play Knoxville

PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

DRAFT

DRAFT PROJECT REPORT
January 2026

CITY OF KNOXVILLE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Elected Officials

Mayor Indya Kincannon

Current City Council

- Karyn Adams - 1st District
- Nathan Honeycutt - 2nd District
- Doug Lloyd - 3rd District
- Matthew DeBardelaben - 4th District
- Charles Thomas - 5th District
- Denzel Grant - 6th District
- Lynne Fugate - At Large Seat A
- Debbie Helsley - At Large Seat B
- Amelia Parker - At Large Seat C

Previous City Council

- Tommy Smith - 1st District
- Andrew Roberto - 2nd District
- Seema Singh - 3rd District
- Lauren Rider - 4th District
- Charles Thomas - 5th District
- Gwen McKenzie - 6th District
- Lynne Fugate - At Large Seat A
- Debbie Helsley - At Large Seat B
- Amelia Parker - At Large Seat C

Special Thanks

To the entire Parks and Recreation Department Team and extended City Staff, the stakeholders and partners, and especially every Knoxville resident who participated in this planning process and provided valuable input— THANK YOU! This plan is a reflection of your commitment to a greener, healthier, and more playful Knoxville!

The Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department staff and other individuals who provided assistance (listed alphabetically):

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The Jean Teague Greenway running through West Hills Park

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STEERING COMMITTEE

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- PROS Consulting
- Lose Design
- Exum Associates
- ETC Institute
- RMPK Funding

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executive summary

Overview

This Executive Summary presents a formal overview of the City of Knoxville's Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2026), a comprehensive strategic document developed to guide the growth, improvement, and sustainability of Knoxville's parks and recreation system over the next decade and beyond.

play Knoxville

Introduction

Play Knoxville, the City of Knoxville's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, reflects a collaborative effort among the City's Parks and Recreation Department, Consultants, community stakeholders, and residents.

The Plan aims to strengthen neighborhoods, enhance recreational opportunities, and guide the Department's work in response to Knoxville's evolving demographics, urban growth, and community needs.

Planning Process

The planning process, initiated in August 2024, involved extensive data collection, public engagement, and analysis to establish a shared vision and actionable strategies for the next 10-years. It was comprised of five key phases noted below. The following pages summarize the key findings from five each of these phases.

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1 CONTEXT ANALYSES

- Planning Context Analysis
- Demographic Context Analysis
- Park System Context Anlaysis
- Context Analysis Summary Document

2 NEEDS + PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT

- Primary Qualitative Analysis
- Primary Quantitative Analysis
- Needs + Priorities Assessment Summary Document

3 VISION

- Visioning Workshop
- Park System Vision Summary Document

4 IMPLE-MENTATION PLAN

- Funding Options
- Implementation Strategy Summary Document

5 FINAL PLAN + ADOPTION

- Draft Final Master Plan
- Final Master Plan
- Executive Summary

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Interactive Project Website
- Project Handout Materials
- Steering Committee Meetings
- Online Surveys
- Statistically Valid Survey
- Intercept Interviews
- Public Workshops
- Special Events
- Focus Group Meetings
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Visioning Workshop
- Elected Official Interviews
- Mayor's Office Coordination
- City Council Presentations

Context Analysis

The Context Analysis is comprised of three elements. Following is a summary of key findings from these elements.

Planning Context reviews existing plans, initiatives, and projects in place and in progress in the City.

Demographic Context reviews characteristics of the existing and projected population of the City.

Park System Context reviews the conditions of the City's existing parks and recreation system.

Knoxville is situated in East Tennessee's Ridge and Valley Appalachians, with a diverse natural environment including rivers, ridges, and forested areas. The City's parks and recreation system is intertwined with complex urban planning layers such as zoning, transportation, and community development.

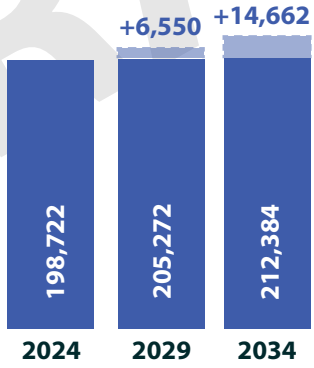
The plan reviewed numerous existing documents, including the 2009 joint Knoxville-Knox County Parks Plan, the 2023 Advance Knox County Parks Plan, and the 2024 Knox County Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan, to align with regional goals.

Collectively, these plans call for a future Knoxville parks system that is:

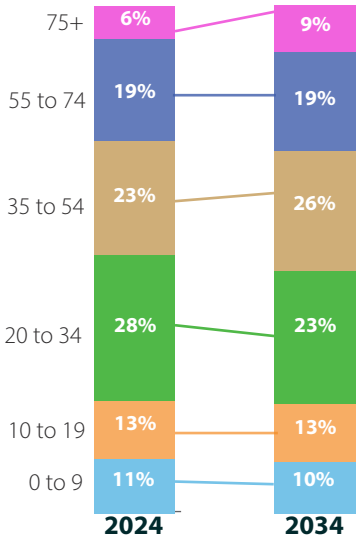
- **More connected** – through greenways, multimodal routes, and riverfront access
- **More equitable** – addressing park deserts, underserved neighborhoods, and universal access
- **More collaborative** – working with nonprofits, schools, County agencies, and community groups
- **More sustainable** – via green infrastructure, tree canopy expansion, and environmental stewardship
- **More responsive** – engaging residents, incorporating data, and adapting facilities and programs to community needs

Knoxville's population is projected to grow by approximately 7% over the next decade, with notable increases in certain council districts. The City has a diverse age distribution, with a significant young adult population and growing senior demographic. Racial and ethnic diversity is moderate, with increasing Hispanic/Latino representation. Median household incomes vary widely across districts, highlighting economic disparities that influence park access and programming needs.

Projected Population Growth



Projected Age Distribution

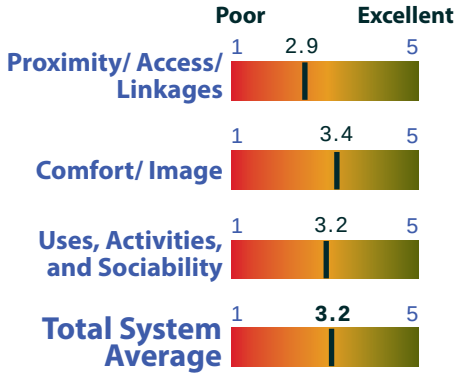


The system of parks and facilities managed by the Department is extensive, featuring 99 parks, on over 2,363 acres, 26 indoor facilities, and a large network of trails and greenways.

Parks score well for visibility, walkability, safety, and overall maintenance, reflecting strong stewardship and community pride.

However, the system would benefit from improved ADA accessibility, more weather protection, clearer wayfinding and branding, and expanded programming flexibility—especially in underutilized locations.

Park Evaluation Findings



Knoxville's recreation programming is broad, community-focused, and generally well aligned with the City's demographic needs. Most programs are in early lifecycle stages, which keeps offerings fresh but highlights a need to strengthen long term, mature programs.

Collectively, these findings highlight a strong, well-used system with meaningful opportunities to improve accessibility, user experience, and long-term operational effectiveness.

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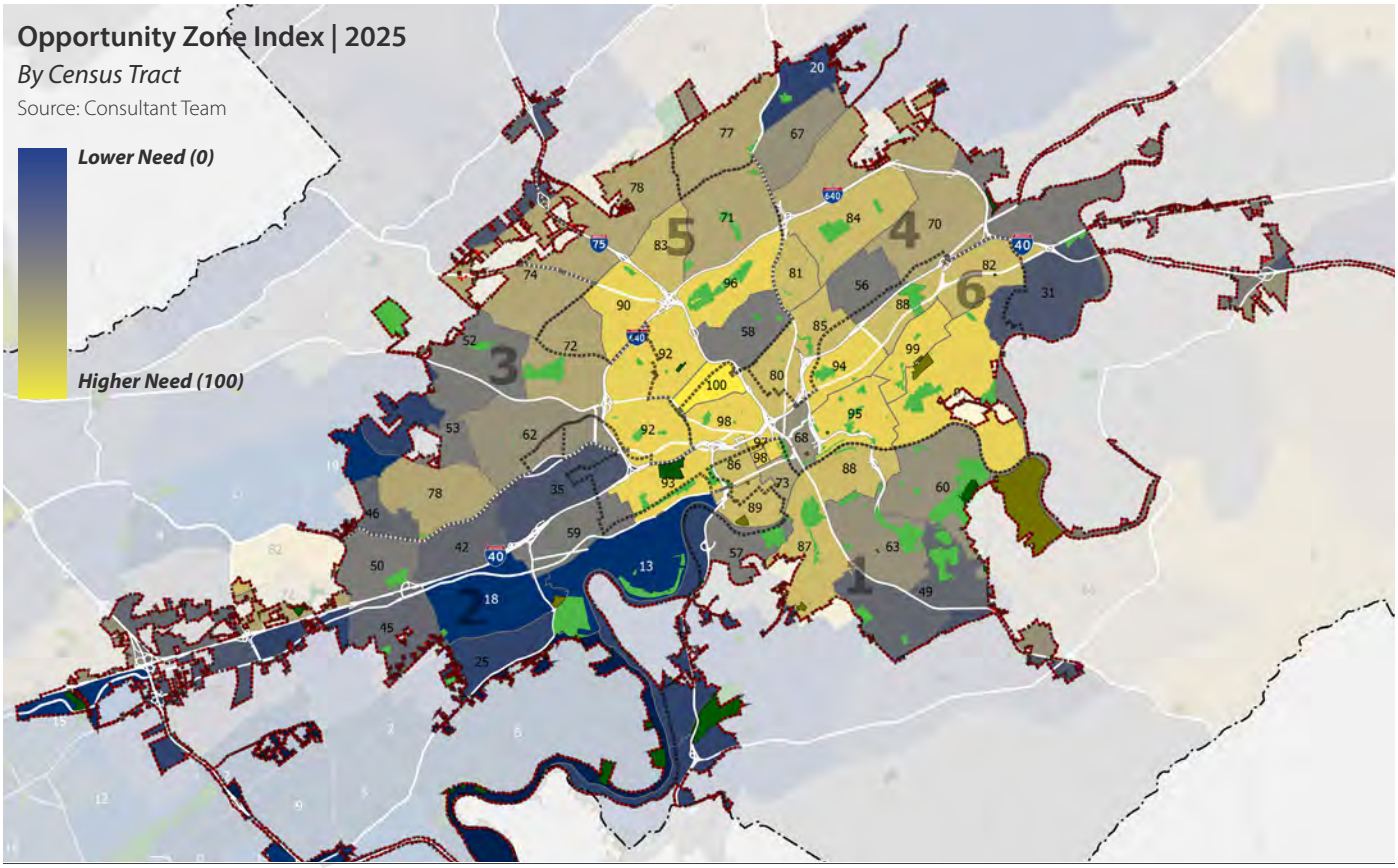
Opportunity Zones

A valuable strategy to integrate all aspects of the Demographic Context is an analysis to understand how demographic and socioeconomic needs and opportunities vary across the City. The Consultant Team achieved this by developing an Opportunities Index, which demonstrates spatial differences in community challenges, by synthesizing a broad range of neighborhood conditions and demographic indicators, including population density, poverty, age, crime rate, and others.

One potential outcome of this index is to use the data as a factor when prioritizing projects and recommendations. Prioritizing higher need areas in effect renders them "opportunity zones," where the investment in parks and recreation has the potential to help address other ongoing challenges.



Needs and Priorities Assessment

The Needs and Priorities Assessment employed a mixed-methods, triangulated approach combining primary quantitative, primary qualitative, and secondary data findings to identify needs and priorities. A statistically valid survey set the public engagement benchmark for comparison with other methods. These different techniques led to residents providing over 33,300 question responses. Following are key summary findings.

HIGH PRIORITY FACILITIES/AMENITIES:
Water Fountains/ Bottle Filling Stations
Greenways (Paved)
Outdoor Restrooms
Trails (Unpaved)
Open Space Conservation and Forested Areas
MEDIUM PRIORITY FACILITIES/AMENITIES:
Public Art
Pavilions and Picnic Areas

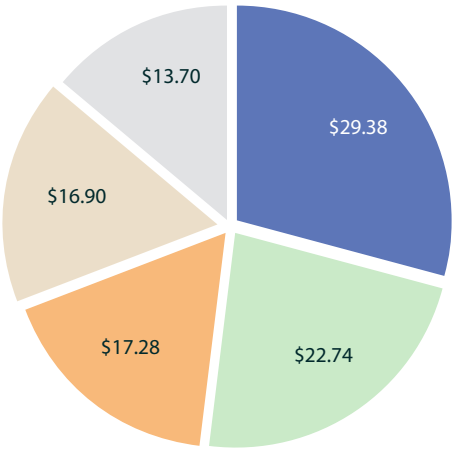
HIGH PRIORITY PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES:
Conservation, Environmental, and Wildlife Programs
Special Events/ Festivals
Adult Fitness/ Wellness Programs
MEDIUM PRIORITY PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES:
Adult/ Senior Volunteer Programs
Adult/ Senior Art, Dance Programs
Family Programs
Adult Athletic/ Sports Leagues

AREAS OF COMMUNITY-WIDE CONCERN:
Affordable housing
Preservation of natural areas
Homelessness and/ or panhandling
Community safety/ crime/ violence
Access to transportation

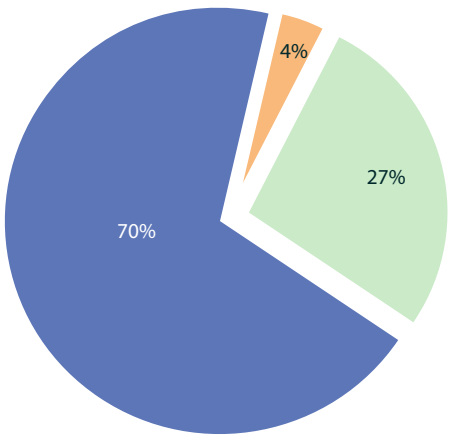
Key Findings

- **Barriers to Use:** Lack of awareness, gaps in trail connectivity, and safety concerns limit park and program use.
- **Funding Support:** Strong public willingness to increase funding for parks and recreation improvements.

Funding Allocation Priorities for Parks and Recreation – Respondent Budgeting of $100



Resident Preference for Future Parks and Recreation Funding in Knoxville



- Repair existing parks and recreation facilities
- Increase maintenance of parks and recreation facilities
- Transform existing parks and recreation facilities
- Create new parks and recreation facilities
- Increase programming in parks and recreation facilities
- Increase funding
- Maintain existing funding levels
- Reduce funding

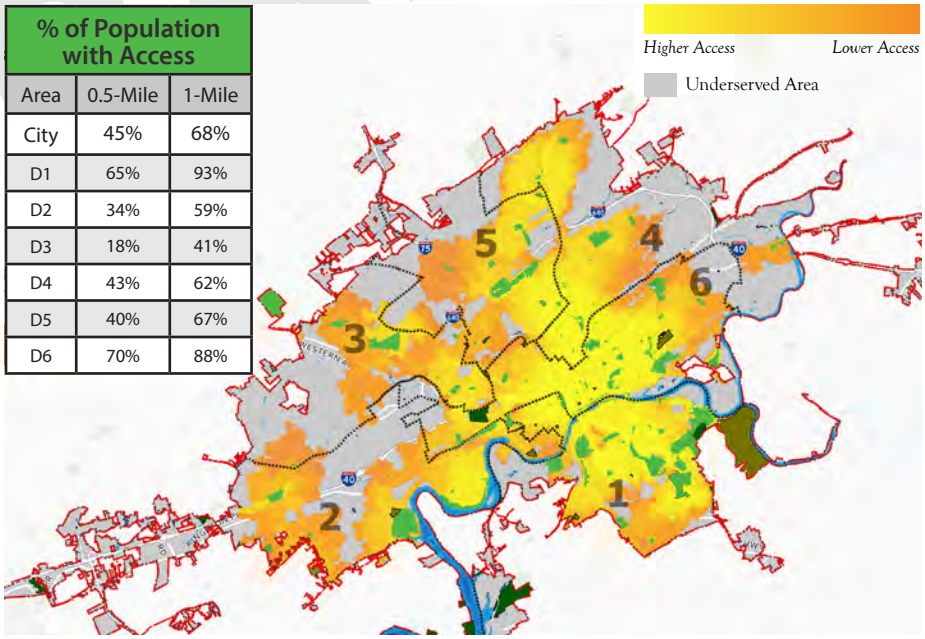
Level of Service (LOS) Analysis

Level of Service (LOS) analyses involves a variety of calculations to understand how well the park system is serving residents. These calculations are typically benchmarked against comparable departments across the country.

- **Acreage LOS:** Knoxville's park acreage per 1,000 residents exceeds national medians, but access is uneven across Council Districts.
- **Indoor Center LOS:** Indoor recreation space is below recommended standards, with significant disparities among Council Districts.
- **Facilities LOS:** Facility needs include teen centers, amphitheaters, disc golf, and indoor pools.
- **Access LOS:** Sixty-eight percent of all City residents have access to a park within 1-mile of home. However, Council District scores range from 41 percent to 93 percent, demonstrating need for targeted expansions.

Acreage Level of Service Analysis | All Parks - One Mile Access

% of Population with Access		
Area	0.5-Mile	1-Mile
City	45%	68%
D1	65%	93%
D2	34%	59%
D3	18%	41%
D4	43%	62%
D5	40%	67%
D6	70%	88%



Key Findings

- **Indoor Center Space:** The City has a high number of indoor centers but many are small and aging and are not maximized to serve changing resident needs, with some centers offering minimal or no programming. Additionally, some centers are leased to partner operators, which reduces Department oversight of programming.
- **Key Access Gaps:** Many of the suburban neighborhoods further from the city center are underserved by parks. Connectivity gaps exist in trail and greenway networks, although this plan and a new bike infrastructure plan include recommendations to address those gaps.

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Vision

The Project Team developed new Department Mission and Vision statements as part of the Vision process:

Mission Statement
Connecting our community to opportunities through Programs and Landscapes that are Accessible to You.

#PLAYKNOXVILLE

Vision Statement
Create vibrant, innovative, healthy, and connected places in Knoxville.

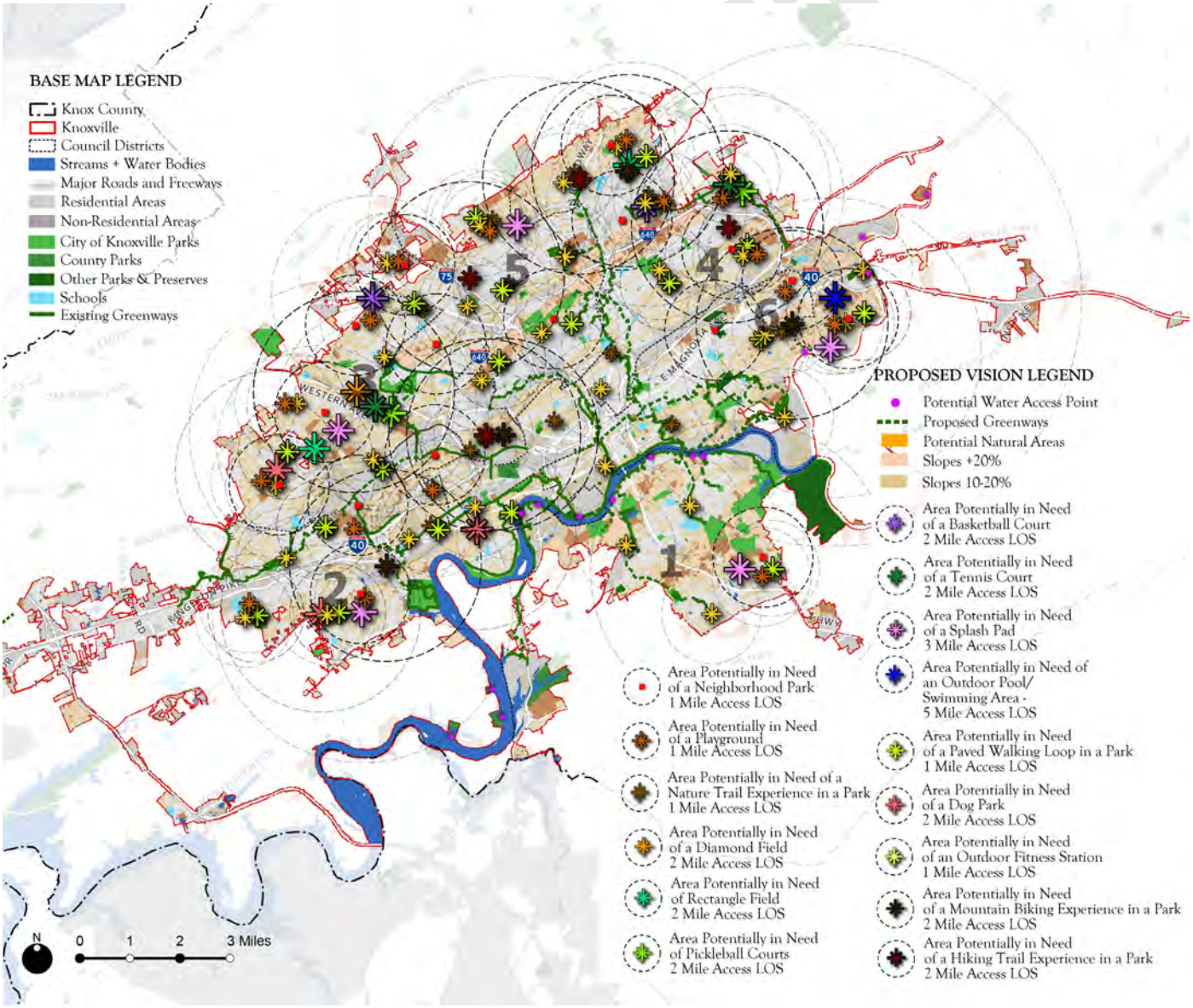
The Vision Framework is organized around four primary goals:

Revitalize existing natural areas, parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

Connect the community to the parks and recreation system through enhanced access and programming.

Grow the parks and recreation system to keep pace with population growth and evolving needs.

Collaborate to maximize environmental, social, and economic benefits through partnerships and integrated planning.



Implementation

The implementation strategy for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is comprised of two interrelated parts:

- **Funding Strategy** to pay for capital projects and staffing needs
- **Phasing and Prioritization** of Projects and Recommendations

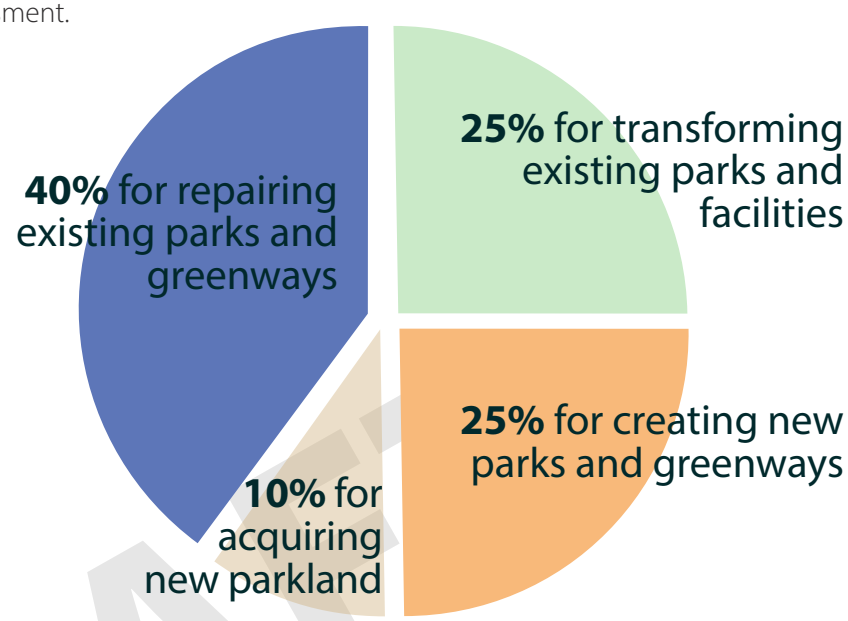
Funding Strategy

Projected capital funding over the next 10-years is estimated to total roughly $57.5 million dollars, primarily from the City's General Fund and grants.

Operations and maintenance funding is projected between $10.6 million and $12 million dollars annually.

Phasing and Prioritization

The funding allocation targets for Capital Improvements prioritize the following elements, rooted in the public input from the Needs + Priorities Assessment.



Phasing and Prioritization

Two new committees—comprised of City Department leaders, non-profit partners, and community advocates—will oversee implementation:

- **City Capital Projects Committee** for capital project coordination.
- **Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee** for operations, programming, maintenance, and engagement.

Improved and regular collaboration between City Departments and external partners will ensure coordinated and transparent progress.

Given the focused amount of funding that will be available to implement projects, prioritization criteria based on the Vision Goals and Objectives, along with industry best practices, were developed to score projects and identify the projects that rise to the top, for Mayor and Council's consideration. The table (right) represents the range of criteria available to prioritize projects.

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES	
Goals	**Criteria**
REVITALIZE	Park Condition
	Priority Facility Need
	Priority Program Need
	Maintenance Importance-Satisfaction Activity Rating
	Historical Investment
	Socioeconomic Opportunity Area
CONNECT	Accessibility
	Connectivity
GROW	Facilities LOS
	Access LOS
	Previously Proposed Project
COLLABORATE	Funding Opportunity
	Staffing and Financial Resources
	Community Health

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Conclusion

This Executive Summary encapsulates the comprehensive planning effort to enhance Knoxville's parks and recreation system, emphasizing community well-being, sustainability, and equity. The full Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides detailed analyses, maps, goals, objectives, and actions to guide implementation.

1 introduction

The Game Plan

The City of Knoxville knows how to play! With its setting nestled in the diverse terrain of east Tennessee, where a rich culture of recreation infuses daily life, it was only appropriate that this new Parks and Recreation Master Plan be called ***Play Knoxville.***

From mountain biking to pickleball, kayaking to golf, the Knoxville parks system offers something for everyone. As Knoxville continues to grow and evolve, this plan is intended to guide the work of the City's Parks and Recreation Department, strengthening neighborhoods, and encouraging the next generation of play.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a collaborative project between the City of Knoxville's Parks and Recreation Department (PRD), the Consultant Team, other City Departments, community organizations and stakeholders, and—most importantly—Knoxville's residents. Over the course of 18-months, the project sought to establish a comprehensive understanding of the parks and recreation system as it exists, identify needs and opportunities, develop goals, objectives, actions, recommendations and, ultimately, to define a shared vision to improve the parks and recreation system over the next 10-years and beyond.

The upgraded Fort Kid playground installed in 2023.

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Background

The City of Knoxville's last Parks and Recreation Master Plan was completed in 2009, a joint project in coordination with Knox County. In the 15+ years since, the parks and recreation system has gone through substantial changes, including new parks, greenways, and facilities, a growing staff, and expanded programming.

And as a city, Knoxville has undergone significant changes over the last two decades, including population growth and shifting demographics, significant redevelopment, and major new development. The City has also seen a significant amount of planning and design, much of it now only in early stages of implementation.

Our nation and broader society have seen dramatic change as well, including rapidly developing new technologies, shifting political movements, and a not too far long ago global pandemic, each of which have impacted the role and relevance of parks and recreation in ways both large and small, obvious and less apparent.

Purpose of Park System Planning

A City's parks and recreation opportunities in the broader public realm—including streets, trails, conservation areas, civic spaces, public transit facilities, and stormwater and other public infrastructure—can help create jobs, increase revenues, protect natural resources, shape urban form and character, expand transportation access, improve health and education, and strengthen families, ultimately building a healthier, more vibrant community. And, in light of worsening wealth inequality, climate change, and political exhaustion, parks and recreation systems can be an oasis, bringing people together, mitigating the effects of storms and severe weather, and providing an outlet for stress relief and opportunities to improve overall wellness for community members.

Parks and recreation master planning provides an opportunity to think long-term about how the park system should be improved to help achieve these many benefits.

- Are additional facilities needed, like new ball fields or playgrounds in fast-growing areas?
- Is there forested land that should be protected before it becomes developed?
- Could new employees provide opportunities to expand programs or strengthen the local ecology?
- Is the whole community being served justly, through a variety of programs and park spaces?

This document serves to answer these questions and many more, creating a vision for the next 10-years of progress, growth, and adaptation for Knoxville's Parks and Recreation Department.

Suttree Landing Park represents Knoxville's recent commitment to providing improved access to the Tennessee River.

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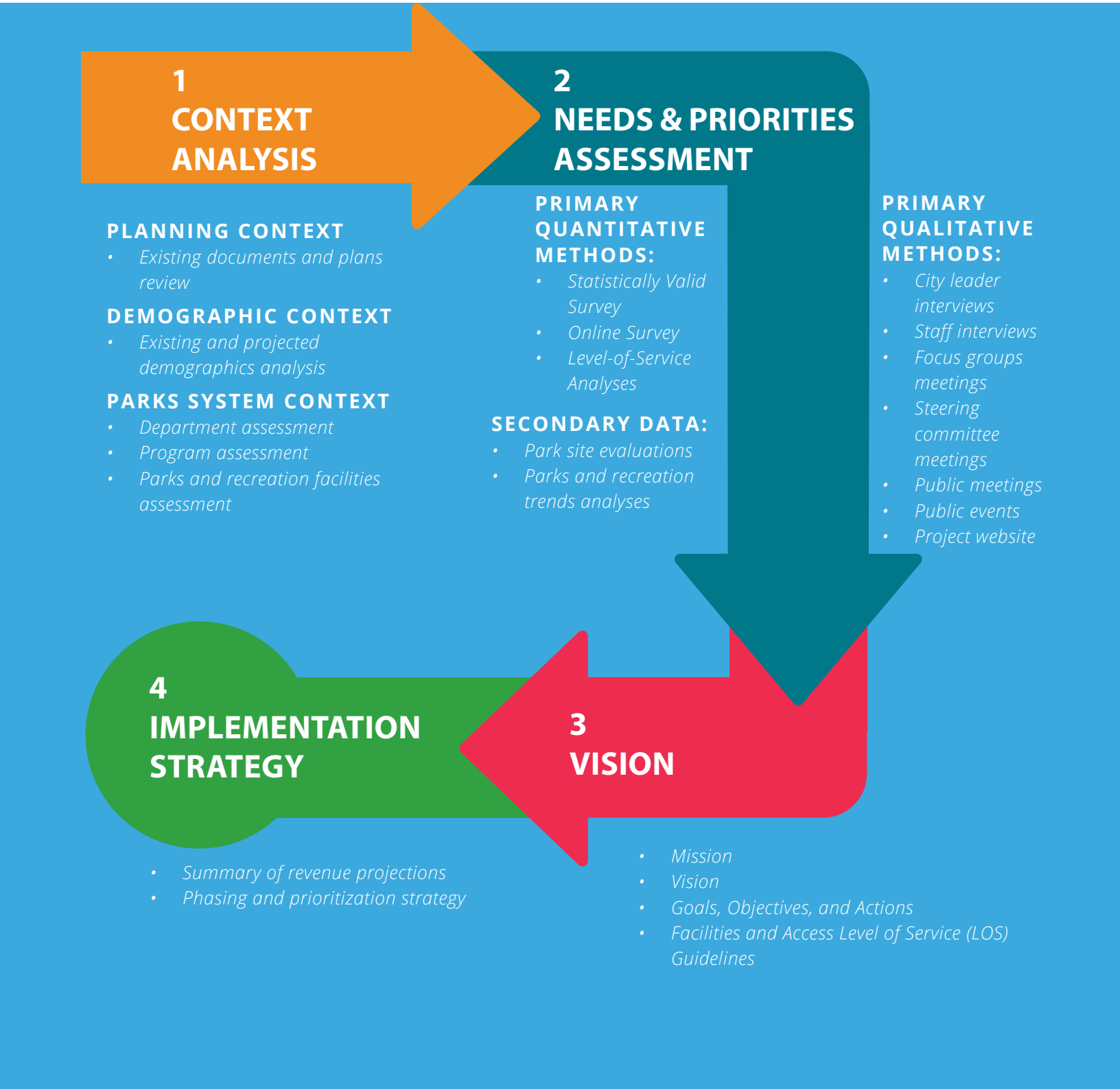
The Process

Initiated in August 2024, the year-and-half-long parks and recreation planning process follows a multi-phase strategy, rooted in data and designed for adaptation and flexibility. It consists of an analysis of the City's Existing Context, Needs and Priorities Assessment, Vision, and Implementation Strategy. Each phase of the process builds on the findings and conclusions from the previous phases.



Following is an overview of each of the report chapters and a description of how the planning process is integrated into each chapter.

CHAPTER 2 - Context Analysis

This chapter includes an analysis of the existing conditions of both the City and the parks and recreation system. The Context Analysis focuses on understanding the parks and recreation system within Knoxville's existing challenges and opportunities. This focus includes a review of previously completed plans and a review of Knoxville's existing and projected demographics. The parks and recreation system analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the state of the department, its recreation programs, and parks and recreation facilities.

CHAPTER 3 - Needs & Priorities Assessment

This chapter identifies the gaps between the existing and desired conditions of the parks and recreation system. The process is based on a proven "triangulated" approach to identifying needs and priorities. It includes various primary qualitative, primary quantitative, and secondary data methods to determine top priorities from different perspectives.

CHAPTER 4 - Vision

This chapter provides recommendations that form a vision for the system based on:

1. Findings from the first two phases of the process;
2. Best planning practices and principles; and
3. The unique desires and aspirations of the community.

The Vision includes a description of the Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Actions. It also provides Facilities and Access Level of Service Guidelines to inform the implementation of parks and recreation facilities.

CHAPTER 5 - Implementation Strategy

This chapter includes a summary of revenue projections, and a phasing/funding plan to implement top priorities based on available and projected funding.

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2 existing conditions

Setting the Scene

Parks and recreation systems occupy a unique space at the intersection between the physical environment of a place, the people who live there, and their culture. For many people, parks are the public spaces they interact with most directly. Additionally, they are a government institution with the rare power to provide environmental, social, and cultural benefits, both on an individual level, and for the community as a whole. For these reasons, the quality and health of a parks and recreation system can be a strong indicator of the quality and health of its surrounding community.

Parks provide a critical opportunity to strengthen the fabric of a community by weaving social and cultural experiences into the landscape. Finally, because every community is different, understanding the nuances of Knoxville's context is extremely valuable to contributing to the overall success of this plan and its impact within the community.

The Consultant Team reviewed existing documents, analyzed demographics and trends, inventoried the existing parks system, visited and evaluated parks, conducted a Level of Service (LOS) analysis, and benchmarked aspects of the City of Knoxville's Parks and Recreation Department against other comparable jurisdictions in order to assess existing conditions through the following three specific contexts:

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KNOXVILLE'S PLANNING CONTEXT

The landscape of the built and natural environment, plus plans, initiatives, and projects shaping Knoxville.

KNOXVILLE'S DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The characteristics of the existing and projected population of Knoxville.

KNOXVILLE'S PARKS SYSTEM CONTEXT

The organizational, programmatic, and physical condition of Knoxville's existing parks and recreation system.

2.1 planning context

Modern urban community planning involves a complex layering of environmental, regulatory, and legal systems, including zoning, land use, transportation, political representation, and education, just to name a few. Much like a quilt, all these systems are interwoven to create the patchwork of land uses and infrastructure that support our daily lives.

Parks and recreation systems intersect with these many layers of the civic fabric in numerous ways, including physical connections, recreational uses, funding, and more. Within Knoxville, parks and recreation services are provided both by the City, as well as by the County and the State, and in some cases, a single park site is managed through a partnership between multiple agencies, including non-profit partners and public-private partnerships. Understanding these complex interactions is important to determining how the recreation system should be improved in the coming years.

The maps on the following pages provide an overview to the City's existing and planned context, all with specific relevance to the parks and recreation system.

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The Baker Creek Preserve Trails provide opportunities for cycling for riders of all ages and abilities.

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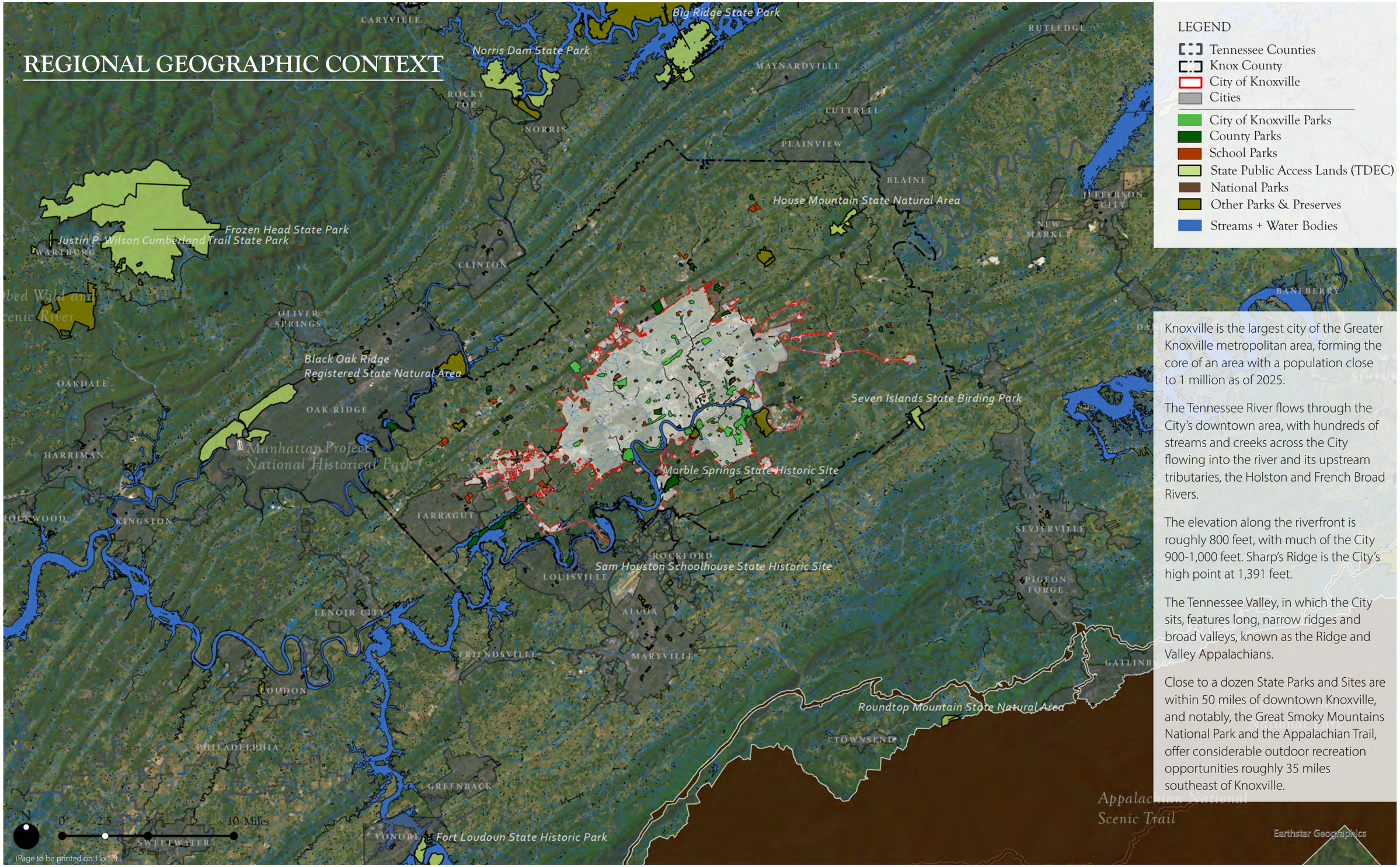
REGIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT



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LEGEND

- Tennessee Counties
- Knox County
- City of Knoxville
- Cities
- City of Knoxville Parks
- County Parks
- School Parks
- State Public Access Lands (TDEC)
- National Parks
- Other Parks & Preserves
- Streams + Water Bodies

Knoxville is the largest city of the Greater Knoxville metropolitan area, forming the core of an area with a population close to 1 million as of 2025.

