

Chapter 6:

Implementation

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The Parks and Recreation System Plan will guide decision-making by the Park Board, staff, partners, and the public over the next 20 years. The Implementation Chapter is intended to provide a framework for decision-making and public investment by identifying priority actions and improvements, associated costs, and potential funding sources. The chapter also serves as a toolkit that guides how to evaluate new initiatives and projects that were not contemplated in the development of the system plan. This toolkit is supplemented by the activity delivery guidelines which describe the recommended frequency for providing recreational facilities in the community. Not to be overlooked, the Implementation Chapter ends with recommendations for evaluating the success of the plan.

Parks & Recreation Foundation

A parks and recreation foundation is an independent non-profit that is affiliated with the Parks and Recreation Department and whose mission is to support the system. A foundation's focus can range from supporting small, individual park projects to significant fundraising arms that create lasting impact through endowments. Foundations can be the recipient of tax-deductible donations and sponsorships and in some cases can apply for grants for which cities are ineligible. They also can assist with advocacy, community engagement, and volunteer development. It is important to recognize that Foundations can take additional staff time, so care needs to be taken in identifying the organization's mission.

Funding Recommendations

While a parks and recreation system is an essential component of the quality of life in a community, ensuring sufficient funding can be challenging when compared to other city services such as water, sewer, and public safety. To achieve the vision set forth in the Parks and Recreation System Plan, additional investment will be needed. This investment will not only be needed to support system expansion, but for the replacement of existing system components.

1. Ensure adequate funding to accomplish plan goals

- 1.1. Identify and regularly communicate system funding needs.
 - 1.1.1. Develop an asset management program.
 - 1.1.2. Evaluate and incorporate into budgets ongoing operational and life-cycle costs when making facility capital decisions.
 - 1.1.3. Establish cost recovery information and policies for programs, park rentals, and other services that clearly communicate the costs associated, the level of community/individual/special interest benefit, and the associated fee.
- 1.2. Expand & diversify funding sources.
 - 1.2.1. Increase Parks and Recreation's share of the general fund.
 - 1.2.2. Increase funding from the General Fund for maintenance work.
 - 1.2.3. Establish an Infrastructure Replacement Reserve Fund to cover major capital repairs and replacements.
 - 1.2.4. Support the creation of a non-profit parks and recreation foundation to support promotion and fundraising.
 - 1.2.5. Explore the use of a franchise fee to fund maintenance or specific programs.
 - 1.2.6. Explore a bond referendum for a specific package of capital improvements.
 - 1.2.7. Pursue legislative authority similar to Minneapolis and St. Paul to capture park dedication through the building permit process.
 - 1.2.8. Continue to strategically pursue grants focused on those whose funding amounts are sufficient to outweigh administrative requirements.

- 1.2.9. Evaluate the potential value of sponsorship for all assets, programs, and events in the system based on user demographics and participation/visitation. Use the data to create an enhanced sponsorship catalog to target local and regional sponsors and corporate partnerships.
 - 1.2.10. Explore collaborative funding opportunities in areas like public health, public art, programming, and sustainability.
 - 1.2.11. Continue to work collaboratively with Public Works and Olmsted County Planning on development, trail and bikeway projects, and environmental initiatives.
 - 1.2.12. Pilot the use of a crowdfunding tool for small, targeted projects (kickstarter.org, razoo.com or NRPA Fund Your Park).
 - 1.2.13. Continue to build and enhance partnerships with schools, athletic associations, nonprofits and others.
- 1.3. Maximize use of volunteers to support system development and operations.

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-Private Partnerships are already a key component of the Parks and Recreation System. The level of partnership is so extensive that many in the community are not aware of when the City is providing the service and when it is a partner. Some public-private partnerships are relatively simple, a non-profit holding an event using park facilities, for example, while others can be quite complex, such as a public-private partnership to develop a regional park or the potential private sponsorship of the development, operations, and future maintenance of downtown parks and open spaces through DMC efforts. As public-private partnerships are developed, the following should be considered:

- » Ensure both entities share the same vision and define success at the beginning of the project.
- » Provide a consistent, fair, and open review process for the development of partnerships.
- » Assess and align strengths of each entity (for example, a private vendor may be more efficient and effective in providing concessions or renting equipment).
- » Conduct an independent financial analysis of the viability of the partnership.
- » Negotiate formal agreements that clearly identify responsibilities, expectations (type of service, hours, and fees), revenue/expense sharing, etc.
- » Make sure partnerships are not concentrated to only the highest quality sites, but instead serve a broad spectrum of the community.
- » Identify potential use of volunteers and assess any potential liability from their involvement.
- » Promote cultural sensitivity and sustainability in partners.
- » Recognize public staff time will be needed to manage partnership.

