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# PARKS

Fishers' parks system is a major component of Fishers' cultural identity and important contributor to the community's vibrancy. This chapter summarizes the parks and recreation facilities plan that provides guidance for many facets of the park system.

# INTRODUCTION

The parks and recreation facilities plan guides the many facets of the City's parks system. From land acquisition of future parkland to concept designs for each existing park, the plan incorporates community input to create policies and action items to ensure a thriving park system for generations to come.

## Organization

The parks and open space section of the comprehensive plan draws on the parks and recreation facilities plan, which is a separate plan that provides analysis and administrative guidance. The facilities plan is the result of several months of public outreach, planning, research and analysis. This work was conducted both by Fishers' staff and by consultants to ensure accuracy and detail.

The parks and recreation facilities plan is organized into nine sections. Four sections from the overall plan are included in this document. These sections frame the key initiatives needed to achieve the vision of the plan. The complete plan can be located via the City's website. In the rare case that a discrepancy may arise between this document and the complete parks plan, the complete parks plan is given priority.

- **Community Needs Assessment** The responses from a community survey regarding park facilities are a vital component to the proposed policies and designs in the plan.
- **Land Acquisition Analysis** The analysis identifies the existing and future need for park acreage to serve the community.
- **Park Designs** Each existing park includes a concept design to meet the goals of the plan and enhance the overall park experience.
- **Goal, Objectives and Action Items** This section frames the community's vision for the park network and provides policy framework to achieve the vision.

## Key Findings and Initiatives

While many important items were discussed, analyzed and included in the plan, several key items emerged as being particularly vital for the longevity and success of the parks system.

- **Additional Parkland Needed** To maintain the desired park acreage ratio (6.75 acres/1,000 people) through 2040, additional parkland will need to be acquired to meet the needs of the forecasted population growth. This plan identifies preferred target areas based on the land acquisition analysis.
- **Connect Park System and Natural Amenities** There is currently a lack of publicly accessible land and overall connectivity along the city's natural amenities including Geist Reservoir and the White River. This plan provides ways to improve access and connectivity throughout Fishers.
- **Design Parks for All Users** When an existing park is repurposed to meet the evolving needs of the community or additional parkland is acquired, the design should be accessible for all users, include both active and passive uses and provide four-season recreational opportunities. This plan sets policies and provides individual concept designs for each existing park within Fishers.
- **Promotion & Programming** The Parks Department should continue to engage with residents through promotions and parks programming. Promotion should continue in the form of online communications and engagement, as well as consistent wayfinding and park signage. Programming should support a mix of community projects and ideas that focus on the core values of the City's Art & Culture Master Plan.

### FIVE-YEAR UPDATE

A Parks Subcommittee was convened as part of the five-year update process in 2021 to provide direction for refinements to this chapter.

## Park Classifications

By classifying the parks and assessing amenities, the City is better able to analyze the health of the overall parks system. Several classifications used to define parks focus on the uses and activities occurring within the park. Other classifications focus on the park size, amenities and proximity of parks to the residents they primarily attract. Many parks in Fishers span more than one park classification.

- **Signature Park** - A signature park is a regional draw and the largest parks, are multi-use in nature, and can often be visited by people outside of the community. These parks are typically large in size and offer intensive recreational facilities, large nature preserves, or iconic facilities unique to the region. Example: Billericay Park
- **Community Park** - A community park is larger than a neighborhood park and serves multiple neighborhoods, geared towards a specific use that serve the general open space needs of the residents of Fishers. These parks are typically large, offer recreational opportunities or preserve significant natural areas. Example: Cumberland Park
- **Neighborhood Park & Natural Area** - A neighborhood park or a natural area serves a variety of age groups within a limited area, usually a quarter- to half-mile radius, and may have limited recreational options or be limited to passive nature exploration. Many neighborhood parks are smaller than 10 acres. Example: Harrison Thompson Park
- **Linear Park** - A linear park is a part of a trail system that connects different destinations and are multi-use in nature for both pedestrian and cyclists. Examples: Nickel Plate Trail & Future Geist Greenway
- **Active Parks** - Active recreation can include activities that are competitive such as sports or non-competitive such as using playground equipment. The sporting events are typically unscheduled games or recreational leagues. Other active facilities within parks found throughout Fishers include ball fields, horseshoe pits, playground equipment, splash pads and meetings spaces. Example: Roy G. Holland Park
- **Passive Parks** - Passive recreation includes activities that are unorganized and non competitive. Parks that offer predominately passive recreation typically have limited built facilities and are more natural in setting. Passive activities found throughout Fishers include picnicking, hiking, bird-watching, painting, cycling, kite-flying and fishing. Passive facilities include benches, picnic shelters, boardwalks and observation areas. Example: Cheeney Creek Natural Area

# CURRENT STATE OF PUBLIC PARKS

The City of Fishers has a comprehensive parks system which was inventoried for the purpose of attaining a snapshot of the services, features, assets and deficiencies that exist throughout the system. Parks and facilities were qualitatively and quantitatively evaluated by use and condition. The analysis provided insights into the current state of Fishers' overall parks system.

Many of Fishers' parks are programmed for active and athletic recreation, with a range of fields and sports facilities. These include parks like Cyntheanne Park, Cumberland Park, Mudsock Fields and Olio Fields. The system also includes natural areas, most of which are largely undeveloped and are home to a mix of mature hardwoods, indigenous vegetation and hiking trails. Examples of this type of park include Ritchey Woods, Sand Creek, Thorpe Creek, Cheeney Creek and Hoosier Woods. There are also more traditional parks that offer a diversity of uses such as playgrounds, sports fields, picnic shelters, community shelters and more. Roy G. Holland, Billericay, Brooks School and Harrison Thompson parks are all in this category.

The inventory of the parks system is being used to help the City determine how best to diversify the park offerings and enhance and maintain existing facilities. The full inventory can be found on the City's website.

*The City's newest park is the Fishers AgriPark located at 11171 Florida Road at the southeast corner of 113th Street and Florida Road in southeast Fishers, just east of Geist Reservoir. A 33-acre urban farm, the Fishers AgriPark pays homage to Fishers' agricultural roots, while inspiring future generations of farmers, scientists, agronomists, robotics engineers, chefs, and more. With a focus on education and giving back, visitors of all ages have a chance to be immersed in a working farm, while learning about current farming practices and the innovations needed to feed our world.*

