

PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION

I. INTRODUCTION

The City's residents and businesses identify parks, trails and recreational facilities as valuable community resources that contribute positively to the quality of life offered within Alexandria. Recreation is viewed as an integral part of life, providing a necessary and satisfying change from the things we usually do and the places where we spend most of our time.

The responses to a community survey and comments at public meetings underscore the importance of creating and sustaining parks, trails and recreational facilities. These comments are included within this Chapter.

Providing quality recreational opportunities begins with proper planning. To assure adequacy and maximum usability, recreation areas and facilities shall be developed with regard for the needs of the people and the area they serve. Proper planning must take into consideration a number of factors, including but not limited to, location of existing recreational areas (i.e. proximity to the area served, separation from incompatible land uses), adequacy of existing facilities, site planning for the location of future facilities, access to current and future facilities, provisions for recreation programs, and financing, maintenance and management of existing and proposed parks, trails and recreational facilities.

This Chapter shall:

1. Provide Park Classification;
2. Inventory Existing Park Facilities;
3. Discuss Trails and Pedestrian Ways;
4. Discuss Recreational Opportunities in the City;
5. Examine Existing and Future Park Facility Needs;
6. Review Community Input; and
7. Establish tangible recommended goals and policies for future park, trail and recreation facilities and programs.

II. INVENTORY

A. Park Classifications

The City of Alexandria features a number of existing park and recreational facilities, which are located throughout the community. Recreational facilities within the City can be typically described according to their type, population served and location.

The following terms and descriptions shall be used to classify existing and future recreational facilities:

- **Neighborhood Parks** provide open space for passive recreation for all ages within a neighborhood, particularly for the elderly and families with young children. An ideal neighborhood park site is scenic or wooded and located a maximum of one-quarter mile, which is normal walking distance, from primary users. Suggested minimum size for this type of park is one acre. Site development should include sidewalk, benches, landscaping, and play features for preschoolers. Neighborhood parks should connect with trails which connect to other parks and neighborhoods.
- **Neighborhood Playgrounds** are usually provided in conjunction with education and institutional facilities and primarily serve the recreation needs of children ages 5 to 12. Individual neighborhood playground size is dependent on the types of activities it supports and the facilities it provides. Play features, ball fields, basketball and tennis

courts, and open play fields are common components. The service area is highly variable, but it usually has a radius of one-quarter mile.

- **Community Parks** typically serve several neighborhoods and are under municipal administration. Although size may vary, community parks are usually more spacious than neighborhood parks or playgrounds. In addition to the kinds of facilities provided at neighborhood parks, these parks may provide swimming pools, picnic areas, more elaborate play fields, restroom facilities and tennis courts. Community parks serve people of all ages and have an effective service area radius of one-half mile.
- **City-wide Parks** may serve some or all types of a community's recreation needs. They can provide a wide range of activities for all age groups or may be very specific. In addition to some of the facilities provided by other types of parks, City-wide parks may contain an area for nature study, hiking and riding trails, pond fishing, spectator sports and numerous other activities. However, in many small communities, a City-wide park is sometimes designated as such not because of its size and/or variety of recreation facilities, but because it is the only park available to the community.
- **Specialized Recreation Areas** may include but are not limited to; golf courses, historic sites, conservancy area, linear trail, and floodplains. Most specialized recreation areas have limited active recreation value, are not developed as multi-purpose recreation areas, or are not always available for use by the public. Specialized areas are an important adjunct to a community and its park and open space program.
- **Regional Parks** may include but are not limited to conservancy areas, trails, floodplains, hiking and riding trails, recreational fields, spectator sports, and fishing. Regional parks serve people of all ages and serve a regional population.

B. Existing Park Inventory

There are 22 City maintained park areas located within and around the City of Alexandria. Following, is a listing and description of the park and recreational facilities existing in the City of Alexandria as well as future annexation areas and regional facilities. Map 10-1 illustrates the location of said facilities:

City Park (One block west of CR 42 (North Nokomis)) – This 18.5 -acre community park was developed in 1921 and is in good condition. A three-phase improvement project was completed in 2005 which included the addition of playground equipment and a wheelchair accessible swing. Past improvements include handicap accessible restrooms, repainted and repaired City garage and day care shed and landscaping of shelters. A DNR grant, along with assistance from Bremer Bank, allowed the addition of several new features including a fishing pier that was added in 1998. A small gazebo has been added to the park and the band shell has undergone a complete face-lift. Re-roofing has also been undertaken. This park is fronted on the west side by Lake Henry and is used by large groups for family reunions and for lake access by fisherpersons. Other facilities include a picnic shelter, tennis courts, a volleyball area, a small softball field, playground equipment and recently reopened swim beach. A boathouse is planned for construction.

Legion Park (Broadway and 8th Avenue West) – This 1.3 acre community park was developed in 1930 and is in good condition. In 1999, the horseshoe courts were improved. Legion Park is close to downtown and is used for passive and active recreational purposes. The park also features: a swing, fountain, flower beds, basketball courts, shuffle board facilities and an ice skating rink.