The City may find it beneficial to further formalize its public-private partnership process. The City of Portland, Oregon and Montgomery County Parks, Maryland may be good resources for the development of policies and procedures.

Priorities

Priorities are drawn from the recommendations identified in Chapter 5 and are organized into the four areas of facilities, marketing, programming/ events, and operations. Because each area's success is important, prioritization across the four areas were not made, which will allow each area to receive needed attention and resources. The ability of the City to achieve these priorities will be a function of staff time and funding. While some initiatives may require a significant investment of either time or funding for a one-time improvement, others will involve a minimal amount of time on an on-going basis. It is also likely that some of the lower priorities that are lower on a list may be completed sooner than higher priorities due to funding or partnership opportunities.

Implementation phasing should be flexible and dependent on regular project prioritization based on needs, funding availability, and partnership opportunities. Depending on funding availability, the City may need to explore the phasing of larger capital improvements, such as like regional park development. While not ideal because it is generally more expensive and extends the time period the park is out of service, phasing does ensure there is funding available for other capital improvements at the same time.

Table 6-1 provides a prioritized list of capital improvements or actions for each category. Costs provided are planning level estimates that need to be further refined with detailed planning. Costs are for project construction and do not include the professional services of surveyors, engineers, architects, etc. Professional services may add 20 to 30% to individual project costs.

TABLE 6-1: PRIORITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS & ACTIONS

Initiative	Notes	Cost
Facilities		
Development of Cascade Lake Regional Park	Based on Cascade Lake Regional Park Master Plan	\$18 million
Trail System Restoration	Approximately 13 miles	\$4 to \$5 million
Completion of Quarry Hill Park and Nature Center Improvements	Based on Quarry Hill Park and Nature Center Master Plan	\$500,000
Investment in land to allow the movement of the sports complexes off of leased land	Cost factors include location, quality, and size. Consideration should be given to the distribution of facilities across the City and opportunities for partnership.	\$900,000 to \$1.5 million
Aquatics	Assumes Soldiers Field replaced, Silver Lake removed, and interactive water features or river access in each of five zones	\$7 to \$15 million
Modernization of existing facilities	Assumes 17 shelters at \$250,000 each and 40 playgrounds at \$50,000 each	\$6.25 million
Nature Play Areas Distributed throughout the City		\$625,000
Development of Gamehaven Regional Park	Utilize the Gamehaven Regional Park Master Plan	\$14 million
Renovation & Reuse of the former Silver Lake Fire Station	Facility master plan recommended to guide this effort.	\$600,000
Addition of user amenities	1) Assumes 1/3 of Neighborhood Parks receive 20 to 25 shade trees, 2 to 4 picnic tables, 2 to 4 benches, water fountain, and bike rack. 2) Assumes all Community Parks receive 40 to 50 shade trees, 8 to 12 picnic tables, 8 to 12 benches, and 2 to 4 bike racks	\$1.1 to \$1.8 million
Renovation or replacement of Mayo Field		\$3 to \$4 million
Additional basketball courts to serve areas of need	Adding \$40,000 in courts at five locations	\$200,000
Complex for football, lacrosse, and rugby	Assumes a 12 to 14 field complex with concessions and lighting.	\$2.1 million
Improvements to Watson Sports Complex		\$950,000 to \$1.5 million
Development of multi-purpose buildings	Addition of buildings at Lincolnshire, at a cost of \$750,000 each	\$2.25 million
Expansion to Skate Park	Seek partnership opportunities with local non-profit	\$250,000
Upgrading of Golf Course Club Houses	\$400,000 for replacement of three club houses	\$1.2 million
Marketing		
Improve department website and social media presence		Staffing
Develop process and standards for publicizing community events that use parks and recreation facilities	Explore how department website can be used to market public events being held in parks and recreation system	Staffing
Improve system awareness and navigation through improved signage, wayfinding, and maps	Build on recent investments.	\$250,000
Raise public awareness of value of natural areas, sustainability, public health, etc.	Collaboration and partnerships will be needed.	Additional Staffing Needed
Raise public awareness of the positive impact of the parks and recreation system		Additional Staffing Needed
Ensure recognition of Parks and Recreation as sponsoring partner		Staffing
Provide interpretation about natural resources/habitat		Additional Staffing and Funding Needed
Develop, update, and annually share list of partnerships		Staffing