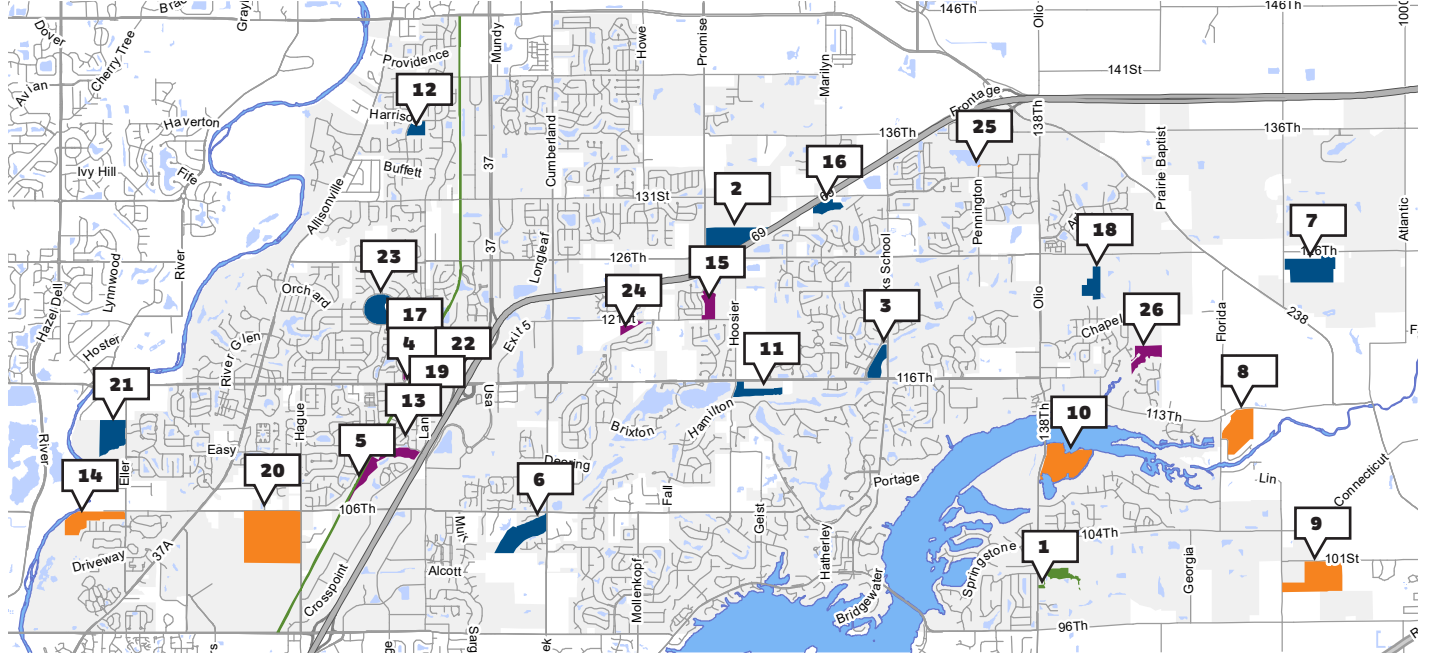
## Inventory Conclusions:

- Fishers possesses a well-maintained, highly-regarded, clean, quality park system with few deficiencies.
- The current parks could offer a broader range of uses and programs to truly cater to all the recreational needs of the community and its evolving demographics.

## Inventory Recommendations:

- Continue to expand the City's trail network, especially greenway extensions such as the future Geist Greenway linking parks to residential subdivisions.
- Create a White River trail connecting Conner Prairie to Heritage Park to create a regional link to Carmel's trail system.
- Increase access to all parks via alternate means of transportation including cyclists, pedestrian and those with disabilities.
- Invest in innovative assets on the long-term to appeal to all demographics and age groups within the community. Suggestions included the creation of park components such as a dog park, tranquility park, skate park, botanical gardens, a sculpture park, hands on adventure play areas, increased access to creeks which create a boundless playground, an extreme sports park, volley ball courts or tennis courts.
- Integrate sustainable products and the use of native plants.
- Introduce a recycling program and the use of city-generated compost. Install recycling and compost bins at city parks.
- To better understand the future cost and viability of park maintenance, a study should be conducted to assess the projected future revenue from Park Impact Fees. As the City gets built out and new residential development slows, alternative revenue funds may need to be identified.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



Parks and Open Space

- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park & Natural Area
- Linear Park
- Signature Park
- Water Bodies
- City of Fishers
- Park



Public Park Name	Acres	Type	Primary Use	Parking	Sports Fields	Indoor Facilities	Other
1 Bee Camp Creek Trail Head	13.4	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Playground, benches
2 Billerica Park	42.7	●	Active	Yes	Yes	Yes	Playground, Splash pad, Baseball Diamonds
3 Brooks School Park	14.8	●	Active	Yes	Yes	No	Playground, Picnic Tables, Basketball, Horseshoe Pits
4 Central Green, The	0.5	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Benches, Sculpture
5 Cheeny Creek Natural Area	27.8	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Fishing Pond, Nature Trail
6 Cumberland Park	39.1	●	Active	Yes	Yes	Yes	Picnic Tables, Disc Golf, Grills, Soccer Field
7 Cytheanne Park	51.5	●	Active	Yes	Yes	No	Playground, Picnic Tables, Concessions, Pickleball Courts
8 Fishers AgriPark	42.5	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Benches, Nature Trails, Urban Farm, Livestock
9 Flat Fork Creek Park	57.6	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Sledding Hill, Mountain Bike Trail, Tree House
10 Geist Waterfront Park	52.8	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Under Construction
11 Hamilton Proper Park	17.2	●	Active	Yes	Yes	No	Pond, Soccer Fields
12 Harrison Thompson Park	9.9	●	Active	Yes	Yes	No	Playground, Picnic Tables, Grills, Shelter, Soccer Fields, Baseball Diamonds
13 Heritage Meadows Park	2.3	●	Active	No	No	No	Playground, Picnic Tables, Exercise Stations
14 Heritage Park at White River	31.8	●	Passive	Yes	No	Yes	Nature Trail, Sledding Hill
15 Hoosier Woods	14.5	●	Passive	No	No	No	Nature Trail, Observation Deck
16 Mudsock Fields	12.2	●	Active	Yes	Yes	No	Concession, Football Field
17 Nickel Plate District Amphitheater & Pavilion	3.9	●	Passive	Yes	No	Yes	Picnic Tables, Hammocks, Amphitheater, Pavilion
18 Nickel Plate Trail	33.2	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Under Construction
19 Olio Fields	18.0	●	Active	Yes	Yes	No	Playground, Concession, Shelter, Baseball Diamond
20 Ritchey Woods Nature Preserve	126.6	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Picnic Tables, Boardwalk, Shelter
21 Riverside Fields	34.4	●	Active	Yes	Yes	No	Baseball Diamonds
22 Rotary Arch Park	0.2	●	Passive	Yes	No	No	Benches, Arch
23 Roy G. Holland Memorial Park	34.3	●	Active	Yes	Yes	Yes	Playground, Picnic Tables, Volleyball, Basketball, Baseball Diamond, Soccer Field, Splash Pad, Shelter
24 Sand Creek Natural Area	7.8	●	Passive	No	No	No	No Facilities
25 Saxony Lake & Beach	0.2	●	Passive	Yes	No	Yes	Rentals, Fishing
26 Thorpe Creek Natural Area	17.7	●	Passive	No	No	No	No Facilities
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>707</b>						

## Maintaining Existing Parks

Amenities at the city’s older parks will need to be repaired and replaced as they age. The playground at Roy G. Holland Park, located at the north end of Holland Drive, continues to be a central focal point for the Sunblest neighborhood. The park offers a variety of amenities including a playground, ball fields, basketball nets, a community center, a picnic shelter, a wooded area and soccer fields. In 2014, the playground

was completely replaced with new equipment. The park continues to be well used with broad appeal for both passive and active recreation.

In order to sustain and enhance the quality of the park system, an ongoing program to repair, replace or update park infrastructure will be needed. As all the parks age, this will demand a more substantive part of the City’s budget. Innovative public and private partnerships should be explored to help offset these mounting costs. The inventory report also cited potential grant sources which may be explored in this context.