Noonan Park (Nokomis and 10th Avenue East) – This 7.6 acre community park, built in 1937, features a 3 acre pond and flower gardens. A new playscape was installed in 1996. A gazebo,

warming house, duck house and three picnic shelters are maintained and in excellent condition. Other facilities include playground equipment, park bench swings, restrooms, ice-skating and a basketball court.

Runestone Park (Highway 27 East) – This .87 -acre park was established in 1949 and contains the historic “Runestone”. The Runestone is planned to be relocated to the Big Ole Central Park. This park area provides a passive area with benches and landscaping.

Big Ole Central Park (Agnes Boulevard and 2nd Avenue) – This half acre park was established in 2003 and is home to ‘Big Ole’, following the reconstruction of 2nd Avenue. This park is the location for community events such as Heritage Fest and Awake the Lakes. There are future plans to improve the parking facilities and provide RV parking. This park is adjacent to the Central Lakes Trail and will be the future home of the Runestone.

Knute Nelson Memorial Ball Park (5th Avenue West) – This 4 acre ballpark, constructed in 1967, is excellent condition. The facility is home to the Alexandria Beetles, an organized baseball team. The Beetles completed their inaugural season in 2001. Improvements to the baseball park include upgrades to the infield, outfield and bleachers, expansion of concession facilities and the installation of new batting cages and wrought iron fencing.

Dean Melton Fillmore Park (15th and Fillmore Street) – This 18.8 acre community park, developed in 1949, is in good condition. The park has a variety of vegetation and wildlife habitat. Facilities include restrooms, playground equipment, a volleyball area, basketball court, a ball field, a gazebo, public grills, picnic tables and a playscape area. A disc golf feature was added in 1998. A skateboarding facility was added to the park in the spring of 2002. The facility features a cement slab and a separate cement skateboard ramp.

Fred Foslien Park (Knut Street, two blocks south of Hwy. 27) – This 1.84 -acre neighborhood park features several maple trees and a view of Lake Victoria. Picnic and playground equipment are featured at the neighborhood park along with a basketball court and softball field. This park was developed in 1952 and is in good condition.

Lake Agnes Park (south shore of Lake Agnes along Agnes Blvd) – This 3-acre scenic roadway park was developed in 1960 and is good condition. Several improvements have been instituted in the past few years: a boat launch facility and dock were added in 1999 (DNR grant) and a gazebo and flowerbeds were also incorporated into the park layout. Other facilities include picnic tables and a nature trail along the shoreline. Lake Agnes Park is primarily used for passive activities.

Goose Park (5th Ave. West and Douglas) – This is a .35 -acre roadside park featuring many varieties of trees, ducks and geese as well as a picnic area. Goose Park is adjacent to Knute Nelson ballpark and used primarily for picnics. It was built in 1969 and is in good condition.

Manor Hills Park (Springdale and Manor Drive) – This 4-acre neighborhood park was developed in 1981. It features a large open area used for softball and football. This fenced park also includes a playground area with play features including a slide.

Geneva Crest Park (Geneva Dr. and Basswood Lane) – This 1.7-acre neighborhood park was developed in 1986. Geneva includes a softball field, volleyball area, playground and picnic area.

Lake View Park (Lake Park Avenue and Runestone Place) – This 2.3-acre neighborhood park includes a picnic area and playground equipment. The park was developed in the late 1980’s with additional playground equipment installed in the 1990’s.

Connie Park (7th Avenue & Temple) – This 1.8 acre park was established in 2001 and maintains a scenic view of Lake Connie with a small BBQ and picnic facility.

Skylark Park (Amanda Lane) – This 4.47 acre park was established in 2002 and contains passive space with trail areas and a small softball field.

Oak Knoll Park (Oak Knoll Drive) – This 4.15 acre park was annexed into the City in 2003. It contains a small ballfield and open space.

Carter Parks (CR 22) – These 2.7 and 2.3 acre parks were established in 2003. They contain a water retention area, gazebo and access to the Central Lakes Trail.

Summer Meadow Park (Scenic Heights Road) – This 4.7 acre park was established in 2004 and will include a second phase of improvement with the development of the southern portion of residential lots. Currently, the park contains open space and a water retention area.

Bluebird Park (Agnes Blvd. N) – This 3.91 acre park features an open trail area which connects to Skylark Park, passive recreation and picnic areas. Future plans include the addition of a gazebo. This park was established in 2005.

Martin's Hope Park 2nd Ave) – This .44 acre park was established in 2005 and named in honor of the former Park Superintendent, Gary Martin. It is adjacent to the historic Fort Alexandria stone wall. It contains a gazebo and picnic facilities and is across from Big Ole Park.

Unnamed Park (Victor Street & 8th Ave) – This 21-acre park was the former city dump site and will be developed as a dog park with trail and scenic amenities. The park is planned for development mid to late summer 2007.