Initiative	Notes	Cost
Programming + Events		
Program and support partners' events to draw residents to parks and recreation facilities	See Programming 1.1 – explore winter opportunities, partnerships with cultural groups, informal/self-directed activities, and other partnerships.	Additional Staffing and Funding Needed
Low-cost/low commitment trial programs	See Public Health 1.1 – target youth, seniors, and immigrants with low cost/low commitment opportunities to try new activities like tennis or snowshoeing	Additional Staffing Needed
Activities for public health (“Find Your Healthy Place” campaign)	See Public Health 2.1 – explore activities like cooking demonstrations, count your steps in the park, health specialists in the park, etc.	Additional Staffing Needed
Activate downtown parks and open spaces	Coordinate with other city departments and DMC	Additional Staffing and Funding
Policies for private vendors to provide programming in parks		Staffing
Public art working group to support development of temporary art installations, performances, cultural events	See Public Art recommendations.	Staffing
Operations		
Provide higher level of service for care/maintenance/cleanliness	Note that modernization of facilities may address some of public perception	Additional Staffing Needed
Expand volunteerism		Additional Staffing Needed
Document, analyze, and plan for the expansion of the natural trail system	See Trails 1.2.1	Additional Staffing Needed
Complete a Natural Resource Inventory	Natural Resource Inventory basis for developing	\$50,000 to &100,000
Complete individual Park Master Plans (Silver Lake, Lincolnshire, Essex, and Kutzky)		\$300,000
Develop an Asset Management System		Additional Staffing Needed
Relocate the Maintenance Facility		\$8 million

Funding Sources

Achieving the vision and mission for the parks and recreation system will take additional funding, not only for big, exciting new facilities like a regional park or interactive water feature, but for neighborhood park revitalization, new programs, and outreach, etc. Significant investment is needed for Rochester to provide the type of parks and recreation system identified in this System Plan. It is estimated that the priorities identified will cost \$70 to \$83 million to implement. Additional initiative implementation, as well as system maintenance and reinvestment needs, will be significantly more. Table 6-2 Funding Sources highlights the types of funding sources that may be appropriate for various types of initiatives. The table is followed by brief descriptions of each of the funding sources.

General Funds

General funds can and should be used to develop and maintain the parks and recreation system. General funds are the primary funding source for on-going maintenance, operations, and amenities. Most grants also have a matching requirement, which is often fulfilled with general funds.

TABLE 6-2: FUNDING SOURCES

Initiative	General Funds	Park Dedication	Grants	Partnerships	Donations	State Aid Funds	Park Bond Referendum	Utility Fee
System Planning (Asset Management Plan, Park/Facility Master Planning, Natural Resource Planning, Trail Planning)	●			∩				
Parkland Acquisition	●	●	○	∩	∩		●	
Modernization (replacement of shelters, playgrounds, etc.)	●			∩	∩		○	∩
User Amenities (benches, shade, restrooms, water fountains, etc.)	●			∩	∩		○	
Park and Facility Development (fields, courts, playgrounds, etc.)	●	●	○	○	∩		●	
System Wayfinding	●		∩	∩	∩			
Expand Pedestrian-Bicycle Network	○	○	○	∩		○	●	○
Natural Resources Management	○		○	∩	∩		●	∩
Public Art and Public Health Initiatives	∩		○	●	∩			
Programming	●		∩	●	∩			
Neighborhood and Community Events	○		∩	●	∩			

KEY	Best Funding Source	Likely Funding Source	Possible Funding Source
	●	○	∩

Dedicated Tax Levy

A city can hold a referendum for a dedicated tax levy with proceeds directed specifically for parks and recreation. This levy can be used for capital projects as well as operations and maintenance. The proceeds may be in place of general funds or be supplemented by general funds. The advantage of a dedicated tax levy is that parks and recreation receives a more stable source of funding and does not have to compete with other city priorities for funding on an annual basis.