*City leaders are constantly looking for ways to engage residents as we plan for the future of our community. Connect with the City of Fishers on our digital platforms for information on how you can get involved.*

## Woodlands, Agriculture and Undeveloped Areas

The majority of undisturbed wooded areas west of Interstate 69 lie along the White River and local creeks. The City of Fishers also maintains Ritchey Woods Nature Preserve along 106<sup>th</sup> Street and Cheeny Creek Natural Area along Lantern Road. These areas provide recreational opportunities while enhancing the environmental health of the area. East of Interstate 69 near the city’s eastern boundary, large areas of undeveloped areas exist. Sizeable swaths of undisturbed woodlands follow waterways, while agricultural fields and other private open space constitute the majority of the undeveloped land. Due to rapid growth over the years, development continues to push eastward into the remaining undeveloped areas.

*Richey Woods Nature Preserve is one of only two state designated nature preserves in Hamilton County. [Image: Scott Morris (cc)]*



## Waterways

Several prominent waterways traverse the community. The majority of the rivers and creeks within Fishers flow from the northeast towards the southwest with a few exceptions southeast of Geist Reservoir. The waterways provide regional drinking water and recreational opportunities and act as natural wildlife corridors.

**Geist Reservoir.** In 1943, Fall Creek was dammed forming Geist Reservoir. With a surface area of 1,890 acres and water volume of 6.1 billion gallons, the reservoir is a source of drinking water for the residents of Indianapolis via the Fall Creek treatment plant. The lake also serves as a regional destination by providing residents year-round recreational opportunities. However, due to the relatively shallow nature of the lake and runoff from local farms and residential lawns, Geist Reservoir faces many water quality challenges. According to the Geist Lake Coalition, 62 percent of the streams in the Geist watershed do not meet state water quality standards.

**White River.** The White River flows north-to-south along the western boundary of Fishers. As a major tributary to the Wabash River, the White River has historic and cultural significance in the development of central Indiana. The river supplies two of the four surface water treatment plants for the City of Indianapolis. Morse Reservoir north of Noblesville stores water to assure a dependable supply to these plants. Although threatened by pollution, many recreational activities take place on the White River, including fishing, kayaking and canoeing. Efforts between the City of Fishers and Carmel are currently underway to develop a trail system along the river.

**Creeks and Streams.** The majority of creeks within Fishers flow from the northeast towards the southwest and eventually drain into the White River. Creeks within the city limits include Sand Creek, Mud Creek, Fall Creek, Thorpe Creek, Cheeney Creek, Lick Creek, Flatfork Creek and Shoemaker Ditch. The creeks serve as a vital component of the overall waterway system and provide existing and potential trail connections identified in the City of Fishers' Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

**Watersheds.** The City of Fishers collects and maintains data on 12 watersheds within the city limits. The watersheds drain into local rivers and creeks and include Fall Creek–Flatfork Creek, Fall Creek–Pendleton to Lick Creek, Geist Reservoir–Bee Camp, Lick Creek–Manifold/McFadden Ditches, Mud Creek–Headwaters, Mud Creek–Sand Creek, Stony Creek–North Tributary, Stony Creek–William Lehr Ditch, Thorpe Creek (Geist Reservoir), White River–Carmel Creek, White River–Shoemaker Ditch and White River–Vestal Ditch/Michener Ditch.

**Floodplains.** Every body of water within Fishers has a floodplain. The floodplain is the area adjacent to a body of water impacted by a 100-year flood. Fishers' Floodplain Ordinance along with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain standards protect the floodplain and prevent physical harm and property loss that can occur from development.

*This photo features a natural stream located within Cheeney Creek Natural Area.*



# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

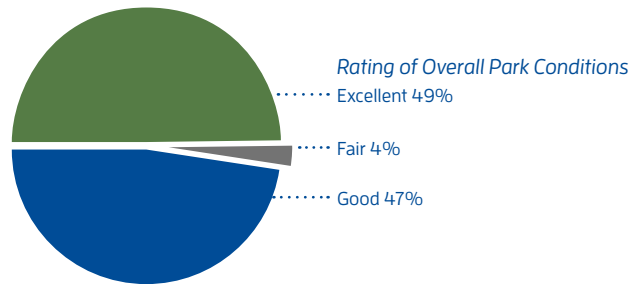
Public input is essential in creating a viable and successful plan that is embraced by the community. In addition to meetings open to the public throughout the plan process, the City conducted a survey to gauge how the community was using the parks system and how it could be improved.

## Community Survey Process

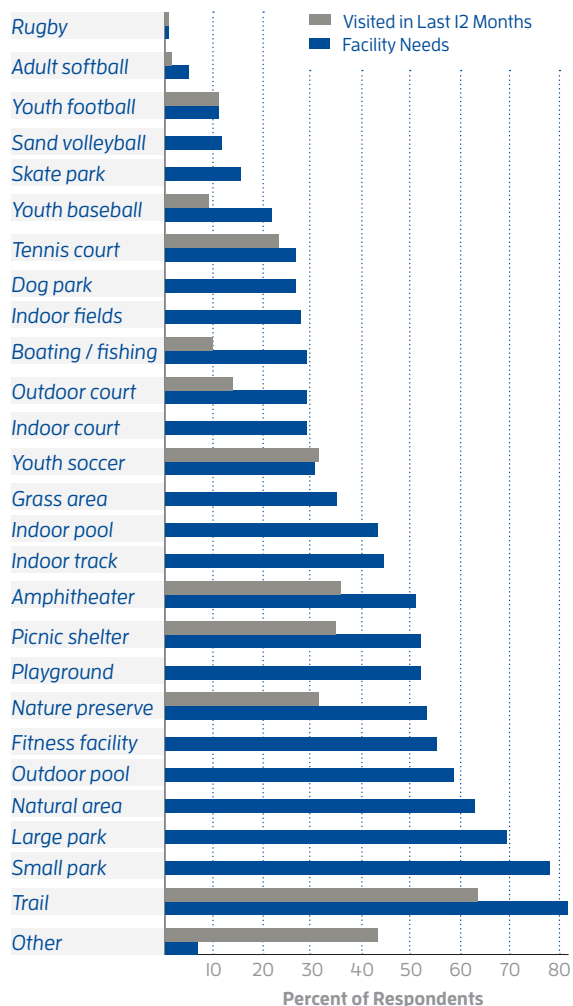
The City hired the ETC Institute to conduct a statistically valid survey to the City of Fishers in the Fall of 2014. Three thousand randomly sampled households were sent a survey regarding the parks system. The target for submitted surveys was 500 while the actual amount received was 640 with a 95 percent confidence level and a deviation rate of +/- 3.8 percent. The survey contained questions relating to quality of the overall parks system, overall value received from the parks system for each respondent and which amenities residents of Fishers felt they needed. The resulting data was analyzed and the findings were used to develop the plan's policy framework and conceptual park designs.

## Survey Results

Each survey response was tallied, graphed and mapped to better analyze the results. In general, the residents of Fishers have a positive rating of the overall park system. 49 percent of the respondents rate the overall condition as "Excellent," 47 percent rate the parks as "Good" and four percent rate the park conditions as "Fair." A few of the survey results are graphically shown below. The full community survey report can be accessed via the Fishers 2040 website.