Unnamed Park (The Pines Subdivision) – This 4.02 acre park was dedicated within the Pines Subdivision which was approved in 2006. As of the drafting of this Plan, the park is passive open space and stormwater ponding. The subdivision is located east of CSAH 44 in the northwest corner of the City and includes platted streets "Karnis Drive", "White Spruce Lane" and "White Spruce Way".

School Recreational Facilities - The Elementary Schools and High School offer a variety of active recreational amenities including an athletic complex which includes a football field, softball and baseball fields, soccer, track and field, playground equipment, tennis courts and basketball courts and a swimming pool. Although these are not "municipal parks", the amenities are available to serve the public at times in which school or extra curricular activities are not underway.

Runestone Community Center – This facility is owned and operated by the City. The facility contains the ice arena and is home to the Alexandria Blizzard, a semi-professional hockey team. Several community events are held at this facility in addition to the youth hockey program.

Deputy Sheriff Curtis A Felt Memorial Park "Memorial Park" (Highway 42 N) – This park is currently located in Alexandria Township and will be annexed into the City in 2009-2011. The park was purchased in 1969 using the National Park Service Land & Water Conservation Fund. Long time residents will remember the automobile salvage yard the occupied the lower end of the property for many years. The local United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Agency helped plan the initial renovation of the property. In 1987, an improvement project, led by the Alexandria Jaycees and Alexandria Eagles Club, provided new playground and picnic shelters for the park. Subsequent projects have improved the ball fields, landscape plantings, walkways, and parking lots. On Memorial Day in 1999, the park was officially renamed "Deputy Sheriff Curtis A. Felt Memorial Park". The park is a popular spot for casual volleyball and softball games as well as group gatherings. The shelter can accommodate groups of 75 to 100 people.

Lake Carlos State Park (Highway 29 N) - contains a tamarack bog, marshes, woodland ponds and lakes. A variety of recreational activities revolve around the lake. This State Park features swimming, fishing, boating, camping, hiking, horseback riding and winter skiing. The park's 1,305 acres are located 10 miles north of Alexandria.

C. Access to Public Waters

The public has access to the Alexandria lakes through several public accesses and beaches. On-site parking for vehicles and boat trailers are provided at the public access. The public accesses are suitable for access via trailer or carry-in and are managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource (DNR). These areas are shown on Map 10-1. Public Access areas include:

Lake Agnes
Lake Winona
Lake Victoria w/fishing pier
Lake Le Homme Dieu
Lake Latoka
Lake Cowdry
Lake Geneva
Lake Carlos

Public beach areas can be found at the City Park, Lake Latoka, Lake Le home Dieu and Lake Carlos.

D. Trails and Pedestrian Ways

Central Lakes Trail - Alexandria offers the Central Lakes Trail which is also shown on Maps 10-1 and 10-2. The Central Lakes Trail runs from Osakis to Fergus Falls and has been dedicated as Minnesota's 23rd State Trail. This scenic recreational trail covers 55 miles through the communities of Osakis, Nelson, Alexandria, Garfield, Brandon, Evansville, Melby, Ashby and beyond to Fergus Falls. The Central Lakes Trail is an all season recreational trail that provides a 14' wide bituminous surface for safe off road non-motorized travel by biking, walking or rollerblading in the spring, summer and fall. It also provides safe permanent routes for snowmobiling in the winter (December-April). The Central Lakes Trail offers a variety of scenery and an opportunity for families to participate in outdoor activities and events. The trail also connects to the Lake Wobegon Trail which covers 60 miles from Osakis to St. Joseph, Minnesota.

Esplanade Trail – Also as shown on Maps 10-1 and 10-2 is the Esplanade Trail.

Beyond the Central Lakes trail there are few designated walkways or bikeways within the City. Pedestrians may use sidewalks when available, however, a systematic pedestrian network is not available. Map 7-3 in Chapter 7 (Transportation) indicates pedestrian sidewalks and trails.

E. Wildlife Management Areas

Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are areas set aside for wildlife management and production by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). WMAs are open to the public and offer many opportunities for wildlife watchers as well as hunters. The following WMA's are located in the Alexandria area.

- Blair Pond WMA – Located between Lake Burgen and Lake Victoria
- Hudson Pit WMA – Located south of I-94

III. PATHWAYS

A. Classifications

Pathways within communities and connecting to larger regional pathways are often classified by their purpose, type of improvement and location. The following table includes a description of six types of pathways and identification of the pathways within Alexandria which are included in each category.