Bonding

General Obligation Bonds and Revenue Bonds provide another source of implementation funding for new public facilities, as well as repairs and/or upgrades to existing facilities.

General Park Bond Issue

Residents can decide to raise revenue through a permanent or temporary tax increase dedicated for specific purposes such as park, trail, and bikeway improvements and maintenance. These funds are usually provided through bonds approved as part of a voter referendum.

State Aid Funds

State aid funds are available for pedestrian and bicycle improvements on state aid streets. This funding source is particularly useful at the time of street construction or re-construction. Rochester has a process for evaluating needed trail and sidewalk improvements as part of capital improvement projects.

Park and Trail Dedication

Minnesota Statutes allow local governments to require dedication of land or cash in-lieu of land for parks and trails from new subdivisions. The dedication must be reasonable and rationally related to the recreation demand created by the development. Cities can also require dedication of right-of-way or easements for sidewalks or trails.

Rochester has a park dedication ordinance that recognizes the impacts that increased residents, visitors, and employees have on the parks and recreation system. It seeks to ensure that areas are preserved for future parks. It also establishes cash in-lieu of land fees where the dedication of land is not feasible or practical; will not create a site useable for park purposes; or would be duplicative of facilities already available. Fees are used within the same quadrant from which they were collected.

Revisions to the park dedication ordinance are being considered simultaneously to this system plan. These updates should reflect the access and distribution recommendations of this system plan, as well as the park classification system established.

The City of Rochester is currently limited in its ability to capture park dedication from redevelopment in the core area of the City. The City should seek legislative amendments to allow it to require park dedication fees from building permits similar to Minneapolis and St. Paul

Utility/Franchise Fees

Franchise fees are included on the monthly bill that customers receive from a utility, such as natural gas, electricity or cable. The fee can be a flat amount each month or a percentage of the monthly bill. A franchise fee can be implemented with an ordinance, which must be approved by the City Council. About 4% of communities participating in HKGi's 2015 Park Finance and Dedication Survey use utility fees as a source of financing.

School Districts

The City partners with Rochester Public Schools in a variety of ways, including the use of athletic facilities and for programming. Open communication between the two entities is important for continued collaboration. Communication should occur

on at least an annual basis about planned projects and additional opportunities to jointly manage public facilities and provide programming.

Partnerships

Public and private partnerships have been key to the development of the parks and recreation system. These relationships have led to the development of parks, operation of athletic facilities, development and implementation of community programming and events, and natural resource management. Partnerships will continue to be important for both facilities and programming. Organizations with partner funding can also provide assistance with design, outreach and maintenance. Partnerships and relationships with private businesses can also result in easements and use agreements for trails across private land.

Donations

Private donations are another potential funding source. These may be financial donations from individuals or area corporations, or donations of labor from recreation clubs or use agreements. Programs such as “adopt-a-trail” or “adopt-a-park” by an organization, business, or individuals have been used in many communities to help with maintenance tasks and raise awareness.

Grants

Grants are a way to make Rochester’s dollars go further. The City has been successful at securing grant funding and should continue to pursue opportunities when potential award outweigh the costs for applying or administrating. Below is a sample of grant opportunities that may be available, along with websites to visit for more information.

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks & Trails Commission

Website: www.gmrptcommission.org

The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission was established in 2013 to assist with system planning and recommendations regarding grants funded by the Legacy Parks and Trails Fund. The commission focuses on counties and cities outside of the seven-county metropolitan area for parks and trails of regional significance. GMRPTC is a source of funding for those parks that are designated as regional parks through the GMRPTC process. In Rochester, Cascade Lake, Gamehaven, and Quarry Hill Parks all have regional designation.

Minnesota DNR

Website: www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/index.html

The Minnesota DNR is one of the most comprehensive resources when it comes to state funding for park and trail programs. They offer a variety of grant programs and technical assistance. Current programs provide assistance for cross country skiing trails, mountain biking trails, horseback riding trails, and recreational trails. Some programs also offer assistance for the development of parks or for trail amenities such as restrooms, lightning, benches, etc. Each of the Minnesota DNR grant programs is unique. The DNR should be consulted before pursuing a grant to clarify funding availability and qualifications.