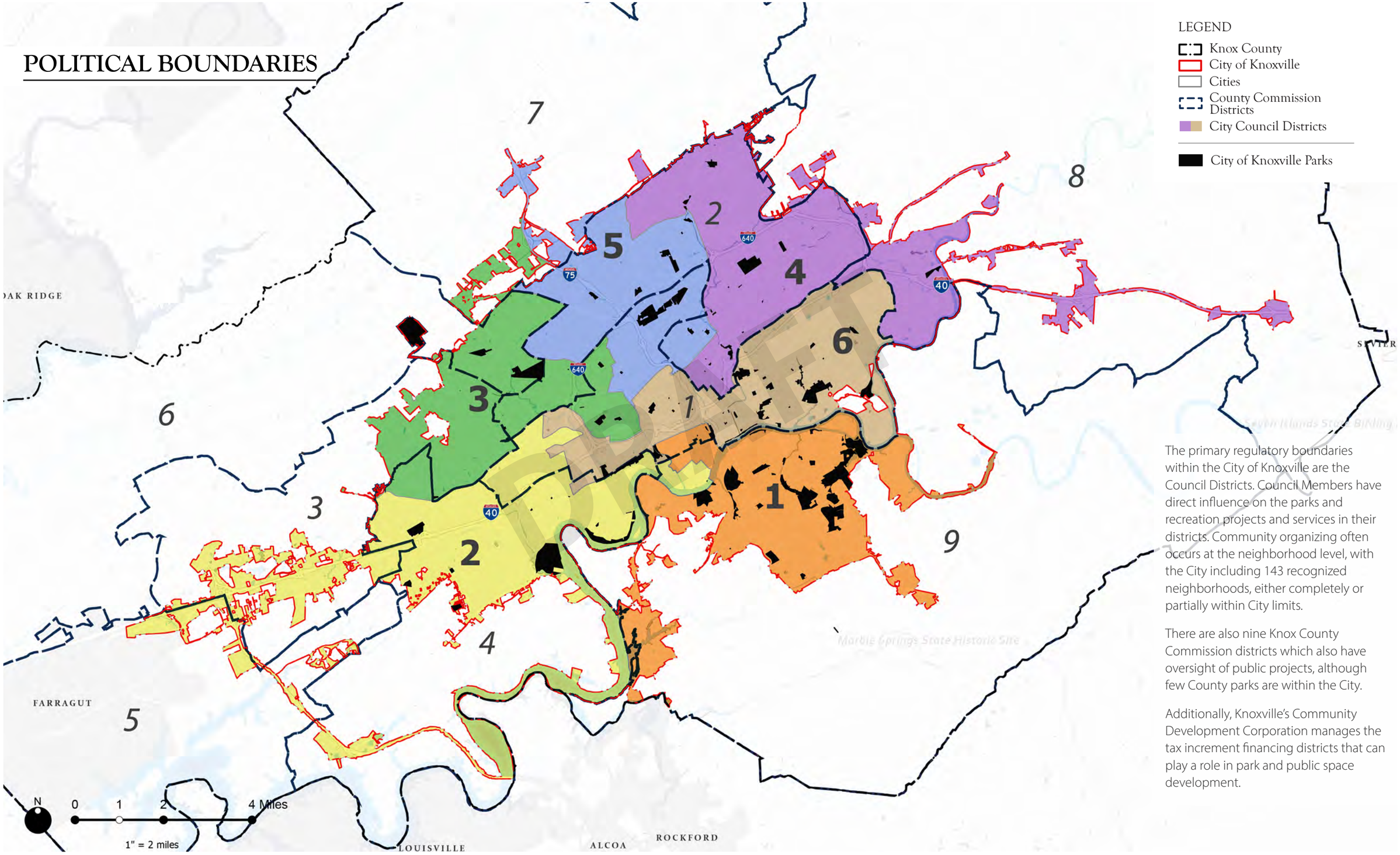
The Tennessee River flows through the City's downtown area, with hundreds of streams and creeks across the City flowing into the river and its upstream tributaries, the Holston and French Broad Rivers.

The elevation along the riverfront is roughly 800 feet, with much of the City 900-1,000 feet. Sharp's Ridge is the City's high point at 1,391 feet.

The Tennessee Valley, in which the City sits, features long, narrow ridges and broad valleys, known as the Ridge and Valley Appalachians.

Close to a dozen State Parks and Sites are within 50 miles of downtown Knoxville, and notably, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Appalachian Trail, offer considerable outdoor recreation opportunities roughly 35 miles southeast of Knoxville.

POLITICAL BOUNDARIES



The primary regulatory boundaries within the City of Knoxville are the Council Districts. Council Members have direct influence on the parks and recreation projects and services in their districts. Community organizing often occurs at the neighborhood level, with the City including 143 recognized neighborhoods, either completely or partially within City limits.

There are also nine Knox County Commission districts which also have oversight of public projects, although few County parks are within the City.

Additionally, Knoxville's Community Development Corporation manages the tax increment financing districts that can play a role in park and public space development.

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FUTURE LAND USE

- Agricultural
- Agricultural Conservation
- Business Park: Type 1
- Business Park: Type 2
- Community Commercial
- Civic/Institutional
- General Commercial
- High Density Residential
- Heavy Industrial
- Mining
- Hillside/Ridge Top Protection Areas
- Low Density Residential
- Light Industrial
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential/Office
- Mixed Use
- Community Mixed Use Center
- Neighborhood Mixed Use Center
- Regional Mixed Use Center
- Mixed Use Special District
- Mixed Use Urban Corridor
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Office
- Other Open Space
- Public Parks and Refuges
- Rural Commercial
- Major rights-of-way
- Rural Residential
- Regional Commercial
- Stream Protection Areas
- Traditional Neighborhood Residential
- Technology Park
- Water

LEGEND

- Tennessee Counties
- Knox County
- City of Knoxville
- Cities

In planning, Future Land Use represents the desired future uses of city land as determined by the municipality's Comprehensive Plan. It informs decisions about re-zoning a parcel and considerations for redevelopment or adjustments to ongoing use.

In Knoxville, 77 existing parks are expected to continue under the categories of either "Public Parks and Refuges" or "Other Open Space." However, there are current parks and additional areas of land identified for Public Parks and Recreation that are listed in other uses, and should be evaluated for re-classification to ensure their label aligns with their intended long-term use as parks and greenspace.

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Tennessee STS GIS, Esri, HERE, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA

Planning Review

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is intended to integrate into the fabric of the City, expanding and improving parks and recreation services for every resident. This planning does not occur in a vacuum--it builds on previous park planning and ongoing projects, as well as the many other related plans completed in recent years.

The following section includes reviews of recent Knoxville and Knox County plans, highlighting the relevant components that will inform this effort.

The Knoxville-Knox County Park, Recreation and Greenways Plan (2009)

Overview

This is the last comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Knoxville and the first comprehensive joint master plan developed by the City of Knoxville and Knox County for parks, recreation, and greenway trails. Its main objectives are:

- To meet the projected recreational needs of a population expected to exceed 525,000 by 2030.
- To conserve open space and natural features like rivers, streams, and forests.
- To provide equitable access to parks and greenways throughout urban, suburban, and rural areas.

The plan assessed existing conditions, inventoried 6,000 acres of usable park land, and integrated citizen input gathered through public meetings and surveys. It updated and consolidated several earlier plans into a single vision for a connected and sustainable system of parks and greenways.

Themes

Accessibility & Equity

- A goal of having a park or greenway within ¼ to ½ mile of all residents.
- Emphasis on serving diverse populations, including seniors, youth, and underserved areas.

Preservation of Natural Resources

- Strong focus on conserving stream corridors, ridgelines, and forested areas.
- Creation of green infrastructure such as the Urban Wilderness and Historic Corridor and Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge expansion.

Connectivity

- Expansion of a comprehensive greenway network linking neighborhoods, schools, parks, and employment centers.
- Emphasis on greenway connectors like sidewalks, sidepaths, and bike lanes.

Public-Private Collaboration

- Improved engagement with nonprofits (e.g., Legacy Parks Foundation), schools, and civic groups to support park development and stewardship.

Community Engagement

- Broad public participation through meetings and surveys, including outreach to school-aged children.
- Use of feedback to guide priorities such as increased greenway connectivity.

Sustainable Development

- Environmentally friendly design practices like permeable paving, bio-swales, and native vegetation.
- Multi-use field design to maximize flexibility and reduce land-use conflicts.

Strategic Planning

- Prioritized sector-based recommendations and long-range park acquisition strategy.
- Addressing historic deficits in park acreage, especially in rapidly growing sectors.

Recommendations

1. Expand and Connect Greenways

- Build new greenways and connectors, especially in underserved and high-growth areas.
- Prioritize greenway access points and continuity for both recreation and transportation uses.

2. Improve Park Access and Equity

- Acquire land in areas with low park acreage per capita, such as the North County Sector.
- Incorporate neighborhood parks into new developments and annexations.

3. Enhance Recreation Facilities

- Develop multi-use fields for soccer, rugby, and other sports.
- Monitor and address shortages in basketball courts, swimming facilities, and other amenities by sector.

4. Preserve and Expand Natural Areas

- Protect and acquire ridge corridors, blueways, and floodplains.
- Establish conservation and trail easements through public-private partnerships.

5. Utilize School Facilities

- Create shared-use agreements with schools to expand recreational opportunities.
- Co-locate new parks with schools where possible.

6. Strengthen Collaboration

- Work closely with the Legacy Parks Foundation and local organizations to acquire land, develop programming, and maintain facilities.

7. Plan for Growth

- Integrate parks planning into urban expansion and rural development policies.
- Use data-driven tools to guide investment in high-need areas.

Relevance to this Plan

Many of the overall themes and recommendations in this plan are still relevant to Knoxville today, despite significant progress being made to implement specific projects and strategies. It will be important to understand why certain recommendations were implemented and why others may not have been successful.

Advance Knox Systemwide Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2023)

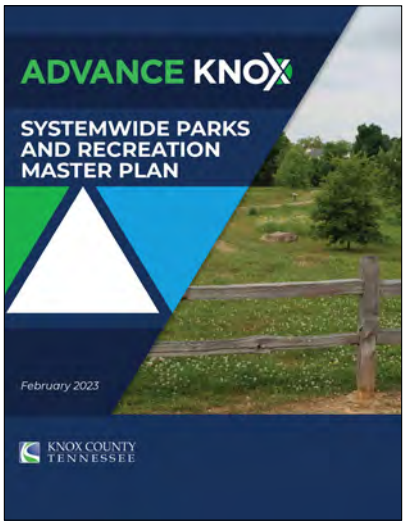
Overview

This plan for Knox County's Parks and Recreation system incorporates community engagement efforts, an analysis of existing recreational assets, staffing and programming assessments, and benchmarking against peer communities to provide an actionable implementation plan for the next 10-years. The plan aims to enhance accessibility, connectivity, and programming while addressing maintenance and expansion needs.

Themes / Analysis

Key themes throughout the plan include inclusivity, sustainability, and community collaboration. The following elements were also noted:

- Growth and Accessibility – With Knox County's population expected to exceed 550,000 by 2040, there is an emphasis on ensuring adequate park access for all residents, particularly in underserved areas.
- Infrastructure and Maintenance – Many parks require facility upgrades, trail enhancements, and ADA-compliant improvements.
- Environmental Stewardship – Conservation efforts, greenway expansions, and sustainable landscaping practices are prioritized.



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Recreational Programming – Expanding offerings for all age groups, including passive recreation (trails, benches) and active sports (youth leagues, adult fitness).

Interdepartmental Collaboration – Coordination between government entities, nonprofits, and private organizations is emphasized to optimize resources.

Recommendations / Vision

- Facility Upgrades – Repairing and upgrading existing parks with new trails, playgrounds, sports fields, and restrooms.
- Connectivity Improvements – Expanding greenways, bike lanes, and sidewalk networks to link parks with neighborhoods.
- New Park Development – Addressing gaps in service, particularly in rapidly growing communities like Hardin Valley.
- Sustainability Measures – Utilizing native plants, implementing eco-friendly maintenance practices, and incorporating stormwater management solutions.
- Enhanced Programming & Marketing – Improving outreach about events and programs while expanding offerings for diverse age groups and interests.
- Strategic Funding & Partnerships – Leveraging private investments, grants, and public-private collaborations to support park improvements.

Relevance to this Plan

While there are only a few Knox County parks within the City of Knoxville, the plan's findings and recommendations for parks across Knox County can provide insight into the needs and priorities of the City's parks and present opportunities for collaboration.

Knox County Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan (2024)

Overview

This is Knox County's first Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan, the result of the Advance Knox process launched in 2021 to define a vision for the unincorporated county that will guide land use, transportation, economic prosperity and quality of life. It replaces previous sector and general plans, providing a framework for managing expected population growth (projected to reach 570,000 residents by 2045). The plan integrates public input, scenario planning, and fiscal impact analysis to guide future investments and policies.

Themes / Analysis

The plan was structured under eight Goals which fall under the following 5 themes.

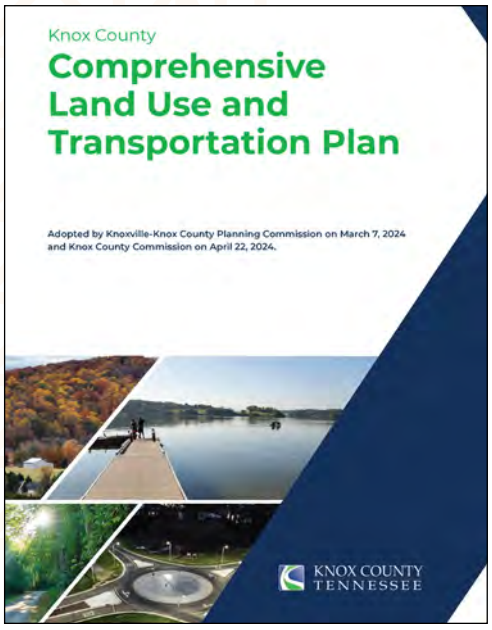
1. Sustainable Growth & Infrastructure Investment
- Efficient and fiscally responsible infrastructure investments to support growth.
- Coordination between land use and transportation planning to improve connectivity.

2. Housing & Economic Development
- Diverse housing options to meet the needs of a growing population.
- Strengthening the local economy by encouraging business investments and employment opportunities.

3. Transportation & Mobility
- Focus on safety, multimodal transportation (walking, biking, public transit), and road modernization.
- Prioritization of infrastructure investments based on fiscal and community needs.

4. Conservation & Community Character
- Preservation of natural resources, including ridges, valleys, and waterways.
- Encouragement of walkable neighborhoods and mixed-use developments.

5. Parks & Recreation
- Expansion and enhancement of park facilities to provide recreational opportunities for residents.
- Addressing "park deserts" to ensure equitable access to green spaces.



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Recommendations / Vision

This plan offers a blueprint for shaping the County's future while maintaining a balance between growth, economic vitality, and environmental stewardship.

Land Use & Growth Strategy

- Provides a Future Land Use Map to guide development while balancing conservation.
- Encourage higher-density, mixed-use developments in key areas to reduce sprawl.

Transportation Improvements

- Prioritize road safety projects and modernization efforts.
- Invest in multimodal transportation networks, including sidewalks and greenways.
- Collaborate with state and local agencies to align transportation projects with future growth needs.

Economic & Workforce Development

- Promote business parks and mixed-use centers to diversify the economy.
- Support workforce training programs to align with emerging industries.

Sustainability & Conservation

- Implement policies to protect environmentally sensitive areas.
- Encourage green infrastructure and conservation-focused development patterns.

Parks & Community Spaces

- Expand park access in underserved areas.
- Develop a connected network of parks, trails, and greenways to enhance community recreation.

Relevance to this Plan

While this plan is specifically focused on unincorporated Knox County, it acknowledges the close relationship between the County and Cities. Its findings and recommendations are broadly relevant to the City's efforts to grow in a sustainable way, providing convenient multi-modal access across the county and encouraging a robust parks and recreation system.

Physical Activity in the City of Knoxville Parks: Findings and Recommendations for Public Health (2019)

Overview

This report describes a detailed analysis of how Knoxville residents use their local parks for physical activity. The study involved a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data, including observations of park activity, extensive audits of features, amenities, and aesthetics to establish a 'park quality score,' and surveys and interviews with residents and focus groups across the city.

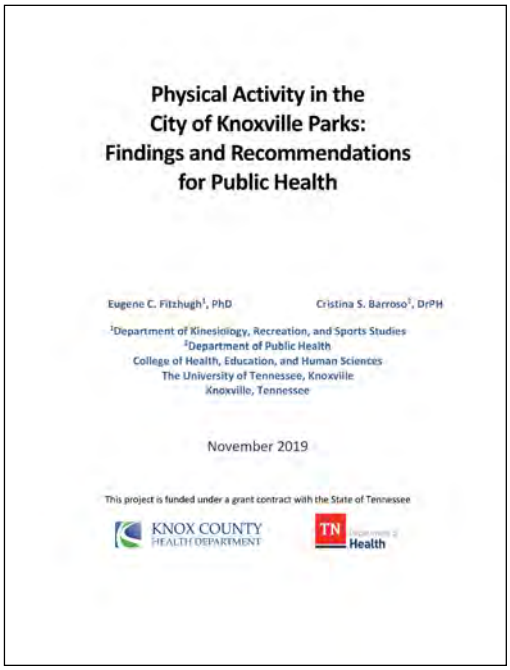
Themes / Analysis

The project resulted in one overarching conclusion and six major conclusions:

Primary Conclusion - the City of Knoxville Parks are well maintained and distributed equitably – but are underutilized by residents.

Other Conclusions:

1. The larger the park, the more opportunities for being physically activity, especially for adults.
2. The park system is equitable in terms of access, features, aesthetics, and amenities.
3. Knoxville City residents, especially in the East Park planning sector, do not consider the park system to be equitable.
4. Parks are currently 'child centric' with very few features for physical activity among adults.


Physical Activity in the City of Knoxville Parks: Findings and Recommendations for Public Health

Eugene C. Fitzhugh[1], PhD Cristina S. Barroso[2], DrPH

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College of Health, Education, and Human Sciences
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Knoxville, Tennessee

November 2019

This project is funded under a grant contract with the State of Tennessee

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT TN Health

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5. Safe access to a park using active transportation (i.e., walking/biking), and public transit is lacking.
6. Perceptions of safety traveling to, and while using a park, is the greatest personal barrier to park use.

Recommendations / Vision

The report offered five categories of recommendations, each with a number of more specific recommendations.

1. Increase Park User Engagement and Programming
2. Expand Community Awareness of the Value of Physical Activity
3. Park Environment Renovations to Promote Park Visits and Physical Activity
4. Improve Neighborhood Built Environment & Park Access
5. Enhance Partnerships for Promoting Physical Activity

Relevance to this Plan

This insightful and data-driven analysis offers many valuable recommendations to incorporate into the Master Plan and may inform the goals and objectives. The study's park analysis methods may also inform the Master Plan's park site evaluations, as there is significant overlap in their approach.

The Tennessee Riverline-652 to You (2022)

Overview

The Tennessee RiverLine is envisioned as North America's next great regional trail system, spanning 652 miles from Knoxville, TN, to Paducah, KY. Integrating paddling, hiking, and biking, the initiative is a collaborative effort between local governments, organizations, and the University of Tennessee to improve public health, economic opportunities, and environmental stewardship through outdoor recreation.

This report outlines the Tennessee RiverLine 652 to YOU initiative in Knoxville, Tennessee, a community engagement program designed to assess and enhance the City's relationship with the Tennessee River. As with 652 to You programs offered to other communities, there were four primary elements: a driving tour of community river assets and opportunities, a local leadership workshop, a river animation event, and a community engagement event.

Themes / Analysis

Strengths of Knoxville's River Connection:

- Strong accessibility to the river with numerous parks, greenways, and launch points.
- Outdoor recreation contributes to economic growth and quality of life.
- The river is a scenic, cultural, and economic asset, enhancing Knoxville's identity.

Challenges Identified:

- Inequitable access to river experiences, particularly for marginalized groups.
- Infrastructure limitations, such as lack of boat docks, rental access, and transportation for paddlers.
- Water pollution and litter issues affecting public perception and usability.

Opportunities for Growth:

- Economic potential through riverfront businesses and tourism.
- Strong existing partnerships among government, organizations, and businesses.
- Increased diversity and accessibility efforts, particularly for disabled and underserved communities.
- Connectivity improvements through expanded greenways and trails.

Recommendations / Vision

1) Diversify and Increase Visibility of Local Paddling Culture

2) Build Synergy Among Outdoor Recreation Organizations

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3) Formalize Water Trails

4) Reimagine River Corridor, Develop Comprehensive Plan

5) Establish Inclusive River Spaces and Experiences

6) Leadership Development

7) Leverage Existing Funding, Advocate for New Sources

8) Demonstrate Leadership, Embrace Role as the Tennessee RiverLine Trailhead Community

Relevance to this Plan

This large-scale planning project offers multiple recommendations that should be incorporated into the Master Plan, with potential for further public/stakeholder engagement and refinement.

Tennessee River Waterfront - Connectivity Framework Study (2024)

Overview

The Waterfront Connectivity Framework Study builds upon the original 2006 South Waterfront Vision Plan initiated by the City of Knoxville. This new study reassesses and updates strategies to enhance connectivity across the South Waterfront, extending to East Knoxville and surrounding areas. It addresses infrastructure needs, multimodal transportation (bike, pedestrian, transit), public spaces, and private development integration.

The study covers three geographic districts along the Tennessee River:

- Up River: Anita–Sevier–Island Home area
- Mid River: Gay Street Bridge & Sevier Avenue
- Down River: Henley Street to Goose Creek

It identifies four key Nodes:

(1. Anita–Sevier–Island Home, 2. South Knoxville Bridge & E Hill Avenue, 3. Gay Street Bridge & Sevier Avenue, 4. Henley Street Bridge to Goose Creek) for intervention and builds on public and private investments made since 2006. The process involved significant community engagement through open houses, surveys, and stakeholder input.

Themes / Analysis

1. Connectivity & Mobility

- Emphasis on multi-modal infrastructure: safe walking, biking, and transit options
- Adoption and promotion of Complete Streets principles for equitable roadway design
- Enhanced links between neighborhoods, green spaces, and the riverfront

2. Form-Based Zoning & Urban Design

- Continued use of form-based codes to guide building scale, use, and placement
- Desire for consistent enforcement to preserve neighborhood character
- Focus on human-scale development and pedestrian-friendly public realms

3. Green Spaces & Recreation

- Strong support for expanding Urban Wilderness, greenways, and waterfront parks
- Calls to protect natural beauty while improving public access

4. Inclusive Development

- Interest in mixed-use and mixed-income housing
- Concerns over gentrification and displacement
- Community desire to balance growth with affordability and equity

5. Community Engagement

- Over 400 attendees at the community open house
- Over 300 public comments gathered emphasizing sustainability, connectivity, and transparency

Recommendations / Vision

Strategic Infrastructure Investments:

- Expand and link the greenway and trail system, especially the South Knoxville Bridge Greenway and the G+O Trail

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- Construct a pedestrian/bike bridge linking the University of Tennessee and South Knoxville
- Improve key corridors like Sevier Avenue, E Blount Avenue, and Hillwood Drive for better flow and multimodal access

Public Realm Enhancements:

- Prioritize public parks, plazas, riverwalks, and civic spaces in development
- Create new gathering spaces like the Festival Lawn and River Arboretum

Development Policies:

- Encourage form-based zoning updates that integrate community input
- Maintain consistent design guidelines to support mixed-use development
- Promote infill housing that complements existing neighborhoods

Equity and Affordability:

- Support affordable housing within larger development projects
- Enhance public transit and provide access to amenities like grocery stores
- Preserve existing community character while accommodating newcomers

Implementation:

- Use this Framework as a guiding document for future planning, rezonings, and investments
- Coordinate closely with public agencies, private developers, and community stakeholders

Relevance to this Plan

The project's extensive proposals for New Public Spaces, Greenways, and Complete Streets have significant implications to this Parks and Recreation Master Plan's recommendations for new park facilities and programming within the project area.

Age Friendly Cities Network (AFCN) Plan for the City of Knoxville, Tennessee (2022)

Overview

Knoxville, TN joined the AARP Age Friendly Communities Network (AFCN) in 2018. The City's previously established goals to be more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities were objectives that directly align with those of the AFCN effort. This report documents steps taken to advance the AFCN lens across the City's planning and development efforts. Key areas of focus include senior housing development with universal design, improved sidewalk connectivity, and expanded outdoor access.

Themes / Analysis

The Phase 1 Planning process focused on understanding needs related to aging. The City used its 2020 needs assessment conducted by the Mayor's Council on Disability Issues (CODI) as the basis for understanding limitations experienced by peoples with disabilities. All four top priority areas were related to a strong, safe, accessible, and connected system of pedestrian amenities and public transportation options that allow people to be independent in travel and getting around the City's sidewalk system.

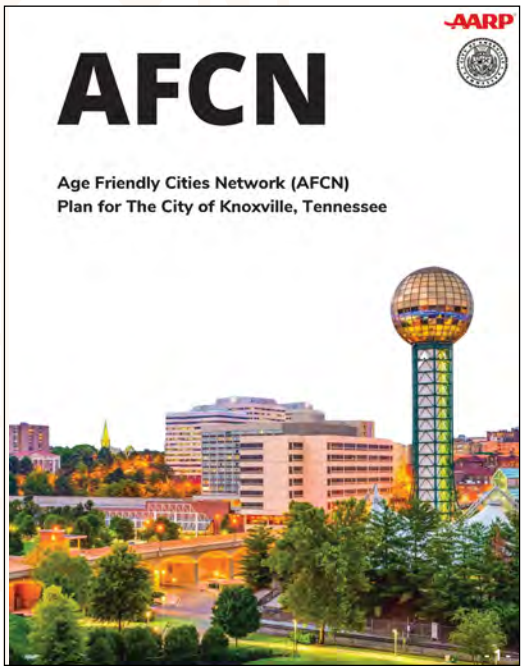
Phase 2 involves further analysis of community needs to be conducted by an AFCN advisory board. The board will review relevant recently completed plans and develop an action plan based on identified needs.

Recommendations / Vision

The CODI study developed 3 goals, including Livability and Universal Design. Both of those goals involve improving ADA-access and accessibility at parks and recreation facilities.

Relevance to this Plan

The AFCN plan provides a basis for important recommendations related to accessibility that should inform the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



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Age Friendly Action Plan Progress Report – City of Knoxville (2025)

Overview

This plan continues the work laid out in the 2022 Age Friendly Cities Plan, expanding on the phased approach:

- Phase 1: Used the 2020 Mayor's Council on Disability Issues (CODI) needs assessment to establish initial priorities.
- Phase 2: Expanded data sources to include multiple community health and needs assessments to refine priorities and finalize the action plan.

The plan emphasizes continuous improvement and integration of accessible housing, transportation, healthcare, and civic engagement into Knoxville's broader urban planning.

Themes / Analysis

The nine general focus areas follow from Phase 1, based on the results of the CODI survey. Two of the nine themes are especially relevant to parks and recreation:

1. Transportation – This was the third highest need overall, with the top two action items being related to improving sidewalk conditions.
2. Housing
3. Health Services
4. Civic and social involvement
5. Recreation and Leisure – This was the second to lowest need overall, with the top actions being:

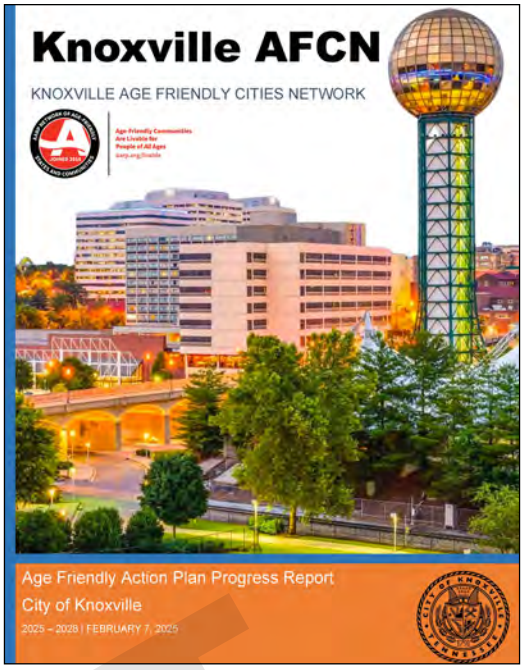
- Inclusive recreational programs
- Accessible recreational public venues

6. Environment and Weather
7. Education
8. Employment
9. Community Based Services

Recommendations / Vision

The plan's recommendations include a range of strategies, (with parks and recreation related items underlined):

- Infrastructure Improvements: Implement widespread sidewalk repairs, increase transit accessibility, and promote walkability.
- Policy & Governance: Incorporate universal design principles in housing policies and improve ADA compliance in public spaces.



- Community Engagement: Strengthen outreach efforts to educate residents on available services and encourage civic participation.
- Healthcare Initiatives: Expand healthcare facility accessibility and increase funding for community-based health services.
- Employment Strategies: Develop training programs and employment incentives to support inclusive workforce participation.

Relevance to this Plan

This AFAP report provides a basis for important recommendations related to community health and accessibility that should inform the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

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Knoxville's Urban Wilderness – Four-Year Implementation Plan (2016)

Overview

The Urban Wilderness 4-Year Implementation Plan is a strategic roadmap for developing Knoxville's Urban Wilderness into a premier outdoor destination. It envisions a connected network of parks, trails, and recreational facilities that enhance outdoor accessibility, economic development, and environmental stewardship. The plan outlines short-term (1–4 years) and long-term (5+ years) projects focused on infrastructure improvements, park expansions, greenway development, and tourism promotion, and it defines eight goals through which all projects are vetted and prioritized. The plan also includes a Design Guide to establish a strong brand across the UW's many sites. Key stakeholders include government agencies, non-profits, businesses, and community organizations collaborating to implement the vision.

Themes / Analysis

1. Connectivity & Accessibility
- Development of trails, greenways, and bike paths linking neighborhoods, downtown Knoxville, and natural areas.
- Improved signage and wayfinding systems to enhance navigation and visitor experience.

2. Economic Development & Tourism
- Positioning Knoxville as a regional and national outdoor recreation hub.
- Encouraging local businesses, including outdoor outfitters, cafes, and lodging, to support increased tourism.

3. Environmental Conservation & Recreation
- Preservation of historic sites, forests, and waterways.
- Expansion of outdoor activities such as mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing, and water sports.

4. Community Engagement & Health
- Partnerships with schools for outdoor education.
- Initiatives to promote public health through outdoor recreation opportunities.

5. Stakeholder Collaboration & Sustainable Management
- Establishment of the Urban Wilderness Alliance to guide long-term management and funding.
- Collaboration among city planners, conservation groups, and local businesses.

Recommendations / Vision

The plan includes a detailed list of projects across a range of sites, including some projects that are Urban Wilderness-wide. All projects are phased across a 4-year implementation timeline, with some additional elements anticipated to require a 5+ year timeline.

Relevance to this Plan

This plan is a critical component of Knoxville's overall park development strategy and any ongoing elements of this plan should be incorporated into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

City of Knoxville Golf Study – Knoxville Municipal, Whittle Springs, and Williams Creek (2023)

Overview

The 2023 Golf Study evaluates the City of Knoxville's three municipal golf courses: Knoxville Municipal, Whittle Springs, and Williams Creek. The study was commissioned to determine the viability and future direction of these public facilities with the aim of enhancing recreational value while optimizing financial resources.

Key goals include:

- Assessing operational, financial, and infrastructure conditions.
- Comparing against national benchmarks.
- Evaluating community engagement, course utilization, and demographic suitability.
- Recommending strategic investments and structural reforms.

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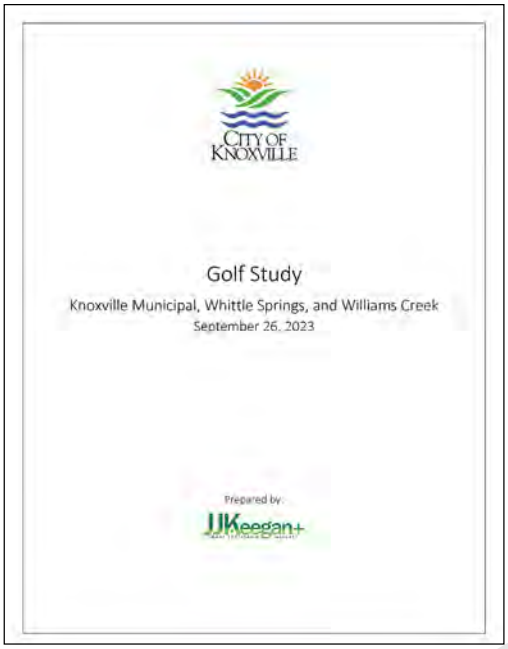
Themes



1. Infrastructure Decay & Capital Needs

- Deferred capital maintenance has significantly deteriorated the golfer experience, especially at Knoxville Municipal and Whittle Springs.
- Estimated capital needs exceed $9.1 million, with Whittle Springs requiring the most ($2.83M) and Williams Creek the highest total investment ($3.82M).

2. Demographic and Economic Constraints

- Household income and net worth near the courses are below national averages, affecting pricing flexibility.
- Knoxville's public golf offerings underperform financially, due in part to lower rates and excessive discounts (season passes, barter arrangements, etc.).

3. Operational & Management Challenges

- Knoxville Municipal and Whittle Springs are operated under a third-party contract (Indigo Sports), which was slated to expire 12/21/23.
- Williams Creek is managed by a nonprofit but has diverged from its lease (e.g., city paying for utilities against contract terms).
- Lack of essential amenities like driving ranges, modern clubhouses, and adequate irrigation limit competitiveness.

4. Changing Golf Industry Trends

- National demand for golf is rising, especially among diverse and younger groups.
- Off-course golf (simulators, Topgolf) is booming, offering opportunities for reimagining facilities (especially Williams Creek).
- Municipal courses nationally are adapting with loyalty-based pricing instead of unlimited annual passes.

5. Public Sentiment & Utilization

- Public surveys reveal low satisfaction: Knoxville Municipal and Whittle Springs ranked lowest among area courses.
- Despite the issues, demand for public golf remains high; City courses are heavily used due to accessibility and affordability.

Recommendations

1. Strategic Investment by Course

- Knoxville Municipal: Upgrade irrigation, expand tees/greens, consider converting to a 9-hole layout with a sports complex.
- Whittle Springs: Major overhaul needed—consider converting to a 9- or 12-hole community-centered facility with a driving range, sports bar-style clubhouse, and greenway.
- Williams Creek: Leverage existing nonprofit support; invest in golf simulators, a second-floor restaurant/bar, and possible food trucks for improved revenue and accessibility.

2. Reevaluate Pricing Models

- Increase transparency on the balance between value and cost-recovery.
- Consider phasing out annual passes or significantly increasing their cost.
- Replace with loyalty cards to reduce deep discounting and better match market pricing.

3. Consider Governance Changes

- Rebid third-party management contracts or assess feasibility of bringing operations in-house.
- Potentially transfer ownership or management of Knoxville Municipal to Knox County for better regional integration.

4. Improve Marketing & Community Engagement

- Clarify vision for municipal golf (public good vs. cost-neutral service).
- Use golf as a community engagement tool—especially for underserved communities and youth.
- Expand entertainment and off-course options to attract new and casual players.

5. Address Safety and Legal Liabilities

- Whittle Springs has unresolved safety issues with adjacent homes.

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- Consider reconfiguration or reduction of holes to minimize risks and potential lawsuits.

6. Shift to General Fund Support

- Transitioning golf operations from Enterprise Fund to the General Fund is recommended to reflect the public-good nature of golf facilities.

Relevance to this Plan

This plan provides a strong basis for considering future strategies for the City's three golf courses. A dramatic re-envisioning of both Knoxville Municipal and Whittle Springs is recommended and offers the potential to provide new and different recreation amenities and programs on those sites.

Western Heights Transformation Plan (2021)

Overview

The Western Heights Transformation Plan is a community-driven initiative aimed at revitalizing the Western Heights neighborhood in Knoxville, Tennessee. Spearheaded by Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC), the City of Knoxville, and Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC), the plan proposes a holistic transformation across housing, neighborhood infrastructure, and people-focused services.
The area is just 1.5 miles from downtown Knoxville but has long suffered from disinvestment, poverty, and aging infrastructure. The plan outlines the redevelopment of the public housing complex into a mixed-income community, improved transportation and safety infrastructure, new green spaces, and robust social services to improve educational, health, and economic outcomes for residents.

Themes / Analysis

1. Community Engagement & Inclusion

- Extensive engagement over 15 months included virtual meetings, in-person open houses, youth sessions, and translated materials for refugee and immigrant communities.
- Residents were active participants, including serving as Resident Ambassadors.