Classification	General Description	Description of each type	Existing Facilities
Park Trail	Multi-purpose trails located within greenways, parks and natural resource areas. Focus in on recreational value and harmony with the natural environment.	Type I: Separate/single purpose hard –surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type II: Multi-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type III: Nature trails for pedestrians. May be hard or soft surfaced.	Carlos State Park Type III Esplanade Trail Type I ; Hiking
Connector Trails	Multi-purpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation.	Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters located in independent R.O.W (e.g. old railroad R.O.W). Type II: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrian or bicyclists/in-line skaters. Typically located within road R.O.W.	Central Lakes Trail Type I
On-Street Bikeways	Paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	Bike Route: Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. Bike Lane: Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders.	Various Locations throughout city.
All-Terrain Bike Trail Snowmobile	Off-road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes or snowmobiles	Single-purpose loop trails usually locate in larger parks and natural resource areas.	Central Lakes Trail Carlos State Park
Cross Country Ski Trail	Trails developed for traditional and skate-style cross-country skiing.	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas.	Carlos State Park Arrowood Resort Andes Tower Hills
Equestrian Trail	Trails developed for horseback riding.	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas. Sometimes developed as multi-purpose with hiking and all-terrain biking, where conflict can be controlled.	Carlos State Park

B. Pathway Design

Trails or pathways should be designed with the following goals in mind:

- Safety – protect non-motorized and motorized users (depending on the type of trail) from adjacent or crossing vehicular traffic;
- Linkages - provide links between local parks and recreational areas and regional trail systems;
- Natural Environment – protect the natural environment and design the trail system while protecting natural features; and
- Continuity – provide continuous trail systems with as few interruptions in user movement as possible.

Following are design guidelines suggested by the National Recreation and Park Association for the various types of pathways:

1. Park Trails

Type I: These separate or single purpose trails are typically ten feet wide and hard surfaced for pedestrians, bicyclists and/or in-line skaters.

Type II: These multi-purpose trails typically include a natural buffer from adjacent uses on either side of the trail. A 50 foot right-of-way to accommodate the buffers is common with a ten foot paved surface.

Type III: Nature trails are generally six to eight feet wide and are soft surfaced. Trail grades vary depending on the topography of the area in which they are located. Interpretive signage is common along nature trails.

2. Connector Trails

Type I and II: These separate or single/purpose hard surfaced trails are designed for pedestrians or bicyclists/in line skaters. If designed for pedestrians only, a six to eight foot width is common. If designed for bicyclists/in-line skaters, a ten foot paved surface is recommended. The trails may be developed on one or both sides of the roadway and may include one or two-way traffic. The trail is typically separated from the roadway with a boulevard, grass and/or plantings.

3. On-Street Bikeways

On Street Bike Lane: Bike Lanes are typically designed as a five-foot lane adjacent to the driving lane. On--street parking may occur between the on-street bike lane and the curb or edge of the road. In essence each side of the roadway is divided into three sections (1) driving lane, (2) on-street bikeway and (3) on-street parking.

On Street Bike Route: This bicycle route is typically designated so with signage. On Street Bike Routes are typically paved shoulders along roadways.

4. All Terrain Bike Trails or Snowmobile:

Design and length vary depending on the topography in the area. These trails are generally a part of a larger regional park or natural resource area.

5. Cross Country Ski Trails:

The design of the cross-country ski trail is dependent upon its intended use. The traditional diagonal skiing typically includes a packed groomed trail with set tracks. Skate-skiing designs include a wider packed and groomed surface. The length of the trails may vary. Cross-country ski trails may be designed to be used as equestrian trails during summer months.

6. Equestrian Trails:

These trails, designed for horseback riding, typically are designed with woodchips or grass as a surface. They are located in larger parks and natural

resource areas where conflict with other trail users may be avoided. The length of an equestrian trail varies but is generally looped.

IV. RECREATION

The City's combination of lakes, historic sites and existing parkland/open space provide residents and visitors with a wide variety of recreational opportunities. In addition to parkland recreation opportunities there are a number of year-round coordinated and uncoordinated recreational opportunities and health and fitness opportunities in and around Alexandria for all ages.

Lakes Area Recreation - Coordinated recreation is primarily facilitated through Lakes Area Recreation which was formed in 1989 as a non-profit joint powers organization comprised of four entities: School District #206, City of Alexandria, Alexandria Township and Lagrande Township. The Board that oversees the Lakes Area Recreation is made up of two representatives from each of the four entities. Another sixteen surrounding cities and townships voluntarily contribute to the Lakes Area Recreation. Approximately 30% of the budget is received from public funding and the other 70% of the budget is received through user fees and grants. The mission statement of Lakes Area Recreation is *to provide recreation and leisure time activities in the broadest sense to all residents of School District #206, using school district, city, and township facilities and funding, along with private resources when available.*

Located in the Douglas County Services Center at 720 Fillmore Street in Alexandria, Lakes Area Recreation provides opportunities for activities such as swimming, weightlifting, cardiovascular fitness, aerobics, gymnastics, youth camps and a wide variety of sports for youth and adults. Facilities at Lakes Area Recreation include a cardio room, weight room, gymnasium, gymnastics center and pool facilities at Discovery Middle School. Youth programs have continued to grow, with more than 9,600 registrations for 27 different programs, which include baseball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, gymnastics, dance, tennis, swimming and other sports.

