walk, bike and participate in physical activities.**
- **Provide alternatives to automobile trips, to save money and protect air quality.**
- **Provide connections among neighborhoods and parks, and help residents connect with the local and regional park and open space resources, including a connection to the nearby Meramec Greenway.**

The updated trail plan identifies at a masterplan level, opportunities for additional trail and greenway connections. The most common opportunity for connections within the city is on the property owned by Homeowners Associations (HOA Land). A trail easement should be developed to allow the HOA to maintain ownership of the land and Ballwin to help build and maintain the trails. A partnership and maintenance agreement between the City of Ballwin and the Homeowners Association would be mutually beneficial and provide Ballwin residents with access to additional open space. The City of Ballwin should also coordinate with Great Rivers Greenway to discuss opportunities to partner.



In addition to proposed trail improvements the trail plan identifies existing trails, existing bike lanes and existing signals with enhanced pedestrian treatments. Some of the proposed trail improvements include upgrading existing sidewalks within the City to trail standards. This includes widening to an average 10 foot wide and where possible comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA).

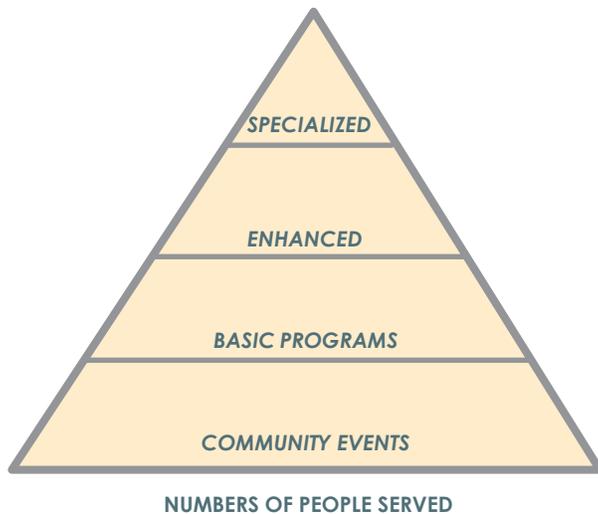
All sidewalks identified for improvements should be implemented with roadway improvements. For example, the sidewalk adjacent to Holloway Road should be enhanced with the proposed Holloway Road improvements.

management recommendations

Fee Setting:

In order to accomplish a high level of recreation services, recreation departments have been much more aggressive in their fee setting with the goal of covering more operational expenses for most programs. However, with a more entrepreneurial approach to assessing fees for activities comes the need to develop a scholarship program that allows for those individuals that cannot afford to pay the opportunity to participate in recreation activities. Such programs usually have a limited budget and do require the user to pay at least something for service.

Many departments are now tiering their programs into different categories with differing levels of cost recovery.



FEE CONTINUUM

Programs and services should be categorized into four levels of offerings that are divided by the level of instruction, expertise, or importance to the community's well-being. Priority for funding and facility usage should be based on the category in which they fall, with fees being set accordingly. The four

categories should include.

Community events – special community wide events, activities or festivals that are onetime events. It should be expected that there will be little to no fees for these activities. Some revenues may be collected from sponsorships and sales of goods and services, but the general rate of recovery would be less than 100%.

Basic or core programs – those that are essential to recreation and community needs (such as teen activities, senior programs, youth activities, special populations, etc). These programs direct costs are usually heavily subsidized. Suggested recovery rate is 25% to 50% of direct costs.

Enhanced – those that are beyond basic and are focused on an audience that has a greater ability to pay. Programs in this area could include adult fitness and sports, or general programs. Suggested minimum recovery rate is 50% to 100% of direct costs.

Specialized – these are activities that are very specialized in nature. These would include activities such as fitness assessments, trip programs, facility rentals and the like. Fees are set based on what the market will bear but at minimum would require 100% of direct costs.

