

TRENDS IN PARKS AND RECREATION

What people seek in their communities and the forces impacting lifestyle and investment decisions are constantly evolving. As a consequence recreation is constantly evolving. New or resurrected sports, new technologies as well as evolving cultural preferences bring new facility and program needs. Park systems must keep pace with these changing needs or become obsolete. By building flexibility into park and recreation facilities, communities can better adapt to changing demands.

Below is a list of some of the trends that are shaping new park and recreation needs:



ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE

- Increased awareness of environmental issues
- Benefits of a healthy ecosystem
- Outdoor education or interpretive programs
- Natural habitat areas



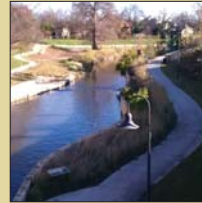
COMPACT NEIGHBORHOODS

- Growing population seeking walkable, mixed-used neighborhoods
- High-quality public open space is expected



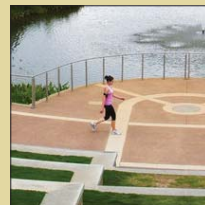
FOCUS ON RIVERS

- Community gathering
- Linear recreation
- Habitat restoration



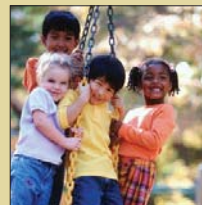
LINEAR RECREATION

- For people of all ages and abilities, trails are the top recreational demand
- Nature-based hiking, birding and interpretive trails
- Cycling, walking and running
- Desire for trails along natural amenities - rivers and lakes



QUALITY vs. QUANTITY

- Greater emphasis on quality of open space and parks systems



DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

- Recreational demands based on ethnic customs and sports
- Diverse population calling for greater community and family gathering spaces
- Demand for un-programmed field spaces and facilities for sports such as soccer



THE THIRD PLACE

- Coffee shops, pubs, cafes, public spaces
- Socialization and recreation
- Enhances livability



DOG PARKS

- Demand for controlled, off-leash dog parks



REDEFINING FAMILY

- Smaller households
- People seeking family and social experiences outside the household



URBAN AGRICULTURE

- Interest in healthy local foods
- Community gardens are increasing in popularity



ACTIVE LIVING

- People are seeking opportunities for healthier lifestyle choices
- Demand for infrastructure and programming that offers healthy foods, walkable neighborhoods and greater recreational choices that integrate active living into everyday life



ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF OPEN SPACE

- Active open spaces play a key role in creating sustainable communities
- Access to open spaces boosts property values and delivers an excellent return on investment



AGING ACTIVELY

- 65-and-older crowd is expected to more than double by 2050
- More active than any prior generation
- Need for recreational and cultural experiences



HEALTHY WORKPLACES

- Greater emphasis on public/shared spaces
- Access to open space and trails is critical

Soldiers Memorial Field Park

Master Plan

Rochester . Minnesota

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