Percent of Respondents Visiting City Amenities and Facility Needs





# VISION AND GOALS SUMMARY

The parks vision statement and goals were developed through a joint effort by the City of Fishers parks advisory committee, the parks and open space task force, the parks & recreation department, the department of community development and input from the community survey. Specific action items to implement the vision and goals are found later in this section.

## Parks Vision Statement

*Fishers' parks system is a key component of Fishers' cultural identity and important contributor to the community's vibrancy. The parks offer family-friendly community spaces for all generations to enjoy with a mix of recreational opportunities at all locations. The parks enhance Fishers residents' quality of life by providing easy access to community gathering space, healthy lifestyle opportunities, the enjoyment of sustainable natural assets and high quality facilities and amenities. The parks system undergoes continual evaluation and monitoring in order to adapt and meet the needs of the community and offer a variety of amenities that are inclusive to all.*

## Goals


- 1. ACCESSIBLE** - The parks system offers a broad spectrum of accessible four-season recreational opportunities throughout the city for all ages and abilities.
- 2. MIXED USE** - A mix of amenities, along with active and passive spaces that promote healthy living and educational opportunities are integrated at each site.
- 3. SUSTAINABLE** - Smart and environmentally sustainable design, products and practices are utilized throughout the park system.
- 4. VIBRANT** - Parks are designed to offer a variety of community gathering spaces that celebrate Fishers' vibrant community spirit and identity.
- 5. SAFE** - Public safety is a key consideration in the design, operation and maintenance of all new and redeveloped parks.
- 6. COLLABORATIVE** - Regional assets are leveraged to maximize access to area amenities and foster a seamless network which optimizes the use of all park resources.
- 7. QUALITY** - Innovative practices and partnerships are incorporated within parks' design and construction to ensure the quality and excellence of maintenance may be sustained.





# GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS


To achieve the community's vision for parkland and open space, action items are identified for each goal. These are tangible items that help develop the park network and guide policies and programs.


**FIVE-YEAR UPDATE** All actions were assessed and updated in 2021. The status of each action is noted with an icon.


 Underway (started, but not yet complete)

 Future (not started)

 Future, then maintenance

 Complete

 New (Actions added during the 2021 update)

 Maintenance (currently occurring on a repeating basis)





## Goal I: Accessible

The parks system offers a broad spectrum of accessible four-season recreational opportunities throughout the city for all ages and abilities.









### Objective 1.1 Provide new facilities and amenities that promote year-round park activity and use.

Status (as of June 2021)

<b>1.1.1.</b> Create innovative spaces and amenities that activate parks during the winter season, including but not limited to sledding hills, ice skating rinks and holiday installments.	
<b>1.1.2.</b> Build new facilities as listed in the parks impact fee study.	
<b>1.1.3.</b> Use art to activate the park spaces by creating interactive art, environmental art and other art pieces into existing and future parks. The art should fit within the context and culture of the surrounding area, yet be creative and vibrant.	
<b>1.1.4.</b> Pursue the possibility of a fee-in-lieu payment option that developers can utilize to reduce their open space requirement. The fee could be used to acquire future parkland or improve conditions at existing parks.	

### Objective 1.2 Create innovative facilities, amenities and resources that enhance the use of the park system for all ages of residents.




<b>1.2.1.</b> Install wi-fi, technologically interactive play areas and other amenities that allow users to collaborate and interact with each other.	
<b>1.2.2.</b> Promote recreational opportunities through geocaching and other trending activities.	
<b>1.2.3.</b> Design parks to allow for areas to be repurposed to meet the evolving needs and preferences of the diversifying demographic.	
<b>1.2.4.</b> Maintain awareness of local and national park trends, technological advances and best practices to ensure a state of the art park system.	

- 1.2.5. Assess feasibility of a dog park. 
- 1.2.6. Identify opportunities for a tranquility park to promote mental health. 

**Objective 1.3** Provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity from the parks to key destinations and residential areas to encourage more people to access the parks using active transportation.

- 1.3.1. Implement the capital improvement projects as outlined in the bicycle and pedestrian master plan. 
- 1.3.1A. Prioritize east and west trail connection to the Nickel Plate Trail. 
- 1.3.1B. Prioritize city-wide connections that create a trail loop of the overall Parks network. 
- 1.3.1C. Identify waterway connections between parks for kayak and canoeing opportunities. 
- 1.3.2. Require residential developments adjacent to parks to provide a pedestrian link between the two. 
- 1.3.3. Revise the City's Open Space Standards in section seven of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to promote innovative open spaces that focus on quality and character by providing broader, creative standards and options during the development review process. 
- 1.3.4. Pursue the feasibility of implementing a bike share program within the parks network. Consider opportunities for a regional bike share program with adjacent municipalities. 

**Objective 1.4** Integrate the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements and universal design principles in the development of recreational opportunities offered throughout the parks system.

- 1.4.1. Encourage that all new parks and park redevelopment incorporate innovative designs and facilities that go above and beyond existing ADA requirements in order to celebrate Fishers' inclusive culture, such as sensory gardens and wheelchair accessible swing sets. 
- 1.4.2. Continue to implement phase one of the City's ADA transition plan within the right-of-way and finalize phase two that incorporates all City facilities, policies and programming.  Also in Transportation
- 1.4.3. Incorporate universal design principals in the development and redevelopment of parks. 



## Goal 2: Mixed Use

A mix of amenities, along with active and passive spaces that promote healthy living and educational opportunities are integrated at each site.



### Objective 2.1 Design new parks and redevelop existing parks to optimize opportunities for both active and passive spaces and a mix of amenities.

Status (as of June 2021)

<p><b>2.1.1.</b> Update the existing parks and recreation facilities plan based on new community data and incorporate into the Fishers 2040 Plan as one comprehensive document.</p>	
<p><b>2.1.2.</b> Acquire additional land for future parks that can be easily designed and developed to include a variety of both active and passive uses.</p>	
<p><b>2.1.2A.</b> Inventory where private neighborhood parks currently exist in North Central Fishers and pursue feasibility of acquiring park land to incorporate into the overall parks network.</p>	
<p><b>2.1.2B.</b> Pursue acquisition of land off the Nickel Plate Trail for pocket park opportunities.</p>	
<p><b>2.1.3.</b> Regularly assess usage of park facilities and fields to understand community needs.</p>	

### Objective 2.2 Design parks and provide resources that optimize public health.

<p><b>2.2.1.</b> Install facilities and amenities that encourage exercise including but not limited to paved trails, outdoor fitness equipment and athletic fields.</p>	
<p><b>2.2.2.</b> Partner with the City of Fishers Health Department to promote the parks system.</p>	
<p><b>2.2.3.</b> Create a map and brochures that identifies ease of use or other fitness metrics (such as distance, terrain type, etc) for each facility within the bicycle and pedestrian network.</p>	

## Goal 3: Sustainable

Smart and environmentally sustainable design, products and practices are utilized throughout the park system.








### Objective 3.1 Parks will be designed to integrate low impact development (LID) practices and sustainable design.

<p><b>3.1.1.</b> Create incentives for developers to utilize LID designs to mitigate stormwater in environmentally sensitive and smart ways.</p>	<p>moved to housing chapter</p>
<p><b>3.1.2.</b> Develop a park to showcase LID and sustainable design to encourage the community to embrace sustainable practices.</p>	

**Objective 3.2** Utilize best practices for the installation and maintenance of sustainable products and practices for City-sponsored and maintained projects.