2. Holistic Place-Based Transformation

- The initiative uses a "We Belong, We Build, We Become" framework focused on neighborhood, housing, and people goals.
- Recognizes historical and cultural significance, particularly the role of Knoxville College and the artistic legacy of the area.

3. Neighborhood Needs and Challenges

- High rates of poverty and unemployment; significant needs in safety, transportation, health care access, and youth programming.
- Physical barriers (like highways) and outdated infrastructure isolate the neighborhood.

4. Equity and De-concentration of Poverty

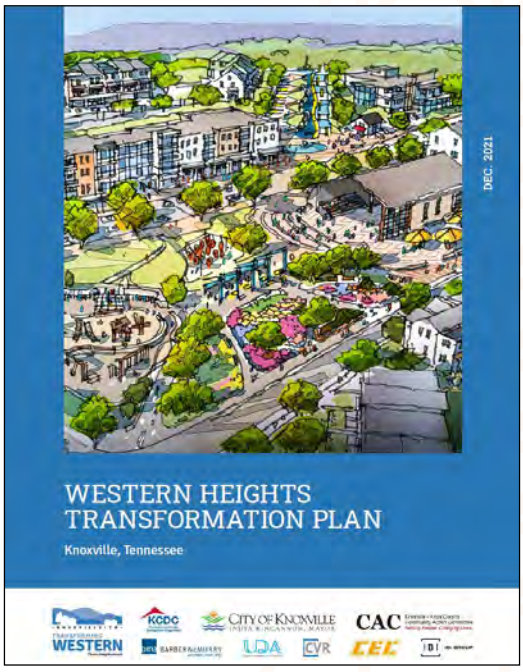
- A major goal is to transform the public housing area into a diverse, mixed-income neighborhood.
- Strategies aim to attract new residents while supporting and uplifting current ones.

5. Partnerships and Coordination

- Over 65 partners from government, nonprofits, education, health, and business sectors are committed to implementation.
- Planning subgroups contributed detailed strategies for housing, health, education, economic development, and more.

Recommendations / Vision

Neighborhood (We Belong



- Improve safety through increased patrols and community watch programs.
- Expand transportation options, including better public transit and safe walking routes.
- Invest in green spaces and parks, including a world-class destination park.
- Foster community identity through public art, entrepreneurship hubs, and cohesive design across new and old housing.

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Housing (We Build)

- Construct 479 mixed-income units to replace outdated 1953 units, plus renovate 244 historic 1938 units.
- Build in phases to minimize displacement and disruption to current residents.
- Ensure housing diversity, including units for families, seniors, and individuals at different income levels
- Implement responsive management, ensuring well-maintained, safe, and clean facilities.

People (We Become)

- Expand early childhood education, including a new $5.4 million Head Start facility.
- Improve educational outcomes with tutoring, enrichment, and support programs.
- Address health needs via increased access to care, mental health services, and nutrition programs.
- Promote economic mobility through job training, workforce placement, and financial coaching.
- Improve food security with access to fresh food via community gardens and partnerships with local food providers.

Implementation

- Preliminary budget of $216 million, with funding from federal sources, the City of Knoxville, philanthropic donations, and private investment.
- Dedicated implementation matrices for neighborhood, housing, and people priorities.
- CAC and KCDC will lead implementation, tracking measurable outcomes for individuals and the community.

Relevance to this Plan

This plan details major changes proposed for the Western Heights neighborhood, which include significant focus on new parks and greenspaces. Incorporating this vision into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan's recommendations will be key to advancing the neighborhood's redevelopment.

Urban Forest Master Plan (2024)

Overview

Knoxville's first Urban Forest Master Plan (2024) presents a strategic framework for managing, preserving, and expanding Knoxville's urban tree canopy over the next 20-years. The plan is the result of a comprehensive process involving data analysis, stakeholder engagement, community input, and a review of best practices.

The urban forest—trees in public and private areas throughout the City—provides crucial benefits like stormwater reduction, improved air quality, energy savings, and enhanced quality of life. However, Knoxville faces challenges like canopy loss, development pressure, climate stressors, and inequitable distribution of trees.

This Master Plan aims to address those issues through coordinated action involving city departments, community organizations, and residents.

Themes / Analysis

1. Canopy Trends & Loss

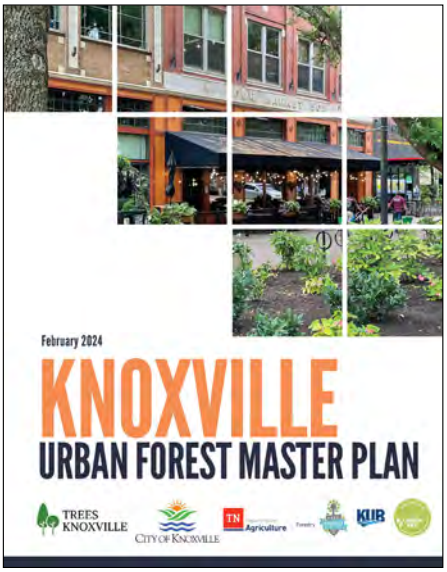
- Knoxville has lost approximately 4% of its tree canopy since 2010, largely due to development, aging trees, and extreme weather.
- Loss is uneven across the city, with some neighborhoods having 50% canopy cover and others as low as 9%.

2. Equity & Environmental Justice

- Areas with lower-income populations and higher social vulnerability tend to have less canopy cover.
- The plan emphasizes equitable investment in tree planting and maintenance, especially in underserved neighborhoods.

3. Benefits of Urban Trees

- The City's urban forest provides over $5 million in benefits annually, including energy savings, air pollutant removal, and stormwater mitigation.



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- Trees also play a role in heat island reduction, health improvement, and aesthetic enhancement.

4. Organizational Structure & Capacity

- Knoxville's current urban forestry program is fragmented and under-resourced.
- A need exists for better coordination across City Departments and stronger partnerships with community organizations.

5. Policy Gaps

- Existing policies do not adequately protect or promote the urban forest.
- Development codes and permitting processes lack sufficient tree preservation and replacement requirements.

6. Community Involvement

- Public input revealed strong support for tree planting and maintenance, especially in parks, along streets, and in neighborhoods.
- Education and outreach are needed to build long-term stewardship.

Recommendations

- Create a City Urban Forestry Program Office - Establish a dedicated office or urban forestry coordinator to lead implementation, planning, and coordination.
- Adopt a City-wide Canopy Goal - Set a long-term goal of increasing the canopy to 40%, with interim benchmarks and equity targets for disadvantaged areas.
- Improve Tree Protection Policies - Strengthen ordinances and development codes to require tree preservation and replacement in construction projects
- Increase Tree Planting - Prioritize planting in areas with low canopy cover and high social vulnerability, and develop a citywide planting plan including public rights-of-way, parks, schools, and private properties.
- Secure Sustainable Funding - Allocate dedicated funding for tree maintenance, planting, and staff capacity, and explore grant opportunities, utility partnerships, and public-private collaborations.
- Engage and Educate the Community - Launch campaigns to raise awareness of the benefits of urban trees. Provide resources for residents and volunteers to participate in planting and care.
- Track Progress and Maintain Data - Update the tree inventory and canopy assessment regularly. Use performance metrics to monitor progress toward canopy goals and adapt strategies as needed.

Relevance to this Plan

This plan proposes to expand tree planting across the city, especially in parks and other greenspaces. The Parks and Recreation Department will be a key partner in ensuring that the recommendations are implemented.

Greenway Corridor Feasibility and Assessment Project (2016)

Overview

This project provided an assessment and preliminary engineering of 13 trail corridors, covering 24 miles.

Themes / Analysis

Each of the 13 segments includes a Corridor Concept with plan and section views.

Recommendations

The feasibility of all trail segments was determined through the design analysis process. Cost estimates and construction time frames were also included.

Ongoing Park Design and Proposals

The Consultant Team reviewed design documents for the following park projects that are currently in design or planning phases:

- Belle Morris Linear Park Concept
- Fountain City Ballfields
- Lakeshore Park Master Plan
- Governor Ned McWherter Park
- Sam E Hill Park
- William Powell Park
- Dr. Walter Hardy Park Foodscape Design
- Gary Underwood Park

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Ongoing Park Design and Proposals (continued)

- First Creek Park
- Chilhowee Park
- G&O Rail Trail
- Gay Street Bridge and Greenway Connections

Plans for a redesigned Fountain City Park being led by the Fountain City Recreation Commission.

Conceptual design for improvements to Governor Ned McWherter Park.

The overall vision for Lakeshore Park, being implemented in phases by the Lakeshore Park Conservancy.

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2.2 demographic context

The characteristics of Knoxville residents can provide important insights into the potential role that this plan can play in improving the social, environmental, and economic quality of life across the City.

The following section provides the key findings from the analysis of specific demographic attributes, including:

- Population and Population Change
- Population Density
- Age Distribution
- Race and Ethnicity
- Median Household Income and Poverty
- Socioeconomics Opportunity Index

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Population and Population Change

Total population and population change are two of the most important demographics to consider in parks and recreation system planning.

Total population allows the system to be benchmarked against other municipalities of similar size, with many of the Level of Service (LOS) recommendations based on population. And by understanding the recent trends in population change, the Department can prepare to expand or contract parks and recreation services as needed going into the future.

Figure 2.2a below compares the past, existing, and projected population and population growth of the City of Knoxville to Knox County and the State of Tennessee.

Figure 2.2a
Population Change by Council District 2010 - 2034

	2010*	2020*	% Change 2010-2020	2024*	2029	2034	% Change 2024-2034
Knoxville	178,874	190,740	7%	198,722	205,272[1]	212,384[1]	7%
Knox County	432,226	478,971	11%	506,748	526,032^	546,465^	8%
Tennessee	6,346,105	6,910,840	9%	7,227,750	7,462,831^	7,697,729^	7%

** Source: US Census Bureau (Decennial & Population Estimates)*
^ Source: UT 2022-2070 Boyd Center Population Projections
[1] Source: ESRI

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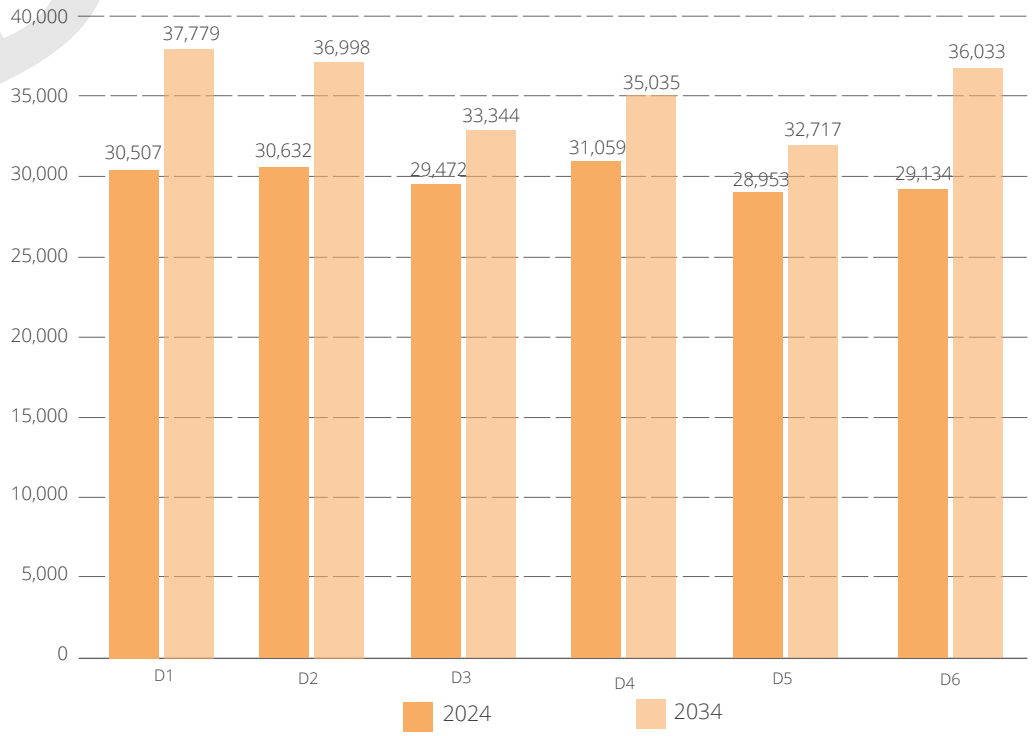
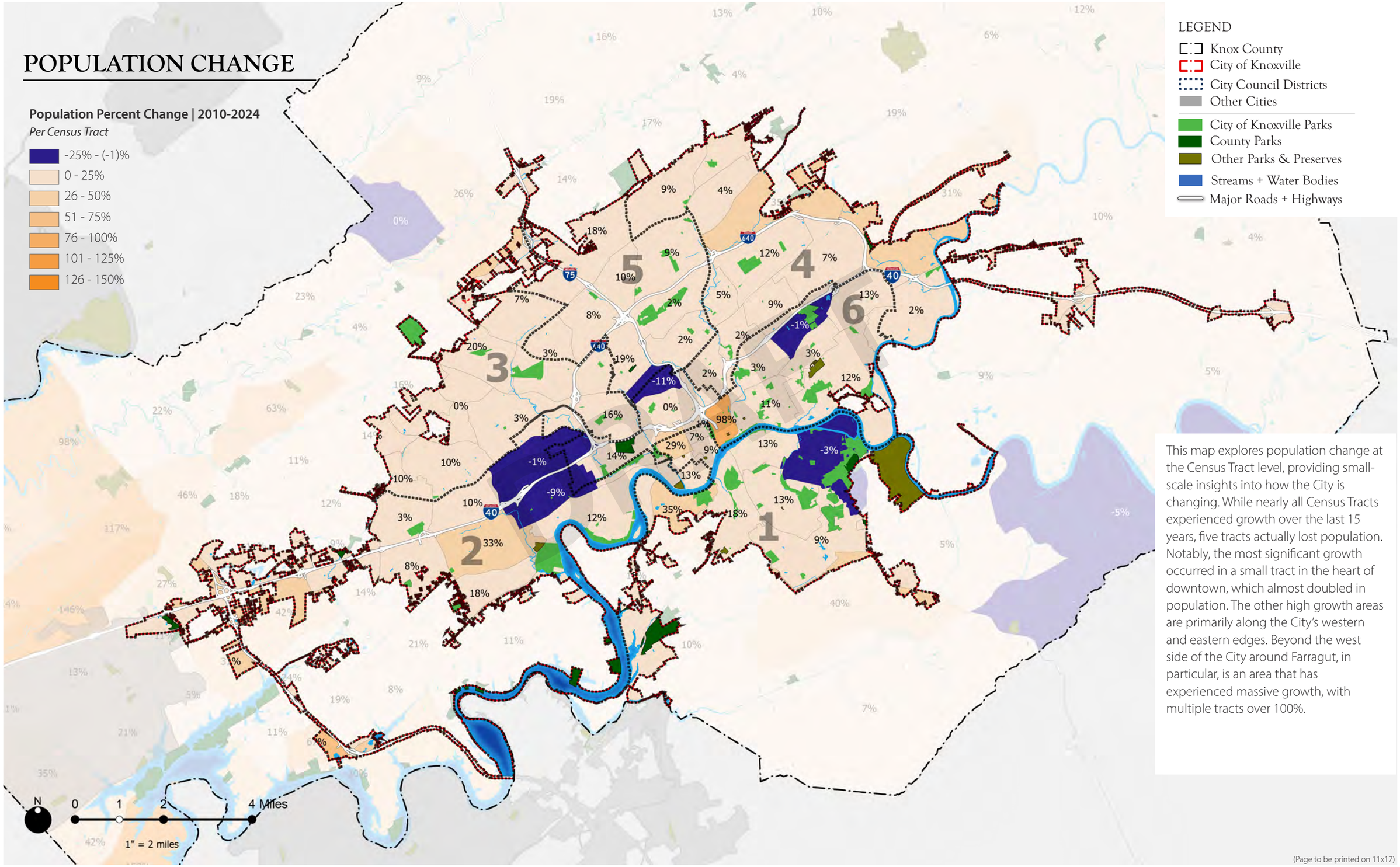
Figure 2.2b
Population Change 2024 - 2034

Figure 2.2b demonstrates projected population growth for each of Knoxvilles's Council Districts over the next 10-years. The City's overall growth is reflected in projected growth in all six districts. Districts 1 and 6 are expected to see the most growth, adding roughly 7,000 residents each.



POPULATION CHANGE



This map explores population change at the Census Tract level, providing small-scale insights into how the City is changing. While nearly all Census Tracts experienced growth over the last 15 years, five tracts actually lost population. Notably, the most significant growth occurred in a small tract in the heart of downtown, which almost doubled in population. The other high growth areas are primarily along the City's western and eastern edges. Beyond the west side of the City around Farragut, in particular, is an area that has experienced massive growth, with multiple tracts over 100%.

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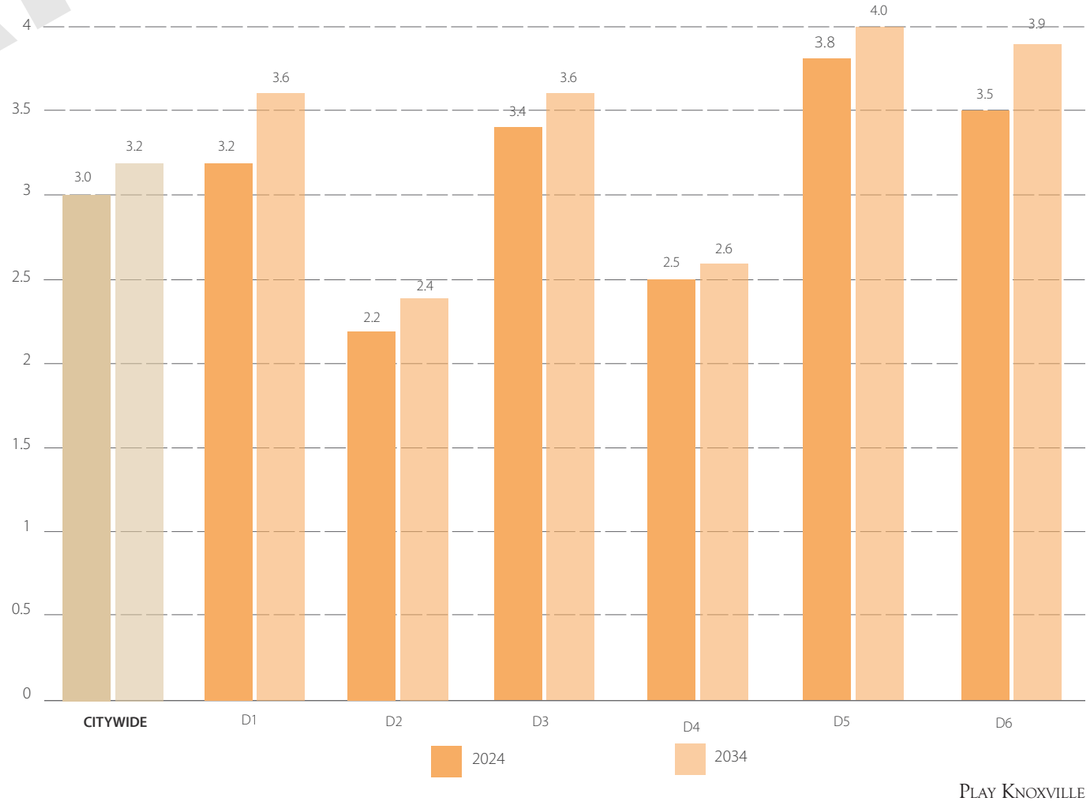
Population Density

Population density is also an important factor to consider in parks and recreation system planning because it typically influences the demand that residents place on parks and recreation services. The higher the population density, the more residents living in a defined geographic area (Census Tract, Council District, etc.). More density typically creates a larger demand both for park land generally, as well as for specific recreation facilities, like ballfields, pools, and programs.

Additionally, higher densities often indicate the presence of multi-unit buildings versus single-family homes. Residents living in multi-unit buildings often rely more on public parks to provide basic, close-to-home recreational opportunities such as playgrounds, lawns to play catch, or dog parks. These are some of the every-day recreational activities that a family living in a single-family home may enjoy on their own property.

Figure 2.2c demonstrates existing and projected population density for each of Knoxville's Council Districts and city-wide over the next 10-years. The City's overall density is expected to rise from 3 residents per acre to 3.2. The least dense Council District is District 2, with only 2.4 residents per acre projected in 2034, while District 5 is expected to reach 4 residents per acre over the next decade.

Figure 2.2c
Population Density City-wide and by Council District
2024 - 2034



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POPULATION DENSITY

Residents per Acre | 2024
By Census Tract
Source: US Census, ACS 5-year

- 0 - 5.0
- 5.1 - 10.0
- 10.1 - 15.0
- 15.1 - 20.0
- 20.1 - 25.0
- 25.1 - 30.0
- 30.1 - 35.0
- 35.1 - 40.0
- 40.1 - 45.0
- 45.1 - 50.0
- 50.1 - 55.0

LEGEND

- Knox County
- City of Knoxville
- City Council Districts
- Other Cities
- City of Knoxville Parks
- County Parks
- Other Parks & Preserves
- Streams + Water Bodies
- Major Roads + Highways

This map explores population density at the Census Tract level, providing small-scale insights into how the City's population is distributed. All of the City's tracts fall within just four of the 5-point categories (0-5; 5.1-10; 10.1-15; 50.1-55). The majority of tracts are 0-5 residents per acre, reflective of a low-density, single-family home development pattern. Most of the medium density tracts (5.1-15) are clustered in Downtown along the north side of the river, although a few are scattered further out in Districts 3, 4, and 5.

The City has one small tract of very high density (54.5 residents per acre) which is in the Fort Sanders area, in the blocks west of James Agee Park.

N 0 1 2 4 Miles
1" = 2 miles

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Age Distribution

It is recommended that the type of programs and recreation facilities that a community provides its residents should reflect the age distribution of the community's population.

Communities with a high concentration of residents ages 0-9 and 10–19 for example, may have a higher need for youth activities such as before-school or after-school care programs and youth athletics. These communities may also require more playgrounds and athletic fields.

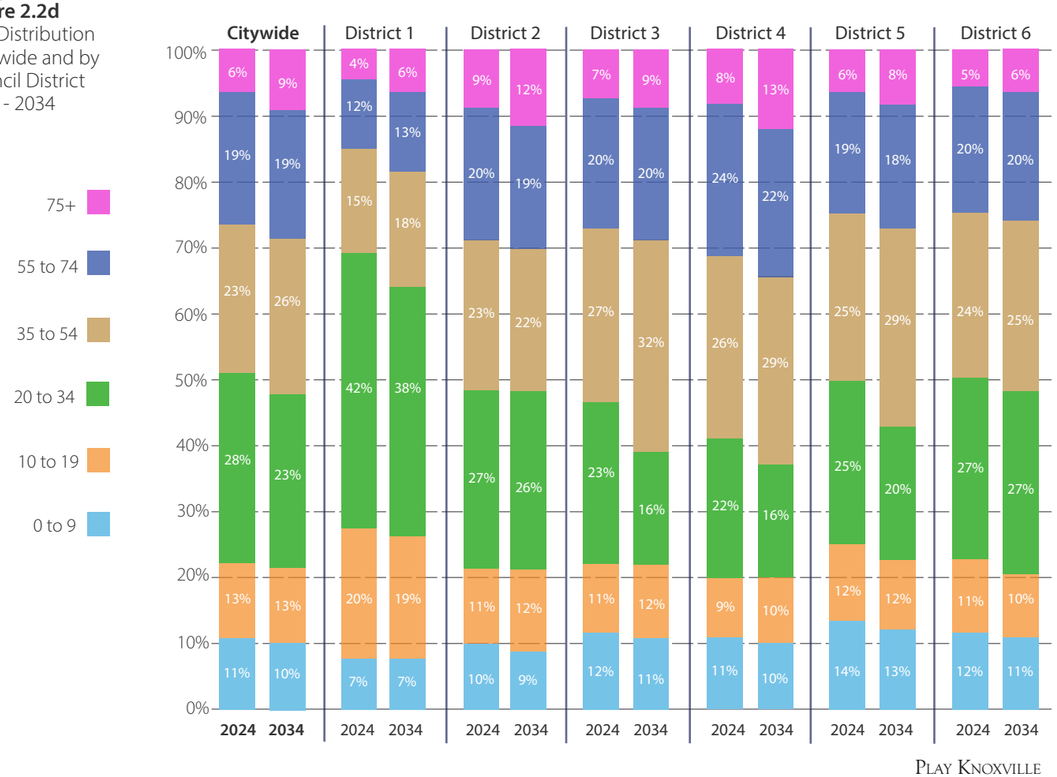
Communities with a high concentration of residents ages 65 and older on the other hand, may require more senior related activities, such as senior leisure programs, health related services, senior center space, and transportation services to transport seniors from activity to activity.

Age distribution by six age groups (0-9, 10-19, 20-34, 35-54, 55-74, and 75 and older) was analyzed for the City and each Council District for 2024, and projected for 2034. Age distribution was also mapped for the year 2024 for the 0-9 and 65+ age groups, based on the particular needs that these groups are expected to demand over the next 10-years.

The analysis suggests that overall Knoxville has a dominant young adult (20-34) population, with secondary skews towards middle age adults (35-54) and seniors (65+). As of 2024, estimates suggest that the young adult population comprises 28 percent of the total population, with seniors at 25 percent.

There is significant variability across the Council Districts. District 1 has the youngest population, reflective of the University of Tennessee's presence in the District, while District 4 skews oldest. Across all Districts, the 75+ age group is expected to see some of the largest increases over the next 10-years. In all Districts but 6, the 20-34 group is expected to decline over the next 10 years.

Figure 2.2d
Age Distribution
City-wide and by
Council District
2024 - 2034



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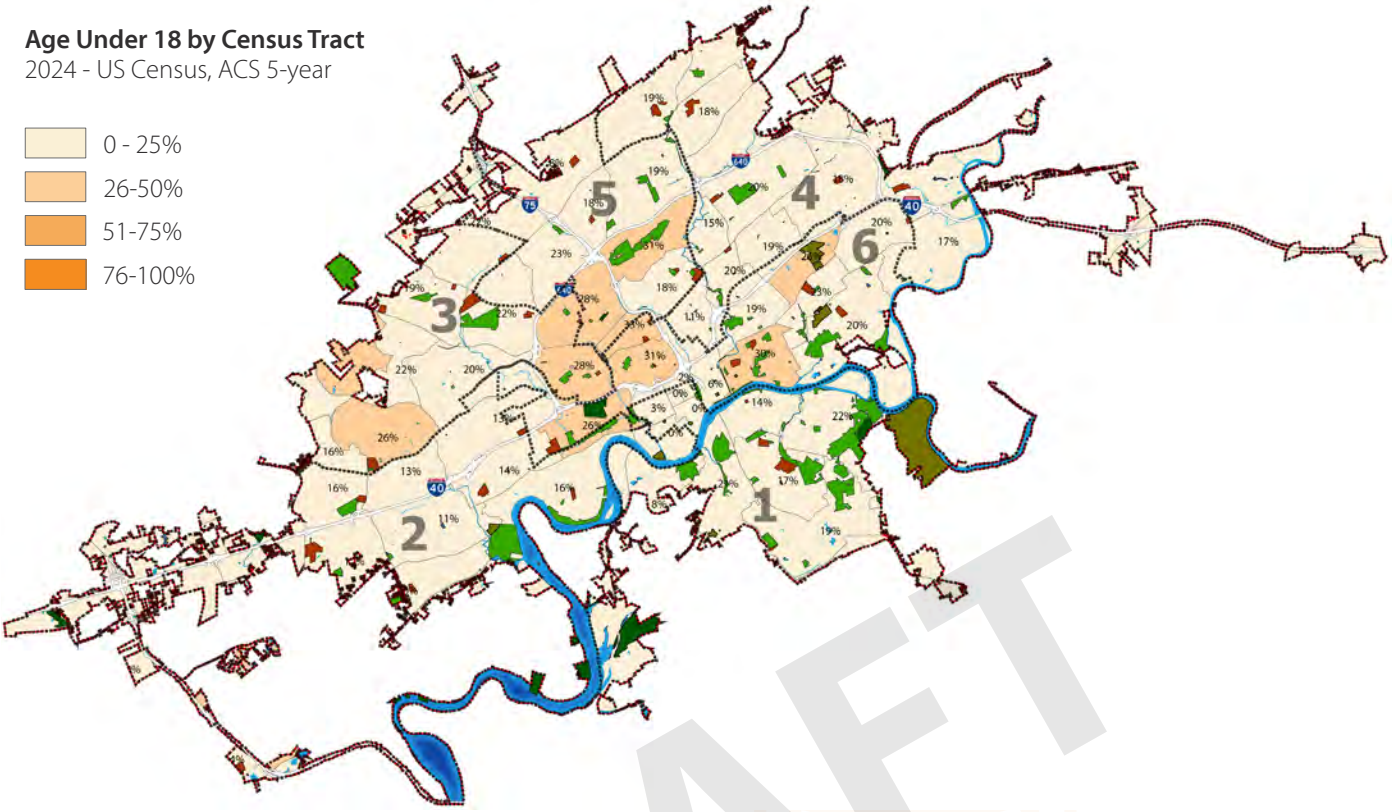
Age Under 18 by Census Tract
2024 - US Census, ACS 5-year



Age 65+ by Census Tract
2024 - US Census, ACS 5-year

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Race and Ethnicity Distribution

Race and ethnicity can be relevant indicators of recreation program and facility needs and desires. Various academic studies have shown that individuals' preferences towards specific park settings, activities, or amenities can vary by racial identification.

Additionally, Knoxville's diversity presents opportunities to celebrate and memorialize past and present figures and cultural keystones that make the City and its communities unique.

Race and ethnicity were analyzed citywide and for each Council District based on 2024 data and projected for 2034. These demographics were also mapped for the year 2024.

The analysis demonstrates that Knoxville has moderate diversity, both racially and ethnically (based on Census data standards, this analysis includes 6 categories of race, which are separate from the ethnic category of Hispanic or Latino). Residents identifying as White are the largest single category citywide, and in Districts 1,2, and 3. In District 4, White (56%) is the largest category and majority as of 2024, but is projected to fall below 50% by 2033.

However, racial groups are relatively segregated, with areas including over 75 percent of each group concentrated in different parts of Knox County.

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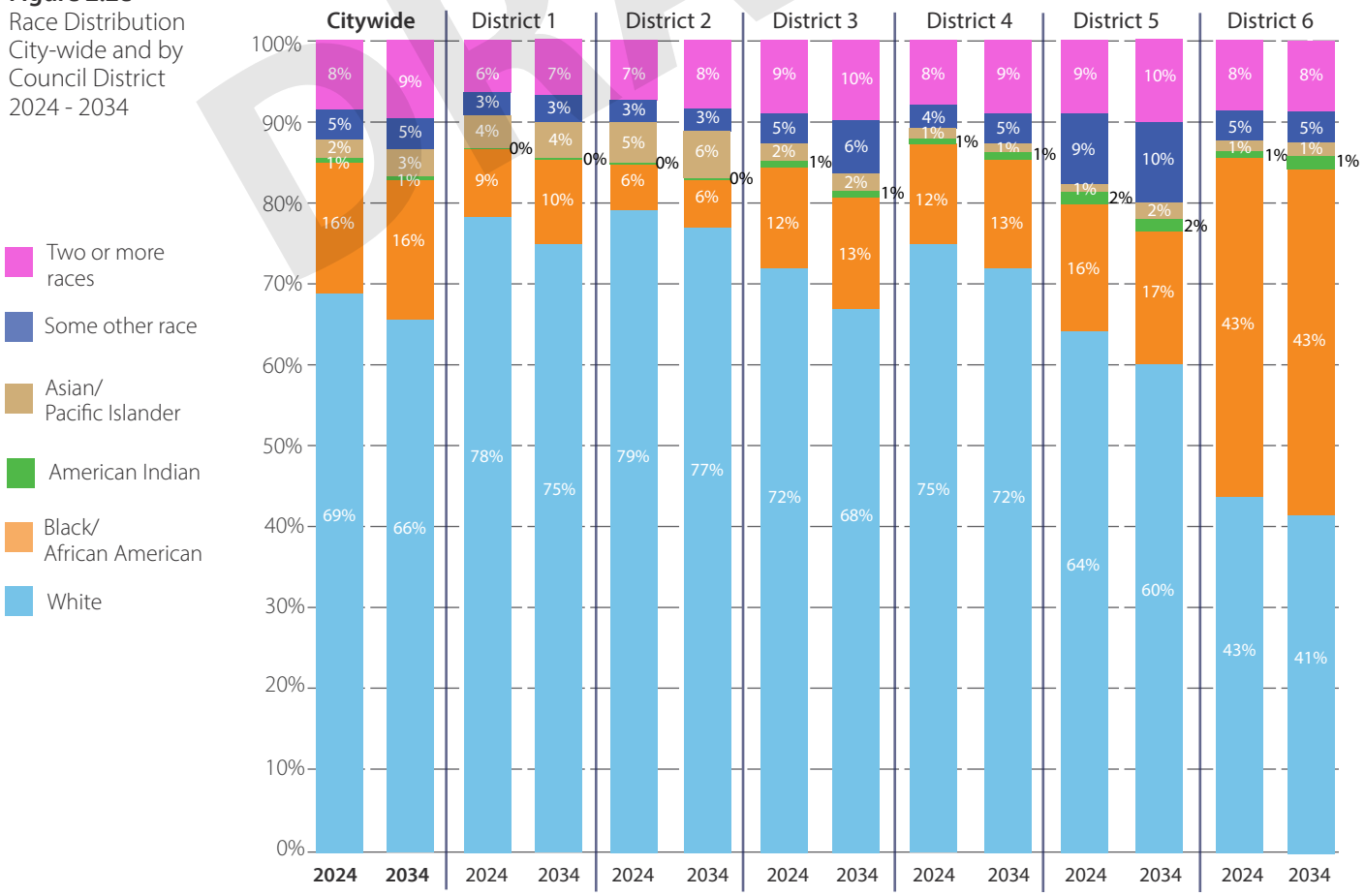
Figure 2.2e
Race Distribution City-wide and by Council District 2024 - 2034



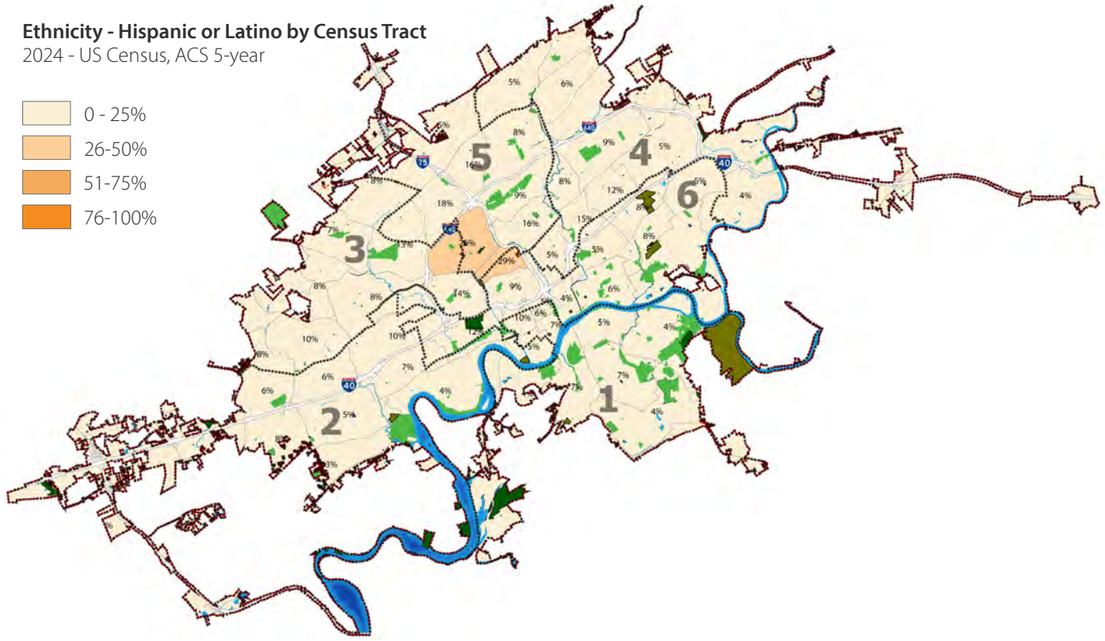
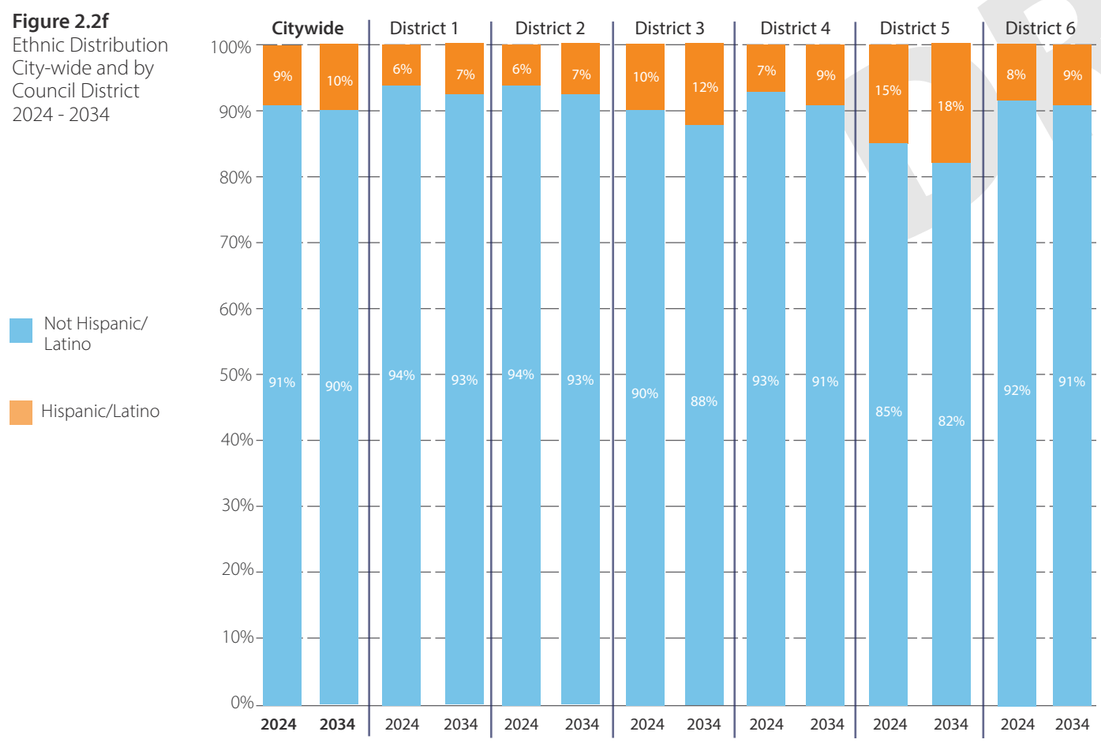


Figure 2.2f illustrates each Council District's ethnicity breakdown for residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino for the years 2024 and 2034, as well as citywide. All Districts and the City are expected to see increases in the Hispanic/Latino percentage. The largest change is projected for District 5, with an increase of 3%.