Minnesota DOT

Website: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/grants/>

A portion of most trail or bikeway improvement projects funded through Minnesota DOT is from federal dollars. Examples of programs typically funding trail or sidewalk improvement projects include Safe Routes to School or the Transportation Alternatives Program managed by the District 6 ATP. Given the size of these grants the City should begin preparing in advance for future applications by identifying the type of improvement, the right-of-way needs, preliminary layout, and cost estimates.

Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment

On Nov. 4 2008, Minnesota voters approved the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment to the Minnesota State Constitution which increased the general sales and use tax rate by three-eighths of one percentage point (0.375%) to 6.875% and dedicated the additional proceeds for the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, the Outdoor Heritage Fund, Clean Water Fund, and Parks and Trails Fund.

Funding from the Legacy Amendment is administered by a variety of agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources, Pollution Control Agency, Department of Health, Historical Society, Minnesota State Arts Board and regional art councils. A number of new grant programs were created. Information about grant opportunities can be found on individual state department and organization websites.

Foundations & Non-Profits

There are foundations and non-profits that are interested in fulfilling their missions by supporting local projects. There are a number of on-line tools that can assist with the process of identifying additional foundations that may provide financial support for park, trail, and bikeway improvements. The Minnesota Council of Foundations is a great starting point for identifying foundations. Another good starting point is to consider the businesses within Rochester and identifying those that have a foundation or charitable giving department. In addition to retailers and manufacturers, be sure to consider businesses such as the railroad, energy providers and communications companies.

General Capital & Operations & Maintenance Costs

The following table is a tool the City can use to initially evaluate and budget for new improvements. Equally important to the initial capital costs for a project are ongoing operations and maintenance costs. Adequately budgeting operations and maintenance ensures that facilities fulfill life expectancy and that parks remain safe and welcoming.