<b>3.2.1.</b> Train staff on best practices for the installation and maintenance of sustainable products and practices to optimize their effectiveness and longevity.	
<b>3.2.2.</b> Monitor the use of sustainable products and practices to assess their effectiveness and refine best practices.	
<b>3.2.3.</b> Incorporate and maintain native plantings and no mow areas into the parks, as appropriate.	
<b>3.2.4.</b> Provide more opportunities for citizen involvement in environmental sustainability, such as providing for recycling at city events and around the community.	

**Objective 3.3** Provide additional parkland acreage, amenities, access and environmental protection along the city's natural features, including the White River, Geist Reservoir and other waterways.

<b>3.3.1.</b> Acquire land along Geist Reservoir, the White River and creeks as prioritized in the land acquisition analysis.	
<b>3.3.2.</b> Construct greenways and trail connections per the bicycle and pedestrian master plan to create a seamless network that links the city's natural amenities.	
<b>3.3.3.</b> Partner with private organizations and businesses near natural amenities, such as Conner Prairie and the Indianapolis Sailing Club, to provide better access to natural features, enhance connections between the parks and greenways network and mitigate environmental impacts.	
<b>3.3.4.</b> Preserve mature trees and the city's tree canopy through policy requirements, incentives and other innovative measures.	
<b>3.3.5.</b> Inventory, monitor and track health of the city's trees and endangered species.	


**GOAL 4: Vibrant**





Parks are designed to offer a variety of community gathering spaces that celebrate Fishers' vibrant community spirit and identity.



**Objective 4.1** Utilize consistent branding at all parks and along greenways to foster a strong sense of community and create an easily recognizable visual cues for park users.

Status (as of June 2021)

<b>4.1.1.</b> Create and install a consistent and vibrant wayfinding signage design for use in all the parks and along all the greenways.	
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<b>4.1.1A.</b> Establish a phasing plan and budget for wayfinding signage	
<b>4.1.1B.</b> Design a wayfinding signage system	
<b>4.1.2.</b> Create and install a park and greenways network map at all park locations to show the connections within the parks network. Consider cost savings opportunities such as in-house design and fabrication.	
<b>4.1.2A.</b> Integrate relevant technology into park maps and signage such as QR codes, digital counts, trail mileage and minutes of travel time.	

**Objective 4.2** Design parks to optimize and integrate vibrant elements which celebrate a strong sense of place reflecting the city’s focus on innovation and entrepreneurship.

<b>4.2.1.</b> Incorporate landmark elements within the parks that convey Fishers’ unique sense of place.	
<b>4.2.2.</b> Partner with business community leaders and the arts community to install public art in parks.	
<b>4.2.3.</b> Identify and design additional civic spaces within the parks that are conducive for events, festivals and other community gatherings.	
<b>4.2.4.</b> Determine need and potential locations for providing an indoor community recreation and events facility.	
<b>4.2.5.</b> Implement the priorities identified in the Fishers Art & Culture Master Plan in coordination with park design use and programming.	
<b>4.2.5A.</b> Identify and promote available spaces for the performing arts community to rent or utilize.	
<b>4.2.5B.</b> Establish a City grant program under the Arts & Culture Commission to provide funding opportunities to the arts community.	
<b>4.2.5C.</b> Pursue programming of multi-cultural events including music, food, etc.	



**Goal 5: Safe**

Public safety is a key consideration in the design, operation and maintenance of all new and redeveloped parks.



**Objective 5.1** Design and operate parks to maximize public safety incorporating clear wayfinding, lighting, visual accessibility and by promoting responsible use of the amenities and facilities.

Status (as of June 2021)

<b>5.1.1.</b> Install consistent wayfinding to ensure people can navigate the parks effectively and safely.	duplicate of 4.1.1
<b>5.1.2.</b> Provide additional lighting in parking lots, trail heads and around buildings that are used when the park is dark.	
<b>5.1.3.</b> Design parks to minimize areas which are visually isolated from the public view.	

**5.1.4.** Work with neighborhood organizations and homeowner associations to create a Friends of the Parks initiative to engage residents to help monitor and maintain their local parks.



**Previously mentioned actions**

- 4.1.1 Install wayfinding signage

**Objective 5.2** Continue to patrol city parks and enforce dawn to dusk restrictions.

**5.2.1.** Strategically patrol parks, particularly during large events and after dark.



**5.2.2.** Evaluate the record of incidents in each park to evaluate whether park rangers are warranted or if adjustments in the amenities and facilities are needed to enhance public safety.



**Goal 6: Collaborative**

Regional assets are leveraged to maximize access to area amenities and foster a seamless network which optimizes the use of all park resources.



**Objective 6.1** Continue to work with adjacent municipalities and jurisdictions to ensure connectivity to regional or unique park assets.

Status (as of June 2021)

**6.1.1.** Collaborate with adjacent municipalities to identify opportunities to enhance accessibility to regional park assets such as Indianapolis’ mountain bike trails at 96th Street and Allisonville Road or the White River Park in Noblesville.



**6.1.2.** Collaborate with Hamilton County and adjacent counties and local townships to identify opportunities for partnerships that support the regional park system.



**6.1.3.** Explore consolidation of resources and management among city, county and township parks.



**6.1.4.** Design and construct regional connections identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.



**Objective 6.2** Pursue public-private partnerships with regional partners to sustain and enhance a seamless regional system.

**6.2.1.** Partner with the Central Indiana Land Trust to lease natural areas to offer public trails and interpretive education.



**6.2.2.** Partner with Hamilton County Tourism Inc to actively participate in regional tourism initiatives that promote the park system.






**6.2.3.** Partner with the regional healthcare network to spread awareness of the parks network and benefits of using parks.



**6.2.4.** Identify other potential partners in the region to enhance the overall regional parks system.



<p><b>6.2.5.</b> Partner with neighborhood organizations and homeowner associations to identify, digitize and track the privately owned and maintained parks within neighborhoods. This data should be included in future parks-to-residents ratio calculations.</p>	
<p><b>6.2.6.</b> Partner with the Fishers Parks Foundation to coordinate fundraising, grant applications and other park initiatives.</p>	
<p><b>6.2.7.</b> Continue collaboration with Hamilton Southeastern School District to provide educational and recreational opportunities and maintain open space.</p>	





## Goal 7: Quality

Innovative practices and partnerships are incorporated in parks to ensure the quality and excellence of maintenance may be sustained.







### Objective 7.1 Pursue partnerships to help cover the cost of maintaining the trails and parks.

Status (as of June 2021)

<p><b>7.1.1.</b> Collaborate with the business community and service clubs to identify opportunities for donations to help sustain the level of service.</p>	
<p><b>7.1.2.</b> Liaise with other innovative municipalities to determine successful ventures which may work in Fishers.</p>	
<p><b>7.1.3.</b> Provide a financial analysis of projected need to maintain park network and identify future revenue sources.</p>	
<p><b>7.1.4.</b> Utilize the volunteer community within Fishers to coordinate regular beautification and maintenance events within the parks network.</p>	

### Objective 7.2 Incorporate the use of innovative sustainable products and practices which will optimize the use of limited maintenance resources.