Figure 2.2f
Ethnic Distribution City-wide and by Council District
2024 - 2034



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RACE

Race | 2024

By Census Tract

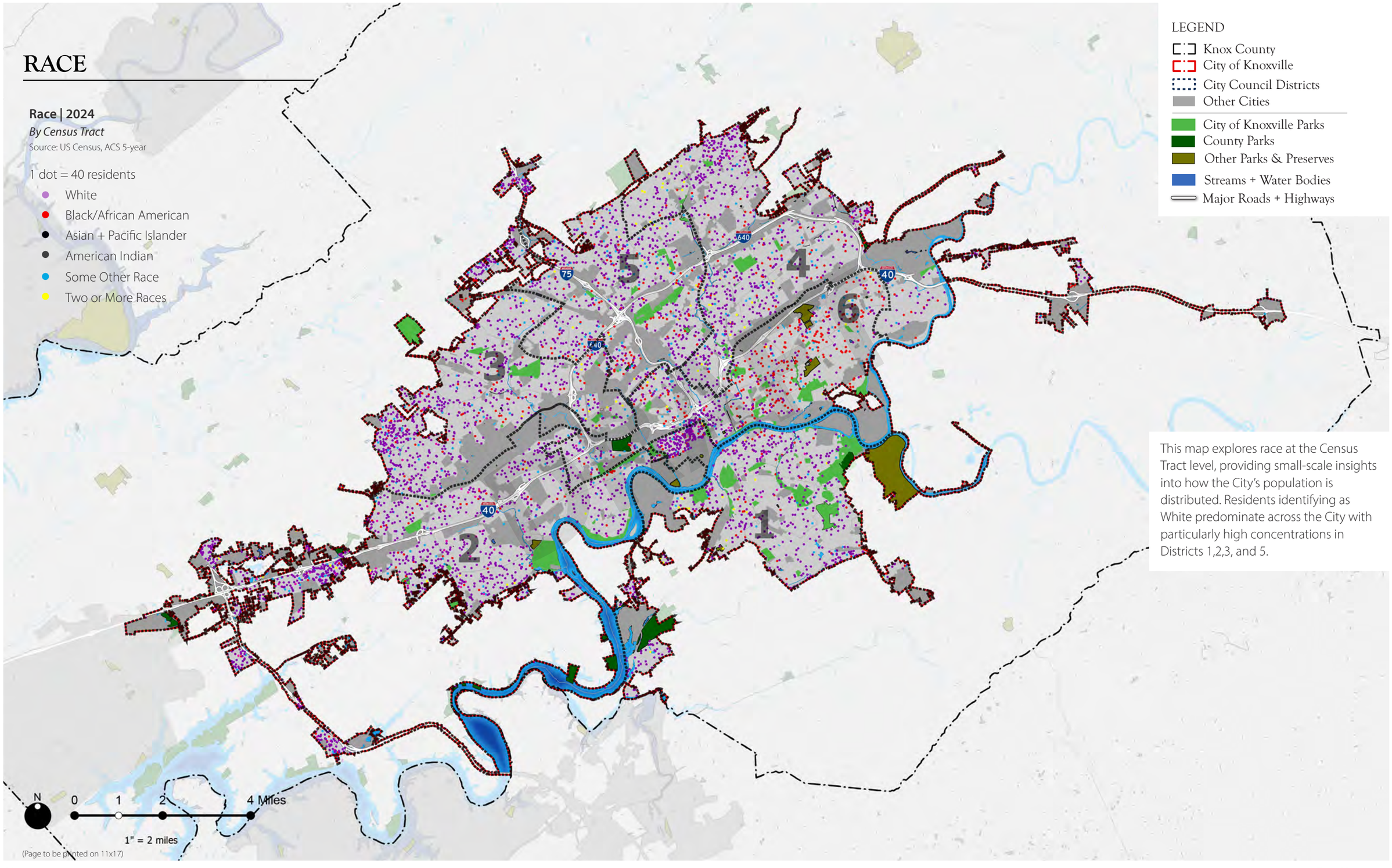
Source: US Census, ACS 5-year

1 dot = 40 residents

- White
- Black/African American
- Asian + Pacific Islander
- American Indian
- Some Other Race
- Two or More Races

LEGEND

- Knox County
- City of Knoxville
- City Council Districts
- Other Cities
- City of Knoxville Parks
- County Parks
- Other Parks & Preserves
- Streams + Water Bodies
- Major Roads + Highways



This map explores race at the Census Tract level, providing small-scale insights into how the City's population is distributed. Residents identifying as White predominate across the City with particularly high concentrations in Districts 1,2,3, and 5.

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Median Household Income and Poverty

Income levels provide a glimpse of the potential purchasing power of city residents. Simply stated, the higher the household income, the greater the potential that residents have disposable income to spend on fee-based leisure programs and activities. The lower the household income, the more residents may rely on local government to provide affordable and/or free parks, recreation, and social programs and services. This is particularly true for families living under the poverty threshold.

Figure 2.2g demonstrates existing and projected median household incomes for each of Knoxville's Council Districts and citywide over the next 10-years. The City's overall MHI is expected to rise by more than $10,000 over the next 5-years, with similar increases in nearly all the Districts. The District with the lowest MHI is District 6 at $36,783, nearly half of the highest district, District 2, at $67,636.

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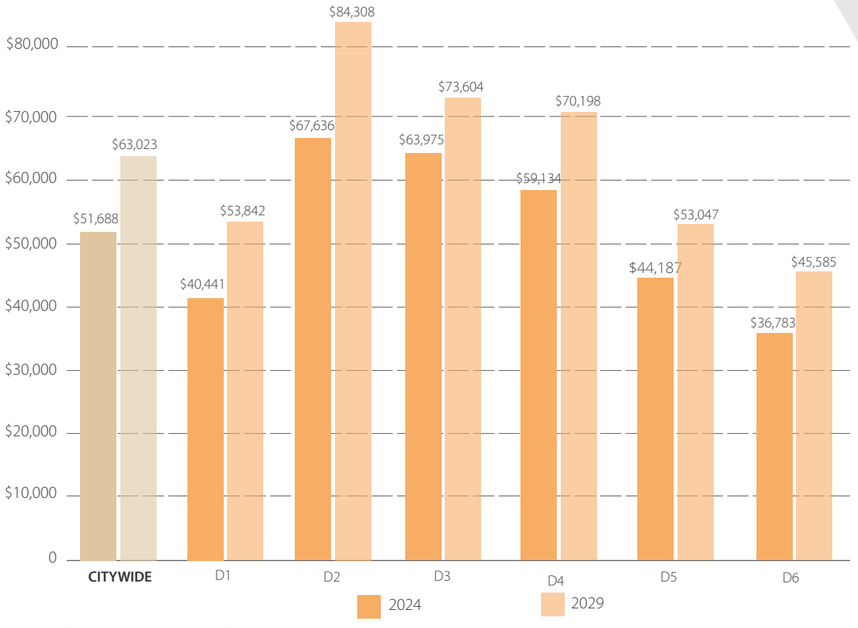
Figure 2.2g
Median Household Income City-wide and by Council District 2024 - 2034
Source: ESRI



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INCOME + POVERTY

Median Household Income | 2024

By Census Tract

Source: US Census, ACS 5-year

- $0 - No Income
- Below Federal Poverty Level *($25,820 HH of 3)*
- $1 - $49,999
- $50,000 - $99,999
- $100,000 - $149,999
- $150,000 - $199,999

LEGEND

- Knox County
- City of Knoxville
- City Council Districts
- Other Cities
- City of Knoxville Parks
- County Parks
- Other Parks & Preserves
- Streams + Water Bodies
- Major Roads + Highways

N 0 1 2 4 Miles

1" = 2 miles

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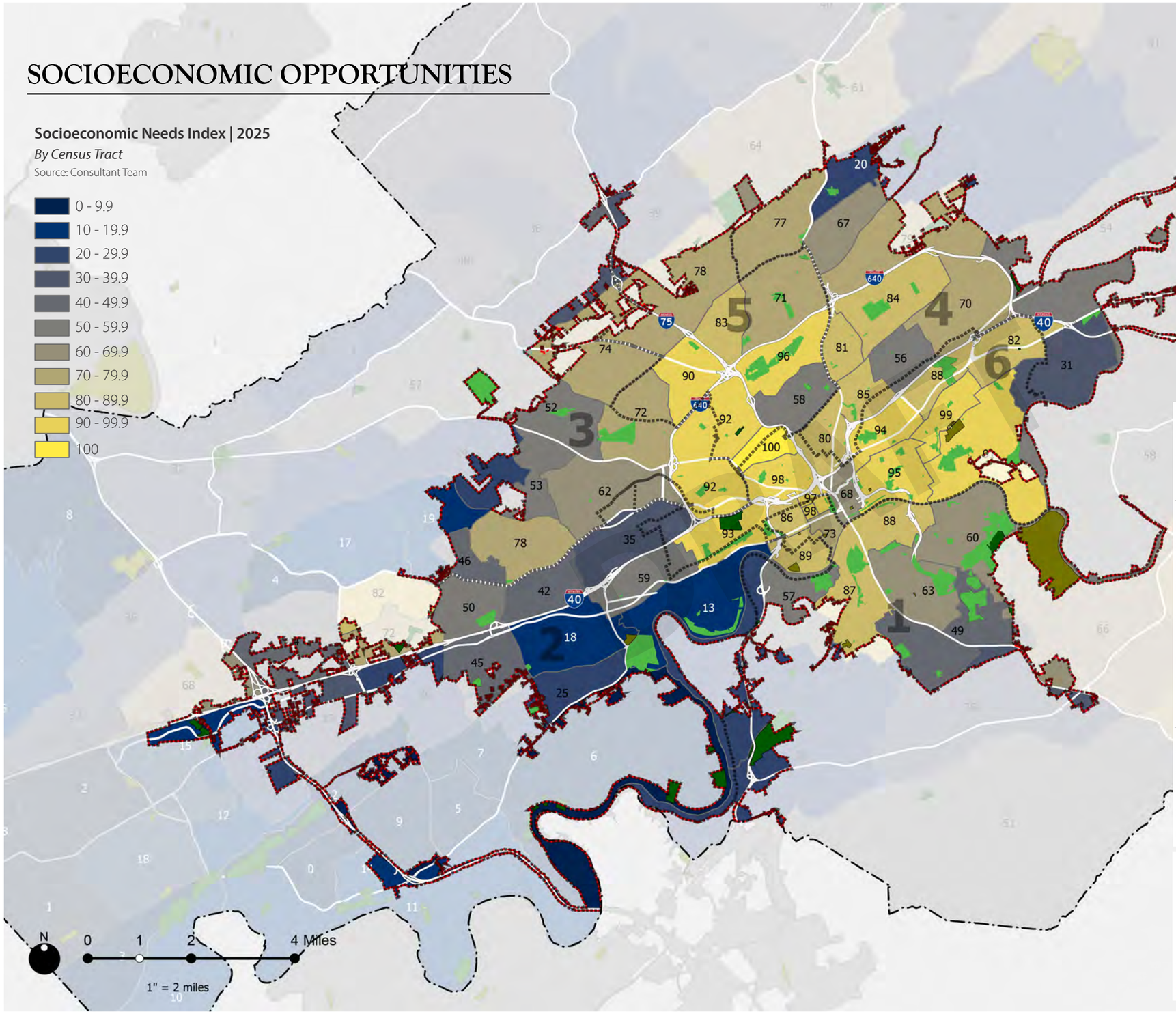
SOCIOECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES



While demographic attributes on their own have important parks and recreation implications, they can also be combined to identify a comprehensive assessment of needs and opportunities in the form of an index.

To this end, the Consultant Team developed a Socioeconomic Needs Index. The purpose of developing this Index is to understand which areas of the City are facing greater challenges, based on integrating a broad range of neighborhood conditions and demographic data, including population density, poverty, age, crime rate, and others.

One potential outcome of this index is to use the scores as an attribute when prioritizing projects. Prioritizing high need areas in effect renders them "opportunity areas," where the public investment in parks and recreation has the potential to help address the ongoing challenges.

This Socioeconomic Index analysis utilizes ten demographic and socioeconomic indicators to measure the level of potential socioeconomic need for 121 census tracts in Knox County. Most of the demographic data included in this analysis comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates from 2019-2023, accessed use ESRI's ArcGIS online.

1. Population Density (weighted x2)
2. Poverty (weighted x2)
3. Residents under age 18
4. Residents age 65 or over
5. Median Household Income
6. Crime
7. Unemployment
8. Education Level
9. Single Parent Households
10. Residents with disabilities

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2.3 parks system context

The Elements of Recreation

This section analyzes the parks and recreation system through three elements, which form the basis for all recreation services:

- Recreation Program Analysis
- Department Operations
- Park Land and Recreation Facilities

Recreation Program Analysis

Overview

As a key component of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Consultant Team conducted a Recreation Program Analysis of the services offered by Knoxville's Parks and Recreation Department (Department). The assessment offers an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings and helps identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding programming. The assessment also assists in identifying Core Program Areas, program gaps within the community, key Department-wide issues, areas of improvement, and future programs and services for residents and visitors.

These program findings and recommendations are based on a review of information provided by the Department including program descriptions, financial data, website content, and discussions with staff. This report addresses the program offerings from a systems perspective for the entire portfolio of programs.

Framework

The Department provides a broad range of recreational activities, appealing to a range of community members. From youth to seniors, from casual participants to core user groups, and from long-time programming participants to new users, the Department and its recreation offerings have become a mainstay in Knoxville's community. These program offerings are supported with dedicated spaces which include trails, recreation centers, athletic facilities, senior centers, aquatic centers, parks, and more.

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Program Assessment Overview

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheet:

Overall, the program descriptions/goals do a good job of effectively communicating to the public key benefits and desired outcomes of each Core Program Area.

- Age segment distribution: The Department's programming is aligned with the community's current population but needs to be monitored regularly to ensure program distribution continues to match evolving Knoxville demographics.
- Program lifecycles: Approximately 60% of the Department's current programs are categorized in introductory or early stages, while only 24% of programs fall into the Mature Stage. A more complete description of Lifecycle Stages can be found later in this analysis.
- Program classification: 21% of all programs are deemed 'essential', while 55% are 'important' and 24% are 'value-added'.
- Pricing strategies: Strategies are varied across the board. Currently, the most frequently used approaches include pricing based on age segment, group discounts, by Department cost recovery goals, and by customer's ability to pay. This should be continued in addition to implementing some new and additional pricing strategies which can be found later in this analysis. Furthermore, it is essential to understand the current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals.
- Marketing: From a marketing and promotions standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including the Department's website, flyers/posters, email blasts, newsletters, in-facility signage, and various social media platforms as a part of the marketing mix.
  - » The Department would benefit from identifying Return on Investment (ROI) for all marketing initiatives.
  - » Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions.
  - » Direct SMS/MMS/Text message marketing could be utilized internally to drive brand awareness.
- Financial performance measures: Financial performance measures, such as cost recovery goals, are currently being utilized across some, but not all Core Program Areas. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to consider tracking cost recovery for all program areas. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the Department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability.

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Core Program Areas

To help achieve the Department's mission, it is important to identify Core Program Areas based on current and future needs to create a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people. The philosophy of the Core Program Area is to assist staff, policy makers, and the public to focus on what is most important to the community. Program areas are considered as Core if they meet a majority of the following criteria:

- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.
- The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the Department's overall budget.
- The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.
- The program area has wide demographic appeal.
- There is a tiered level of skill development available within the program area's offerings.
- There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.
- There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
- The Department controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market.

Existing Core Program Areas

Through discussions with the Department Staff, seven Core Program Areas were identified that are currently being offered. These Core Program Areas make up the entirety of the Department's programming portfolio and include every type of demographic and user served within Knoxville. Across and within each of the Core Program Areas are major program types that are designed to meet current and emerging needs of Knoxville residents. These Core Program Areas, as well as some overarching goals and example programs within each one, are described in the table below and pages following it.

AQUATICS

Description: Indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities focused on promoting a water safe mindset, while also providing water-based programs and facilities to our communities.

Goals: Promote water safety to reduce drownings within the community by providing swim lessons and water safety education for all ages.

Offer entry-level swim lessons and fitness programs at low or no cost to ensure accessibility for all community members, focusing on water safety skills and basic fitness.

- *Swim Lessons*
- *Lifeguard Training*
- *Water Safety Instructor Training*
- *Exercise Programs*
- *Water Aerobics*

ARTS CENTER (KAC)

Description: An array of art, clay, and dance classes promoting mental health well-being, encouraging positive self-image, and building confidence for people of all ages and skill levels.

Goals: Provide classes, equipment, and tools to participants.

Utilize critical problem-solving skills and foster a positive environment.

Make art accessible to underserved or underrepresented populations in the community at low cost or no cost.

- *Youth Arts*
- *Adult Clay*
- *Adult 2-D & 3-D Art*
- *Outreach*
- *Adult Dance*

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ATHLETICS

Description: Recreational youth and adult sports leagues designed to promote social interaction, competitive spirit, and physical fitness.

Goals: Provide high quality, developmentally appropriate sports programs for Knoxville residents of all skill levels.

- *Youth Basketball*
- *Youth Baseball & Softball*
- *Adult Softball*
- *Adult Volleyball*
- *Adult Kickball*
- *Adult Baseball*

DYNAMIC RECREATION

Description: Recreational opportunities for the special needs community to promote inclusion and develop basic skills.

Goals: Foster a reoccurring recreational outlet for the special needs community and provide the opportunity to individuals with disabilities to participate in competitive sports.

Allow individuals with disabilities to improve upon social integration and improve fine and gross motor skills.

- *Special Olympics Sports Training*
- *Pickleball*
- *S.A.I.L*
- *Arts & Crafts*
- *Board Games*
- *Hiking*
- *Wheelchair Basketball*

RECREATION

Description: Promote healthy lifestyles and character building through physical, wellness, and social activities and programs for people of all ages to enjoy their leisure time.

Goals: Promote enjoyment, nourishment, and socialization for mental health and wellbeing.

Provide affordable quality programs, parks, and recreation venues and a safe and fun environment.

- *After School*
- *Family Fun Game Night*
- *Summer Camps*
- *Fitness Classes*
- *Children's Choir*
- *Homeschool P.E.*
- *Youth Open Gym*
- *Open Pickleball, Basketball, & Volleyball*

SAFETY CITY

Description: Provides educational programing for elementary age students in the areas of traffic and fire safety.

Goals: Provides a 2nd grade curriculum that meets the TN Health Learning standards for Fire and Occupational Safety.

Offer a full day field trip to teach children about traffic and fire safety to reduce injuries and fatalities.

Offer programs unique to small groups to achieve Scout badge requirements while learning about safety skills.

- *2nd Grade Field Trips*
- *Special Needs Field Trips*
- *Public Hours*
- *Scout Programs*

SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Description: Promote healthy lifestyles and character building through physical, wellness, and social activities and programs for older adults/seniors to enjoy their leisure time.

Goals: Enhance the quality of life, physical/mental health, and wellness of participants.

Offer entry-level programs accessible at little to no cost.

- *Senior Bingo*
- *Card Games*
- *Knitting & Crochet Lessons*
- *Senior Exercise*
- *Guitar Practice*

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Program Strategy Analysis

Age Segment Analysis

An Age Segment Analysis was completed by Core Program Area, exhibiting an over-arching view of the age segments served by different program areas, and displaying any gaps in segments served. It is also useful to perform an Age Segment Analysis by individual programs in order to gain a more nuanced view of the data. The table below depicts each Core Program Area and the most prominent age segments they serve. Under each Core Program Area, a 'P' was indicated if that Core Program Area serves a certain age segment as its Primary demographic, an 'S' as its Secondary demographic, or a 'P/S' if it serves that age segment as both a Primary and Secondary demographic.

Figure 2.3a
Age Segment Analysis

	Ages Served					
Core Program Area	Preschool (5 & Under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Adult (18+)	Senior (55+)	All Ages Programs
Aquatics	S	P S	P S	P S	P S	P
Arts Center KAC	S	P	P S	P	P	
Athletics	S				S	
Dynamic Recreation				P	P	P
Recreation						P
Safety City	S	P	S			
Senior Activities				S	P	

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Based on the age demographics of the Knoxville community, current program offerings seem to be well-aligned with the community's age profile. Knoxville does a great job of having offerings for all ages, as well as offering programs for more specific age groups. While the Department does a great job of having dedicated core programs tailored to the community's adult and senior demographics, Knoxville also does well to serve younger populations with specific Core Program Areas.

The Department has also done a good job catering to the remainder of the community by ensuring most age segments have dedicated programming geared towards them; specifically, every age segment but Preschool has at least two different Core Program Areas that serve as a Primary demographic, with most having three. Moving forward, it is recommended that the Department continues introducing new programs with specific age demographics in mind to address any potential unmet needs in the future.

Staff should continue to monitor demographic shifts and program offerings to ensure that the needs of each age group are being met. It would be best practice to establish a plan including what age segment to target, establish messaging, identify which marketing method(s) to utilize, create a social media campaign, and determine what to measure for success before allocating resources towards a particular effort.

Program Lifecycle Analysis

A Program Lifecycle Analysis involves reviewing each program offered by the Department to determine the stage of growth or decline for each. This provides a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall mix of programs managed by the Department to ensure that an appropriate number of programs are "fresh" and that relatively few programs, if any, need to be discontinued. This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data, but rather, is based on staff members' knowledge of their programs.

There are seven individual stages; the first three of which (Introduction, Take-Off, and Growth) fall into the beginning lifecycle stages, which are the expected stages that healthy programs grow from new offerings to programs that the community depends on and turns out for consistently. The Mature Stage often anchors a programming portfolio, as mature programming provides a Department with the highest level of consistent interaction, attendance, and earned revenue. Following the Mature Stage, programs will slowly enter the Saturated, Decline, and No-Go stages, where they will naturally filter out of a programming portfolio over time. The table below shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the Department's programs.

Figure 2.3b
Lifecycle Analysis

Lifecycle Stage	Description	Actual Program Distribution		Recommended Distribution
Introduction	New program; modest participation	8%	60%	50-60% total
Take - Off	Rapid participation growth	17%		
Growth	Moderate, but consistent population growth	35%		
Mature	Slow participation growth	24%	24%	40% total
Saturated	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	16%	16%	0-10% total
Decline	Decline participation	0%		
No-Go	Cancelled Programs	0%		

Overall, the Lifecycle Analysis depicts a majority concentration of programs in their early lifecycle stages. Approximately 60 percent of all programs fall within the beginning stages Introduction, Take-Off, and Growth, with 35 percent of those programs being specifically in the Growth Stage. It is recommended to have 50-60 percent of all programs within these beginning stages as they provide the Department an avenue to energize its programmatic offerings, so the Department is meeting that quota. These stages ensure the pipeline for new programs is there prior to programs transitioning into the Mature Stage, of which only 24 percent of all Knoxville program offerings fall into. This stage anchors a program portfolio, and it is recommended to have roughly 40 percent of programs within this stage in order to achieve a stable foundation.

Additionally, just 16 percent of the assessed programs are identified as being Saturated, Declining, or No-Go (canceled). It is a natural progression for programs to eventually transition into Saturated and Declining Stages. However, it is recommended to have 0-10 percent of programs in the decline stage and if programs begin to reach these stages rapidly, it could be an indication that the quality of the programs does not meet expectations, or there is not as much of a demand for those programs. As programs enter into the Decline Stage, they must be closely reviewed and evaluated for repositioning or elimination. When this occurs, the Department should modify these programs to begin a new lifecycle within the Introductory Stage or replace the existing programs with new programs based upon community needs and trends.

Staff should complete a Program Lifecycle Analysis on an annual basis and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance. Furthermore, the Department could include annual performance measures for each Core Program Area to track participation growth, customer retention, and percentage of new programs as an incentive for innovation and alignment with community trends.

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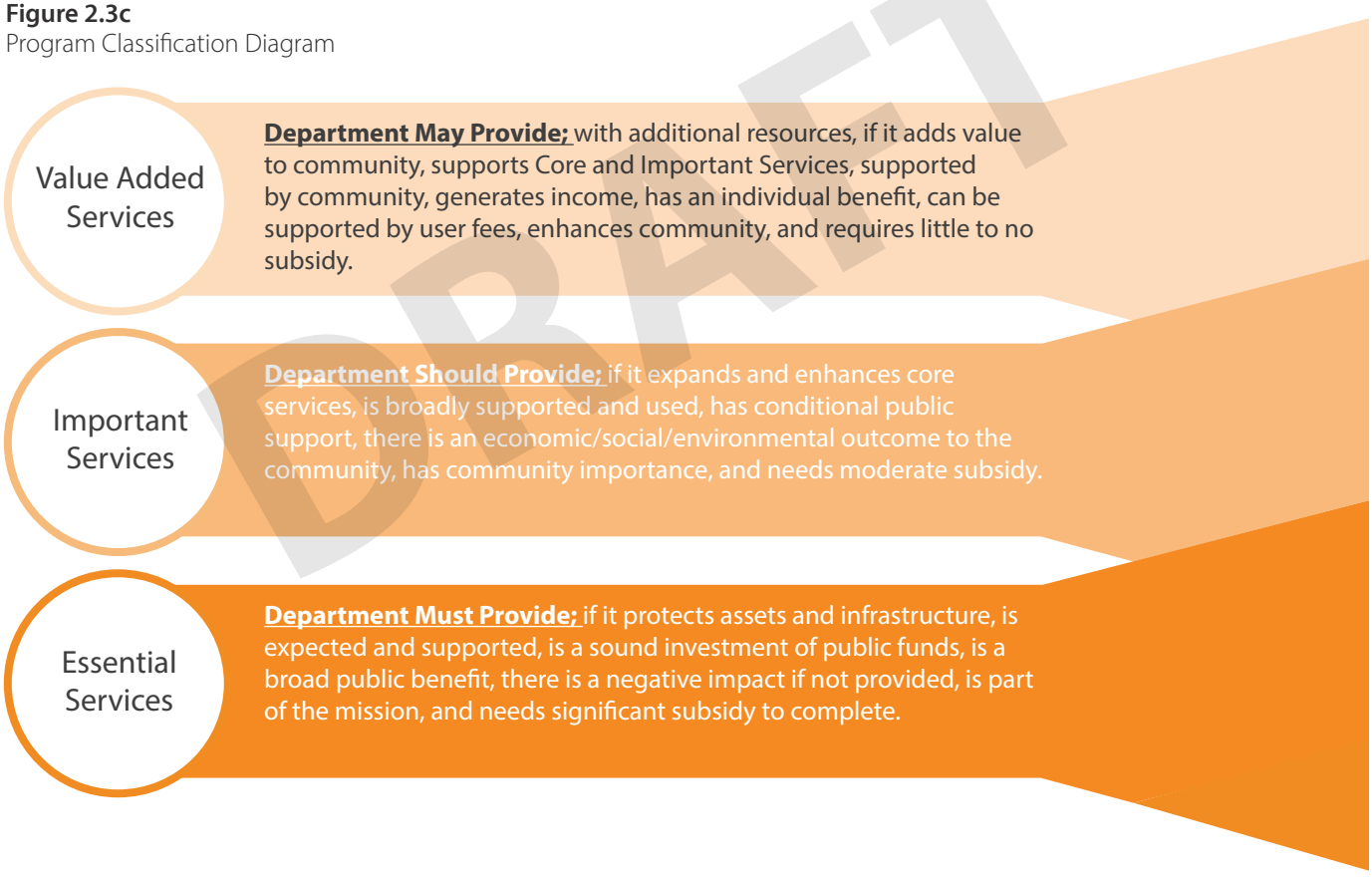
Program Classification

Conducting a classification of services analysis informs the Department on how each program serves the overall organization mission, the goals and objectives of each Core Program Area, and how the program should be funded regarding tax dollars and/or user fees and charges. How a program is classified can help to determine the most appropriate management, funding, and marketing strategies.

Program classifications are based on the degree to which the program provides a public benefit versus a private benefit. Public benefit can be described as everyone receiving the same level of benefit with equal access, whereas private benefit can be described as the user receiving exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit.

For this exercise, the Department used a classification method based on three categories: Essential Services, Important Services, and Value-Added Services. Where a program or service is classified depends upon alignment with the organizational mission, how the public perceives a program, legal mandates, financial sustainability, personal benefit, competition in the marketplace, and access by participants. The following graphic describes each of the three program classifications.

Figure 2.3c
Program Classification Diagram



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With assistance from staff, a classification of individual programs within the Department was conducted. The results presented in Figure 2.3d represent the current classification distribution of recreation program services. Programs should be assigned cost recovery goal ranges within these overall categories. With only 21percent of individual program offerings deemed Essential, it is likely that the Department functions with most individual programs having the potential to create more cost recovery. Because most programs fall into the Important category (55%) or the Value-Added category (24%), the Department has several opportunities to create earned revenue potential if users are willing to pay a price increase without losing participation.

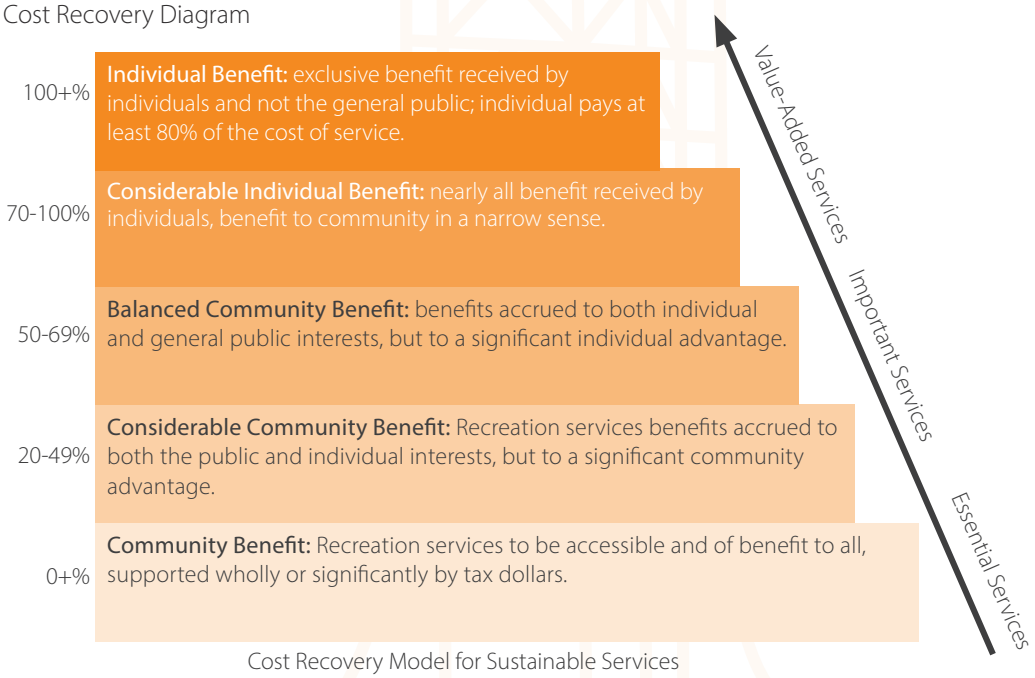
Figure 2.3d
Program Classification

Factors	Essential	Important	Value - Added
Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment	High public expectation	High public expectation	High individual and interest group expectation
Financial Sustainability	Free, nominal or fee tailored to public needs, requires public funding	Fees cover some direct costs, requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target	Fees cover most direct and indirect costs, some public funding as appropriate
Benefits (e.g., health, safety, protection of assets, etc.)	Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided)	Public and individual benefit	Primarily individual benefit
Competition in the Market	Limited or no alternative providers	Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need	Alternative providers readily available
Access	Open access by all	Open access, Limited access to specific, users	Limited access to specific users
Best Practice Cost Recovery Goal*	0-50%	50%-75%	75%-100%+
Knoxville Program Distribution	**21%**	**55%**	**24%**

As the Department continues to evolve to better meet the community's needs, there could be an added benefit to managing the services if they all were classified according to the Cost Recovery Model for Sustainable Services depicted at right.

Given the number of free programs offered and generally low-cost recovery goals, it would be helpful to further distribute programs internally within sub-ranges of cost recovery as depicted above. This will allow for programs to fall within an overall service classification tier while still demonstrating a difference in expected/ desired cost recovery goals based on a greater understanding of the program's goals (e.g., Pure Community Services versus Mostly Community Services or Community and Individual Mix versus Mostly Individual Mix).

Figure 2.3e
Cost Recovery Diagram



Cost Recovery Model for Sustainable Services

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Cost of Service and Cost Recovery Analysis

Cost recovery targets should at least be identified for each Core Program Area at a minimum, and for specific programs or events when realistic. The identified Core Program Areas would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics including administrative costs. Theoretically, staff should review how programs are grouped for similar cost recovery and subsidy goals to determine if current practices still meet management outcomes.

Currently, the Department utilizes cost recovery in some, but not all core program areas. For example, while Arts Center (KAC) has developed cost recovery goals and tracked cost recovery metrics, other Core Program Areas like Dynamic Recreation and Safety City are free by design.

Determining cost recovery performance and using it to make informed pricing decisions involves a three-step process:

1. Classify all programs and services based on the public or private benefit they provide (as completed in the previous section).
2. Conduct a Cost-of-Service Analysis to calculate the full cost of each program.
3. Establish a cost recovery percentage, through Department policy, for each program or program type based on the outcomes of the previous two steps and adjust program prices accordingly.

The following section provides more details on steps 2 and 3.

Understanding the Full Cost of Service

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost of accounting needs to be created for each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and the Department's program staff should be trained on this process. A Cost-of-Service Analysis should be conducted on each program, or program type, that accurately calculates direct (e.g., program-specific) and indirect (e.g., comprehensive, including administrative overhead) costs. Completing a Cost-of-Service Analysis not only helps determine the true and full cost of offering a program, but it also provides information that can be used to price programs based upon accurate delivery costs. The figure below illustrates the common types of costs that should be accounted for in a Cost-of-Service Analysis.

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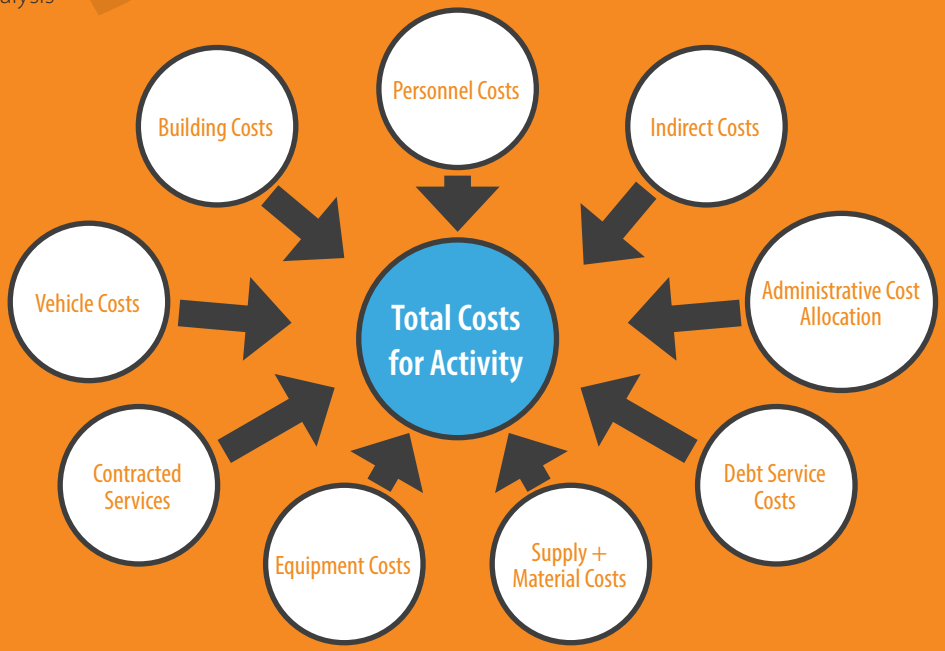
Figure 2.3f
Cost-of-Service Analysis
Cost Factors



The methodology for determining the total Cost-of-Service involves calculating the total cost for the activity, program, or service, then calculating the total revenue earned for that activity. Costs (and revenue) can also be derived on a per unit basis. Program or activity units may include:

- Number of participants
- Number of tasks performed
- Number of consumable units
- Number of service calls
- Number of events
- Required time for offering program/service

Departments use Cost-of-Service Analysis to determine what financial resources are required to provide specific programs at specific levels of service. Results are used to determine and track cost recovery as well as to benchmark different programs provided by the Department between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost-of-Service totals have been calculated. Program staff should be trained on the process of conducting a Cost-of-Service Analysis and the process should be undertaken on a regular basis.

Actual cost recovery can vary based on the Core Program Type, and even at the individual program level within a Core Program Area. Several variables can influence the cost recovery target, including lifecycle stage, demographic served, and perhaps most important, program classification. It is normal for programs within each Core Program Area to vary in price and subsidy level. The program mix within each Core Program Area will determine the cost recovery capabilities.

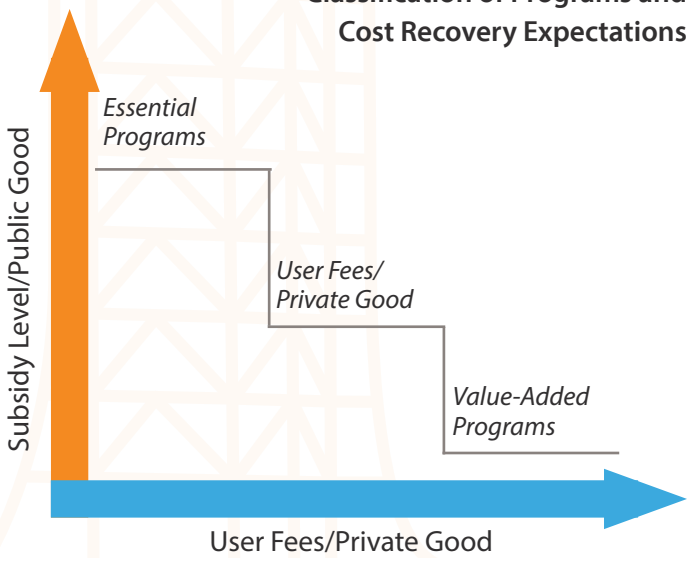
With approved cost recovery goals, annual tracking, and quality assurance, actual cost recovery will improve. Use the key performance indicator on the previous page and update it annually to include the cost recovery goal and the actual cost recovery achieved. Each Core Program Type can be benchmarked against itself on an annual basis.