The Lakes Area Recreation Association is currently in the discussion and planning stage along with the Alexandria Area YMCA, Minnesota National Guard, the Alexandria Senior Community Center, Young Peoples Place Child Care, and Independent School District #206 to construct a joint YMCA/Community Center/National Guard Armory/Senior Center/Child Daycare Center to serve the residents of the Alexandria area. This combined facility would meet the needs of each individual organization, as well as address the needs of an expanding county population seeking more fulfilling lifestyles through recreation and exercise. If all entities decide to participate in this facility, construction could begin as early as 2008 with an estimated project cost of \$20 million.

Numerous other additional adult and family recreational opportunities exist within the Alexandria area including but not limited to: golfing at the Alexandria Golf Club which offers an 18-hole course and driving range as well as several surrounding facilities, trap shooting, skiing, frisbee golf, hockey and skating, horseback riding, racing, racquetball fishing and numerous watersports.

V. EXAMINATION OF EXISTING AND FUTURE PARK FACILITIES

The City's combination of recreational activities, golf course, lakes and existing parkland and open space provide residents and visitors with a variety of recreational opportunities. Map 10-2 indicates areas served by existing recreational facilities and park search areas. As noted in the park classifications, depending on the type of park, the service area will vary. The map illustrates a need for parks in the southern portions of the City.

Accessibility

¹The American with Disability Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. The law requires local and state governments, places of public accommodation and commercial facilities to be readily accessible to persons with disabilities. ADA statutes affect the City and other local and state park and recreation facilities in the following ways:

- Newly constructed buildings (after January 26, 1993) must be constructed to be readily accessible.
- Renovations or alterations occurring after January 26, 1992 to existing facilities must be readily accessible.
- Barriers to accessibility in existing buildings and facilities must be removed when it is “readily accessible”. This includes the location and accessibility to restrooms, drinking fountains and telephones.

Other requirements include but are not limited to:

- One accessible route from site access point, such as a parking lot to the primary accessible entrance must be provided. A ramp with a slope of no greater than 1:6 for a length of no greater than two feet may be used as a part of the route. Otherwise a slope of maximum 1:12 is allowed.
- One accessible public entrance must be provided.
- If restrooms are provided, then one accessible unisex toilet facility must be provided along an accessible route.
- Only the publicly used spaces on the level of the accessible entrance must be made accessible.
- Any display and written information should be located where it can be seen by a seated individual and should provide information accessible to the blind.

Parks which are developed with items such as parking lots, swimming pools, tennis courts and basketball courts should have routes which are accessible. Nature parks or areas with limited development should have the minimum of accessible routes to the site. The National Park Service provides design guidelines for accessible outdoor recreation.¹

As the City redevelops City Park, it will be important to include ADA standards in the design. Installation of curb cuts and pathways within the park, designation of handicap parking in the parking lots, remodeling of restroom facilities to provide a handicap accessible stall in each of the men’s and women’s facilities and pathways to shelters and recreational amenities has been recommended as a method to achieve accessibility goals.

¹ Source: Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, James D. Meres, Ph.D., CLP and James R. Hall, CLP. © 1996, National Recreation and Park Association

Alexandria Park Inventory	Park Classification	Trail Areas	Baseball/Softball	Nature Areas	Horseshoe Pits	Tennis Courts	Soccer Fields	Basketball Courts	Football Field(s)	Volleyball Courts	Track & Field	Playground	Swimming	Pleasure Skating Rink	Hockey Rink	Fishing	Cross Country Skiing	Warming/Changing House	Archery Range	Skateboarding	Restroom Facilities	Handicap Access	Picnic Area	Parking	Disc Golf	Historic Display	
Big Ole Central Park	CP	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	
City Park	CP	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	
Legion Park	NP	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Noonan Park	CP	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	
Runestone Park	CP	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Knute Nelson Memorial Ball Park	RP	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	
D.M. Fillmore Park	CP	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	
Fred Foslien Park	NP	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Lake Agnes Park	CP	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Goose Park	NP	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Manor Hills Park	NP	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Geneva Crest Park	NP	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Lake View Park	NP	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Summer Meadow Park	NP	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Lake Connie Park	NP	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Oak Knoll Park	NP	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Martin's Hope Park	CP	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Blue Bird Park	NP	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Skylark Park	NP	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Carter Parks	NP	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N
Unnamed Dog Park	RP	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Unnamed "Pines Subdivision Park"																											
Runestone Comm. Cntr.	IND	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N

CP= Community Park, RP=Regional Park, NP=Neighborhood Park, IND=Indoor

Park Assessment

Park Name	Turf	Irrigation	Plantings Trees	Drainage System	Accessible	Parking	Parking Availability	Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Playground Equipment
Big Ole Central Park	1	NA	1	0	0	2	0	NA	NA	NA
City Park	0	NA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legion Park	0	NA	0	4-5	2	2	0	1	NA	NA
Noonan Park	1	Y	0	0	0	0	0	1	NA	0
Runestone Park	0	NA	1	0	2	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Knute Nelson Memorial Ball Park	0	Y	0	0	0	0	2	NA	NA	NA
D.M. Fillmore Park	1	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	0	NA	0
Fred Foslien Park	0	NA	0	4	4	NA	0	NA	0	0
Lake Agnes Park	0	NA	0	4	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Goose Park	0	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Manor Hills Park	0	NA	1	2	4	NA	0	NA	NA	0
Geneva Crest Park	3	NA	0	2	2	NA	0	NA	NA	0
Lake View Park	0	NA	2	2	0	NA	0	NA	NA	0
Summer Meadow Park	0	NA	2	0	4	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Lake Connie Park	0	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Oak Knoll Park	0	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Martin's Hope Park	0	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Blue Bird Park	3	NA	1	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Skylark Park	2	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Carter Parks	0	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Unnamed Dog Park	0	NA	0	0	0	NA	0	NA	NA	NA
Runestone Community Center	NA	NA	NA	NA	2	NA	0	NA	NA	NA