TABLE 6-3: GENERAL CAPITAL & MAINTENANCE COSTS

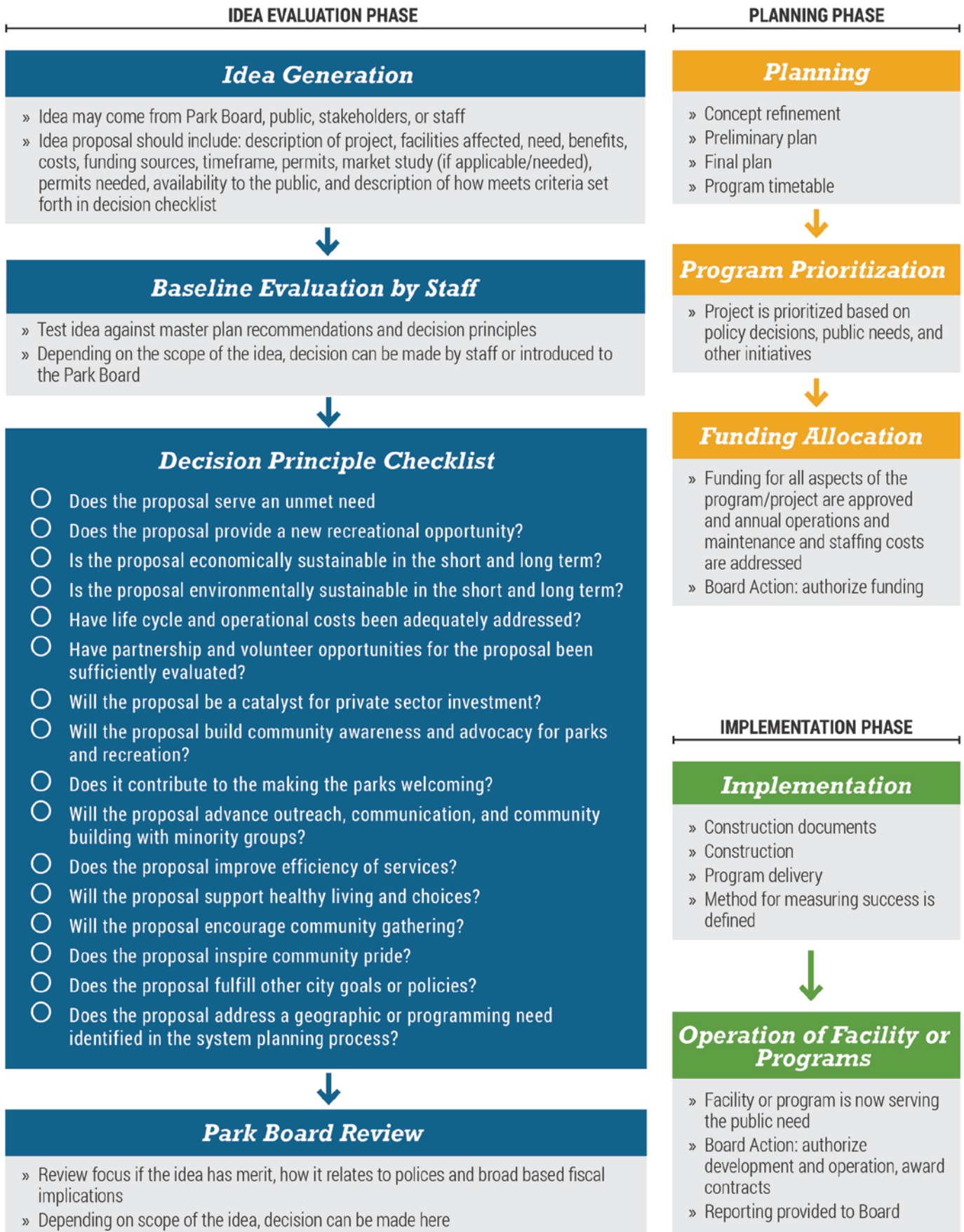
Park Element	Capital Cost	Annual O&M Cost	Estimated Life (years)	Notes
General Grounds & Landscaping				
Mowed Turf Grass (Irrigated)	\$60,000/Acre New Sod \$34,000/Acre New Seed	\$1,000/Acre	15-30	Includes mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating & overseeding.
Mowed Turf Grass (Non Irrigated)	\$30,000/Acre New Sod \$2,000/Acre New Seed	\$800/Acre	15-30	Does not assume hydroseed. Includes mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating & overseeding.
Irrigation	\$25,000/Acre	\$1,300/Acre	25	Includes water costs
Contractual Landscape Maintenance (Street Medians & Natural Prairie Plantings)	\$6.50 Sq. Ft. (\$282,600/Acre)	\$.25 Sq. Ft. (\$9,250/Acre)	20	
Prairie Restoration	\$5,000/Acre	\$300/Acre		
Naturalized Shoreline	\$100/LF	\$400/Acre		
Rain Garden	\$10/Sq. Ft.	\$300/Acre		Low end - high end could be up to \$20/Sq Ft
Woodland Restoration	\$4,000/Acre	\$400/Acre		Assumes restoration of existing wooded area. \$20,000/Acre if new tree planting required
Stormwater Features	\$25/Sq. Ft.	\$900/Acre		
Trails & Surfaces				
Trails (Asphalt)	\$80/LF	\$5,280 Per Mile	30	Assumes 10 foot wide trail
Parking Lots (Asphalt)	\$2,500-\$3,000/Stall	\$20-\$25 Per Stall	40	
Sidewalks (Concrete)	\$45/LF			Assumes 6 foot wide sidewalk
Natural Surface Trails	\$30/LF if limestone ADA or \$5/LF if rustic footpath	\$500/Mile		
Park Facilities				
Multi-purpose buildings with restrooms	\$300-\$400/Sq. Ft.	\$11,000/Bldg./Yr.	40	
Picnic Shelters	\$150-\$200/Sq. Ft.	\$3,800/Bldg./Yr.	40	
Tennis Courts with Lighting	\$175,000	\$1,000/Court	25	Assumes 12,500 Sq. Ft Double Court.
Tennis Courts	\$125,000	\$1,000/Court	25	Assumes 12,500 Sq. Ft. Double Court. Resurfacing includes striping of both tennis and pickleball cost of \$10,000 per court
Pickleball Courts	\$25,000	\$400/Court	25	
Basketball Courts (Concrete)	\$35,000/Court	\$400/Court	50	Assumes 4,680 Sq. Ft.
Basketball Courts (Asphalt)	\$25,000/Court	\$600/Court	25	
Playgrounds	\$50,000 - \$300,000	\$1,500/Site/Yr.	20	
ADA Playground	\$200,000 - \$600,000	\$3,000/Site/Yr.	20	
Natural Play Areas	\$50,000-\$250,000	\$1,000/Site/Yr.	20	Assumes 1 to 2 signature features and remainder natural materials
Skate Parks	\$40/Sq. Ft.	\$3,000/Site/Yr.	10-15	
Outdoor Hockey Rinks	\$80,000-\$100,000/Hockey Rink	\$9,000/Rink	20	