Cost Recovery Best Practices

Cost recovery targets should reflect the degree to which a program provides a public versus individual good. Programs providing public benefits (e.g., Essential programs) should be subsidized more by the Department; programs providing individual benefits (e.g., Value-Added programs) should seek to recover costs and/or generate revenue for other services. To help plan and implement cost recovery policies, the Consultant Team has developed the following definitions to help classify specific programs within program areas.

- **Essential** programs category is critical to achieving the organizational mission and providing community-wide benefits and therefore, generally receive priority for tax-dollar subsidization.
- **Important or Value-Added** program classifications generally represent programs that receive lower priority for subsidization.
  - » Important programs contribute to the organizational mission but are not essential to it; therefore, cost recovery for these programs should be high (e.g., at least 80 percent overall).
  - » Value-Added programs are not critical to the mission and should be prevented from drawing upon limited public funding, so overall cost recovery for these programs should be near or in excess of 100 percent.

Classification of Programs and Cost Recovery Expectations



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Pricing

Pricing strategies are another mechanism agencies can use to influence cost recovery. Overall, the degree to which the Department uses various pricing strategies is rather varied, with different areas of the Department utilizing different approaches to program pricing. However, pricing tactics are primarily concentrated on age segment, group discounts, and by the customer's ability to pay.

Currently, the Core Program Areas that utilize the largest variety of pricing strategies are Aquatics and Arts Center KAC (utilizing 7 out of 10 of the listed pricing strategies). Moving forward, the Department should consider implementing some additional strategies, when deemed appropriate, such as weekday/weekend rates or prime/non-prime time rates, as they are both valuable strategies when setting prices. However, it is important to know where the Department is currently having success in terms of pricing; while finding extra earned revenue is necessary, maintaining a good balance of program costs without creating a price barrier for lower income participants should remain a priority.

Staff should continue to monitor the effectiveness of the various pricing strategies they employ and adjust as necessary. It is also important to regularly monitor for local competitors as an increase in programming competition may alter program pricing. The table below details pricing methods currently in place by each Core Program Area and additional potential strategies to be implemented over time.

Figure 2.3g
Pricing Strategy

Current Pricing Strategies										
Core Program Area	Age Segment	Family/ Household Status	Residency	Weekday/ Weekend	Prime / Non-Prime Time	Group Discounts	By Location	By Competition (Market Rate)	By Cost Recovery Goals	By Customer's Ability to Pay
Aquatics	●	●				●	●	●	●	●
Arts Center KAC	●	●				●	●	●	●	●
Athletics						●			●	●
Dynamic Recreation										
Recreation	●		●							●
Safety City										
Senior Activities										●

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Marketing and Promotion

When forming new and maintaining existing programs and services, utilizing effective marketing strategies is an integral step in securing appropriate and significant attendance and engagement from the community. Based on the feedback from staff of the Department, the table below illustrates the methods currently being used within each Core Program Area.

In Use

- Program Guides (print)
- Program Guides (online)
- Website
- Smart/Mobile Phone Enabled Website
- Apps
- Flyers and/or Brochures
- Email blasts and/or listserv
- Public Service Announcements
- Road sign Marquees
- Radio Ads (paid or free)
- Newsletters (print)
- Newsletters (online)
- In-facility Signage
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter/X
- YouTube
- QR Codes

Not In Use

- Television ads (paid or free)
- Blogs/Vlogs
- Direct Mail
- Webinars
- Paid Advertisements
- On-Hold Preprogrammed Phone Messages
- SMS/MMS/Text Message Marketing
- Blogs/Vlogs
- Webinars

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The Department utilizes a broad range of marketing strategies to get the word out, including some strategies used across all Core Program Areas (like the Department's website, flyers and brochures, email blasts, and QR codes). These strategies will remain important in keeping the community up to date with both Core Program Areas and individual program offerings, especially in the face of local competition potentially pulling users from the Department.

It should be noted that the Consultant Team observed that Knoxville's Parks and Recreation Department is progressive in its marketing and promotions efforts, utilizing several strategies across a diverse set of media. Additionally, it is noted that the Department's management of its social media platforms is consistent and a reliable avenue for increasing and maintaining program awareness and participation.

Program Strategy Recommendations

In general, the Department program staff should continue the cycle of evaluating programs on both individual merit as well as the program mix as a whole. This can be completed at one time on an annual basis, or in batches at key seasonal points of the year, as long as each program is checked once per year. The following tools and strategies can help facilitate this evaluation process:

Mini Business Plans

The Consultant Team recommends that Mini Business Plans (2-3 pages) for each Core Program Area be updated on a yearly basis. These plans should evaluate the Core Program Area based on meeting the outcomes desired for participants, cost recovery, percentage of the market and business controls, Cost-of-Service, pricing strategy for the next year, and marketing strategies that are to be implemented. If developed regularly and consistently, they can be effective tools for budget construction and justification processes in addition to marketing and communication tools.

Program Development & Decision-Making Matrix

When developing program plans and strategies, it is useful to consider all of the Core Program Areas and individual program analysis discussed in this Program Assessment. Lifecycle, Age Segment, Classification, and Cost Recovery Goals should all be tracked, and this information, along with the latest demographic trends and community input, should be factors that lead to program decision-making. Community input can help staff focus in on specific program areas to develop new opportunities for various target markets including the best marketing methods to use.

A simple, easy-to-use tool similar to the figure below will help compare programs and prioritize resources using multiple data points, rather than relying solely on cost recovery. In addition, this analysis will help staff make an informed, objective case to the public when a program is in decline, but beloved by a few, is retired. If the program/service is determined to have strong priority, appropriate cost recovery, good age segment appeal, good partnership potential, and strong market conditions, the next step is to determine the marketing methods by completing a similar exercise as the one seen below.

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Marketing & Promotion Methods

Program Idea *(Name or Concept)*: _____

Marketing Methods	Content Developed	Contact Information	Start Date
Activity Guide			
Website			
Newspaper Article			
Radio			
Social Media			
Flyers - Public Places			
Newspaper Ad			
Email Notification			
Event Website			
School Flyer/Newsletter			
Television			
Digital Sign			
Friends & Neighbors Groups			
Staff Promotion @ Events			

Internal Factors

Priority Ranking:	High	Medium	Low
Program Area:	Core	Non-core	
Classification	Essential	Important	Discretionary
Cost Recovery Range	0-40%	60-80%	80+%
Age Segment	Primary	Secondary	

Sponsorship/Partnership

Potential Partnerships	Monetary	Volunteers	Partner Skill	Location/Space
Potential Sponsors	Monetary	Volunteers	Sponsor Skill	Location/Space

Market Competition

Number of Competitors _____

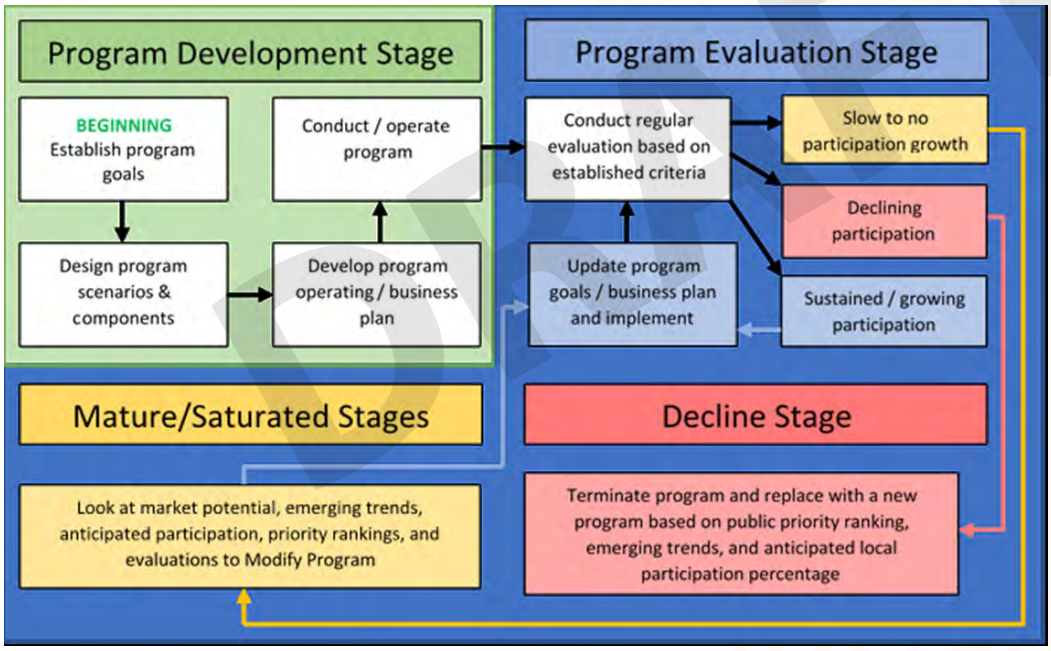
Competitiveness	High	Medium	Low
Growth Potential	High	Low	

Program Evaluation Cycle (with Lifecycle Stages)

Using the Age Segment and Lifecycle analysis, and other established criteria, program staff should evaluate programs on an annual basis to determine program mix. This can be incorporated into the Program Operating/Business Plan process. A diagram of the program evaluation cycle and program lifecycle is found in Figure 2.3h below. During the Introductory Stages, program staff should establish program goals, design program scenarios and components, and develop the program operating/business plan. Regular program evaluations will help determine the future of a program.

If participation levels are still growing, continue to provide the program. When participation growth is slowing (or non-existent) or competition increases, staff should look at modifying the program to re-energize the customers to participate. When program participation is consistently declining, staff should terminate the program and replace it with a new program based on the public's priority ranking and/or program areas that are trending nationally/locally, while taking into consideration the anticipated local participation percentage.

Figure 2.3h
Program Evaluation Cycle and Program Lifecycle



Operations and Maintenance Assessment

Overview

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes an evaluation of the current operations and staffing model and circumstances in order to inform recommendations aimed at improving the organizational efficiency and effectiveness of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department (Department) in Plan. The Department currently has authorized 52 full-time employees and over 600 part-time / seasonal employees to manage, program and activate the system of sites and facilities that includes:

- 99 park sites, totaling 2,363 acres
- 26 community, recreation, arts, and senior center facilities totaling over 180,000 square feet
- 178 unique recreational program and service offerings offered year-round

Site and facility maintenance is not overseen by the Parks and Recreation Department but rather is provided and managed by the separate Public Service Department in coordination with Parks and Recreation. The Public Service Department has nine divisions and a total of 304 FTEs, with five of these divisions supporting the sites and facilities of parks and recreation as detailed below:

1. Facilities Maintenance
2. Horticulture
3. Urban Forestry
4. Construction
5. Central and Waste Services

Organizational Structure

The Department is organized to delivery programs and services across a multitude of disciplines and areas of focus. These are illustrated in Figure 2.3i below and in the functional organizational chart, Figure 2.3j that follows.

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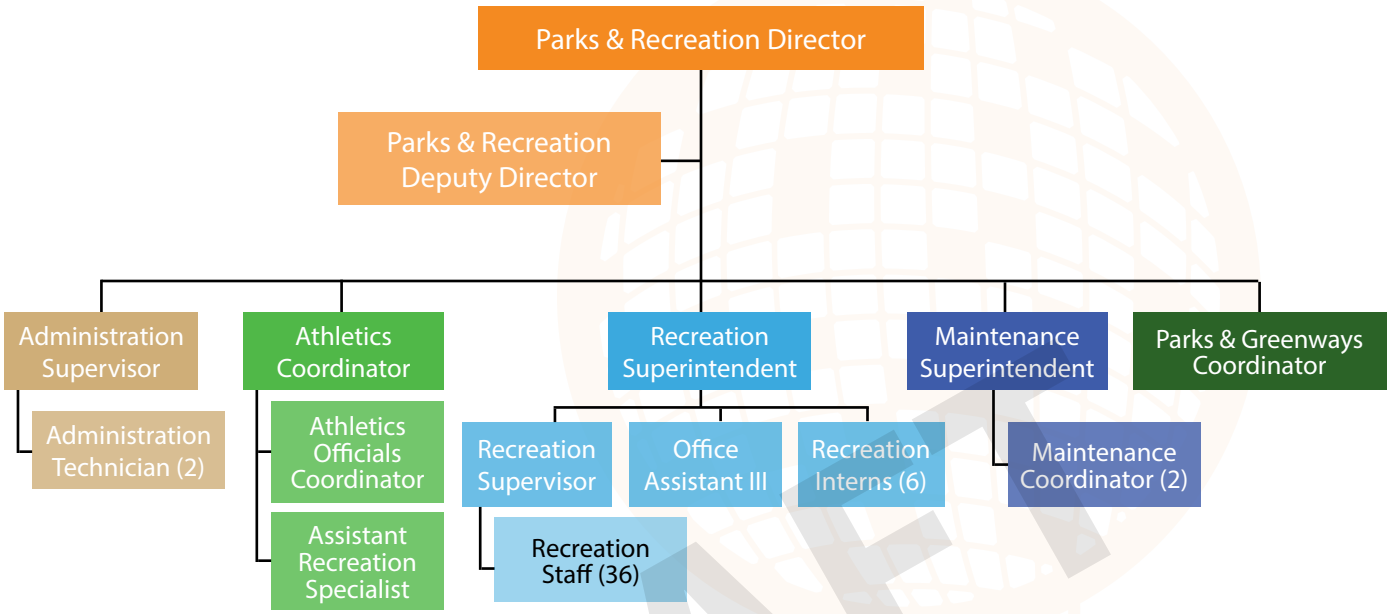
Figure 2.3i
Parks and Recreation Divisions

*Maintenance of sites and facilities within the park system is predominantly managed by the Public Service Department with support and coordination from limited staff within the Parks and Recreation Department.

Figure 2.3j
Parks and Recreation Department Organizational Chart

The organizational chart below depicts the current full-time personnel of the Parks and Recreation Department.



Organizational Capacity Findings

Through the process of interviewing staff and stakeholders, as well as an analysis of current staffing levels of the Department and supporting departments overseeing site and facility maintenance in comparison to national best practice standards, there were several key findings identified. These findings will be utilized to develop specific recommendations in this Plan for improving the organizational capacity of the Department over the next 5-10 years.

KEY FINDING
The Department is over-reliant on part-time and seasonal staff.

While there are 52 FTEs authorized within the Department, there are over 600 part-time and seasonal employees needed to meet service demands. Operating a parks and recreation department with a work force so heavily dominated by part-time and seasonal employees (with low-end wages) can create numerous challenges:

- **Reduced Continuity and Potential Loss of Institutional Knowledge**
- **Increased Hiring and Scheduling Challenges**
- **Increased Training and Supervisory Requirements**
- **Diminished Organizational Commitment and Accountability**
- **Potential Negative Impacts on Service Quality and Safety**

Full-time staff in Recreation Programs in particular are spread very thin across a substantial system of facilities. Across the network of pools and indoor centers, there is an average of 1.4 FTEs per facility responsible for year-round management of the facility and supervision of assigned part-time/ seasonal staff.

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In order to compare staffing levels supporting parks and recreation in Knoxville both the full-time capacity of the Parks and Recreation Department and the Public Service Department (PSD) (performing site and facility maintenance) must be taken into account. This is due to the fact that traditional park and recreation maintenance is not organized under the Parks and Recreation Department in Knoxville as it is in most agencies. Rather, crews of the PSD are responsible for all site and facility maintenance of all city assets including parks and recreation facilities. It was determined that while this paradigm is not common for most parks and recreation departments, it is a system that works well within the Knoxville municipal structure.

In order to calculate the impact of parks and recreation maintenance on the crews of the PSD, the proportion of annual crew time for each impacted crew was identified in coordination with PSD leadership. Figure 2.3k below details these findings.

Figure 2.3k
Public Service Department Full-Time Equivalent Staff for Parks and Recreation

PSD Crew	Total FTEs	% Annual Crew Time on Parks and Rec	Equivalent FTEs for Parks and Recreation Maintenance
Construction	56	25%	14.0
Horticulture	44	80%	35.2
Facilities Maintenance	26	50%	13.0
Central & Waste Services	30	20%	6.0
Urban Forestry	10	30%	3.0
TOTAL			**71.2**

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Combining these current maintenance staffing FTEs with the 52 full-time positions of the Parks and Recreation Department equals a total of 123.2 FTEs that are responsible for the daily delivery of parks and recreation programs and services, as well as related site and facility maintenance of the City of Knoxville. This then can be compared with national best practice standards as detailed in the National Recreation and Parks Association's 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review for staffing of public park and recreation agencies in the United States. The most common standard utilized is the ratio of FTEs for every 10,000 residents of a community. Agencies are then further differentiated based on the size of the community. For communities of similar size to Knoxville (100,000 – 200,000 residents), the median staffing levels are 8.2 FTEs / 10,000 residents. Figure 2.3l below illustrates currently Knoxville has only 6.2 FTEs / 10,000 residents. This suggests a need for additional staff (both in PRD and PSD) to serve parks and recreation needs.

Figure 2.3l
Parks and Recreation Department Full-Time Equivalent Staff Benchmarking

Knoxville Total Population (2024)	198,792
Current FTEs	123.2
Current FTEs / 10,000 residents	6.2
National Median FTEs / 10,000 residents*	8.2
National Median FTEs*	163.0
Current Deficiency from National Median*	39.2 FTEs

*For communities with 100,000 – 200,000 residents (Source: 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review)

Maintenance Funding Assessment Findings

The financial assessment performed in this analysis evaluated annual unit maintenance costs for park/sites and facilities/buildings within the parks and recreation system. Total annual budgetary expenditures were analyzed in comparison to the breadth of maintenance responsibilities in both acres of park lands and square feet of facilities. There is no national best practice standard or median available for these comparisons, however from the related experience of the Consultant Team performing this analysis across numerous departments every year, there are typical ranges that have been identified for systems similar to Knoxville. The details of this analysis and its findings are provided in the table below.

Figure 2.3m
Parks and Recreation Maintenance Assessment Analysis Findings

Knoxville Inventory	Annual Maintenance Expenditures	Annual Unit Cost (per acre or per square foot)	Typical Annual Unit Cost Range	Percentile of Typical Range
2,363 acres	$2,090,860.25	$884.83 /acre/year	$1,000 - $4,000	-3.8%
208,696 square feet	$708,108.84	$3.39 /sq ft/year	$3 - $6	13.0%

As seen in this analysis, Knoxville is considerably lower in resourcing park/site maintenance than the typical annual maintenance cost per acre compared to similar systems nationally. Facility maintenance is resourced within the range of typical annual maintenance cost per square foot, falling at 13 percent of those observable results.

Additional Operational Assessment Findings

In the course of evaluation current operations of the Department and in multiple work sessions with leadership staff, additional findings emerged that are addressed with recommendations in this Master Plan.

Current capital planning is not integrated and does not involve all the internal stakeholders that will be responsible for operations and maintenance of sites and/or facilities once constructed.

Deferred maintenance in the system of park sites, park amenities and features, and recreation facilities is significant and growing. A more formal maintenance management system will improve the ability of the PSD and the Department to perform preventative maintenance and forecast major capital repair and replacement needs.

Staffing deficiencies go beyond traditional maintenance and recreation staff, but also include marketing/communications, therapeutic recreation, planning and safety, and data management/ systems coordination.

Performance tracking on community grants awarded by the City can be greatly improved to increase accountability of partners and impact delivered by these investments.

The current model of **engaging local recreation commissions** to program and maintain sports fields is outdated and could be revised to be more equitable to all partners. It is not well structured to provide consistency, enforceability, and accountability on the part of the commissions.

There is **no formal interlocal agreement** established with Knox County Schools regarding shared site and facility usage. This relationship should be modernized with a master agreement that is equitable to all parties.

Ongoing evaluation of fee structures should include an assessment of program and facility performance including but not limited to current and desired cost recovery. Further modernization of fees should include a distinction between resident and non-resident users/participants.

There are numerous opportunities for **better utilizing technology** to improve the efficiency of maintenance activities, access to and overall efficacy of recreation programming, and visitor experiences at parks and facilities.

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Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Existing Parks and Recreation System

Park Land

The City of Knoxville's parks and recreation system is currently comprised of 99 parks, totaling 2,363+ acres. Parks are classified by eight categories to assist with management and maintenance operations:

Minipark

- Smallest park (typically 3 acres or less)
- Designed to serve residents who live within walking distance (may have little to no parking or located in a residential neighborhood)
- Little to no programming or reservable amenities

Neighborhood Park

- Larger than minipark and typically has more amenities (typically 3-10 acres)
- Designed to serve residents who live within walking distance (may have little to no parking)
- Little to no programming or reservable amenities

Community Park

- Larger than neighborhood parks, typically 10+ acres
- Serve a broader population and purpose and offers a wider range of activities/amenities than neighborhood parks

Signature Park

- Typically a large park – 50+ acres (although can be any size based on overall draw)
- Serves entire city by providing a wide variety of outdoor recreation amenities
- Generally has programmable and reservable amenities

Nature Conservation Park

- Set aside to preserve natural or cultural resources, landscapes, and open space or provide enhanced aesthetics
- Use for recreation may be hiking, biking, etc. compared to other typical park amenities
- Usually include dedicated watershed or natural/ non-developed or unbuildable/ undevelopable

Special Use Park

- Intended for specialized (examples include Safety City Park and Chilhowee Park) or single-purpose recreational activities, such as athletic fields, dog parks, skate parks, or golf courses

Greenway

- Linear parks usually next to watershed, railroad, or other resources that enhance the park experience
- May be used for transportation as well as for recreation, typically narrow unless connected to a larger park

Future

- Parks that are planned and/or in development with funding sources identified

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Indoor Facilities

The system includes 26 indoor facilities that offer a range of indoor uses, such as recreation centers, community centers, and arts centers, and which provide residents with over 208,000 square feet of indoor space. These facilities range from the Larry Cox Senior Center, which offers senior services and a kitchen, to the South Knoxville Community Center which includes an indoor gym, community rooms, and an indoor fitness area, to the Williams Creek Community Center and Pool, which includes indoor pickleball courts and an ADA-compliant pool for adaptive programming.

Other Parks and Recreation Providers

Other public and semi-public parks and recreational resources are also located throughout the City of Knoxville and just beyond its boundaries, which are patronized by Knoxville residents. These include facilities provided by the County, UT, adjacent cities, the State, and organizations like the YMCA, the Greening Youth Foundation, and the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Figure 2.3n depicts the City's parks and recreation system while Figure 2.3o includes an inventory of the system.

Paths & Trails

The City of Knoxville has an expansive and diverse system of paths and trails. From Greenway shared use paths that offer biking and walking routes to destinations across the City, to walking paths within parks, to hiking and mountain biking trails weaving across the City's Urban Wilderness parks, there are hundreds of miles of trails to explore, with new segments regularly being added.

Paths and trails are classified under the following three categories:

Greenways

- Typically 10-12' paved, shared use paths (for mixed bike and pedestrian traffic) that are separated from vehicular traffic in their own right of way or as a sidepath adjacent to a road (protected by curb or barrier).
- These paths may run through parks, but typically extend for multiple miles connecting neighborhoods and destinations throughout the city.
- Paths may be a minimum of 8' and are occasionally unpaved, but feature compacted aggregate suitable for most bikes
- Designed to serve both active transportation (commuting) and recreation (exercise).
- Trailheads often feature parking, drinking fountains, and bike maintenance equipment.

Park Loop **Greenways**

- Same physical standards as Greenways, but these paths are located entirely within one park, without existing Greenway connections beyond the park.

Walking Paths, Hiking trails, MTB & Multi-Use Trails

- This category covers the broad range of remaining paths and trails in parks that are designed for recreation activities.
- Walking paths are typically 5-8' paved paths in parks that provide pedestrian connections to the various facilities within a park.
- Hiking trails are typically 3-6' unpaved trails for hiking in Nature Conservation Parks, occasionally in other park types.
- Mountain Biking (MTB) trails are typically 3-6' unpaved trails designed for mountain bikes featuring maintained natural surfaces and some wooden boardwalk sections, as well as jumps and other obstacles.
- Multi-Use Trails are typically 5-8' unpaved trails designed for both mountain biking and hiking.

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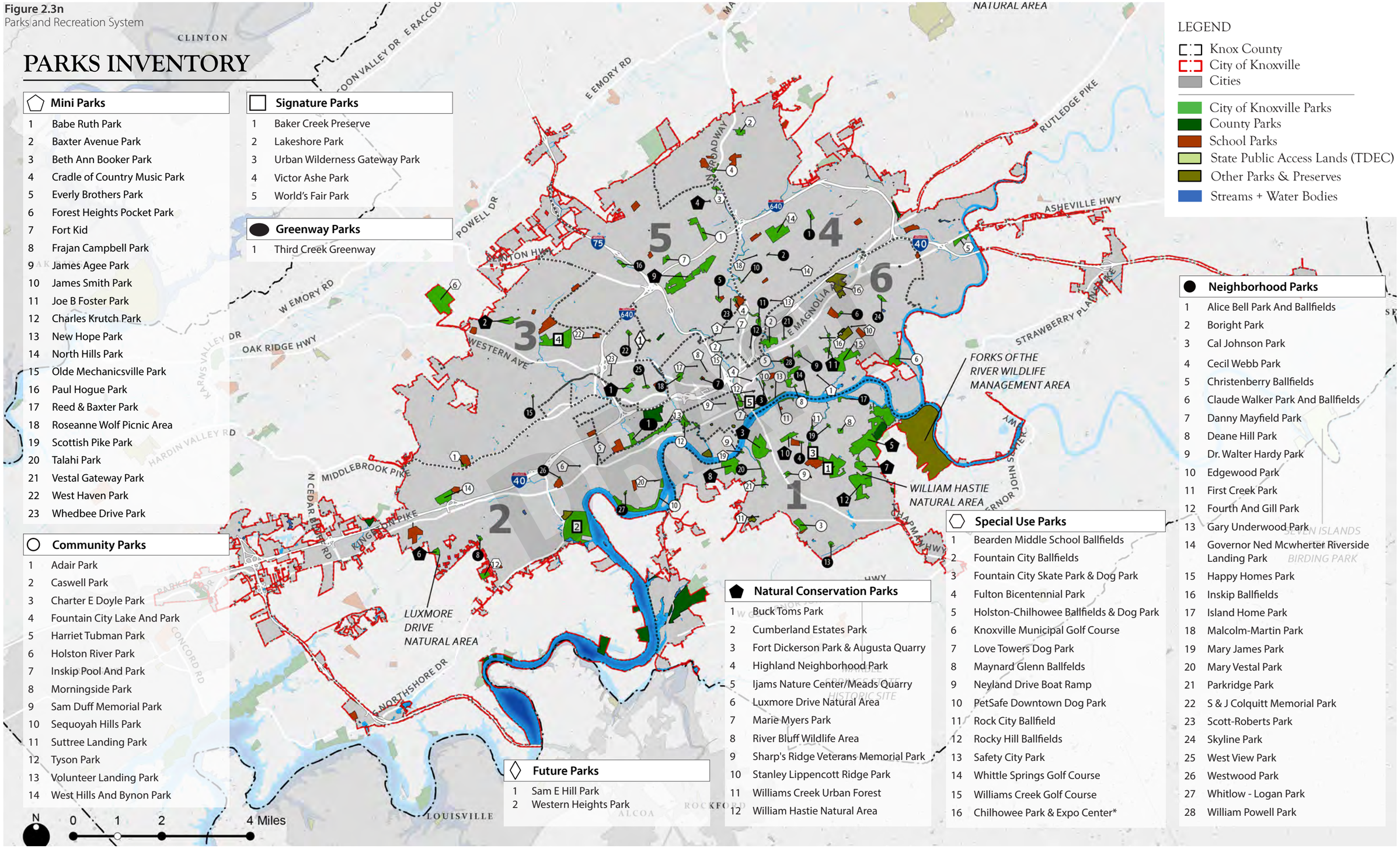
Figure 2.3n
Parks and Recreation System

PARKS INVENTORY



Mini Parks

1 Babe Ruth Park
2 Baxter Avenue Park
3 Beth Ann Booker Park
4 Cradle of Country Music Park
5 Everly Brothers Park
6 Forest Heights Pocket Park
7 Fort Kid
8 Frajan Campbell Park
9 James Agee Park
10 James Smith Park
11 Joe B Foster Park
12 Charles Krutch Park
13 New Hope Park
14 North Hills Park
15 Olde Mechanicsville Park
16 Paul Hogue Park
17 Reed & Baxter Park
18 Roseanne Wolf Picnic Area
19 Scottish Pike Park
20 Talahi Park
21 Vestal Gateway Park
22 West Haven Park
23 Whedbee Drive Park

Community Parks

1 Adair Park
2 Caswell Park
3 Charter E Doyle Park
4 Fountain City Lake And Park
5 Harriet Tubman Park
6 Holston River Park
7 Inskip Pool And Park
8 Morningside Park
9 Sam Duff Memorial Park
10 Sequoyah Hills Park
11 Suttree Landing Park
12 Tyson Park
13 Volunteer Landing Park
14 West Hills And Bynon Park

Signature Parks

1 Baker Creek Preserve
2 Lakeshore Park
3 Urban Wilderness Gateway Park
4 Victor Ashe Park
5 World's Fair Park

Greenway Parks

1 Third Creek Greenway

Future Parks

1 Sam E Hill Park
2 Western Heights Park

Natural Conservation Parks

1 Buck Toms Park
2 Cumberland Estates Park
3 Fort Dickerson Park & Augusta Quarry
4 Highland Neighborhood Park
5 Ijams Nature Center/Meads Quarry
6 Luxmore Drive Natural Area
7 Marie Myers Park
8 River Bluff Wildlife Area
9 Sharp's Ridge Veterans Memorial Park
10 Stanley Lippencott Ridge Park
11 Williams Creek Urban Forest
12 William Hastie Natural Area

Special Use Parks

1 Bearden Middle School Ballfields
2 Fountain City Ballfields
3 Fountain City Skate Park & Dog Park
4 Fulton Bicentennial Park
5 Holston-Chilhowee Ballfields & Dog Park
6 Knoxville Municipal Golf Course
7 Love Towers Dog Park
8 Maynard Glenn Ballfelds
9 Neyland Drive Boat Ramp
10 PetSafe Downtown Dog Park
11 Rock City Ballfield
12 Rocky Hill Ballfields
13 Safety City Park
14 Whittle Springs Golf Course
15 Williams Creek Golf Course
16 Chilhowee Park & Expo Center*

LEGEND

Knox County
City of Knoxville
Cities

City of Knoxville Parks
County Parks
School Parks
State Public Access Lands (TDEC)
Other Parks & Preserves
Streams + Water Bodies

Neighborhood Parks

1 Alice Bell Park And Ballfields
2 Boright Park
3 Cal Johnson Park
4 Cecil Webb Park
5 Christenberry Ballfields
6 Claude Walker Park And Ballfields
7 Danny Mayfield Park
8 Deane Hill Park
9 Dr. Walter Hardy Park
10 Edgewood Park
11 First Creek Park
12 Fourth And Gill Park
13 Gary Underwood Park
14 Governor Ned Mcwherter Riverside Landing Park
15 Happy Homes Park
16 Inskip Ballfields
17 Island Home Park
18 Malcolm-Martin Park
19 Mary James Park
20 Mary Vestal Park
21 Parkridge Park
22 S & J Colquitt Memorial Park
23 Scott-Roberts Park
24 Skyline Park
25 West View Park
26 Westwood Park
27 Whitlow - Logan Park
28 William Powell Park

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Fig. 2.3o Parks and Recreation Master Plan Inventory

| | | | | Number of Indoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Number of Outdoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Fig. 2.3o Parks and Recreation Master Plan Inventory (continued)

| | | | | Number of Indoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Number of Outdoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Fig. 2.3o Parks and Recreation Master Plan Inventory (continued)

| | | | | Number of Indoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Number of Outdoor Facilities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Fig. 2.3p Parks and Recreation Master Plan Inventory - Buildings

			Number of Indoor Facilities														
Facility Name	Council District	Indoor Center Square Footage	Recreation Centers	Community Centers	Senior Centers	Teen Centers	Nature Centers	Fitness Centers (Weight room, etc.)	Gyms (Basketball, etc.)	Stadiums	Arena	Performance Amphitheater	Indoor Track	Indoor Competitive Swimming Pools	Indoor Separated Dive Well	Indoor pool designated exclusively for leisure (i.e. non-competitive)	Therapeutic Pool
Cecil Webb Community Center	1	14,274		1				1	1								
South Knoxville Community Center	1	32,000		1	1			1	1							1	
South Knoxville Optimist Club Building	1	2,000	1														
Deane Hill Community Center	2	6,500		1					1								
Cumberland Estates Community Center	3	10,200		1				1	1								
West Haven Community Center	3	2,910		1					1								
Happy Homes Rec Center (Owned by Knox Co.)	3	1,000	1														
Knoxville Arts Center	4	4,000	1														
Larry Cox Senior Center	4	2,702			1												
Milton Roberts Community Center	4	5,986		1					1								
Richard Leake Community Center	4	4,308		1					1								
Oakland Recreation Center (Owned by Knox Co.)	4	1,140	1														
Fountain City Arts Center	4	4,000	1														
New Hope Recreation Center	4	4,030	1														
Fountain City Recreation Center	4	3,650	1														
Christenberry Community Center	5	8,385		1					1								
Inskip-Norwood Community Center	5	4,836		1					1								
Adair Park Building	5	489	1														
Sam E Hill Park (in design)	5	9,000	1														
Cal Johnson Community Center	6	11,011		1				1	1								
Dr. E.V. Davidson Community Center	6	15,700		1				1	1							1	
Williams Creek Community Center & Pool	6	8,100		1													1
Fairview Community Center	6	475	1														
Safety City Building	6	3,000	1														
John T O'Connor Senior Center	6	30,000			1												
Kerr Building - Chilhowee	6	19,000						1									
TOTALS		**208,696**	**11**	**11**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**6**	**10**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**1**

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Fig. 2.3q Parks and Recreation Master Plan Inventory - Other Parks and Greenspaces

Park Owner/ Management	Park Name	Council District	Acres	Park Classification	Notes (from KGIS and PRD)
Knox County Parks	[Unnamed]		7.11	Open Space / Natural Area	Small unnamed property in the Helix Trails area; connects Forks of the River WMA and Urban Wilderness.
	Badgett Rd #1 Park		62.20	Open Space / Natural Area	Undeveloped Park
	Badgett Rd #2 Park		10.55	Open Space / Natural Area	Undeveloped Park
	Badgett Rd #3 Park		24.85	Open Space / Natural Area	Undeveloped Park
	Beverly Park		89.77	District/Regional	Overall, this park featuring a Par 3 golf course and walking path is in good condition. It is next to a health care center.
	Houser Rd #1 Park		49.96	Open Space / Natural Area	Undeveloped Park
	Houser Rd #2 Park		11.15	Open Space / Natural Area	Undeveloped Park
	I C King Park		260.22	District/Regional	The park has a natural look to it. Overall condition is fair - prominent needs are improved parking and general trail maintenance. Part of the Urban Wilderness and connects to the Knox-Blount Greenway.
	John Tarleton Park		70.17	District/Regional	Completely within Knoxville.
	Lyons Bend Rd Park		46.28	Open Space / Natural Area	
	Maloney Rd Park		3.90	Community	Overall it was fair to good. Condos currently under construction on adjacent property. Water pumping station present.
	Marine Park		2.81	Community	Completely within Knoxville; Overall the park is in good condition, but could use improvements to bridge, grill, picnic tables and the addition of sign identifying creek. Creek littered with trash and tires.
	Meads Quarry		45.92	Open Space / Natural Area	Knox County owns 43 acres including the quarry itself on the south side of the Meades Quarry property. Ijams Nature center owns the northern side and is responsible for maintenance. A historic cemetery is also on the site. Remnants of old mill building. Good for hiking or mountain biking.
	New Harvest Park		43.25	Community	
	Spring Place Park		11.67	Community	Overall the park is in good condition. Construction activity was occurring.
	Sterchi Hills Park		11.44	Community	Overall this park was in excellent condition.
	Ten Mile Creek Greenway Park		23.43	Open Space / Natural Area	This site has not yet been developed; it appears to be land held for a future greenway connection
	Thomas 'Tank' Strickland Park		0.84	Neighborhood	Completely within Knoxville
	Tommy Schumpert Park		177.93	District/Regional	This park is currently under expansion/ redesign for Tommy Schumer
	Turkey Creek		57.53	Open Space / Natural Area	
	Wrights Ferry Rd Park		16.20	Open Space / Natural Area	Undeveloped Park
	Knox County Totals		1033.5		*includes parks that are entirely within Knoxville city limits OR partially within (majority of park may be outside city limits)
Other Parks & Greenspaces (not City managed)	Chilhowee Park & Expo Center*		77.85	Special Use Facility	*Owned by City, not managed by PRD; Included in City inventory acreage.
	Circle Park		2.72	Special Use Park	Owned by University of Tennessee.
	City County Building Lawn		1.80	Special Use Facility	Managed by the Public Building Authority.
	Community Unity Park		9.73	Special Use Park	Owned by Knoxville's Community Development Corporation.
	James Taylor Sr Memorial		19.16	Special Use Park	Cemetery owned by State of Tennessee Eastern State Hospital.
	Knoxville Botanical Gardens And Arboretum		47.06	Special Use Park	Owned and managed by non-profit.
	Meadow Circle Park		1.03	Special Use Park	KGIS owner listed as CITY OF KNOXVILLE COMMUNITY PARK
	Mount Castle Park		1.40	Special Use Park	Owned by University of Tennessee
	University Of Tennessee Gardens		15.78	Special Use Park	Owned by University of Tennessee
	Other Totals		176.54		*Must be publicly accessible and free to enter
State Lands	Forks of the River Wildlife Management Area		618.9	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency	
			618.9		
	TOTALS		**2,305**		

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Figure 2.3r
Indoor Center System

INDOOR CENTER INVENTORY

City of Knoxville Centers
- Center - Regularly Staffed
- Center - Regularly Un-staffed

1 Adair Park Building
2 Cal Johnson Community Center
3 Cecil Webb Community Center
4 Christenberry Community Center
5 Cumberland Estates Community Center
6 Deane Hill Community Center
7 Dr. E.V. Davidson Community Center
8 Fair View Community Center
9 Fountain City Arts Center
10 Fountain City Recreation Center
11 Happy Homes Rec Center (Owned by Knox Co.)
12 Inskip-Norwood Community Center
13 John T O'Connor Senior Center
14 Kerr Building at Chilhowee Park
15 Knoxville Arts Center
16 Larry Cox Senior Center
17 Milton Roberts Community Center
18 New Hope Recreation Center
19 Oakland Recreation Center (Owned by Knox Co.)
20 Richard Leake Community Center
21 Safety City Building
22 Sam E Hill Park (Under Design)
23 South Knoxville Community Center (2nd Floor Leased to Boys & Girls Club)
24 South Knoxville Optimist Club Building
25 West Haven Community Center
26 Williams Creek Community Center & Pool

LEGEND
- Knox County
- City of Knoxville
- City Council Districts
- Cities
- Major Roads + Highways
- City of Knoxville Parks
- Other Parks & Preserves

Indoor Centers Provided by Others
1 Ijams Nature Center
2 Boys & Girls Club Western Heights
3 Boys & Girls Club of Tennessee Valley
4 Boys & Girls Club Five Points
5 Lindsay Young Downtown YMCA
6 Pilot Family YMCA
7 Cansler Family YMCA
8 Haslam-Sansom Ministry Complex
9 Sansom Sports Complex
10 Boys & Girls Club North Ridge Crossing
11 Boys & Girls Club Montgomery Village
12 New Harvest Park (Knox Co.)