Use of Other Service Providers:

There has also been a movement away from the principle of public recreation departments having to be the actual provider of all recreation programs and services, to the concept of public agencies being the general coordinator and enabler of overall community recreation needs and resources. This has resulted in a great deal of

programming now being conducted by volunteer youth sports organizations, adult sports associations, non-profit groups such as the YMCA and other social service organizations, schools and the private sector. This has reduced the financial obligations of the public sector, placed programming in the hands of organizations with the specific expertise (and often the facilities as well), and allowed the private sector to have a more active role in public recreation. There has also been an increase in the number of public agencies collaborating to bring a higher level of recreation service on more of a regional basis especially for more specialized services (special needs, outdoor education, etc.). This concept has become much more prevalent across the country with recreation departments being a clearinghouse of information and services offered by others while providing more basic recreation services itself.

Facilities:

The vast majority of outdoor related recreation programming takes place in public parks with school facilities providing the other main venue. For indoor programs, a recreation center is the primary location for most activities. With the demand for recreation programs and services continuing to expand a new more innovative approach may be necessary to find appropriate sites for many activities. This could result in partnering with private facilities (fitness centers, dance studios, outdoor aquatic clubs, etc.), non-profits (YMCA's, Boys & Girls Clubs, cultural arts centers, etc.) and even private schools or public schools for certain activities. With the demand for youth sports fields continuing to grow, it is not unusual for youth sports organizations to build

and operate their own fields on their own property or on leased undeveloped public land.

Staffing:

In order to continue to grow the number of recreation programs and services that are offered to a community, adequate staffing is necessary to not only conduct the program itself but also to supervise and administer the activities. With staffing costs being the single greatest expense item for parks and recreation departments, many agencies have attempted to minimize the number of full-time staff by contracting for certain programs or partnering with other providers for services (see service providers above). The need to reduce full-time staff has become even more acute with the poor financial condition of some municipal governments. However, even with this approach there still needs to be adequate full-time staff to oversee and coordinate such efforts. Part-time staff is still the backbone of most recreation departments and make up the vast majority of program leaders and instructors. Many departments have converted program instructors to contract employees with a split of gross revenues (usually 70% to the instructor and 30% to the city) or developed a truer contract for services that either rents facilities and/or takes a percentage of the gross from another organization. The use of volunteers can help to augment paid staff but should not be seen as a substitute for them.

Funding:

The basic requirement for the provision of recreation programs and services is a funding commitment associated with the development of facilities to support programs and staff to manage and provide the programming. This usually requires a tax dollar commitment but also other sources of funding including program fees, grants, and partnering with other agencies can also help with additional funding. In many recreation departments, funding limits have been the greatest single challenge to providing not only existing programs but also bringing on any new services.

Municipal park grants from St. Louis County should be pursued on a regular basis as a means of funding phases of park improvements. This should be achieved through the traditional route of completing an individual park master plan for parks with a great need of improvement. In this document we have recommended master plan studies for New Ballwin and Vlassis.

Partnering with other agencies can be a powerful tool in implementing system-wide improvements such as trails and greenway networks. Great Rivers Greenway, as well as neighboring municipalities in west St. Louis County should be considered as great opportunities to develop and expand Ballwin's connectivity as a whole. Federal project funding grants such as TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program), STP (Surface Transportation program), and CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program) can be applied for through East West Gateway to assist in trail and greenway funding.

Administration:

Essential to developing a comprehensive recreation program is a strong administrative overview of the process. It starts with the development of an overall philosophy that will direct programming efforts by the public organization and determine the role of other providers. The philosophy should emphasize areas of focus by age group as well as program areas and also prioritize future program development options.

Key aspects of administration include:

In-house vs. contracted – As part of the programming philosophy a determination of what programs and services will be offered directly by the recreation staff and which will be contracted to other individuals or organizations must be determined. Increasingly recreation departments are turning to contracted services or the outright rental of facilities to other providers to broaden programming and limit the role of in-house employees.

Before determining which programs, and services to contract or have provided by others, an assessment of the specific pros and cons of such a move needs to be completed. A major aspect of this analysis should be to determine the financial impacts and quality of the services that will be provided.

Key questions to be asked include:

- Will this be the most cost-effective method to obtain the program, service or function?
- Does the department have the knowledge and equipment to provide the program, service or function?
- Will the quality of the program, service or function suffer if it is contracted to other organizations?
- Are there other more qualified organizations that should provide the program, service or function?
- Is the service, program or function only available from a contract provider?
- Are the safety and liability risks too high to provide the program or service in house?

Marketing:

There must be the realization that recreation programming is a discretionary expenditure and as a result it is critical that there is a strong marketing effort to promote the recreation activities that are offered by public providers.