Park Element	Capital Cost	Annual O&M Cost	Estimated Life (years)	Notes
Park Facilities Continued				
Community Gardens	\$10,000-\$20,000/Acre	\$800/Acre		
Off-Leash Dog Park	\$10,000-\$50,000/Acre	\$800/Acre	15-20	
Splash Pad	\$600,000	\$5,000	15-20	
Mountain Biking Course	\$15,000-\$25,000/mile	\$1,000/mile		
Fitness Loop	\$5,000 to \$7,500/station	\$500/station	20	Assumes trail already constructed.
Giant Slide	\$5,000	\$500	20	
Disc Golf Course	\$350 to \$1,000/hole			
Sand Volleyball Court	\$10,000/court			
Neighborhood Park Amenity Package	\$16,000 to \$25,000/park	Included in general park costs	20	Assumes 20-25 \$400 shade trees; 2- \$2,000 benches with concrete pad, 2- \$2,000 bike racks with concrete pad, 2- \$1,000 waste receptacles
Community Park Amenity Package	\$45,000 to \$75,000/park	Included in general park costs	20	Assumes 40-50- \$400 shade trees; 8-12- \$1,200 6 ft. picnic tables 8-12- \$2,000 benches with concrete pad, 2- \$2,000 bike racks with concrete pad
Athletic Fields				
Highly Maintained (Irrigated) Large Rectangular Field (1.5 Acres)	*\$65,000/Field New Sod \$30,000/Field New Seed TURF ONLY	\$4,200/Field	15	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Highly Maintained (Irrigated) Medium Size Rectangular Field (.83 Acres)	*\$35,500/Field New Sod \$16,000/Field New Seed TURF ONLY	\$2,300/Field	15	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Highly Maintained (Irrigated) Small Size Rectangular Field (.54 Acres)	*\$23,500/Field New Sod \$10,500/Field New Seed TURF ONLY	\$1,500/Field	15	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Average Maintained (Non Irrigated) Large Rectangular Field (1.5 Acres)	*\$37,500/Field New Sod \$2,250/Field New Seed TURF ONLY	\$2,000/Field	7	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Least Maintained (Non Irrigated) Practice Rectangular Field (1 Acre)	*\$25,000/Acre New Sod \$1,500/Acre New Seed	\$800/Acre	7	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Highly Maintained (Irrigated) Diamond Field (1 Acre)	*\$50,000/Acre New Sod \$27,000/Acre New Seed & Aglime	\$4,200/Field(Includes: lining, dragging, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding)	7	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Average Maintained (Non Irrigated) Diamond Field (1 Acre)	*\$25,000/Acre New Sod \$1,500/Acre New Seed & Aglime	\$2,300/Field(Includes: lining, grading, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding)	7	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Least Maintained (Non Irrigated) Practice Diamond Field (1 Acre)	*\$25,000/Acre New Sod \$1,500/Acre New Seed	\$800/Acre (Includes: mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating & overseeding)	7	Includes lining, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weed control, aerating, irrigation & overseeding.
Field Lighting (Diamond)	\$225,000/field	\$3,000/field	25-30	
Field Lighting (Rectangular)	\$250,000/field	\$7,000/field	25-30	
*Costs are for turf/field/irrigation only, no additional amenities				
All costs are planning level estimates in 2016t dollars				

Project Review Process

One of the most challenging things for a parks and recreation department is knowing when to say “yes” to a potential project and when to say “no.” The project review process outlined in Figure 6-1 provides a sample outline for a systematic review of new requests. This type of review ensures that new projects that are in-line with system-wide goals can be adequately funded, staffed, and maintained prior to implementation.

FIGURE 6-1: PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS



Measuring Progress

Routine evaluation of the parks and recreation system is valuable, particularly when justifying requests for funds, facilities, staff time, and volunteers. Regular evaluation helps demonstrate that system planning efforts and strategic initiatives are progressing. Communicating system benefits is important to ensure that elected and appointed officials, the public, partners, and other decision makers have a thorough understanding of the magnitude of benefits the system provides to parks and recreation users, the community, and region. Regular evaluations also have the potential for pinpointing which improvements would better serve system users and identifying benchmarks for excellence.