Ranking Key

1. Turf Condition

- NA Not Applicable
- 0 No Problems.

- 1 Turf is in good conditions with some bare areas.
- 2 Turf has a few problems that need some work (aeration and over-seeding).
- 3 Turf is in poor condition and needs renovation.
- 4 Turf is in very poor condition and should be completely redone.

Ranking Key

4. Drainage System

- 0 No Problems.
- 2 Some saturation/standing water-minor improvements needed.

- 4 Very poor drainage-system needs renovation.
- 5 Dangerous system/conditions exist.

7. Parking Availability

- NA Not Applicable.
- 0 No Problems.
- 2 Not enough parking mainly during peak-use periods or only occasionally.
- 4 Not enough parking most of the time.

2. Irrigation System

- NA Not Applicable.
- 0 No Problems.

- 1 System is in good condition with minor adjustment problems.
- 2 System is in fair condition, needs frequent work.
- 3 System doesn't do the job and needs to be expanded (poor coverage).
- 4 System is in very poor condition or no system at all.

5. Accessibility

- 0 Entire park is accessible to handicapped.
- 2 Portions of the park are accessible to handicapped individuals.
- 4 None of the park is accessible to handicapped individuals.

8. Basketball or Tennis Courts

- NA Not Applicable.
- 0 No Problems.
- 1 Good condition, need minor routine maintenance, patching or striping.
- 2 Fair condition, needs minor repairs.

- 3 Poor condition – needs major repairs but can still be used.
- 4 Very poor condition. Potholes, cracks; need extensive repair/resurfacing.
- 5 Dangerous surface conditions exist-holes, large cracks, etc.

3. Plantings/Trees

- 0 No Problems.
- 1 Plantings/trees are in good condition with few minor problems.
- 2 Some bare areas that need additional plant materials.
- 3 Several areas have problems that need work.
- 4 Plantings/trees in very poor condition & should be completely removed.
- 5 Condition of trees present dangerous safety situation.

6. Parking

- NA Not applicable.
- 0 No problems.

- 1 Good condition – needs regular routine maintenance.
- 2 Surface in fair condition- spot repairs are necessary.
- 3 Surface in poor condition, several areas need major repairs.
- 4 Very poor condition, parking area needs complete renovation.
- 5 Dangerous conditions exist.

9. Playground Equipment

- NA Not Applicable.
- 0 No Problems.
- 1 Equipment is old but can still be used.

- 2 Equipment requires regular routine maintenance.
- 3 Equipment is in poor condition and requires major repair or renovation.
- 4 Equipment is in very poor condition and should be replaced.
- 5 Dangerous conditions exist.

VI. Recreational Facility Standards

As parkland is acquired either through dedications or purchase, it is important to plan space according to the desired recreational contents. In existing parks, it is important for the City to be aware of space requirements and orientation recommendations to determine if it is feasible to include the item(s) within the park. Following are facility standards for a number of recreational activities:

Unit	Land Required	Recommended Size & Dimensions	Recommended Orientation	No. Units Per Population	Service Area	Existing Facilities
Baseball Diamond	3 to 3.85 acres	<p>1. Official: Baselines-90' Pitching dist-60.5' Foul lines-min 320' Center field-400'+</p> <p>2. Little League: Baselines-60' Pitching Dist.-46' Foul lines-200' Center field-200'-250'</p>	Locate home plate so the pitcher is not throwing across the sun, and batter is not facing sun. Line from home plate through pitchers mount to run east-northeast.	1/6,000	Appr. ¼ to ½ mile radius Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields part of a community complex	Knute Nelson Park Fillmore Park
Softball/ Youth Diamond	1.5 to 2 acres	<p>Baselines 60' Pitching dist- 45' men, women-40', Fast pitch field radius from plate – 225' Slow pitch 275' men, 250' women</p>	Locate home plate so the pitcher is not throwing across the sun, and the batter is not facing sun. Line from home plate through pitchers mount to run E/NE	1/ 1,500	Approximately ¼ to ½ mile radius	Fillmore Park Discovery School
Tennis Court	7,200 sq. ft. / court. 2 acres/ complex	36' x 78' with 12' clearance on both ends	Long axis north-south	1/2000	¼ to ½ mile radius. Best in batteries of 2 to 4. Located in neighborhood/ community parks or near a school	City Park School Facilities
Basketball	0.25 to 0.59 acre Youth: 2400 to 3036 sq. ft High School: 5040 to 7280 sq. ft	Youth: 46' to 50' x 84' High School 50' x 84'	Long axis north-south	1/2000	¼ to ½ mile radius Outdoor courts in neighborhood/ community parks. Indoor as part of schools	Legion Park Noonan (½ court) Fillmore Park (½ court) Fred Foslien (½ court)