<p><b>7.2.1.</b> Plant areas of indigenous plantings in some areas of the parks to reduce costs over time and to increase the natural areas in the park system.</p>	
<p><b>7.2.2.</b> Proactively integrate environmentally sustainable best practices and products throughout the parks system such as solar lighting, recycling bins, composting and the use of rain barrels.</p>	
<p><b>7.2.3.</b> Assess the success of these products and practices to ensure they are achieving the desired outcomes.</p>	
<p><b>7.2.4.</b> Pursue grant funding for sustainable products and programs.</p>	



# LAND ACQUISITION ANALYSIS

Acquisition of future parkland is critical to achieve the vision of the community and meet the needs of the burgeoning population in Fishers. An interdepartmental analysis of existing conditions and forecasted demographics resulted in the creation of a map that identifies areas of preferred target areas for future acquisition. The following section details the analysis.

## A Strategic Approach to Future Parkland

The City of Fishers currently maintains a ratio of 6.7 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This ratio includes only public parks and not privately owned and maintained parks found in neighborhoods throughout Fishers. The parks & recreation department plans to increase the ratio to 6.75 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

In 2014, PolicyAnalytics, LLC conducted population forecasts based on several growth scenarios. Using the Current Growth Model (Scenario B), the city is forecasted to have a population of 131,525 by 2040. With an additional 44,440 residents forecasted to arrive in Fishers over the life of this plan, the parks and recreation infrastructure will need to expand in order to sustain the existing level of service. The City currently maintains roughly 707 acres of parkland\*. To meet the parkland per resident ratio goal, the City will need to acquire approximately 179 acres of additional parkland by 2040.

A smart and strategic approach should be taken when acquiring future parkland. Parkland acquisitions should complement the existing park network, address the needs and vision of the citizenry and enhance the

vibrancy of the community. Several factors are included in the analysis of potential acquisition areas:

- Community survey results
- Existing parkland locations and ratios per geographic area
- 2040 park acreage needed per geographic area
- Environmentally sensitive areas
- Proximity to existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Existing undeveloped land

These components were individually analyzed and then several were combined to create a composite map that identifies preferred acquisition areas. While the map identifies preferred target areas, specific properties and parcels have not been identified for future acquisition. This map and analysis should be used as a guide for future decisions; however, opportunities for land acquisition may exist outside of the preferred areas and should be pursued as appropriate.

\*2021 estimate of parkland acreage and 2021 population estimate of 100,850 prepared by the city based on approved development.

## Existing Parkland Locations and Ratios per Geographic Area

While the City currently maintains a ratio of 6.7 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, the ratio is a citywide average. The map entitled 2015 Park Acreage and Ratio per Quadrant breaks the city down into quadrants based on merged police service districts in order to analyze how various areas of the city are being served. It tallies the acreage of parks within each quadrant and then shows the overall ratio calculation. The quadrants show a range of ratios:

- Quadrant 1 (northwest portion) – 2.18 acres/1,000 residents
- Quadrant 2 (northeast portion) – 7.26 acres/1,000 residents
- Quadrant 3 (southwest portion) – 10.57 acres/1,000 residents
- Quadrant 4 (southeast portion) – 5.53 acres/1,000 residents

### FIVE-YEAR UPDATE

For the 2021 update, a new action item has been added to re-evaluate the parks facilities plan and this parkland ratio analysis using tract-level population data from the 2020 Census. That data was not available at the time of this update.

## 2040 Park Acreage Needed per Geographic Location

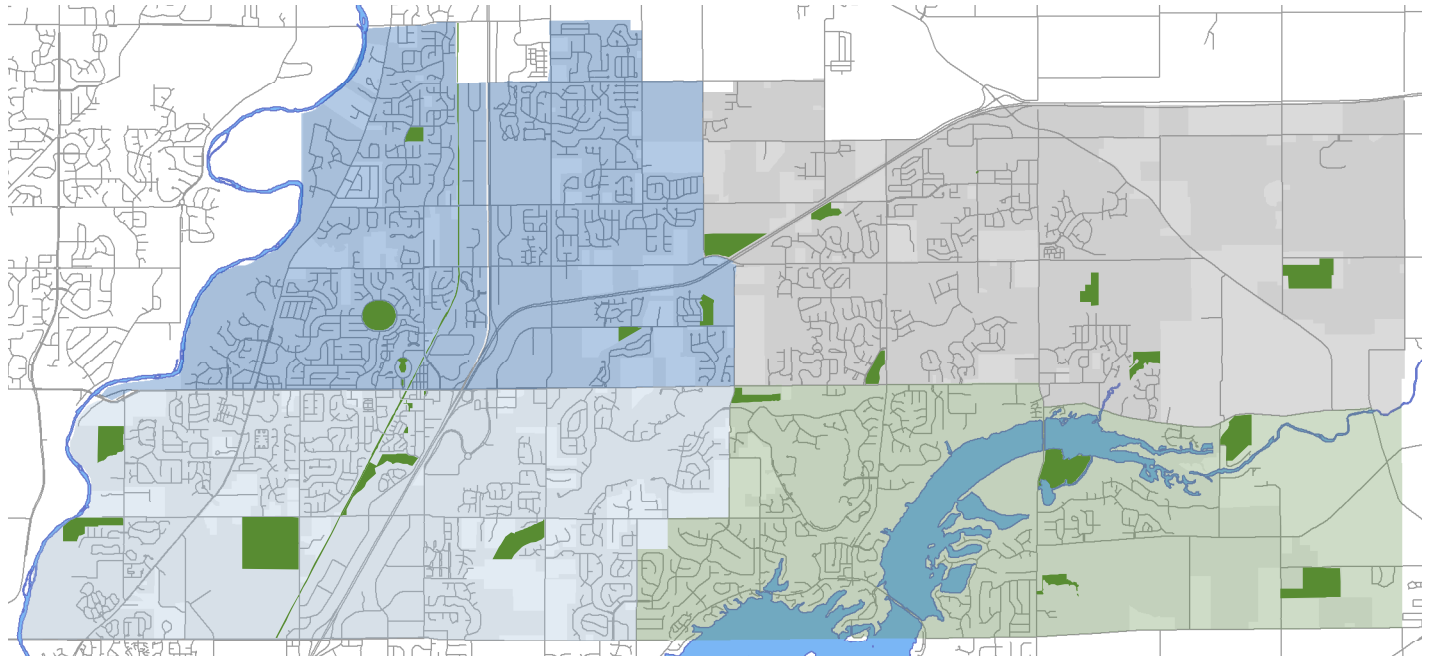
The City's goal is to raise the ratio to 6.75 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents by 2040. While the goal of 6.75 acres per 1,000 residents is meant to be an average goal across the city as a whole, it is beneficial to also analyze the amount of parkland per population in various quadrants of the city. This ensures all corners of the city have access to parkland and a variety of amenity types. To obtain a balanced 6.75 acres per 1,000 residents for each quadrant, additional parkland will need to be acquired in each by 2040. Ratios were calculated to gauge how many additional acres are needed in each quadrant to meet 6.75 acres per 1,000 residents for the future 2040 population growth identified in the study completed by PolicyAnalytics, LLC.