Comprehensive evaluations of the parks and recreation system should include both quantitative and qualitative components. Qualitative tools, such as surveys, are relatively easy to conduct and are important in gauging satisfaction, trends, and needs. Surveys, though, do not tell the entire picture. Quantitative methods, such as counts, are important in capturing the who, what, where, and when of parks and recreation use. Counts are the most beneficial in demonstrating the magnitude of usage.

There is a long list of options for what to monitor and how to perform the analysis for park metrics. The list below is a sampling of options the city should consider. However, differing metrics may need to be utilized for different types of parks to ascertain the information desired for the entire park system.

Quantitative Data Collection

- » Number of people using parks, trails, and other non-fee facilities through user count program. This data might be collected through counting cars in the parking lot, creating a neighborhood park count volunteer program, or installing technology to count trail users.
- » Number of recreation activities and participants tracked through registrations.
- » Number of events, facility users, and participants tracked through reservations, permitting, and in requests of associations.
- » Measure of improvements made – land acquired, facilities and trails constructed, etc.
- » Number of volunteers, types of volunteer activities, and the public value or economic impact of volunteer efforts.
- » Number of individuals and dollar value of those using the scholarship program.
- » Number of park master plans completed and how many residents participated in each process.

- » Parks and recreation system safety – number of accidents, incidents, and crime.
- » Number and type of partnerships, including the economic value of those relationships.

Qualitative Data Collection

- » Satisfaction surveys of recreation activity participants.
- » Intercept surveys to find out how users got there, why they came, how long they stayed, and the importance of the park's different features and attributes. If done regularly this can be informative of trends.
- » Focus groups to gather information about park use habits and desires for future park system directions.
- » Survey to evaluate perceptions of safety
- » Regular city-wide park survey or inclusion of park-related questions on city survey. Some consistency in questions will assist in evaluating trends over time.
- » Evaluations by associations and other groups that regularly use facilities.

Parks and Recreation uses a number of the quantitative and qualitative methods identified above to measure the system's impacts and needs. Evaluation results are currently shared through the Department's annual report, monthly reports, and on its website. Additional opportunities to share successes and build awareness should be explored. Areas for potential evaluation of the system and the system plan are outlined below.

Potential System Metrics

- » Implementation progress on individual park master plans and system plan recommendations and priorities.
- » Number of participants in planning processes for parks and recreation system development.
- » Evaluation of distribution and access for neighborhood parks, community parks, and natural areas (small and large).
- » Evaluation of equity and access for traditionally underserved populations to parks and facilities like playgrounds, playfields, outdoor basketball, and rectangular fields.
- » Evaluation of special use parks viability and cost recovery.
- » Number by size of natural areas conserved demonstrating no net-loss of natural areas in parks and recreation system.
- » Number of environmental education events per zone in parks and recreation system natural areas.
- » Monitor ease of reserving and using facilities through surveys
- » Evaluate success, value, and impact of new programming through counts and surveys.
- » Analyze whether demographic mix of park, trail, and program users is reflective of the City's demographic composition (age, income, race, ethnicity)
- » Evaluate the ability to fund the desired system
- » Summarize the amount of outside funding (grants, partnerships, donations, etc.) secured by number and value.

- » Evaluate whether perceptions of safety have improved and compare to actual statistics of incidents.
- » Annually assess sustainability efforts through such measures as quantifying and sharing the annual volume of pesticides applied in the system each year; measuring and comparing water quality in surface waters on an annual basis (temperature, turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen, etc.); counting the number of acres managed for invasive species; and/or species counts of insects, birds, and other animals before and after projects aimed at supporting biodiversity.
- » Evaluate requests and programs offered by City and partner organizations to determine gaps.
- » Identify challenges to implementation and what steps have been taken to address them.
- » Conduct regular communications strategy workshop with staff to identify website and social media improvements.
- » Every 5 years benchmark the City of Rochester system to other cities in the region and to national averages available from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in the areas of facilities, operations, and funding.
- » Evaluate use of informal facilities such as outdoor basketball courts, hockey rinks, and tennis courts.
- » Evaluate increases in physical activity through participation numbers in leagues/associations, events, and programming.