Simple changes such as establishing an identity for Ballwin Parks & Recreation can go a long way in increasing visibility and participation. A system-wide signage standard should be developed to be used in all of the city's parks and facilities. Consistent materials, scale, form, and use of a logo should all be considered. For example, a modified green version of Ballwin's newest logo can be used throughout all parks.

Registration:

An aspect of marketing for recreation services is the ease of being able to register for these activities. This requires a fully computerized registration software package, the ability to register on-line, the acceptance of credit cards for service, and the ability to make payments over time.

Record keeping:

To determine the relative success of programming and the markets being served, continue to have accurate and timely record keeping. Registration numbers by class and activity area need to be kept and comparisons by programming season conducted. In addition, expense and revenue numbers for each activity must be noted and compared to determine financial viability. Demographic records of who are taking recreation programs and where they live will determine specific markets that are being served and more importantly ones that may be overlooked. Continue to adequately keep such records with complete computerization of not only registration but all records associated with programming.

Evaluation:

Ultimately the success of recreation programming must be measured by the community it serves. A determination of the satisfaction with existing programs and services as well as the needs and expectations for future programming must be measured through a formal evaluation process.

recreation program assessment

Recreation programming offered by the City of Ballwin is reasonably comprehensive and meets a broad range of interests and needs in the community. While a variety of programs are offered that are typically found in many departments there are a number of key program areas that do not have strong offerings as well. The program areas that are generally lacking include court sport activities, group fitness, aquatic exercise, competitive swimming, pickleball, and aquatics, fitness, outdoor recreation and special needs programs.

The greatest challenge comes from an increasingly high demand for a variety of recreation activities and services with limited indoor and outdoor facilities to accommodate these needs. Equally important is having adequate staffing levels to support program demands. Drop-in recreation opportunities must be balanced against programming demand and schedule. With the anticipated continued rate of growth in Ballwin will be continued pressure in the coming years to greatly expand the recreation program options in a number of areas.

future programs & services recommendations

1. Utilization the five-year program plan model, a program development assessment should take place before proposing and during the approval process for a program. This will aid in determining the appropriateness and priorities for any new programs.
2. Continue having all programs offered use a program proposal sheet to determine the direct cost of offering the activity as well as the minimum number of registrants needed to conduct the program. This proposal form should also evaluate the need for the program, its market focus, and the ability to support the program priorities for the department.
3. Continue having each program or service that is completed have an itemized the exact cost and revenues generated by the program and the number of individuals served. This will determine if the program or service met its financial goals and also its service goals.
4. The Parks and Recreation Department should conduct a lifecycle analysis for major programs to determine the future trends and direction for activities. Tracking program trends on a regional and national basis would also be helpful.
5. As the demand for programs and services continues to grow the Park and Recreation Department should expand opportunities for partnering with other City Departments and organizations to provide specialized services to the community.
6. The Park and Recreation Department will need to develop programs that have not only an appeal for different age groups (youth, teen, adult and seniors) but also continue to emphasize the family unit along with different ethnic groups in the city.
7. Maintain the overall marketing plan efforts for recreation programs and services. The marketing plan should be a simple, easy to implement, document that serves as a guideline for specific marketing efforts. Continue review and refinement of the marketing plan.
8. Continue offering contract programs and service on a 70%-30% split of revenues (or 60%-40% if possible) to provide the City with a strong revenue stream.
9. Continue the strong effort to track, and document use of various City recreation facilities from active use areas to more passive use amenities. This will provide the City with strong facility use numbers, identify where additional programs may be scheduled and determine overall priorities of use.
10. Continue updating and refine the Parks and Recreation Department's fee policy to ensure that pricing for programs and services is being done in a systematic way that maximizes revenues.

image sources

Image #	Source
1	https://www.escondido.org/escondido-senior-center.aspx
2	http://www.pdhp.org/recreation-center-highland-park-fitness-pool/
3	https://www.localfitness.com.au/windy-hill-fitness-centre-essendon/swimming-pool-essendon-north-enjoy-the-many-aquatic-sp580i2
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22	https://www.asla.org/2018awards/455278-Re-Envisioning_Pulaski_Park.html
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24	DG2 Design
25	DG2 Design