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Figure 2.3s
Paths & Trails Inventory

PATHS & TRAILS INVENTORY

Greenways

1 Adair/Sue Clancy Greenway
2 Bakers Creek Greenway
3 Bearden Village Greenway
4 Cavet Station Greenway
5 Cottrell Greenway
6 First Creek Greenway (Caswell Park)
7 First Creek Greenway (Lower)
8 First Creek Greenway (Upper)
9 Fourth and Gill Greenway
10 James White Greenway
11 Jean Teague Greenway
12 Knox/Blount Greenway
13 Kuwahee Greenway
14 Liberty Street Greenway
15 Mary Vestal Greenway
16 Middlebrook Greenway
17 Morningside Greenway
18 Neyland Greenway
19 Northwest Connector Greenway
20 Northwest Knoxville Greenway
21 Papermill Bluff Greenway
22 Parkside Greenway
23 Pleasant Ridge Greenway
24 Riverwalk (South Waterfront) Greenway
25 Riverwalk (Suttree Landing) Greenway
26 Sarah Moore Greene Greenway
27 Second Creek Greenway
28 Sequoyah Greenway
29 Ten Mile Creek Greenway
30 Third Creek Greenway
31 Victor Ashe Greenway
32 Washington Pike Greenway
33 Weisgarber Greenway
34 Will Skelton Greenway

Park Loop Greenways

1 Augusta Quarry Greenway
2 Charter Doyle Greenway
3 Community Unity Greenway
4 Fountain City Greenway
5 Gary Underwood Greenway
6 Holston Chilhowee Greenway
7 Holston River Greenway
8 Inskip Greenway
9 Lakeshore Greenway
10 Loves Creek Greenway
11 Malcolm-Martin Greenway
12 Maple Drive Greenway (Fountain City)
13 Sam Duff Greenway

LEGEND

- Knox County
- City of Knoxville
- City Council Districts
- Cities
- Major Roads + Highways
- City of Knoxville Parks
- Other Parks & Preserves

Paths & Trails Inventory

- Greenways
- Park Loop Greenways
- Walking Paths, Hiking Trails, MTB Trails & Multi-Use Trails

Walking Paths, Hiking Trails, MTB Trails & Multi-Use Trails

1 Baker Creek Trails
2 Boright Loop Path
3 Crow's Nest Trail
4 Edgewood Paths
5 Forest Heights Pocket Park Path
6 Ft. Dickerson Trail
7 Fountain City Lake Path
8 Ijams Nature Center Nature Trails
9 James Agee Loop Trail
10 Joe B. Foster Park Loop Path
11 Krutch Park Paths
12 Marie Myers Park Trails
13 Meads Quarry Trails
14 North Hills Path
15 Olde Mechanicsville Park Loop Path
16 Parkridge Park Loop Path
17 River Bluff Nature Trail
18 Scott Cleland Nature Trail
19 Scottish Pike Park Path
20 Sharp's Ridge Memorial Veterans Park Trails
21 Stanley Lippencott Ridge Park Trails
22 West View Paths
23 Westwood Park Paths
24 William Hastie Natural Area Trails
25 William Powell Park Loop Path
26 World's Fair Park Path System
27 Zaevion Dobson Park Path

N 0 1 2 4 Miles

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General Park and Facility Evaluations

Research by park experts has shown that all successful parks and public spaces share common qualities:

- They are easily accessible
- They are comfortable and attractive
- They allow users of all ages to engage in a variety of activities and allow people to gather and meet one another
- They are sustainable – meaning that they help meet existing needs while not compromising the needs of future generations

Considering these qualities, the parks were evaluated based on 4 categories and 25 sub-categories using Lakeshore Park, Rocky Hill Park, and West Hills/Bynon Park as benchmarks for establishing scoring for the rest of the parks system.

Parks were evaluated collaboratively by City Staff and the Consultant Team using a three-point scale for the site condition category and five-point scale for the other system categories.

LEGEND	System	Site
Performance	Score	
Excellent	5.0	3.0
	4.0	
Fair	3.0	2.0
	2.0	
Poor	1.0	1.0
-	n/a	

Figure 2.3k illustrates the results of this analysis, followed by a map of the results.

CONDITION
Site

- **Site Structures/ Amenities**
  What are the condition of the park's amenities?
- **Site Furnishings**
  What are the condition of the park's furnishings?
- **Landscape/ Hardscape**
  What are the conditions of the park's landscapes and hardscapes?

ACCESS
Proximity, Access, and Linkages

- **Visibility from a distance**
  Can one easily see into the park?
- **Ease of walking to the park**
  Can someone walk directly into the park safely and easily?
- **Clarity of information/signage**
  Is there signage that identifies the park, and/or signage that provides additional information for users?
- **ADA Compliance**
  Does the site generally appear to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) laws for accessibility?
- **Lighting**
  Is the park lighted appropriately for use at night? (if applicable)

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COMFORT
Comfort and Image

- **First impression/overall attractiveness**
  Is the park attractive at first glance?
- **Feeling of safety**
  Does the park feel safe at the time of the visit?
- **Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Exterior /Interior)**
  Is the park clean and free of litter?
- **Comfort of places to sit**
  Are there comfortable places to sit?
- **Protection from bad weather**
  Is there shelter in case of bad weather?
- **Evidence of management/stewardship (Exterior/ Interior)**
  Is there visual evidence of site management?
- **Ability to easily supervise and manage the park or facility (Interior)**
  How difficult it is to supervise the park and its facilities?
- **Condition and effectiveness of any equipment or operating systems**
  Is the equipment and/or operating system in good condition?
- **Branding**
  Does the park exhibit appropriate branding?

USE
Uses, Activities, and Sociability

- **Mix of uses/things to do**
  Is there a variety of things to do given the type of park?
- **Level of activity**
  How active is the park with visitors?
- **Sense of pride/ownership**
  Is there evidence of community pride in the park?
- **Programming flexibility**
  How flexible is the park in accommodating multiple uses?
- **Ability of facility to effectively support current organized programming**
  Is the site meeting the needs of organized programs?
- **Marketing or promotional efforts for the facility**
  Is the site being marketed effectively?

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Fig. 2.3.k Park Evaluations

LEGEND

Performance	Score System	Site
Excellent	5.0	3.0
	4.0	
Fair	3.0	2.0
	2.0	
Poor	1.0	1.0
-	n/a	

PARK NAMES	TYPE	TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGE	SITE AMENITIES AVERAGE	SITE FURNISHINGS AVERAGE	SITE GENERAL HARDSCAPE LANDSCAPE AVERAGE	SITE EVALUATION AVERAGE	PROXIMITY/ ACCESS/ LINKAGES	Visibility From A Distance	Ease In Walking To The Park	Clarity Of Information/ Signage	Ada Compliance	Lighting
Adair Park	Community Park	3.4	1.9	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.0	3	2	2	1	
Alice Bell Park/ Ballfields	Neighborhood Park	3.5	2.4	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.0	1	3	1	2	3
Ashley Nicole Playground	Minipark	4.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	4.8	5	5	4	5	
Augusta Quarry	Signature Park	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.5	1	1	2	2	
Babe Ruth Park	Minipark	1.8	1.3	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.3	2	1	1	1	
Baker Creek Preserve	Signature Park	4.4	2.8	3.0	2.9	2.9	4.6	4	5	5	4	5
Baxter Avenue Park	Minipark	3.4	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.4	3.3	4	5	3	1	
Bearden Middle School Ballfields	Special Use Park	2	1.4	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.5	1	3	1	1	
Beth Ann Booker Park	Minipark	4.2	2.5	3.0	2.7	2.7	3.8	4	4	4	3	4
Boright Park	Neighborhood Park	3.5	1.3	2.8	1.7	1.7	3.3	5	4	3	1	
Buck Toms Park	Nature Conservation Park	3.1					3.0	2	4			
Cal Johnson Park	Neighborhood Park	4	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.4	3.3	3	3	2	5	
Caswell Park	Community Park	3.1	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.7	3.2	3	4	3	3	3
Cecil Webb Park	Community Park	3.8	2.7		2.8	2.8	2.5	2	3	2		3
Charles Krutch Park	Minipark	3.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	3.6	4	5	1	4	4
Charter Doyle Park	Community Park	3.2	2.3	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.4	2	1	4	1	4
Chilhowee Park & Exposition Center	Special Use Park	2.9	2.3	1.8	2.3	2.1	2.0	2	3	1	2	2
Christenberry Ballfields	Neighborhood Park	3.7	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.5	4.2	5	5	2	4	5
Claude Walker Ballpark	Neighborhood Park	4.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	3.2	4	3	3	3	3
Cradle of Country Music	Minipark	3.4	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.3	3.8	5	5	1	5	3
Cumberland Estates Park	Nature Conservation Park	3.3	2.0	2.6	2.0	2.0	2.0	1	3	1	2	3
Danny Mayfield Park	Neighborhood Park	4.3	3.0	2.7	2.7	2.7	4.5	5	5	4	4	
Deane Hill Park	Neighborhood Park	2.9	1.8	2.0	1.8	1.8	2.2	2	2	1	3	3
Downtown Dog Park	Special Use Park	3.5	2.6	1.8	2.1	2.1	4.5	5	5	5	3	
Dr Walter Hardy Park	Neighborhood Park	2.9	2.5	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.6	2	4	3	2	2
Edgewood Park	Neighborhood Park	4.7	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	5.0	5	5	5	5	5
Everly Brothers Park	Minipark	4.2	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.8	4.4	3	5	5	5	4
First Creek Park	Neighborhood Park	3.3	2.6	2.9	2.2	2.2	2.0	1	4	1	2	
Forest Heights Pocket Park	MInipark	3.8	2.7	2.3	2.5	2.5	3.8	2	4	4	5	
Fort Dickerson	Nature Conservation Park	2.6	1.8	2.5	2.1	2.1	1.4	2	1	2	1	1
Fort Kid	Minipark	4.4	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	4.5	3	5	5	5	

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COMFORT AND IMAGE	First Impression/ Overall Attractiveness	Feeling Of Safety	Cleanliness/ Overall Quality Of Maintenance (Exterior Site)	Cleanliness/ Overall Quality Of Maintenance (Interior Site)	Comfort Of Places To Sit	Protection From Bad Weather	Evidence Of Management/ Stewardship (Exterior Site)	Evidence Of Management/ Stewardship (Facility/ies) Interior)	Ability To Easily Supervise And Manage The Park Or Facility (Interior)	Condition And Effectiveness Of Any Equipment Or Operating System	Branding	USES AND ACTIVITIES AND SOCIABILITY	Mix Of Uses/ Things To Do	Level Of Activity	Sense Of Pride/ Ownership	Programming Flexibility	Ability Of Facility To Effectively Support The Current Organized Programming	Marketing Or Promotional Efforts For The Facility Or Activities
3.5	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4.2	4	5	4	4	4	4
3.8	5	5	5	4	5	1	4	3	5	4	1	4.2	5	5	5	5	4	1
4.4	5	5	5		5	4	3		4	4	5	4.3	5	5	3	4	4	5
2.9	4	4	4		2	1	4		1	2	4	2.7	3	1	5	1	3	3
2.0	1	2	2		1		3		4	2	1	1.8	2	1	2	2	3	1
4.0	5	5	5		4	2	4		2		5	4.8	4	5	5	5	5	5
3.8	3	5	5	5	3	3	4	4	5	1	4	2.4	1	1	4	1	5	
2.1	1	5	3		1	1	3	2			1	2.2	3	1	3	3		1
4.7	5	5	5		4	5	5		5	5	3	3.8	4	3	5	4	3	
3.3	4	5	3		2		4				2	4.0	4	4	4			
4.0	1	5	5				5					1.5	2	1				
3.8	3	2	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	4.7	4	4	5	5	5	5
3.3	4	3	4		3	4	4		2	3	3	2.5	2	1	4	2	3	3
4.1	5	5	2		4	3	5			4	5	4.4	5		3	5	5	4
3.6	5	5	5		5	1	5		2		1	3.4	3	5	5	3		1
3.3	5	4	4		4	2	3				1	3.8	5	5	4	4	4	1
3.3	3	5	5		2	2	5		3		1	3.4	5	3	5	3		1
3.4	4	5	4		3	1	5		3	3	3							
4.4	5	4	5	5	3	3	5	5	5	4		4.5	5	4	5	5	4	4
3.6	5	5	5		1	2	5		5		1	2.5	2	2	5			1
3.7	4	5	4	4	4	1	5	4	5		1	3.8	5	5	4	4	4	1
4.4	5	5	5		4	4	4		5	4	4	3.8	5	3	3	5	5	2
3.3	3	4	4	4	3	1	4	4	3	4	2	2.8	3	2	4	3	4	1
3.4	3	5	3		2	1	4		5		4	3.0	1	4	5	1	5	2
2.8	3	3		2	2	3	4		2	3		3.6	3	3	4	4	4	
4.4	5	5	3		5	4	4			4	5	4.8	5	5	4	5		5
4.3	5	5	4		5	1	4		5		5	3.7	5	1	5			
3.7	5	4	5		5	1	5				1	3.8	4	4	5			2
3.8	3	5	5		5	1												
3.5	3	3	4		3	4	4			3	4	2.5	2	2	3	2	3	3
4.6	5	5	5	5	5	1	5		5	5	5	3.8	4	5	4	1	5	4

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Fig. 2.3.k Park Evaluations (continued)

LEGEND

Performance	Score System	Site
Excellent	5.0	3.0
	4.0	
Fair	3.0	2.0
	2.0	
Poor	1.0	1.0
-	n/a	

PARK NAMES	TYPE	TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGE	SITE AMENITIES AVERAGE	SITE FURNISHINGS AVERAGE	SITE GENERAL HARDSCAPE LANDSCAPE AVERAGE	SITE EVALUATION AVERAGE	PROXIMITY/ ACCESS/ LINKAGES	Visibility From A Distance	Ease In Walking To The Park	Clarity Of Information/ Signage	Ada Compliance	Lighting
Fountain City Ball Park	Special Use Park	2.1	1.5	2.2	1.7	1.7	2.2	1	3	1	1	5
Fountain City Park	Neighborhood Park	4.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	4.4	5	4	4	5	4
Fountain City Skate and Dog Park	Minipark	2.5	3.0	2.2	2.6	2.6	2.2	3	1	2	4	1
Fourth and Gill Park	Minipark	4.4	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.7	3.8	4	4	3	4	
Frajan Campbell Park	Minipark	2.7	1.5	2.3	2.3	2.0	3.3	3	4	3		
Fulton Bicentennial Park	Neighborhood Park	1.8	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.8	1.8	1	3	1	1	3
Gary Underwood Park	Neighborhood Park	3.2	2.3	2.6	2.8	2.6	4.0	3	5	5	3	
Gov Ned McWherter/ Riverdale Landing	Neighborhood Park	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.2	1	1	2	2	5
Happy Homes Park	Neighborhood Park	2.0	1.3	2.0	2.0	1.8	2.3	4	3	1	1	
Harriet Tubman Park	Neighborhood Park	4.1	2.3	2.8	2.0	2.3	3.8	4	4	3	4	4
Highland Neighborhood Park	Minipark	2.1					2.3	3	3	1		
Holston -Chilhowee Ballfields	Minipark	2.2	1.2	2.0	2.3	1.8	1.5	3	1	1	1	
Holston River Park	Community Park	3.8	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.3	5	1	2	1	
Inskip Ballfields	Minipark	2.8	1.4	2.1	2.2	1.9	3.0	3	1	1	5	5
Inskip Park	Community Park	4.0	2.3	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.2	3	1	2	1	4
Island Home Park	Neighborhood Park	3.5	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.1	3.3	3	3	3	4	
James Agee Park	Minipark	3.9		2.5	2.3	2.4	3.8	5	5	1	4	
James Smith Park	Minipark	3.6	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.7	3.2	4	4	4	1	3
Joe B Foster Park	Minipark	2.4	2.3	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.3	3	3	1	2	
Lakeshore Park	Signature Park	4.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.8	5	4	5	5	5
Love Towers Dog Park	Special Use Park	3.6	3.0	2.8	2.3	2.7	3.8	4	3	4	4	
Luxmore Drive Natural Area	Nature Conservation Park											
Malcom Martin Park	Community Park	3.6	2.2	2.1	2.8	2.4	2.6	4	2	3	1	3
Marie Myers Park	Nature Conservation Park	2.2			1.5	1.5	1.3	1	1	2		
Market Square Park	Signature Park	3.8	2.0	2.7	3.0	2.6	4.0	1	5	5	5	4
Mary Costa Plaza	Special Use Park	2.5		1.3	2.2	1.7	2.8	1	5	1	3	4
Mary James Park	Neighborhood Park	2.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.6	5	3	2	2	1
Mary Vestal Park	Community Park	2.6	2.0	2.8	3.0	2.6	3.5	3	4	5	2	
Maynard Glenn Ballfields	Minipark	2.4	1.9	1.7	2.0	1.9	3.0	4	3	2	2	4
Morningside Park	Community Park	4.2	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.7	4.6	5	5	5	3	5
New Hope Park	Neighborhood Park	3.2	2.0	1.7	2.0	1.9	2.5	3	3	2	2	
North Hills Park	Minipark	3.7	3.0	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.8	1	2	4	3	4
Oakland Park	Neighborhood Park	2.5	1.0	2.0	1.8	1.6	1.8	4	2	1	1	1
Olde Mechanicsville Park	Minipark	2.3		2.0	1.5	1.8	2.4	3	2	1	1	5

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COMFORT AND IMAGE	First Impression/ Overall Attractiveness	Feeling Of Safety	Cleanliness/ Overall Quality Of Maintenance (Exterior Site)	Cleanliness/ Overall Quality Of Maintenance (Interior Site)	Comfort Of Places To Sit	Protection From Bad Weather	Evidence Of Management/ Stewardship (Exterior Site)	Evidence Of Management/ Stewardship (Facility/ies Interior)	Ability To Easily Supervise And Manage The Park Or Facility (Interior)	Condition And Effectiveness Of Any Equipment Or Operating System	Branding	USES AND ACTIVITIES AND SOCIABILITY	Mix Of Uses/ Things To Do	Level Of Activity	Sense Of Pride/ Ownership	Programming Flexibility	Ability Of Facility To Effectively Support The Current Organized Programming	Marketing Or Promotional Efforts For The Facility Or Activities
2.4	2	5	4		1	2		2	2		1	1.6	2	1	2	2		1
4.7	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5		5	3	3.3	4	2	5	2	5	2
2.4	3	3	4		2	1	3				1	3.3	4	3	3			
4.6	4	5	5		4	5						5.0	5	5	5			
3.1	3	2	4		3		4		4	3	2	1.6	2	1	2	2		1
1.9	1	4	1		2	1	1		4		1	1.6	3	1	1	2		1
2.7	3	4	3	2	4	2	3	1	4		1	3.3	4	3	4	4	4	1
1.8	2	1	1		2	1	1		3	3	2	1.8	3	2	1	2		1
1.9	1	3	1		2	3	1	2				2.0	4	1	1			
3.9	4	4	3		3	5	4			4		4.8	5	5	4	5	5	
2.5	3	3			1	1	3		4			1.7	1	1	2	1	4	1
2.7	3	5	3	1	1	1	4		5		1	1.8	2	1	3	2		1
4.0	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	2	2	4.3	5	5	4	5	5	2
2.7	1	5	4	1	5	1	1	3	5		1	2.8	3	5	1	4		1
4.4	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	2	4.7	5	5	5	4	5	4
3.7	4	5	5		4	1	4		4	3	3	3.3	4	4	4	4	3	1
4.1	5	5	5		5	1	5		3			3.8	4	5	5	4		1
3.8	4	4	3		2	4	5	5	5	2								
3.2	2	3	3		5	5	1					1.8	4	1	1	2	2	1
4.9	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5.0	5	5	5	5	5	5
3.6	4	4	5	4	4	1	3	3	4	5	3	3.3		3	4	1	5	
4.1	4	5	5	5	4	4	4			2		3.7	4	1	3	5	5	4
2.2	3	1	3		3	1	2		1	3	3	2.8	4	3	3	3		1
3.6	4	5	3		3	4	4		5		1	4.0	4	5	5	3		3
2.6	2	5	3		3	2	2				1	2.0	3	1	2	3		1
3.2	3	4	4		4	1	3		5	3	2	2.5	3	2	3	2	4	1
2.5	2	2	2		3	3	2			4	2	2.0	3	2	2	2	2	1
2.6	3	4	2		2	3	2		3	3	1	1.5	1	1	1	1	4	1
3.8	5	4	5	3	4	4	3		3	4	3	4.5	5	4	3	5	5	5
3.6	2	4	4		2	5	3		5	4	3	3.2	3	2	4	4	3	3
4.4	4	5	5	5	5	3	4	4	5	5	3	3.3	2	2	5	2	5	4
2.9	2	3	3	4	3	1	3	4		4	2	2.3	3	1	3			
2.6	2	5	2		3	1	2		5		1	1.6	2	2	1	2		1

Fig. 2.3.k Park Evaluations (continued)

LEGEND

Performance	Score System	Site
Excellent	5.0	3.0
	4.0	
Fair	3.0	2.0
	2.0	
Poor	1.0	1.0
-	n/a	

PARK NAMES	TYPE	TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGE	SITE AMENITIES AVERAGE	SITE FURNISHINGS AVERAGE	SITE GENERAL HARDSCAPE LANDSCAPE AVERAGE	SITE EVALUATION AVERAGE	PROXIMITY/ ACCESS/ LINKAGES	Visibility From A Distance	Ease In Walking To The Park	Clarity Of Information/ Signage	Ada Compliance	Lighting
Paul Hogue Park	Neighborhood Park	3.7	2.3	1.9	2.3	2.2	3.6	4	4	3	2	5
Reed and Baxter Park	Minipark	2.2			2.0	2.0	2.3	5	2	1		1
Riverbluff Wildlife Area	Nature Conservation Park	1.2			1.7	1.7	1.0	1	1	1	1	1
Rocky City Ballfield	Sports Complex	1.2	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.2	3.0	5	3	2		2
Rocky Hill Ballfields	Sports Complex	1.8	1.0	2.0	2.0	1.7	3.2	4	5	2	2	3
Roseanne Wolf Picnic Area	Minipark	3.2		2.5	2.3	2.4	2.5	2	2	5	1	
S & J Colquitt Memorial Park	Neighborhood Park	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.0	1	3	3		1
Safety City	Special Use Park	3.8	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.5	2.6	1	2	4	4	2
Sam Puff Memorial Park	Community Park	2.9	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.2	1	2	3	4	1
Scott Roberts Park	Minipark	4.2		3.0	3.0	3.0	4.3	5	5	3		
Scottish Pike Park	Neighborhood Park	3.6	1.5	2.3	2.5	2.1	2.6	4	4	1	3	1
Sequoyah Hills Park	Community Park	3.9	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.7	4.0	4	5	5	2	
Sharps Ridge Northside Crossing	Nature Conservation Park	2.8	2.0	2.0	2.3	2.1	2.3	1	3	4	1	
Sharps Ridge Veteran Memorial	Nature Conservation Park	3.1	3.0	2.7	2.2	2.6	2.8	3	2	3	3	
Skyline Park	Neighborhood Park	2.8	2.7	1.6	1.8	2.0	2.8	3	2	2	4	3
Stanley Lippencott Ridge Park	Nature Conservation Park	2.6					1.0	1	1	1		
Suttree Landing Park	Neighborhood Park	4.4	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.8	4.0	4	4	2	5	5
Talahi Park	Neighborhood Park	3.4	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.3	1	5	2	1	
Third Creek Greenway Park	Linear Park	2.4		2.0	2.1	2.1	2.3	3	2	1	3	
Tyson Park	Community Park	3.5	2.2	3.0	2.6	2.6	3.2	2	4	5	2	3
Urban Wilderness Gateway Park	Signature Park											
Vestal Gateway Park	Minipark	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.6	2.9	4.6	5	5	4	4	5
Victor Ashe Park	Community Park	3.5	2.1	2.4	2.8	2.4	2.5	1	3	2	4	
Volunteer Landing Park	Special Use Park	4.4	2.5	3.0	3.0	2.8	4.6	3	5	5	5	5
West Haven Park	Minipark	3.3	2.0	2.8	2.4	2.4	1.6	1	4	1	1	1
West Hills Park	Community Park	3.6	2.4	1.6	1.9	2.0	2.6	2	2	4	3	2
West View Park	Neighborhood Park	3.6	2.0	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.8	4	2	2	3	
Westwood Park	Minipark	3.6	1.7	2.7	2.5	2.3	3.0	1	4	5	2	
Whedbee Drive Park	Minipark	3.3	2.0	1.7	2.4	2.0	1.8	4	1	1	1	
Whitlow-Logan Park	Neighborhood Park	3.9	1.8	3.0	1.8	2.2	3.3	4	4	4	1	
William Creek Urban Forest	Nature Conservation Park											
William Hasties Nature Area	Nature Conservation Park	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.5	1.8	1.3	1	1	2	1	
William Powell Park	Neighborhood Park	2.8	2.7	2.0	2.3	2.3	2.6	4	4	2	1	2
World's Fair Park	Signature Park	4.7	2.6	2.9	3.0	2.8	4.6	3	5	5	5	5

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COMFORT AND IMAGE	First Impression/ Overall Attractiveness	Feeling Of Safety	Cleanliness/ Overall Quality Of Maintenance (Exterior Site)	Cleanliness/ Overall Quality Of Maintenance (Interior Site)	Comfort Of Places To Sit	Protection From Bad Weather	Evidence Of Management/ Stewardship (Exterior Site)	Evidence Of Management/ Stewardship (Facility/ies Interior)	Ability To Easily Supervise And Manage The Park Or Facility (Interior)	Condition And Effectiveness Of Any Equipment Or Operating System	Branding	USES AND ACTIVITIES AND SOCIABILITY	Mix Of Uses/ Things To Do	Level Of Activity	Sense Of Pride/ Ownership	Programming Flexibility	Ability Of Facility To Effectively Support The Current Organized Programming	Marketing Or Promotional Efforts For The Facility Or Activities
3.7	4	3	3		3	5	3	4		4	4	3.8	4	5	3	5		2
2.4	2	4	3		1	1	3		4		1	1.8	2	1	2	3		1
1.1	1	1	1		1	1	1		1	2	1	1.4	2	1	1	2		1
2.1	2	3	3		1	1	3			3	1	1.3	1	1	2	1	2	1
1.4	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1		1.3	1	1	1	1	3	1
3.8	3	4	5		3		4					3.0		2	4			
2.3	3	2	2		3	1	3					1.7	3	1	1			
4.2	4	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	2	4	4.0	5	5	5	4	4	1
3.4	3	3	4		4	4	4			3	2							
4.2	4	5	4		5		3					4.0		4	4			
4.2	4	4	5		4	4	4					4.3	4	5	4			
3.7	4	5	5		5	1	2					4.2	5	5	4	3	4	4
3.4	4	3	3		4		2			4	4	2.3	3	1	2	3	3	2
2.9	4	2		3		2	2	4			3	3.5	3	5	4	2	3	4
2.4	3	3	2		1	1	3	3	3	4	1	3.3	4	3	4	4	4	1
5.0	5	5																
4.6	5	5	5	5	5	2	5	5	4	5	5	4.2	5	5	4	5		2
4.0	3	4	4		5	4	4				4	3.3	2	3	5			
2.4	2	4	2		4	1	2		3		1	2.6	3	3	4	2		1
3.0	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	2	3	1	4.5	5	5	2	5	5	5
2.5	1	3	1		4	4	2					2.3	1	3	3			
3.3	4	5	4	2	4	3	4	2	2			4.3	5	5	5	4	4	3
4.6	5	5	5		5	3	5		5		4	4.0	4	5	5	3		3
3.7	4	5	5	4	5	2	5	3	3		1	4.0	5	5	5	5	3	1
3.8	4	5	4		4	3	4		3	4	3	4.0	5	4	4	5	2	4
3.9	4	5	3		4	4	4		4	3		4.0	4	4	4	4		
4.2	4	4	5		5	4	3					3.3	3	3	4			
3.9	4	5	5		4	1	4		5	3	4	3.5	3	4	4	3		
4.0	5	5	4		5	1	4					4.5	5	5	4			4
2.1	2	1	3		3	1	2		1	3	3	3.2	4	2	3	3	4	
2.7	3	3	2		1	3	3			4		3.3	4	3	2	4		
4.4	5	5	5		5	2	5		3	5	5	5.0	5	5	5	5	5	5

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Figure 2.3v
Park Scores Map

PARK SCORES

Performance	Score
Excellent	5
	4
Fair	3
	2
Poor	1

Signature Parks

1 Baker Creek Preserve
2 Lakeshore Park
3 Urban Wilderness Gateway Park
4 Victor Ashe Park
5 World's Fair Park

Mini Parks

1 Babe Ruth Park
2 Baxter Avenue Park
3 Beth Ann Booker Park
4 Cradle of Country Music Park
5 Everly Brothers Park
6 Forest Heights Pocket Park
7 Fort Kid
8 Frajan Campbell Park
9 James Agee Park
10 James Smith Park
11 Joe B Foster Park
12 Charles Krutch Park
13 New Hope Park
14 North Hills Park
15 Olde Mechanicsville Park
16 Paul Hogue Park
17 Reed & Baxter Park
18 Roseanne Wolf Picnic Area
19 Scottish Pike Park
20 Talahi Park
21 Vestal Gateway Park
22 West Haven Park
23 Whedbee Drive Park

Community Parks

1 Adair Park
2 Caswell Park
3 Charter E Doyle Park
4 Fountain City Lake And Park
5 Harriet Tubman Park
6 Holston River Park
7 Inskip Pool And Park
8 Morningside Park
9 Sam Duff Memorial Park
10 Sequoyah Hills Park
11 Suttree Landing Park
12 Tyson Park
13 Volunteer Landing Park
14 West Hills And Bynon Park

Greenway Parks

1 Third Creek Greenway

Natural Conservation Parks

1 Buck Toms Park
2 Cumberland Estates Park
3 Fort Dickerson Park & Augusta Park
4 Highland Neighborhood Park
5 Ijams Nature Center
6 Luxmore Drive Natural Area
7 Marie Myers Park
8 River Bluff Wildlife Area
9 Sharp's Ridge Veterans Memorial Park
10 Stanley Lippencott Ridge Park
11 Williams Creek Urban Forest
12 William Hastie Natural Area

Special Use Parks

1 Bearden Middle School Ballfields
2 Fountain City Ballfields
3 Fountain City Skate Park & Dog Park
4 Fulton Bicentennial Park
5 Holston-Chilhowee Ballfields & Dog Park
6 Knoxville Municipal Golf Course
7 Love Towers Dog Park
8 Maynard Glenn Ballfelds
9 Neyland Drive Boat Ramp
10 PetSafe Downtown Dog Park
11 Rock City Ballfield
12 Rocky Hill Ballfields
13 Safety City Park
14 Whittle Springs Golf Course
15 Williams Creek Golf Course
16 Chilhowee Park & Expo Center*

Neighborhood Parks

1 Alice Bell Park And Ballfields
2 Boright Park
3 Cal Johnson Park
4 Cecil Webb Park
5 Christenberry Ballfields
6 Claude Walker Park And Ballfields
7 Danny Mayfield Park
8 Deane Hill Park
9 Dr. Walter Hardy Park
10 Edgewood Park
11 First Creek Park
12 Fourth And Gill Park
13 Gary Underwood Park
14 Governor Ned Mcwherter Riverside Landing Park
15 Happy Homes Park
16 Inskip Ballfields
17 Island Home Park
18 Malcolm-Martin Park
19 Mary James Park
20 Mary Vestal Park
21 Parkridge Park
22 S & J Colquitt Memorial Park
23 Scott-Roberts Park
24 Skyline Park
25 West View Park
26 Westwood Park
27 Whitlow - Logan Park
28 William Powell Park

LEGEND
Knox County
City of Knoxville
City Council Districts
Streams + Water Bodies
Major Roads + Highways

N 0 1 2 4 Miles

(Page to be printed on 11x17)

General Park and Facility Evaluation and Summary Findings

Findings from recent park and facility evaluations highlight that the Knoxville park system performs well in several key areas, including high visibility and walkability, overall cleanliness and maintenance, effective support for organized programs, and a strong sense of community pride and ownership. These strengths reflect a system that is accessible, safe, and actively used. However, the evaluations also revealed opportunities for improvement in areas such as ADA accessibility, protection from weather elements, promotional outreach, and programming flexibility. Addressing these gaps will enhance the overall user experience, support broader community engagement, and ensure the park system remains responsive and inclusive as community needs evolve.

Proximity, Access and Linkages

STRENGTHS

- High visibility and site recognition from adjacent roadways and surrounding areas, enhancing passive surveillance and wayfinding.
- Strong walkability and pedestrian connectivity to park sites from nearby neighborhoods and community nodes.
- Adequate site lighting contribute to perceived safety and encourages extended park use.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Improved signage and way finding systems needed for clear communication of park identity, branding, access points, rules/regulations, and awarness of nearby parks.
- Enhancement of ADA compliance, including accessible routes, entries, and facilities to meet or exceed federal accessibility guidelines and inclusive design standards.

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COMFORT AND IMAGE

STRENGTHS

- Perception of safety is strong, supporting sustained community use and comfort across demographics.
- Cleanliness and consistent maintenance reflect a high standard of care and responsiveness by park operations staff.
- Visible signs of stewardship and oversight, such as presence of staff or maintenance crews, reinforce a sense of order and care.
- Facilities are easily supervised, promoting safe, manageable environments that reduce opportunities for misuse or vandalism.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Lack of weather protection, such as shaded areas, shelters, or rain structures, limits year-round usability and visitor comfort.
- Limited park branding and identity elements, including signage, color schemes, or thematic design, and reduce community recognition.

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USES, ACTIVITIES AND SOCIABILITY

STRENGTHS

- Facilities effectively support organized programming, demonstrating appropriate design, layout, and infrastructure to meet community needs.
- Strong sense of pride and ownership among users, reflecting community connection and stewardship of park spaces.
- Diverse mix of uses and recreational opportunities, accommodating a range of ages, interests, and cultural activities that promote inclusive engagement.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Limited marketing and outreach efforts reduce public awareness of available programs and amenities.
- Inconsistent or low levels of activity at some sites suggest potential to boost engagement through targeted programming or enhancements.
- Programming flexibility could be improved, allowing for more adaptive, spontaneous, or community-led use of space.

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General Path and Trail Evaluations

As with parks, research by path and trail experts has shown that all successful paths and trails share common qualities:

- They are easily accessible and connect origins to destinations
- They are comfortable, attractive, and safe
- They allow users of all ages and abilities to utilize
- They are sustainable – meaning that they help meet existing needs while not compromising the needs of future generations

Considering these qualities, the trails were evaluated based on 4 categories and 26 sub-categories.

Greenway paths and trails were evaluated by City Staff using a five-point scale for all categories.

Figure 2.3q illustrates the results of this analysis, followed by a map of the results.

LEGEND Performance	System Score
Excellent	5.0
	4.0
Fair	3.0
	2.0
Poor	1.0
-	n/a

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

- **Nearby destinations**
  Does the path/trail connect to schools, libraries, business districts, or other destinations?
- **Trail spurs or trail connections**
  Does the path/trail have connections to other trails?
- **ADA Accessibility**
  Does the path/trail generally appear to comply with the applicable Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) laws for accessibility?

USER SAFETY

- **Social safety**
  Does the path/trail provide a feeling of safety based on its area context/proximity to areas of safe activity?
- **User safety**
  Does the path/trail provide a feeling of safety based on its overall design?
- **Regulatory signage**
  Is there signage that identifies the path/trail and approriate regulatory signage?
- **Site lines/ clear views**
  Does the path/trail generally have clear site lines providing good visibility over distance?
- **Marked crosswalks**
  Are intersections with roads/driveways marked with appropriate crosswalks?
- **Access control**
  Do path/trail access points have appropriate access controls (bollards, etc.) to restrict vehicular use?
- **Pedestrian/bike signals**
  Do intersections and crossings with roads have appropriate user-activated signals?

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TRAIL AMENITIES

- **Seating/Waysides**
  Does the path/trail have seating provided at appropriate intervals?
- **Trash receptacles**
  Does the path/trail have trash/recycling receptacles provided at appropriate intervals?
- **Vehicle parking**
  Does the path/trail have vehicular parking provided as appropriate for trail use and context?
- **Bicycle parking**
  Does the path/trail have bike parking provided at appropriate intervals?
- **Fitness stations**
  Does the path/trail have fitness stations provided at appropriate intervals?
- **Restrooms**
  Does the path/trail have restrooms provided at appropriate intervals?
- **Drinking fountains**
  Does the path/trail have drinking fountains provided at appropriate intervals?
- **Interpretive signage**
  Does the path/trail have interpretive signage providing information on unique or notable features?
- **Wayfinding signage**
  Does the path/trail have wayfinding signage at appropriate locations to guide users to destinations?
- **Landscape**
  Does the path/trail have appropriate (native/non-invasive) and well maintained landscaping for its context?