Unit	Land Required	Recommended Size & Dimensions	Recommended Orientation	No. Units Per Population	Service Area	
Volleyball	4,000 sq. ft	30' x 60' with a minimum clearance of 6' on all sides	Long axis north-south (outdoor)	1/2000	½ to 1 mile	City Park Geneva Park
Football Field	1.5 acres	160' x 300' with a minimum of 10' clearance on all sides.	Long axis northwest or southeast	1/3000	Approx. 2 mile radius	School Facilities
Soccer Field	1.7 to 2.1 acres	195 to 225' x 330' to 360' with 10' clearance on all sides	Long axis northwest or southeast	1/3000	Approx. 1 to 2 mile radius	School Facilities
Ice Arena	2 acres	Rink 85' x 200' (min. 85' 185') Addt. 5000. 22,000 sq. ft to include support area	Long axis is north-south (outdoors)	1/20,000	15 to 30 minute travel	Runestone Community Center
Warming House	Variable	Variable	Variable	1/rink area	2 hockey rinks/skating areas	Noonan Park
Picnic Area	Variable	Variable	Variable	1/5000	2 mile radius	Numerous Various Locations
Play Equipment	0.5 acre	Variable	Variable	1 acre/park	2 to 3 mile radius	City, Fillmore, Noonan, Fred Foslien, Lake View, Geneva and Manor Hills Parks
Sliding Hill	2-4 acres	Variable	Variable	1/7,500	1 mile radius	Andes Tower Hills 12-15 miles from City
Shooting/Archery Range	0.65 acre	300' length x min. 10' between targets. Roped, clear area on side of range min. 30' . Clear space behind targets min. 90' x 45' with bunker	Archer facing north + or - 45 degrees	1/7,500	30 minute travel time. Part of a regional complex	Shooting Park 2 miles from City
Community Center	15-25 acres	Varies	Varies	1/20,000	--	Runestone Community Center
Horseshoe courts	0.1 acre			½,000	--	Legion Park City Park

Unit	Land Required	Recommended Size & Dimensions	Recommended Orientation	No. Units Per Population	Service Area	
Off-Street Parking	300 S.F Per Car	Typically 9' x 20 with a 20' driving lane	Variable	NP: 8-12 cars CWR: 25-100 cars SR: 25-100 cars	NA	Various Locations
Restroom Facilities	Varies	Per building code	Variable	1 double unit per park	1 park	Knute Nelson Fillmore Park Noonan Park City Park

* Derived from the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration Standards with local standards applied.

VIII. COMMUNITY INPUT IN PARKS AND RECREATION

A. Public Input. In conjunction with the creation of this Plan, a survey was made available to all property owners within the community. Additionally, the community was invited to a community meeting to discuss the components of the comprehensive plan including parks and recreation. A detailed breakdown of survey questions and responses can be found in Chapter 2. Results indicate residents consider park, trail and recreational facilities a priority:

- 1. Areas Served.** Eighteen persons or 49% of respondents completing surveys indicated all areas in the community were served well by existing parks, while nineteen or 51% of the respondents noted there are areas not served by parks. Comments received on the survey relating to this question included a need for larger parks, parks needed in the north and south and outside city limits, needed trails along railway, lakes and along 50th Avenue.
- 2. Recreational Items to Add.** When asked what park facilities would add to the quality of life in Alexandria, survey respondents responded as follows: trails including the connection of parks with trails (28), picnic shelters (13), playground equipment (13), athletic fields (25).
- 3. Recreational Opportunities.** Survey participants were asked if various age groups and family types have sufficient recreational opportunities in Alexandria. Thirty persons noted children have sufficient recreational opportunities with 11 indicating there were not sufficient opportunities for children. 48% (19) felt teenagers are offered sufficient recreational opportunities while 53% (21) of respondents indicated there were not. Of the respondents, 55% (23) felt adults have sufficient opportunities and 63% (25) felt adequate opportunities are available for seniors. 58% (23) of respondents felt there were adequate recreational opportunities for families and 68% (30) felt there were adequate opportunities for tourists.