This distribution is meant as a guide and actual ratios from one quadrant to the next may continue to vary based on the needs of the area residents and land availability. The parkland needed to meet 6.75 acres per 1,000 residents for each quadrant:






- Quadrant 1 (northwest portion) – 173.8 acres.
- Quadrant 2 (northeast portion) – 115.8 acres
- Quadrant 3 (southwest portion) – Will have a surplus of 59.4 acres.
- Quadrant 4 (southeast portion) – 106.1 acres



PARK ACREAGE PER QUADRANT (2021)



Park Acreage Per Quadrant (2021)

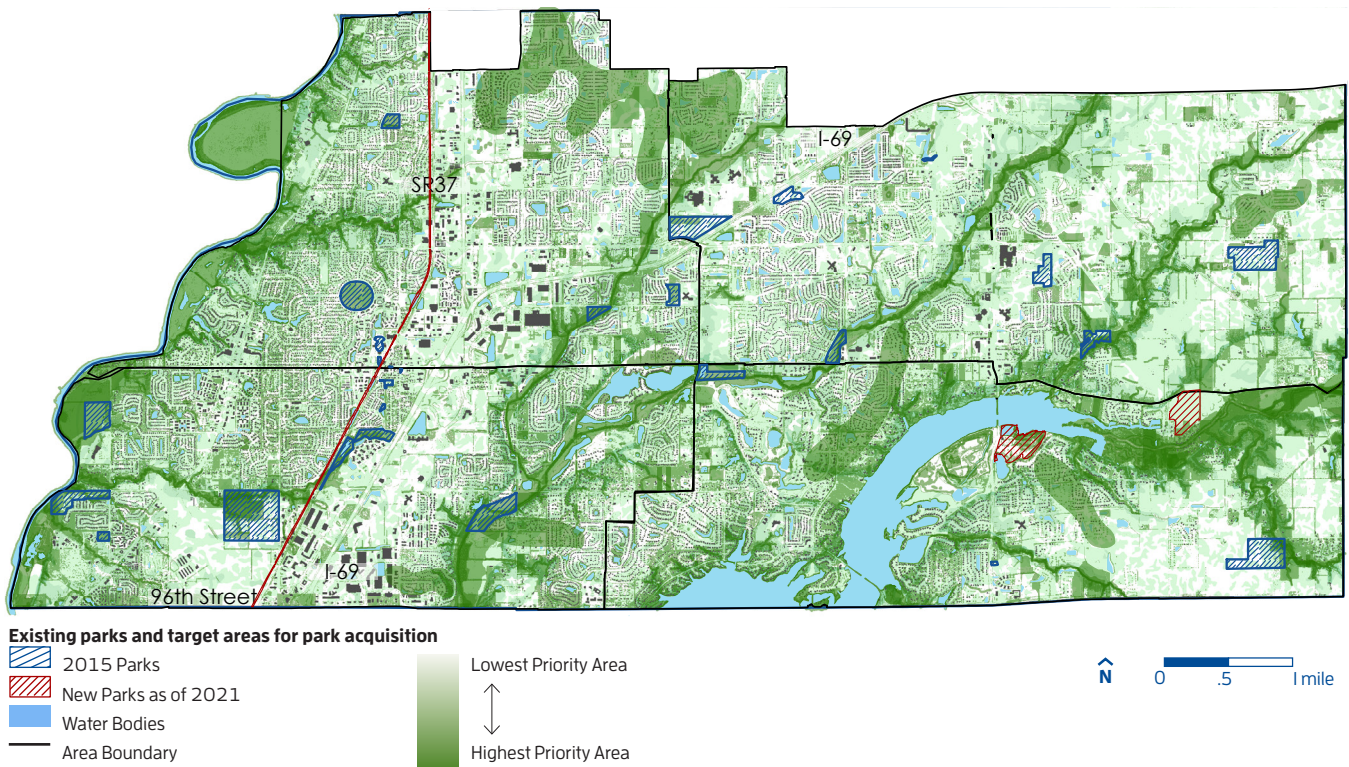
 Quadrant One (88.7 Acres)	 Quadrant Three (277.8 Acres)	 Public Parks
 Quadrant Two (156.9 Acres)	 Quadrant Four (183.5 Acres)	



## Preferred Land Acquisition Target Areas

The composite acquisition map identifies the four quadrants and overlays the environmentally sensitive areas map, the spot analysis from the community survey report, undeveloped parcels that do not have approved plats and the 50 foot buffer surrounding the bike and pedestrian network. The darker green areas contain more of the targeted characteristics identified in the acquisition analysis. While the map identifies preferred target areas, specific properties and parcels have not been identified for future acquisition. This map and analysis should be used as a guide for future decisions; however, opportunities for land acquisition may exist outside of the preferred areas and should be pursued as appropriate.

### PREFERRED LAND ACQUISITION TARGET AREAS



## Parkland Connectivity

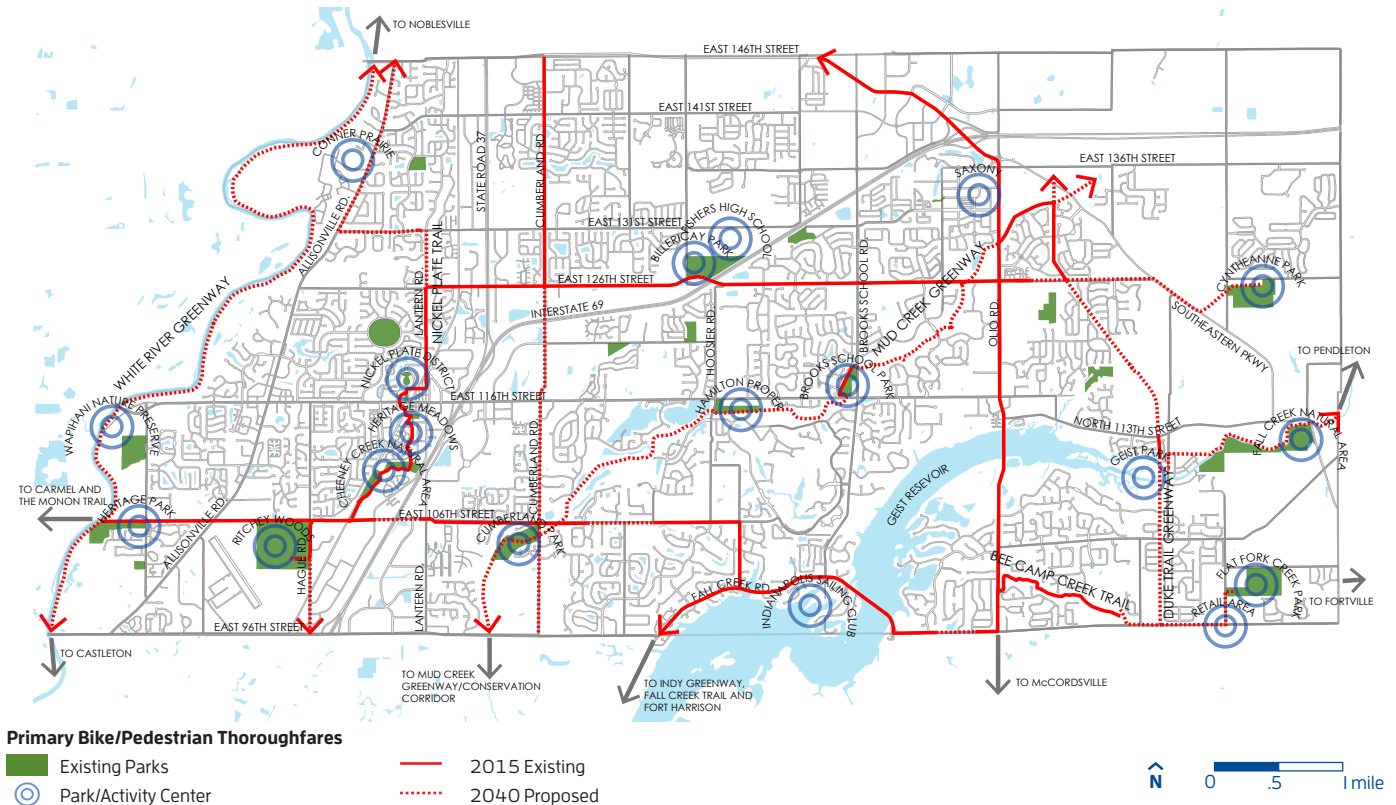
Community and stakeholder input strongly supports the creation of primary east/west and north/south bicycle and pedestrian thoroughfares. These routes would provide vital connections between existing parkland, neighborhoods and activity centers throughout the community.