PATH/TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Path/Trail surface**
  Does the path/trail have an appropriate and well maintained surface for its context?
- **Bridge facilities**
  Does the path/trail have appropriate and well maintained bridges for its context?
- **Drainage facilities**
  Does the path/trail have appropriate and well maintained drainage facilities for its context?
- **Cleanliness/ Overall maintenance**
  Does the path/trail have appropriate cleanliness/overall maintenance?
- **Shaded trail condition**
  Does the path/trail have shading appropriate for its use and context?
- **Shoulders**
  Does the path/trail have appropriate shoulders for its use and context?

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Fig. 2.3w Path & Trail Evaluations - Greenways

LEGEND

Performance	Score System
Excellent	5.0
	4.0
Fair	3.0
	2.0
Poor	1.0
-	n/a

No	GREENWAY NAME	LENGTH (Mi)	TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES	ACCESS + CONNECTIVITY:	Nearby destinations	Trail spurs or trail connections	ADA Accessibility	USER SAFETY:	Social safety	User safety	Regulatory signage	Site lines/ clear views
1	Adair/Sue Clancy Greenway	1.24	3.1	2.3	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.6	5.0	4.0	2.0	4.0
2	Bakers Creek Greenway	0.55	4.4	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.3	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0
3	Bearden Village Greenway	1.81	3.1	4.3	5.0	4.0	4.0	2.7	4.0	4.0	1.0	2.0
4	Cavet Station Greenway	1.17	2.9	3.7	3.0	4.0	4.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	1.0	4.0
5	Cottrell Greenway	0.68	3.4	4.3	4.0	4.0	5.0	3.9	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
6	First Creek Greenway (Caswell Park)	0.56	3.9	4.3	5.0	3.0	5.0	3.5	2.0	5.0	2.0	5.0
7	First Creek Greenway (Lower)	0.98	3.4	4.0	4.0	5.0	3.0	3.2	2.0	5.0	2.0	3.0
8	First Creek Greenway (Upper)	0.62	2.5	2.7	4.0	2.0	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0
9	Fourth and Gill Greenway	0.18	3.5	2.3	2.0	1.0	4.0	3.6	4.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
10	James White Greenway	0.86	3.7	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.2	5.0	3.0	3.0	5.0
11	Jean Teague Greenway	2.65	3.6	4.3	5.0	5.0	3.0	3.1	5.0	3.0	2.0	4.0
12	Knox/Blount Greenway	3.91	3.7	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.0	3.3	4.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
13	Kuwahee Greenway	0.28	3.5	4.7	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0
14	Liberty Street Greenway	0.42	2.3	3.0	4.0	4.0	1.0	2.7	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0
15	Mary Vestal Greenway	0.69	2.7	3.0	5.0	2.0	2.0	2.4	2.0	2.0	1.0	4.0
16	Middlebrook Greenway	2.06	2.8	4.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	2.7	3.0	3.0	1.0	4.0
17	Morningside Greenway	1.25	2.9	2.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	4.0
18	Neyland Greenway	3.01	3.7	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.1	5.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
19	Northwest Connector Greenway	0.66	3.3	3.7	3.0	3.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0
20	Northwest Knoxville Greenway	0.99	3.7	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
21	Papermill Bluff Greenway	0.86	2.7	2.3	3.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	3.0
22	Parkside Greenway	0.80	3.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	3.8	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
23	Pleasant Ridge Greenway	1.50	3.5	4.3	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.3	5.0	5.0	2.0	5.0
24	Riverwalk (South Waterfront Greenway)	0.65	3.9	3.7	5.0	1.0	5.0	4.2	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
25	Riverwalk (Suttree Landing) Greenway	0.40	4.0	3.7	5.0	1.0	5.0	4.4	5.0	5.0	2.0	5.0
26	Sarah Moore Greene Greenway*	0.51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
27	Second Creek Greenway	1.49	4.2	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0
28	Sequoyah Greenway	2.86	3.5	3.7	5.0	4.0	2.0	3.8	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
29	Ten Mile Creek Greenway	1.99	3.0	3.7	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	2.0
30	Third Creek Greenway	4.18	3.1	4.3	5.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	3.0
31	Victor Ashe Greenway	1.89	4.3	4.7	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.3	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0
32	Washington Pike Greenway*	0.69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
33	Weisgarber Greenway	0.96	2.5	2.3	3.0	1.0	3.0	2.6	3.0	3.0	1.0	5.0
34	Will Skelton Greenway	3.57	3.3	3.7	5.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	3.0
	TOTALS		3.3	3.8	4.2	3.5	3.6	3.5	4.1	3.8	1.9	4.2

*Maintained by Knox Co.

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Marked crosswalks	Access control	Pedestrian signals	TRAIL AMENITIES:	Seating	Trash receptacles	Automobile parking	Bicycle parking	Fitness stations	Restrooms	Water fountains	Interpretive signage	Wayfinding signage	Landscape	TRAIL INFRASTRCUTURE	Trail surface	Bridge facilities	Drainage Facilities	Cleanliness/ Overall maintenance	Shaded trail condition	Shoulders
1.0	1.0	1.0	3.4	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
4.0	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	-	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0
2.0	4.0	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	3.0	-	5.0	4.0	3.0	5.0
3.0	3.0	3.0	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.6	3.0	-	5.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
4.0	4.0	3.0	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	4.2	4.0	-	5.0	5.0	3.0	4.0
3.0	4.0	-	3.1	2.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	-	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0
3.0	4.0	-	2.5	3.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	5.0	3.8	5.0	2.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	4.0
4.0	2.0	1.0	1.7	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	3.4	3.0	-	5.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
-	4.0	-	3.5	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	4.6	4.0	-	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
-	5.0	-	2.6	2.0	2.0	4.0	2.0	1.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	4.0	3.4	3.0	-	5.0	5.0	3.0	1.0
2.0	4.0	2.0	3.3	4.0	4.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.5	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
3.0	3.0	3.0	2.7	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	4.0
2.0	3.0	-	1.7	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	3.7	5.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
3.0	5.0	3.0	1.2	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.2	1.0	2.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	3.0
3.0	2.0	3.0	2.6	5.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	2.7	2.0	1.0	3.0	2.0	4.0	4.0
2.0	4.0	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	-	5.0	2.0	2.0	4.0
-	4.0	-	3.4	4.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	3.2	2.0	-	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
4.0	3.0	5.0	2.8	3.0	4.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.3	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	3.0
-	5.0	-	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	3.8	5.0	5.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	2.0
4.0	3.0	5.0	2.3	4.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.6	4.0	-	4.0	3.0	2.0	5.0
-	3.0	-	1.9	5.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.6	2.0	-	5.0	4.0	4.0	3.0
-	4.0	-	2.0	2.0	2.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.2	2.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
5.0	3.0	5.0	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.8	4.0	-	5.0	4.0	2.0	4.0
-	5.0	-	3.0	5.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	4.6	5.0	-	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0
-	5.0	-	3.3	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	4.8	5.0	-	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.0	3.0	5.0	3.5	5.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	2.0	4.0	4.7	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	5.0
-	3.0	-	1.9	5.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	4.6	4.0	-	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
-	5.0	-	1.8	1.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.7	4.0	4.0	5.0	2.0	3.0	4.0
3.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	4.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	5.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.0
3.0	4.0	-	3.5	4.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	4.7	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.0	2.0	2.0	1.4	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	3.6	3.0	-	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0
3.0	3.0	3.0	2.8	4.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	2.0	5.0	3.8	3.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	3.0
3.1	3.6	3.1	2.4	3.1	2.8	3.1	1.8	1.3	2.3	2.1	1.2	2.0	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.2	4.5	3.9	3.2	3.9

Fig. 2.3x Path & Trail Evaluations - Park Loop Greenways

No	GREENWAY NAME	LENGTH (Mi)	TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES	ACCESS + CONNECTIVITY:	Nearby destinations	Trail spurs or trail connections	ADA Accessibility	USER SAFETY:	Social safety	User safety	Regulatory signage	Site lines/ clear views
1	Augusta Quarry Greenway	0.15	3.4	2.3	2.0	3.0	2.0	3.4	4.0	3.0	2.0	3.0
2	Charter Doyle Greenway	0.46	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.0	4.0	3.8	5.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
3	Community Unity Greenway*	0.41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Fountain City Greenway	0.34	3.6	3.3	5.0	1.0	4.0	2.7	3.0	4.0	4.0	5.0
5	Gary Underwood Greenway	0.45	3.1	2.7	4.0	1.0	3.0	3.2	5.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
6	Holston Chilhowee Greenway	0.86	2.2	2.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	2.3	3.0	1.0	1.0	4.0
7	Holston River Park Greenway	1.76	3.7	3.0	2.0	2.0	5.0	3.8	5.0	3.0	5.0	5.0
8	Inskip Greenway	0.15	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	3.4	5.0	3.0	1.0	3.0
9	Lakeshore Greenway	3.33	3.8	3.0	4.0	1.0	4.0	3.9	5.0	5.0	3.0	4.0
10	Loves Creek Greenway	0.87	2.3	1.7	1.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	2.0
11	Malcolm-Martin Greenway	0.34	2.9	2.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	4.0
12	Maple Drive Greenway (Fountain City)	0.20	2.1	1.7	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.1	5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0
13	Sam Duff Greenway	0.26	3.2	3.0	3.0	1.0	5.0	3.2	2.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
	TOTALS	9.58	3.1	2.5	3.1	1.6	2.9	3.1	3.8	2.9	2.3	4.0

*Maintained by KCDC

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Marked crosswalks	Access control	Pedestrian signals	TRAIL AMENITIES:	Seating	Trash receptacles	Automobile parking	Bicycle parking	Fitness stations	Restrooms	Water fountains	Interpretive signage	Wayfinding signage	Landscape	TRAIL INFRASTRCUTURE	Trail surface	Bridge facilities	Drainage Facilities	Cleanliness/ Overall maintenance	Shaded trail condition	Shoulders
-	5.0	-	4.0	5.0	3.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	3.8	2.0	-	3.0	5.0	4.0	5.0
-	4.0	-	3.4	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	3.8	3.0	-	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.0	1.0	1.0	3.8	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	4.0	-	3.0	3.0	5.0	4.5	5.0	2.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
-	1.0	-	2.7	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	-	5.0	4.0	4.0	5.0
2.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	2.6	2.0	-	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
1.0	4.0	-	4.3	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	3.7	3.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	3.0	3.0
-	5.0	-	2.9	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	3.8	3.0	-	4.0	4.0	3.0	5.0
3.0	4.0	3.0	3.9	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	2.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	-	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0
-	-	-	2.1	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.6	3.0	-	4.0	3.0	5.0	3.0
-	4.0	-	2.9	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	3.8	3.0	-	5.0	3.0	3.0	5.0
1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.4	1.0	-	3.0	4.0	4.0	5.0
-	4.0	-	2.8	3.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	3.8	4.0	-	4.0	3.0	3.0	5.0
1.6	3.3	1.8	3.0	4.1	3.9	4.3	2.0	1.3	3.1	3.2	1.6	2.3	4.3	3.8	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.4

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Fig. 2.3y Path & Trail Evaluations - Walking Paths, Hiking Trails, MTB Trails & Multi-Use Trails

No	GREENWAY NAME	TYPE	TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES	ACCESS + CONNECTIVITY:	Nearby destinations	Trail spurs or trail connections	ADA Accessibility	USER SAFETY:	Social safety	User safety	Regulatory signage	Site lines/ clear views
	LEGEND Performance / Score System: Excellent 5.0; 4.0; Fair 3.0; 2.0; Poor 1.0; - n/a											
1	Baker Creek Trails	Various	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	2.0	4.3	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.0
2	Boright Loop Path	Paved Loop	2.7	1.3	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.3	5.0	4.0	2.0	5.0
3	Crow's Nest Trail	Mulched Trail	3.2	2.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	3.6	5.0	4.0	1.0	3.0
4	Edgewood Paths	Paved Loop	3.5	3.7	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.8	3.0	5.0	3.0	5.0
5	Forest Heights Pocket Park Path	Paved Loops	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
6	Ft. Dickerson Trail	Unpaved Trails	2.9	1.7	3.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	3.0
7	Fountain City Lake Path	Paved Loop	3.6	3.3	5.0	1.0	4.0	3.1	3.0	5.0	4.0	5.0
8	Ijams Nature Center Nature Trails	Unpaved Trails	3.7	3.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	3.3	5.0	4.0	2.0	3.0
9	James Agee Loop Trail	Unpaved Loop	3.0	1.7	3.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
10	Joe B. Foster Park Loop Path	Paved Loop	2.9	1.7	1.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
11	Krutch Park Paths	Paved Loop	3.5	3.7	5.0	1.0	5.0	3.2	1.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
12	Marie Myers Park Trails	Unpaved Trails	2.9	3.3	4.0	5.0	1.0	2.8	3.0	3.0	1.0	4.0
13	Meads Quarry Trails	Unpaved Trails	3.8	4.0	5.0	5.0	2.0	3.8	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
14	North Hills Path	Paved Loop	3.3	1.7	3.0	1.0	1.0	4.4	5.0	5.0	2.0	5.0
15	Olde Mechanicsville Park Loop Path	Paved Loop	3.1	2.7	4.0	1.0	3.0	3.4	3.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
16	Parkridge Park Loop Path	Paved Loops	2.7	1.7	2.0	2.0	1.0	3.8	4.0	3.0	2.0	5.0
17	River Bluff Nature Trail	Gravel Trails	2.4	2.3	5.0	1.0	1.0	2.2	3.0	3.0	1.0	3.0
18	Scott Cleland Nature Trail	Unpaved Trail	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	-	3.6	5.0	4.0	1.0	3.0
19	Scottish Pike Park Path	Paved Loop	2.8	1.7	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.8	4.0	4.0	1.0	4.0
20	Sharp's Ridge Memorial Veterans Park Trails	Unpaved Trails	3.2	3.3	3.0	4.0	3.0	3.6	3.0	4.0	3.0	4.0
21	Stanley Lippencott Ridge Park Trails	Unpaved Trails	2.7	2.3	3.0	3.0	1.0	3.2	3.0	4.0	1.0	4.0
22	West View Paths	Paved Loop	2.6	2.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	2.6	3.0	2.0	1.0	4.0
23	Westwood Park Paths	Paved Loops	3.5	2.3	2.0	1.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0
24	William Hastie Natural Area Trails	Gravel/Dirt	3.5	3.7	5.0	5.0	1.0	3.7	3.0	4.0	3.0	4.0
25	William Powell Park Loop Path	Paved Loops	2.5	1.3	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	5.0
26	World's Fair Park Path System	Paved Loops	4.2	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.3	4.0	5.0	4.0	5.0
27	Zaevion Dobson Path*	Paved Loop	3.2	2.3	2.0	1.0	4.0	3.6	3.0	5.0	2.0	5.0
	TOTALS		3.2	3.0	3.7	3.5	1.4	3.3	3.4	3.6	2.2	3.4

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Marked crosswalks	Access control	Pedestrian signals	TRAIL AMENITIES:	Seating	Trash receptacles	Automobile parking	Bicycle parking	Fitness stations	Restrooms	Water fountains	Interpretive signage	Wayfinding signage	Landscape	TRAIL INFRASTRCUTURE	Trail surface	Bridge facilities	Drainage Facilities	Cleanliness/ Overall maintenance	Shaded trail condition	Shoulders
4.0	5.0	-	3.4	5.0	5.0	3.0	2.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	5.0
1.0	3.0	-	2.0	3.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	-	5.0	5.0	3.0	3.0
-	5.0	-	2.9	5.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	4.2	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0
3.0	4.0	-	2.9	5.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.6	4.0	-	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
-	5.0	-	2.4	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	3.6	3.0	-	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0
-	4.0	-	3.2	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	3.0	5.0	3.8	3.0	-	4.0	4.0	3.0	5.0
1.0	3.0	1.0	3.8	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	4.0	-	3.0	3.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	-	5.0	5.0	3.0	2.0
3.0	3.0	3.0	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.0
-	4.0	-	2.4	5.0	5.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	3.0	5.0
-	5.0	-	2.3	4.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	3.6	3.0	-	4.0	3.0	3.0	5.0
-	4.0	-	2.8	5.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0
2.0	4.0	-	1.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	-
-	5.0	-	3.6	4.0	2.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	4.0	3.8	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	-
-	5.0	-	2.6	5.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	4.0	4.4	4.0	-	3.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
-	4.0	-	2.6	5.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	3.8	3.0	-	4.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
-	5.0	-	2.3	5.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	-	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
-	1.0	-	1.6	1.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	3.4	3.0	-	3.0	2.0	5.0	4.0
-	5.0	-	2.9	3.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	4.6	4.0	-	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
-	1.0	-	2.6	5.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
-	4.0	-	1.9	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	-
-	4.0	-	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	-	4.0	3.0	5.0	-
-	3.0	-	2.9	5.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	-	5.0	1.0	3.0	5.0
-	4.0	-	3.4	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	4.2	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0
4.0	4.0	-	2.5	1.0	4.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	1.0	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	-
-	3.0	-	2.6	4.0	5.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	-	3.0	3.0	3.0	5.0
4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	1.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	2.0	4.0	3.6	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	2.0	4.0
-	3.0	-	2.9	5.0	5.0	3.0	5.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	3.0	5.0
3.3	4.1	-	2.7	3.3	2.8	3.2	2.3	1.5	2.2	2.7	2.2	3.3	4.1	4.0	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.6	4.7	4.5

Environmental Site Evaluations of Parks with Natural Areas

The Consultant Team along with City Staff evaluated a sampling of the City's natural area parks and parks with large portions of natural areas, from an ecological perspective. The assessment included a review of Knoxville's environmental setting followed by brief site visits.

Site Visits Initial Impressions

Baker Creek Preserve

Areas reviewed appeared to be reflective of a native diverse canopy with an altered mid- and understory. The trails evaluated appeared compacted, well maintained and stable. Only small areas of stormwater management existed to slow flow and treat runoff from impervious surfaces. The Team discussed options for enhancing water quantity and quality treatment on this and other parks.

William Hastie Natural Area

There is an intact native canopy covering the bicycle trails across this natural area, however, the Team noted an expansive understory of winterberry (aka Fortune's spindle (Euonymus fortunei)). There is a small sinkhole on the property which appears to be relatively recent. Trails reviewed were a combination of natural, compacted trails and stabilized surfaces with gravel. Though not a comprehensive review, there was little evidence of heavy erosion along the trail system.

Forks of the River Wildlife Management Area

Though owned and managed by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), Forks of the River WMA is a part of the Urban Wilderness network, and the property is within the City of Knoxville. Trailheads number 6 and 7 are both in the WMA, and a paved trail along the river is maintained by the city. The Team hiked the paved trail to the confluence of the Tennessee, French Broad, and Holston Rivers, and noted the habitat management implemented by TWRA including expansive sunflower fields that are both a recreational amenity and a part of the plan to attract mourning doves for hunters. Other opportunities for hunting exist within the WMA that are managed by TWRA.

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Suttree Landing Park

This urban park could be a part of a riverfront trail into the City if future acquisitions and partnerships are successful. Bank stabilization projects have included revegetation, with varied success due to maintenance challenges. Non-motorized boats can access the river from a floating dock at the landing.

River Bluff Wildlife Area

This largely forested park was apparently maintained as a formal garden and natural area by the previous owners. The intact canopy is primarily native, but there are invasive species in the understory. The destination for the trail system is an overlook that provides a panoramic view of the Tennessee River and the backside of the University of Tennessee campus. Constraints to these trails, either real or perceived center around the fact that the slope is steep and unstable. There is suitable terrain for rock climbing on this 60-acre tract. The proposed pedestrian bridge to UT campus could also be a connector to River Bluff and High Ground Parks.

S&J Colquitt Memorial Park

This small urban park is indicative of an area with a native forested canopy and dense invasive mid-story of privet along the edge. There is certainly value to sustaining the natural canopy, but managing the invasive species on this small lot may not be worth an intensive effort.

Cumberland Estates Community Center & Park

This naturally forested area features trails surrounded by residential homes. Although only a small area owned by the city, the total forested area surrounding the Community Center is estimated to be about 40 acres. An evaluation of the natural communities within this parcel indicated it is characterized by an intact canopy and a shrub layer representative of natural systems in this part of Tennessee. Native shrub species include Carolina buckthorn, strawberrybush, American holly, mapleleaf viburnum, Viburnum rufidulum, and saplings of native species of hardwoods. The historical land use undoubtedly affected the lack of invasive species in this area, but either way it should serve as a reference tract for how these isolated forests could look.

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Marie Myers Park

This park is characterized by native canopy with extensive coverage by nonnative understory and midstory plants. The native canopy includes yellow poplar, sugar maple, hackberry, American elm, box elder, red mulberry, dogwood, American sycamore, bitternut hickory, red maple, black locust, white ash, American beech, northern red oak, and chestnut oak. Understory invasive species include Japanese stiltgrass, common ivy, winterberry, Japanese honeysuckle, Chinese privet, kudzu, tree of heaven, multiflora rose, Amur honeysuckle, Callery pear, Lespedeza cuneata, and sawtooth oak.

Marie Myers, at least in the portions of the trails evaluated, is an example of how invasive species can completely dominate the understory and greatly impact midstory vegetation by direct competition and shading. The midstory to canopy level invasive species threaten the existing canopy and shed doubt on the ability of native canopy species to regenerate.

Stanley Lippencott Park (and Dogwood Community Park)

Similar in character to Marie Myers Park with some larger canopy trees, but the prevalence of dense, invasive species (particularly winterberry) compromises the long-term integrity of this area.

Holston River Park

This park includes a landing for non-motorized access to the river, as well as several decks over the river for stationary fishing. The park has expansive areas for soccer and active play, and a narrow fringe of native vegetation along the river. Potential for a greater protected area and zone of revegetation along the river corridor, and some attention to the potential effects of fertilizers and other chemicals from the ball fields flowing directly into the river after rains.

Victor Ashe Park

A significant edge effect was nited with dense invasive species along the fringe of the narrow, forested strand that traverses through the park. Additional canopy in this area includes post oak, black cherry, Virginia pine, southern red oak, eastern red cedar. There is substantial occurrences of the invasive Callery pear along the fringe. The forested canopy at the edge of the park is certainly not the featured element of the park, which has four soccer fields as the primary activity.

Sharp's Ridge Veterans Memorial Park

The areas reviewed had native, mature canopy and a mixture of dense, invasive species within the native understory and shrub layer. A dense mat of common ivy and other invasives occurs across the property, particularly along the roadway due to edge effects.

General Comments

- Many of these natural areas feature paths for cycling/multiple use. Although some of the trails across parks are covered with gravel or some other medium, most are hard packed natural soils. The local bike clubs have equipment to pound these soils into compaction and, for the most part, they appear stable and that they are contributing to limited sedimentation downstream.
- There does not appear to be any formal guidance on managing natural resources on park natural areas. There is some collaboration with the City's urban foresters, and a comprehensive assessment of tree canopy has been conducted, but there do not appear to be established guiding principles for managing biological diversity, controlling invasive species, assuring canopy regeneration, etc.

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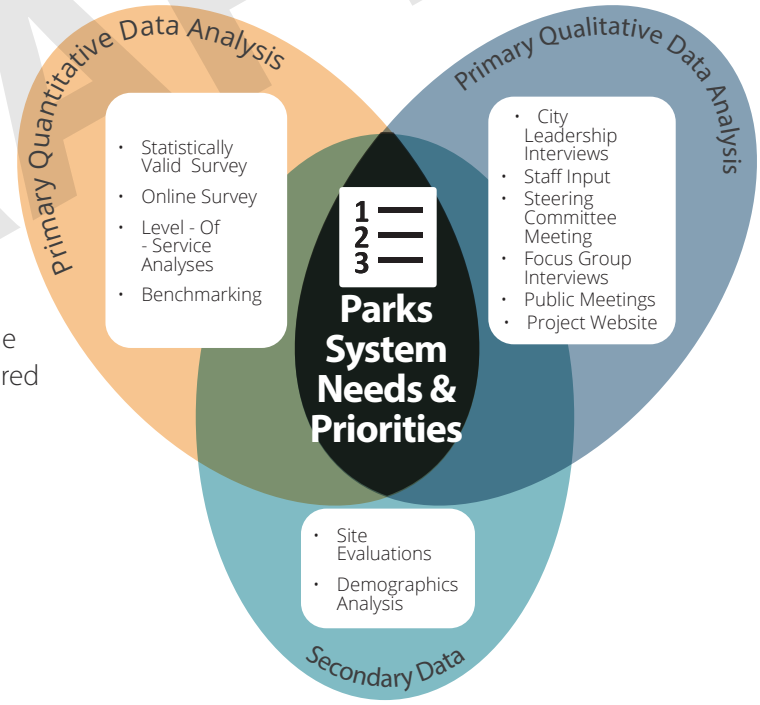
3 needs + priorities

Understanding the Needs and Priorities

The purpose of the Needs and Priorities Assessment is to determine the gaps between existing and desired conditions. There are no nationally accepted standards for identifying residents' needs and determining ideal levels of service for recreation facilities, whether parks, indoor recreation centers, athletic fields, trails, or other amenities. Therefore, each community must determine the appropriate needs assessment techniques and Level-of-Service (LOS) standards required to identify and meet the specific needs of its residents. Historically, planning for parks and other elements of the public realm has been more art than science.

The strategy employed here is to use a mixed-methods, triangulated approach to identifying needs. Mixed-methods research combines the use of various primary data sources (quantitative and qualitative) collected through the planning process, with secondary data from other sources such as census data and previous reports.

The term triangulation refers to the comparison of findings from the various techniques to identify consistent themes and top priorities. For example, the findings from the statistically-valid survey are compared to the findings from the other techniques – such as public workshops, interviews, focus group meetings, and level-of-service analysis – to identify consistent priorities.



Primary Quantitative Methods:

- Statistically Valid Survey
- Online Survey
- Level-of-Service Analysis
- Benchmarking

Primary Qualitative Methods:

- City Leadership Interviews
- Staff Input
- Steering Committee Meeting
- Public Meetings
- Project Website
- Focus Group Interviews

Secondary Data:

- Demographics and parks and recreation trends (Discussed in Section 2.3 - Demographic Context)
- Site evaluations (Discussed in Section 2.4 - Park System Context)

Findings from each of the needs assessment techniques, as well as a summary of top priority needs are discussed in this chapter.

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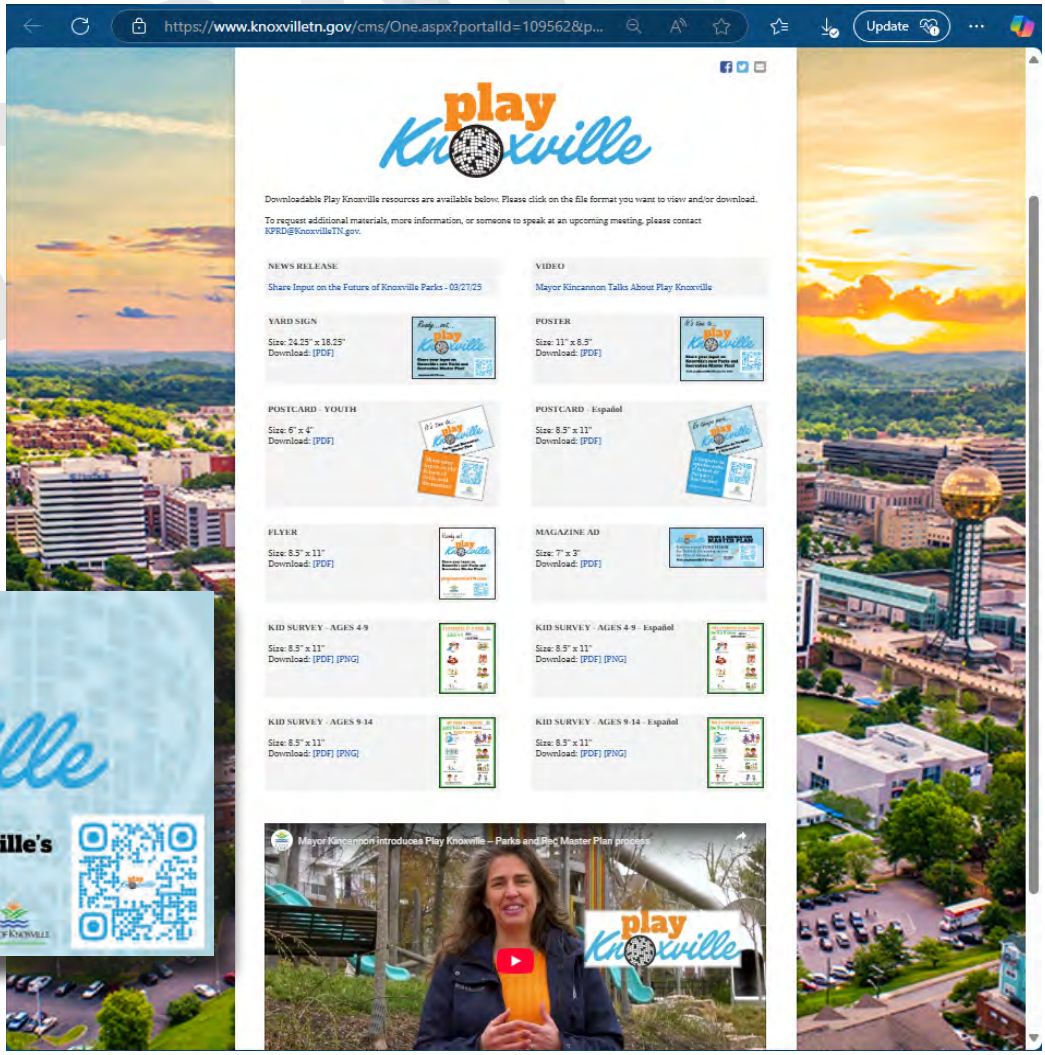
3.1 public engagement

Connecting with the Community

From the beginning of this project, a broad public engagement strategy to reach as many residents as possible was a priority. Given the many years since the last master plan and the changes the City has undergone, City and Department leadership were keen to hear from as many residents as possible about how the parks and recreation system could better serve their needs.

A multi-pronged promotional strategy led by the Department was developed with various printed, online, and social media outlets. Collectively, over 5,000 people have been engaged, through the combination of online platforms, surveys, public meetings, other public events, and interviews.

The range of outreach materials shared on the project website, including yard signs, posters, postcards (English + Spanish), flyers, and a video from the mayor.



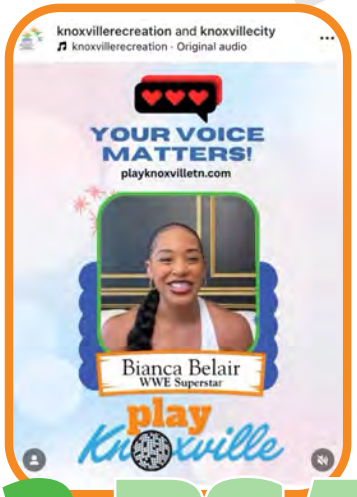
By the Numbers...

4,874 Unique Visitors
to the Interactive Project Website

30 Special Events
attended to share project info and giveaways

8 Public Meetings
across the city

17 Focus Groups
with 100+ community leaders



3 PSA videos
on social media with special guests!

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WARNING
JOY

Statistically Valid Survey

OVERVIEW

Consultant Team member ETC Institute administered a parks and recreation needs assessment survey for the City of Knoxville, Tennessee during the winter of 2024-2025. The purpose of the survey was to help determine park and recreation priorities for the community. The survey is the most statistically-representative needs assessment technique, based on a random sample of City residents. The full report is available under separate cover; following is an executive summary of the survey findings.

METHODOLOGY

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households throughout the City of Knoxville. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online.

After the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute followed up with residents to encourage participation. To prevent people who were not residents of Knoxville from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting their survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses entered online with the addresses originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not included in the final database for this report.

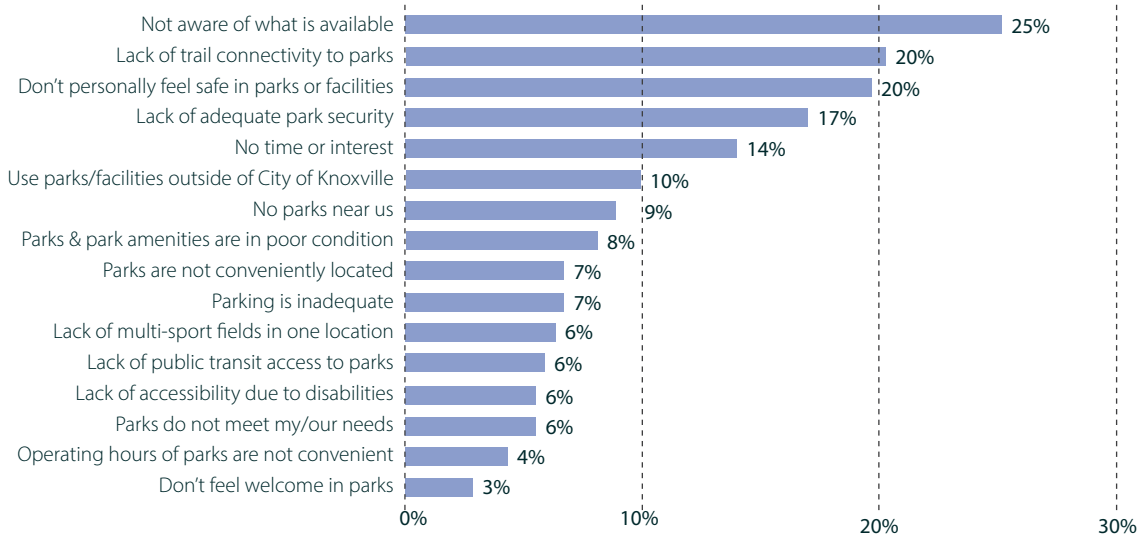
The goal was to receive 500 completed surveys from households within the City of Knoxville. This goal was exceeded, with 507 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 507 residents have a precision of at least +/-4.4% at the 95% level of confidence. The major findings of the survey are summarized in the following pages.

DRAFT

Parks and Program Use

- **Parks Use:** Eighty-nine percent (89%) indicated that they have visited a park in the past year. They selected the barriers that prevent them from using parks more often. The common barriers were: not aware of what is available (25%), lack of trail connectivity to parks (20%), and don't personally feel safe in parks or facilities (20%).

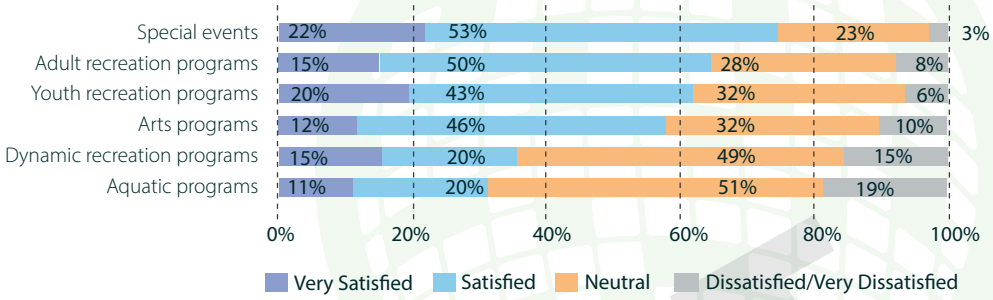
Figure 3.1a - Reasons Limiting Household Use of Knoxville Parks: Percent of Respondents Selecting Each Barrier



Parks and Program Use

- **Parks Use:** Thirty-two percent (32%) indicated that they have participated in a program in the past year. They rated the overall quality of the programs/events they participated in. Thirty-five percent (35%) rated excellent, fifty-six percent (56%) rated good, nine percent (9%) rated fair, and one percent (1%) rated poor. They also rated their level of satisfaction with the listed programs. The programs that respondents were most satisfied with were: special events (75%), adult recreation programs (65%), and youth recreation programs (62%).

Figure 3.1b - Satisfaction Ratings for City of Knoxville Recreation Programs (% of Respondents)



Attendance of Programs (Days and Times)

- **Parks Use:** Respondents identified their participation in recreation program across different age groups by day and time, based on their experience over the last 12 months. Saturday emerged as the most popular day, particularly for adults (14%) and families (7%), signaling high weekend demand. Evening programs have been favored by adults (10%), older adults (10%), and teens (7%), while morning sessions have been preferred by young children (4%) and older adults (6%). These results indicate that optimizing program schedules around weekend mornings and evenings could enhance attendance and align with community availability.