4. **Major Recreation Improvement.** Survey participants were asked, “What one major recreation improvement would you like to see made in Alexandria during the next five years?” Responses included:

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT
YMCA	11	24%
Sports complex	8	17%
Indoor pool	4	9%
Recreation facility	4	9%
Bike routes	3	7%
Community center	3	7%
More walking/biking trails	3	7%
Outdoor pool	3	7%
Fix beach	2	4%
Consolidate park & rec. depts	1	2%
Indoor walking	1	2%
More connections to Cent. Lakes trail	1	2%
More family rec. opportunities.	1	2%
Public uses for lakes	1	2%
TOTAL	46	100%

6. Additional considerations survey participants were asked with the respective percentages follow below:

Recognizing both are important would you encourage the City to place greater emphasis on:
Roadway construction and improvement projects. **47%**

Enhancing park and recreational facilities and trail systems. **53%**

Would you encourage the City to:

Develop more, smaller parks used by neighborhood and community residents. **47%**

Develop a few larger parks that are used by all City and area residents/tourists. **53%**

Would you encourage the City to:

Fix up and/or enhance existing parks and recreational areas. **54%**

Accept the donation of additional parkland in developing areas. **46%**

IX. MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

The proper care and management of park and trail facilities will encourage park/pathway use, improve the quality of life in Alexandria and enhance the visual quality of neighborhoods and the City as a whole. Maintenance of the park system is currently coordinated through the City's Park Department with nine employees. Park maintenance tasks may occur on a daily, weekly, monthly, seasonal and/or weather related basis. These jobs include but are not limited to:

Litter and Garbage Clean-up	Mowing and Trimming
Preventative Equipment Maintenance	Moving Tables and Benches
Equipment Repair	Leaf Clean-Up
Facility Repair and Maintenance	Tree Inspection
Winter Pond Maintenance	

The City has established a five member Park Board. Board members are appointed by the City Council for three-year terms. The Board meets every other month and includes one representative from each ward and a City Council representative. The Park Board functions as a consultative group which assists the City Council with matters pertaining to the City Parks. Additionally, the City Council appoints two members to the Community Recreation Board which oversees the budget and policies of Lakes Area Recreation. The appointments are for three-year terms.

X. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Several resources are available to assist the City of Alexandria in providing adequate parks, trails and facilities for residents. Following is a list of typical sources.

1. Property Taxes
2. Park Dedication/Fee In-Lieu of Parkland Dedication Requirements
3. User Fees
4. Volunteer hours/labor
5. Donations by private individuals, civic organizations, organized groups, etc.
6. Grants

The City budgets for operational expenses through its annual budget process. The City currently utilizes donations from organizations and individuals, grant programs and the general tax levy to cover expenses relating to parks. The City also funds park improvements through its five year capital improvement plan for long-range capital improvements to the park system. Expenditures within the capital improvement plan include purchase of playground equipment, purchase/planting of trees, paving of the parking lot, etc.

The City has adopted and enforces specific parkland dedication requirements within a Subdivision Ordinance. Each subdivision review procedure includes a parkland dedication stipulation whereby developer's must either set aside parkland acreage or submit a fee-in-lieu of parkland dedication. Current standards pertaining to subdivisions require ten percent of the area platted or a fee in lieu of parkland dedication equal to 10% of the estimated fair market value of the undeveloped land of the final plat area.

XI. RECOMMENDED GOALS AND POLICIES FOR PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION

Following the inventory and evaluation of existing park, trail and recreation facilities and in accordance with park, trail and recreational plans the following goals and recommendations have been prepared.

1. The Planning Commission and Park Board shall review development proposals to ensure proposed parkland dedication or fee-in-lieu of dedications meet the needs of the City including type and location of land, park configuration, access and parking and compatibility with the neighborhood and other recreational offerings. The City shall strive to provide active and passive park and recreational facilities to meet the needs of diverse groups within the community including, but not limited to, teenagers, physically and mentally challenged, and all household types.
2. The City Council should continue to maximize recreational opportunities available to residents and tourists through cooperative ventures which are mutually beneficial for the City, school district, Douglas County, Department of Natural Resources and civic organizations. Examples include coordinating trail design and construction with reconstruction of county roads and joint grant applications with the school and or county to the DNR.
3. In order to reduce the tax impact of park and recreational (re) development projects, the City should research and utilize a variety of funding sources for the acquisition,

development and renovation of park and recreation facilities; including but not limited to grant applications, providing information to civic organizations regarding desired capital improvements to parks and trails, use of volunteer labor, and use of user fees. The capital improvement plan shall be reviewed annually to address items identified within the Comprehensive Plan.

4. The City should develop a trail plan to link existing parks and neighborhoods and coordinate the trail development with the school district; Douglas County (County Road turn backs and reconstruction projects) and DNR grant programs. The City shall carefully review proposals from developers relative to proposed trail and sidewalk facilities within new subdivisions. The City should develop a sidewalk/trail policy indicating when/where sidewalks or trails should be placed. Trails connecting the new housing areas of the City to the heart of the City should be considered. The Planning Commission and City Council should require developers to install identified portions of trails/pedestrian ways with subdivision construction, even if the trail/pedestrian way temporarily dead-ends.
5. When developing parks, the Planning Commission and Park Board should review its intended use, recreational voids or needs within the area and funds available.
6. The City should design new facilities to be barrier free and provide other accommodations for people with disabilities, in accordance with ADA requirements.
7. As the City grows and additional parks are developed, the Planning Commission and Park Board should develop a theme for park signs and budget for the installation in the City's parks.