Greenways can be considered linear parks that connect the overall park system. Many waterways in the region, including the White River and local streams, provide the backbone of the greenways network. The combination of proposed greenways and trails creates a bicycle and pedestrian network that seamlessly connects municipal and regional parks. Greenway and trail design standards can be found in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

The following map identifies primary bicycle and pedestrian thoroughfares that integrate both greenways and shared-use paths along roadways. These key corridors connect many of the existing parks. Special consideration should be given to land acquisition that helps implement the greenways network and provides additional parkland along the thoroughfares. These areas are shown as target areas on the Preferred Land Acquisition Target Areas map.

For the complete bicycle and pedestrian 2040 network map, please refer to the transportation section of this plan. This map only includes potential primary thoroughfares. Thoroughfare alignments are subject to change as constraints arise or needs evolve.

### PRIMARY BIKE / PEDESTRIAN THOROUGHFARES



# PARK DESIGNS

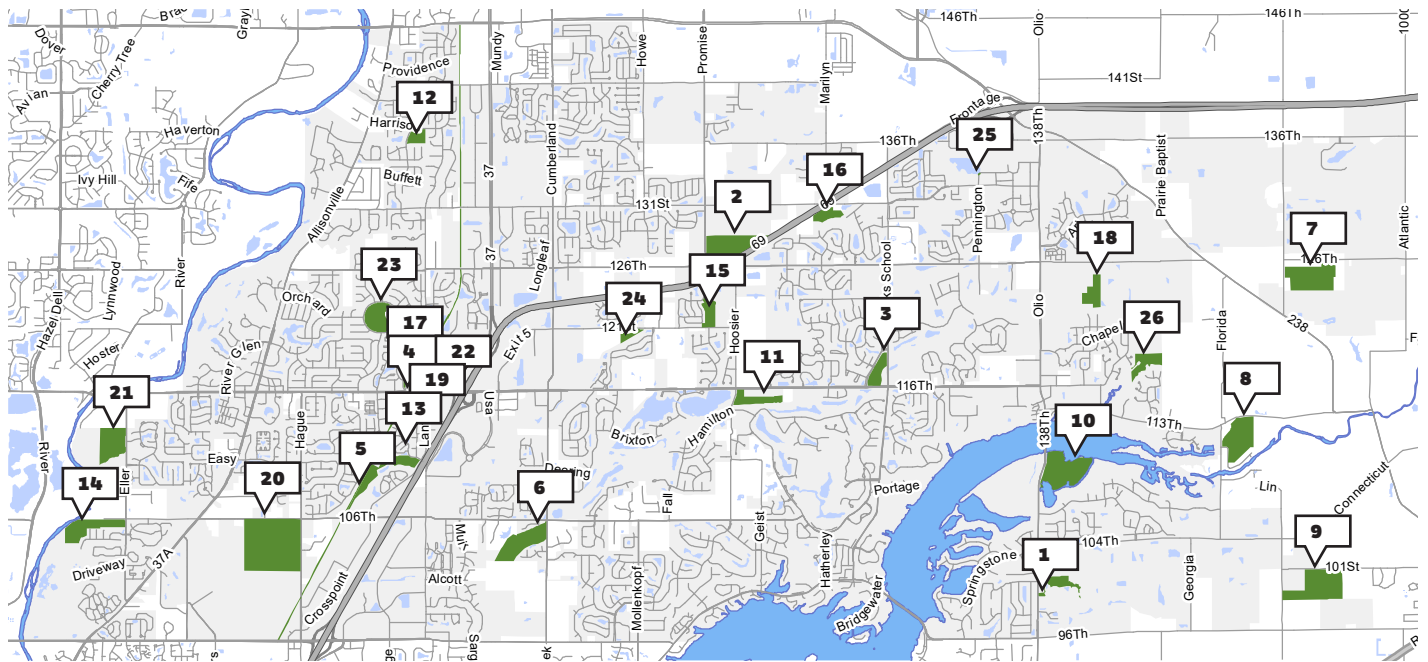
The parks and recreation facilities plan includes designs for existing and planned parks in the City of Fishers.

Each park has a conceptual plan formed from input from the City of Fishers' public works, parks and recreation and community development staff, the ETC community survey responses, site visits and guidance from the parks advisory committee and the parks and open space task force. These concepts are intended to guide the design for each park and are subject to change as needs evolve

and the individual designs proceed through the development approval process. Fishers 2040 does not prioritize park improvement projects. Specific park improvements are detailed and prioritized in the City's capital improvement program and park impact fee list of projects. **The park designs are listed below.**

- |                                      |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>1.</b> Bee Camp Creek Trailhead   | <b>10.</b> Geist Waterfront Park        | <b>19.</b> Pocket Park                   |
| <b>2.</b> Billerica Park             | <b>11.</b> Hamilton Proper Park         | <b>20.</b> Ritchey Woods Nature Preserve |
| <b>3.</b> Brooks School Park         | <b>12.</b> Harrison Thompson Park       | <b>21.</b> Riverside Fields              |
| <b>4.</b> Central Green              | <b>13.</b> Heritage Meadows             | <b>22.</b> Rotary Park                   |
| <b>5.</b> Cheeney Creek Natural Area | <b>14.</b> Heritage Park at White River | <b>23.</b> Roy G. Holland Memorial Park  |
| <b>6.</b> Cumberland Park            | <b>15.</b> Hoosier Woods                | <b>24.</b> Sand Creek Natural Area       |
| <b>7.</b> Cyntheanne Park North      | <b>16.</b> Mudsock Fields               | <b>25.</b> Saxony Beach                  |
| <b>8.</b> Fishers AgriPark           | <b>17.</b> Nickel Plate Amphitheater    | <b>26.</b> Thorpe Creek Natural Area     |
| <b>9.</b> Flat Fork Creek Park       | <b>18.</b> Olio Fields                  |  |

## PARKS WITH DETAILED DESIGN PLANS



### Parks with Detailed Design Plans

- Public Park
- Water Bodies
- City of Fishers
- Park