Figure 3.1c - Days and Times for Recreation Program Participation by Age Group (during the past 12 months)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Anytime
Child (under age 6)	3%	2%					5%		4%	3%	1%	
Youth (ages 6-12)			4%		3%		4%		2%	3%	3%	
Teen (ages 13-17)	1%				1%		2%		1%	2%	1%	
Adult (ages 18-59)	9%					7%	14%			6%	10%	7%
Older Adult (ages 60+)	5%	6%					7%			6%	10%	7%
Family	5%					3%	7%		3%	3%		3%

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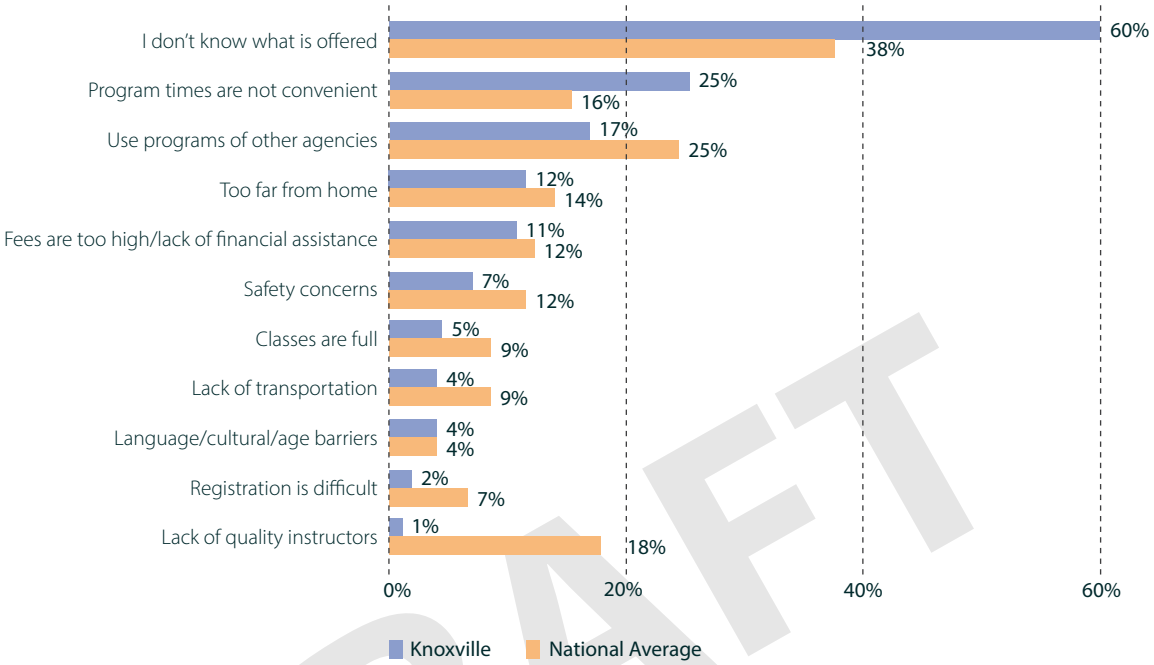
Parks and Program Use

- **Barriers:** Respondents selected the reasons why they do not participate in programs, activities, classes, or events more often. The common barriers were: I do not know what programs are being offered (60%), hours that programs are offered are not convenient (25%), and I use programs provided by other organizations (17%).

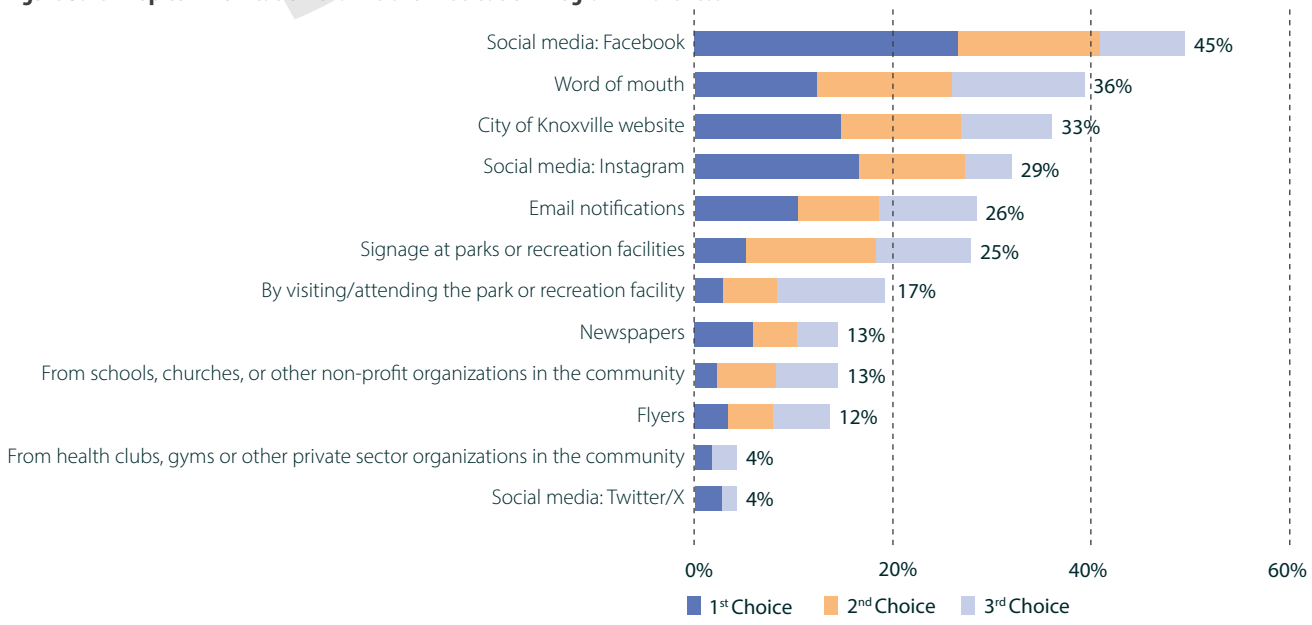
Figure3.1d - Barriers to Recreation Program Participation – Knoxville vs. National Benchmark



Communication

- **Barriers:** Based on the sum of top three choices, the preferred resources for learning about the City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department programs, activities, and special events were: Facebook (45%), word of mouth (36%), and City of Knoxville website (33%).

Figure 3.1e - Top Communication Channels for Recreation Program Awareness



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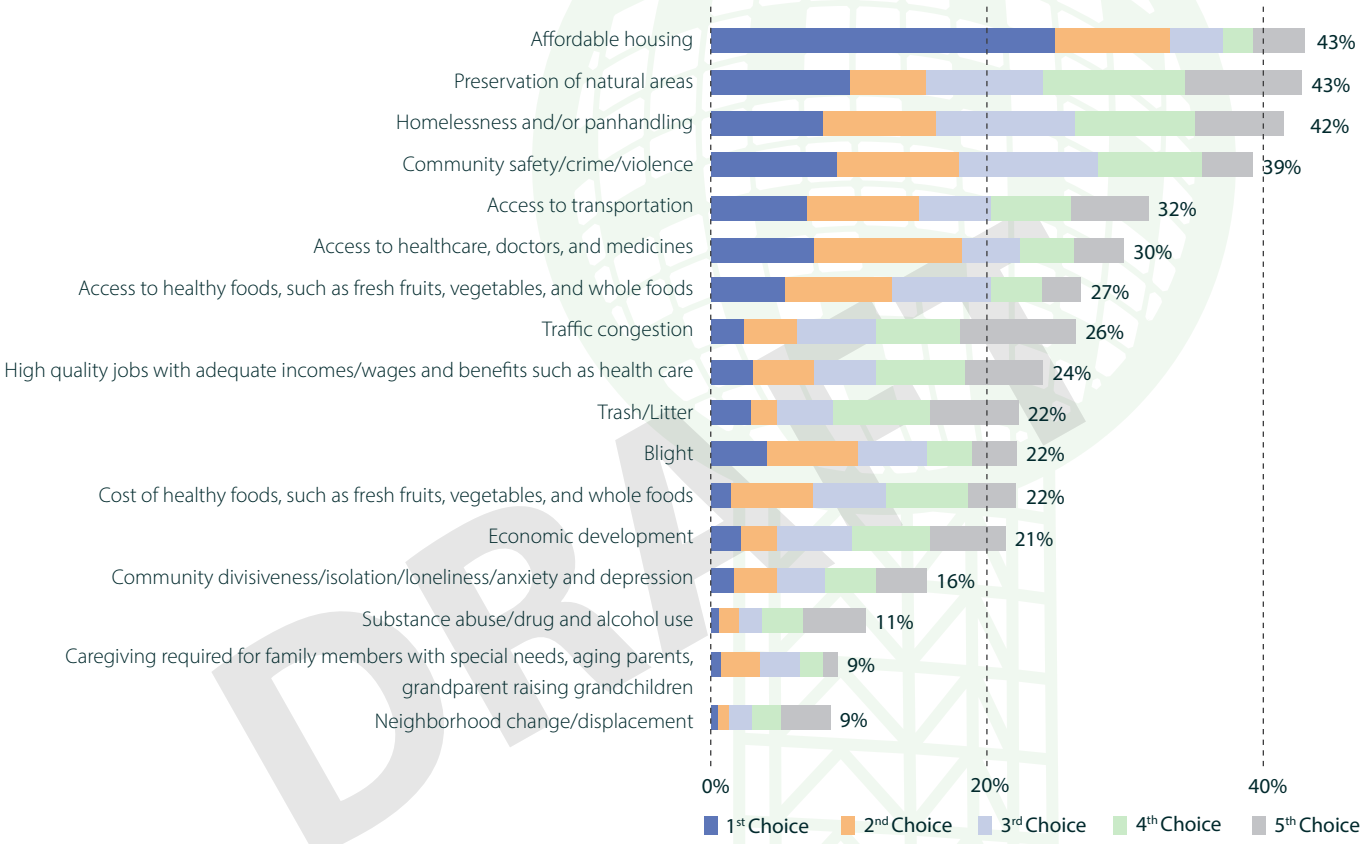
Community Health Concerns, Benefits, Importance, and Improvements to Parks and Recreation

- **Community Health Concerns:** Survey respondents identified affordable housing (43%), preservation of natural areas (43%), and homelessness/panhandling (42%) as their top concerns. These were followed by community safety (39%) and access to transportation (32%). The results highlight key priorities around housing, public safety, and environmental preservation, areas where parks and recreation systems can play a supportive role.

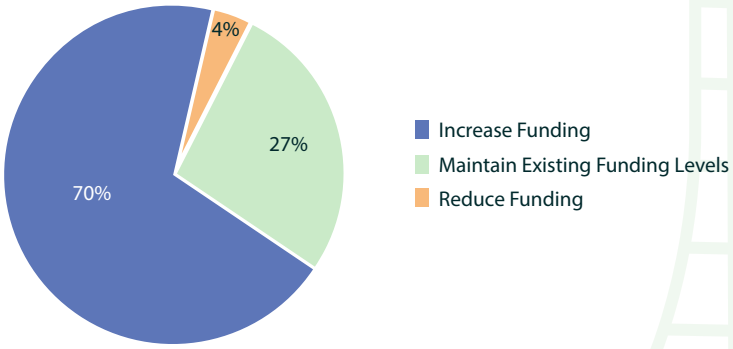
Figure 3.1f - Top Five Community Health Concerns Identified by Survey Respondents. Percentage of respondents selecting each issue as one of their top five priorities



Additional Findings

- **Funding:** Based on their perception of value, respondents selected how they want the City of Knoxville to fund future parks, recreation, trails, and open space needs. Seventy percent (70%) selected increase funding, twenty-seven percent (27%) selected maintain existing funding levels, and four percent (4%) selected reduce funding.

Figure 3.1g - Public Preference for Future Parks and Recreation Funding in Knoxville



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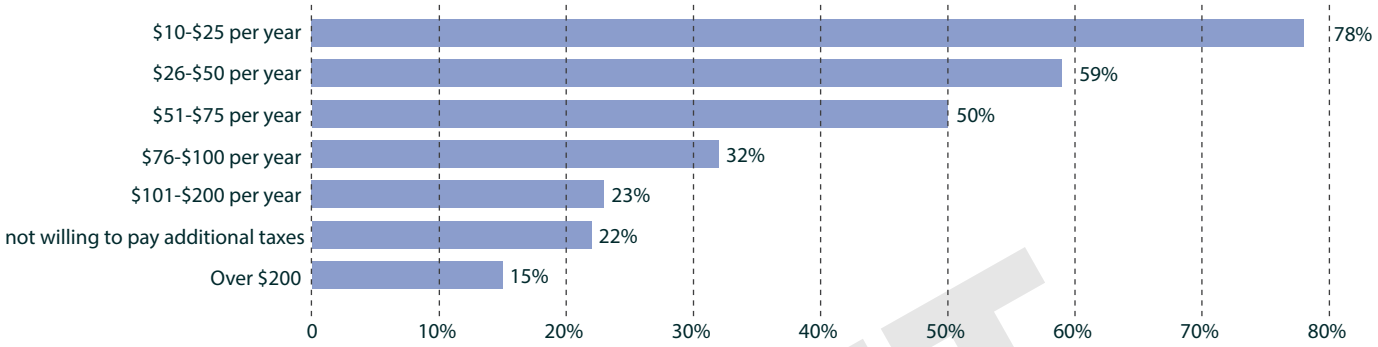
Additional Annual Taxes

- The majority of respondents expressed a willingness to pay additional annual taxes to support improvements in Knoxville's parks and recreation system. Specifically, 78 percent were willing to pay $10–$25, 59 percent would pay $26–$50, 50 percent chose $51–$75, 32 percent selected $76–$100, 23 percent indicated $101–$200, and 15 percent were willing to pay over $200 per year. Meanwhile, 22 percent of respondents stated they were not willing to pay any additional taxes. This distribution reflects a general openness among residents to modest tax increases to enhance local park amenities.

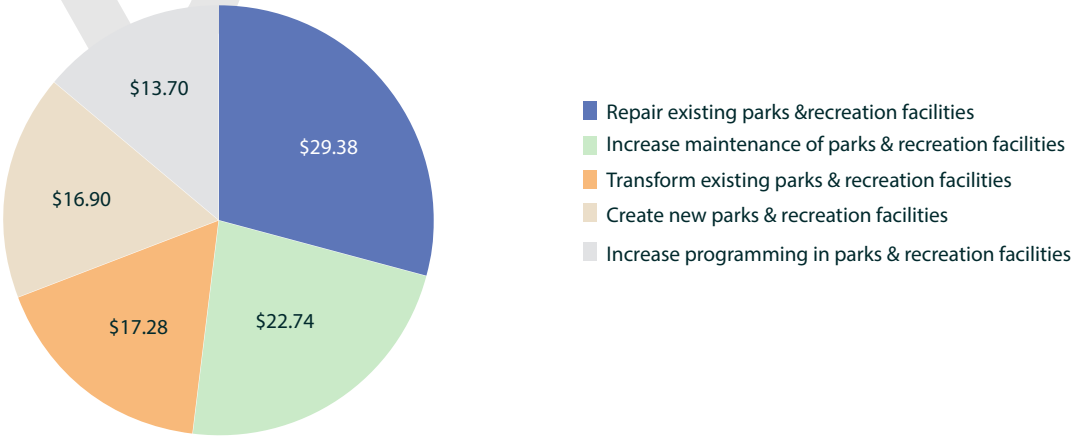
Figure 3.1h - Willingness to Pay Additional Annual Taxes for Park and Recreation Improvements



Funding Allocation Priorities for Parks and Recreation – Respondent-Based Budgeting of $100

- This pie chart presents how respondents would allocate $100 across five categories of parks and recreation investments. The highest funding priority is repairing existing facilities ($29.38), followed by maintenance ($22.74) and transformation of existing facilities ($17.28). Lower priorities include creating new parks ($16.90), increasing programming ($13.70), and program innovation. These results suggest strong public preference for reinvestment in existing infrastructure over system expansion.

Figure 3.1i - Funding Allocation



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Recreation Facilities/Amenities Needs and Priorities

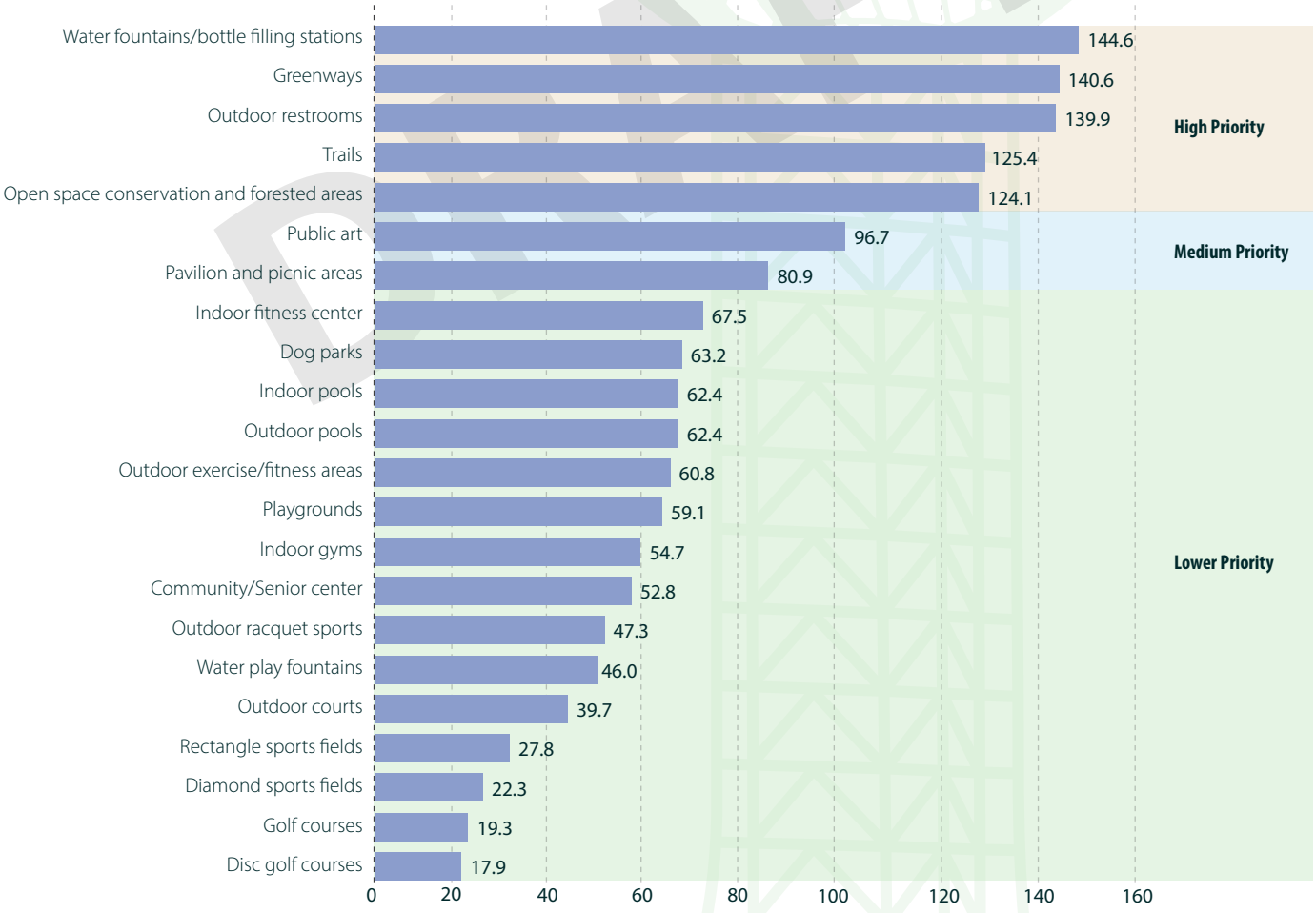
- **Facilities Needs:** Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 22 recreation facilities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met.

Priorities for Facility Investments: The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facilities. Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Water fountains/bottle filling stations (PIR=144.6)
- Greenways (PIR=140.6)
- Outdoor restrooms (PIR=139.9)
- Trails (PIR=125.4)
- Open space conservation and forested areas (PIR=124.1)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 22 facilities assessed in the survey.

Figure 3.1j - Priority Investment Ratings for Parks and Recreation Facilities in Knoxville (2025 Survey)



Recreation Programs/Activities Needs and Priorities

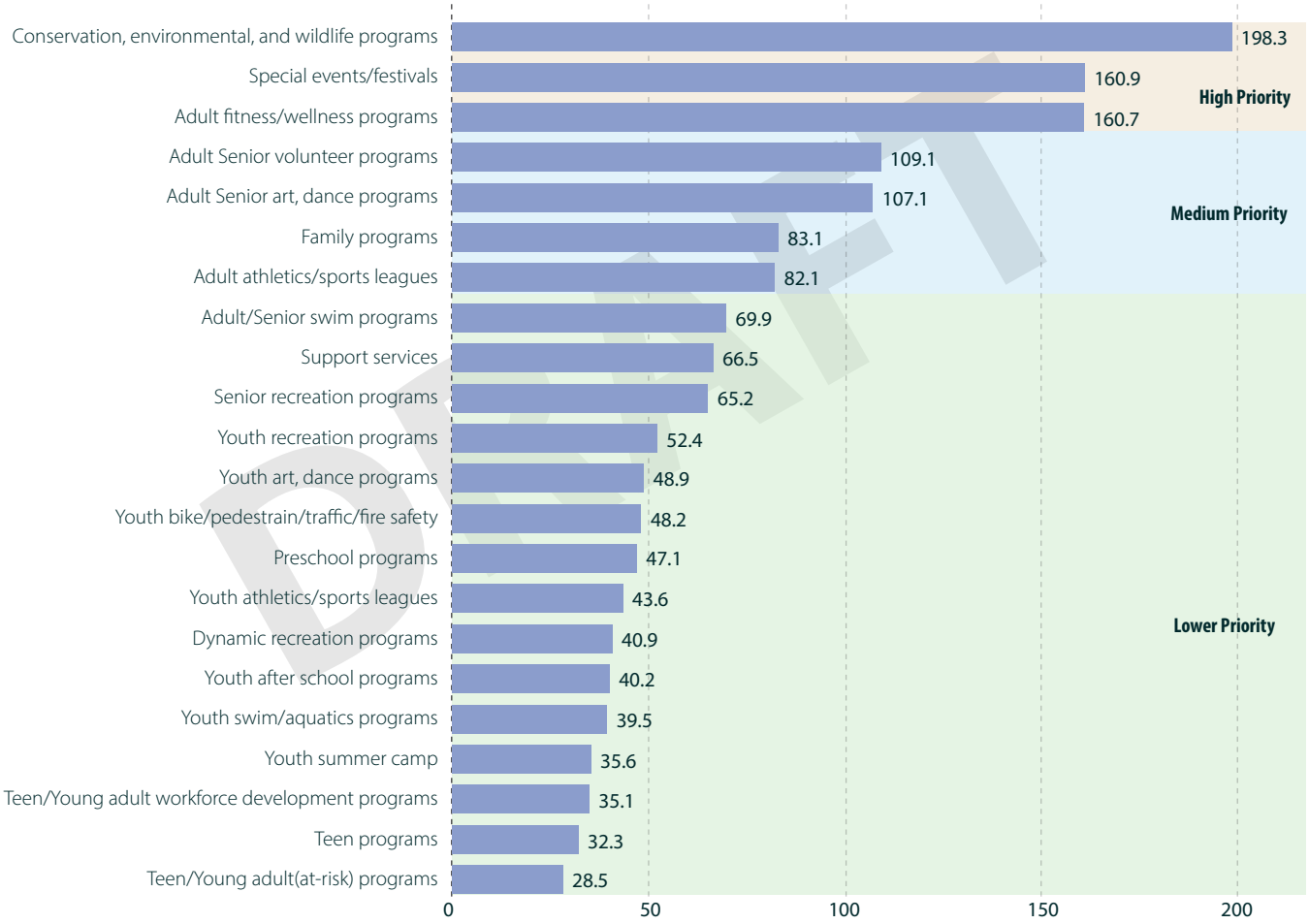
- **Programs Needs:** Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 22 recreation programs and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met.

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Conservation, environmental, and wildlife programs (PIR=198.3)
- Special events/festivals (PIR=160.9)
- Adult fitness/wellness programs (PIR=160.7)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 22 programs assessed in the survey.

Figure 3.1k - Priority Investment Ratings for Parks and Recreation Programs in Knoxville (2025 Survey)



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Investment Priorities

Recommended Priorities: In order to help the City identify investment priorities, ETC Institute conducted an Importance-Satisfaction (I-S) analysis. This analysis examined the importance residents placed on each maintenance activity and the level of satisfaction with each item. By identifying the items of high importance and low satisfaction, the analysis identified which item will have the most impact on overall satisfaction with the items in the future. If the City wants to improve its overall satisfaction rating, the City should prioritize investments in the items with the highest Importance Satisfaction (I-S) ratings.

Overall Priorities for the Maintenance Activities by Major Category. This analysis reviewed the importance of and satisfaction with the items. Based on the results of this analysis, the items that are recommended as the top priorities in order to raise the parks overall satisfaction rating are listed below:

- Restroom maintenance (I-S=0.2318)
- Waste pickup (I-S=0.1546)
- Paved greenway maintenance (I-S=0.1095)
- Waterways/rivers/stream (I-S=0.1056)

The table below shows the Importance-Satisfaction rating for the nineteen major categories of the maintenance activities that were rated.

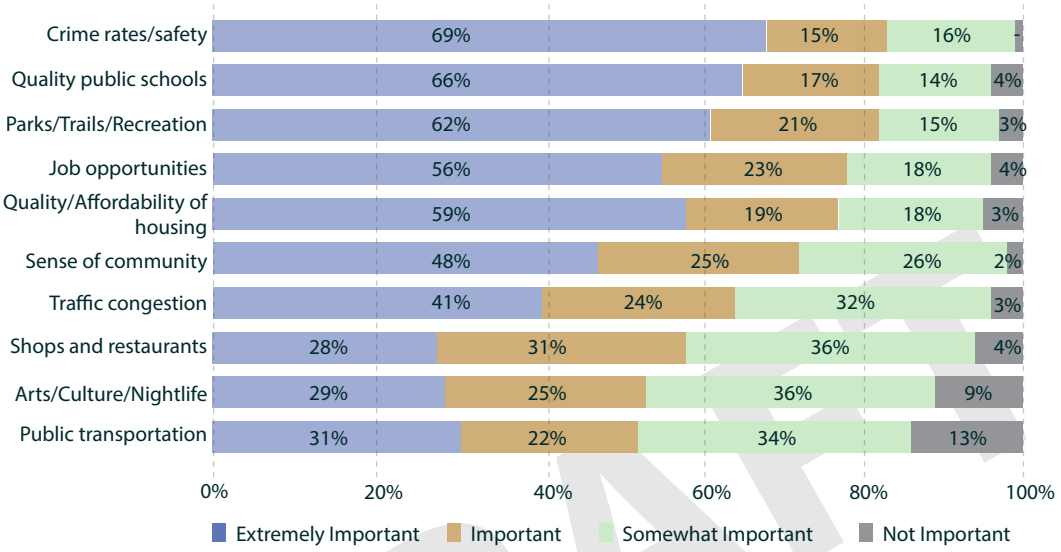
Figure 3.1l - Importance-Satisfaction Ratings of Maintenance Activities for Parks and Recreation Services in Knoxville (2025)

2025 Importance-Satisfaction Rating Maintenance Activities						
Category of Service	**Most Important %**	**Most Important**	**Satisfaction %**	**Satisfaction Rank**	**Importance Satisfaction**	**I-S Rating Rank**
Very High Priority (IS>.20)						
Restroom maintenance	42%	2	45%	19	0.2318	1
High Priority (IS .10-.20)						
Waste pickup	38%	3	59%	13	0.1546	2
Paved greenway maintenance	45%	1	76%	1	0.1095	3
Waterways/rivers/streams	23%	6	54%	14	0.1056	4
Medium Priority (IS<.10)						
Playground safety and maintenance	24%	4	65%	8	0.0854	5
Dog park (off-leash) maintenance and care	16%	10	53%	15	0.0757	6
Unpaved trail maintenance	24%	5	72%	3	0.0682	7
Graffiti removal/vandalism repair	14%	11	51%	16	0.0675	8
Pavilion/ picnic area maintenance	17%	9	64%	9	0.0593	9
Landscaping	19%	7	69%	5	0.0590	10
Community/senior center maintenance	13%	13	64%	11	0.0465	11
Mowing	18%	8	75%	2	0.0445	12
Tree care	14%	12	72%	4	0.0383	13
Athletic court maintenance	12%	14	69%	6	0.0381	14
Water access maintenance	9%	16	64%	10	0.0328	15
Athletic filed maintenance	9%	15	65%	7	0.0325	16
Golf course maintenance	5%	18	48%	18	0.0252	17
Water play fountain maintenance	5%	17	60%	12	0.0201	18
Pool maintenance	2%	19	49%	17	0.0081	19

Public Priorities for Community Livability: Safety, Schools, and Parks Top the List

- Survey respondents identified the most critical factors that contribute to making Knoxville a great place to live. Safety topped the list, with 69 percent rating crime rates as extremely important, followed closely by quality public schools (66%) and access to parks, trails, and recreation (62%). Job opportunities, housing affordability, and a sense of community were also rated highly. In contrast, fewer respondents prioritized arts, nightlife, and public transportation. These findings highlight residents' emphasis on foundational services and quality-of-life amenities in shaping a livable community.

Figure 3.1m - Importance of Community Attributes for Quality of Life in Knoxville



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Online Surveys

OVERVIEW

As part of the development of the Knoxville Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a community-wide online survey was offered to gather valuable public input on the City's parks, recreation facilities, and programs. The survey received responses from 801 respondents, providing a comprehensive understanding of current park usage, community needs, barriers to access, satisfaction with existing programs, and priorities for future investments.

The purpose of the online survey was to capture the values, preferences, and aspirations of Knoxville's diverse population. The community's feedback plays a vital role in shaping actionable strategies to enhance the quality, inclusivity, and sustainability of Knoxville's parks and recreation system for years to come. The survey also gauged residents' willingness to support potential funding initiatives that would enable these improvements.

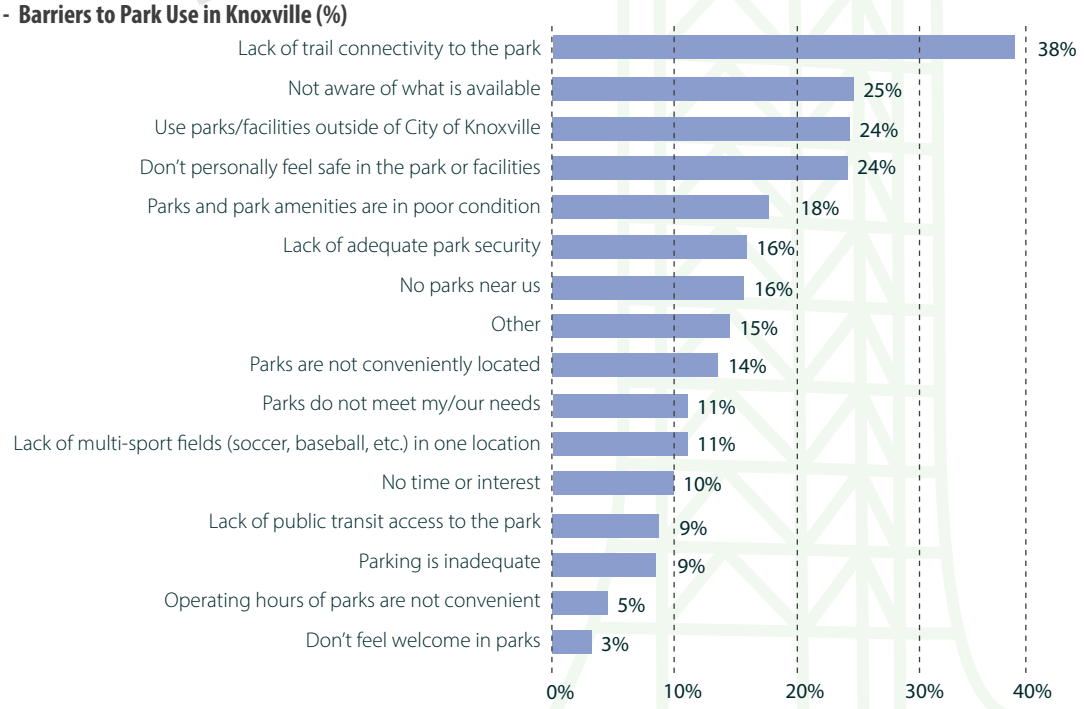
METHODOLOGY

The first online community survey was conducted from March 24 to June 3, 2025, using the Social Pinpoint engagement platform. The survey was completely open to any respondent, ensuring a broad representation of community voices. The survey was designed to provide questions that closely matched the Statistically Valid Survey for the purposes of comparison. Questions included a mix of rating scales, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended responses to gather feedback on park usage, program satisfaction, barriers to access, and future funding preferences. Participants also completed a budget allocation exercise to prioritize investment in park maintenance, facility upgrades, and new park development.

Barriers to Using Knoxville Parks

- **Parks Use:** The survey identified key barriers to park use in Knoxville, including lack of trail connectivity (38%), limited awareness of parks (25%), use of parks outside the city (24%), safety concerns (24%), poor park conditions (18%), and inadequate security (16%). Addressing these issues can help increase park access and community engagement.

Figure 3.1n - Barriers to Park Use in Knoxville (%)



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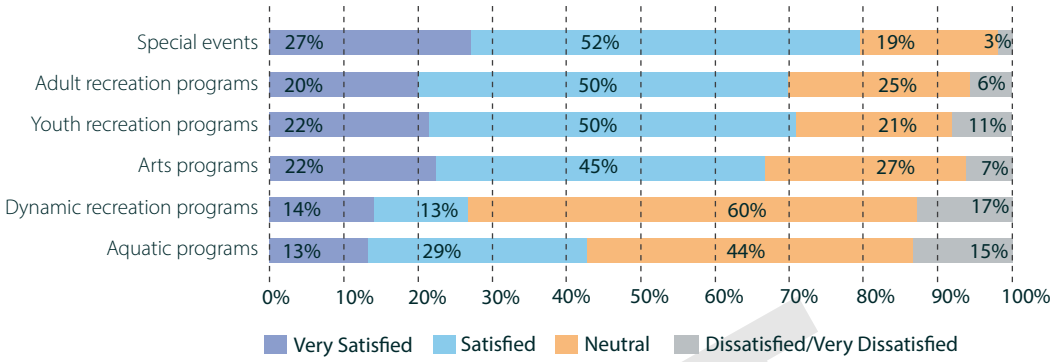
Parks and Program Use

- **Parks Use:** The survey shows Special Events had the highest satisfaction with 79 percent positive responses. Adult Recreation Programs and Youth Recreation Programs each received 70 percent satisfaction. Arts Programs followed with 67 percent. In contrast, Dynamic Recreation Programs had only 27 percent satisfied and 17 percent dissatisfied, while Aquatic Programs had 42 percent satisfied and 15 percent dissatisfied, highlighting key areas for improvement.

Figure 3.1o - Satisfaction Ratings for City of Knoxville Recreation Programs (% of Respondents)



Attendance of Programs (Days and Times)

- **Parks Use:** The survey results on preferred days and times for recreation program participation reveal distinct patterns across age groups. Saturday is the most popular day overall, especially among Families (83%), Children under 6 (76%), and Adults (72%). Youth (ages 6–12) show strong preferences for weekdays, particularly Tuesday (53%), Wednesday (47%), and Thursday (58%). Teens (ages 13–17) exhibit more balanced day preferences, with higher participation on Thursday (46%) and Saturday (67%). Across all groups, Evening and Afternoon are the most preferred times, particularly for Adults (46% evening) and Families (31% afternoon, 29% evening), while Morning is less favored, especially among Teens (6%). These insights suggest that scheduling programs on weekends and weekday evenings may maximize participation across diverse age groups.

Figure 3.1p - Preferred Days and Times for Recreation Program Participation by Age Group

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Anytime
Child (under age 6)	31%	28%	30%	27%	25%	31%	76%		28%	20%	13%	14%
Youth (ages 6-12)	20%	46%	53%	47%	58%	49%	62%		21%	34%	25%	20%
Teen (ages 13-17)	36%	36%	36%	33%	46%	42%	67%		6%	12%	17%	13%
Adult (ages 18-59)	49%	36%	35%	36%	37%	41%	72%		27%	30%	46%	32%
Older Adult (ages 60+)	31%	45%	42%	44%	48%	47%	53%		30%	23%	25%	19%
Family	49%	25%	20%	19%	26%	31%	83%		26%	31%	29%	30%

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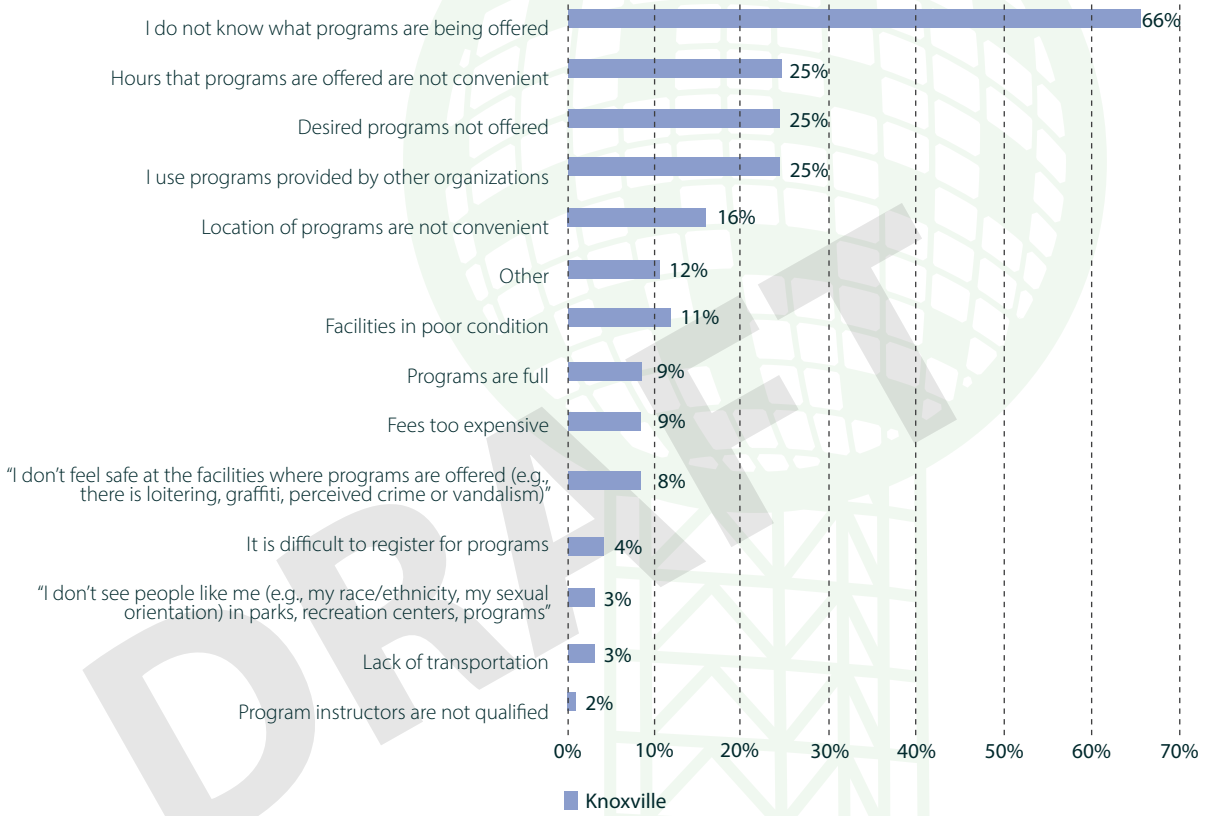
Parks and Program Use

- **Barriers:** The leading barrier to program participation is lack of awareness (66%), followed by inconvenient hours (25%), unavailable programs (25%), and use of other providers (25%). Other barriers include location issues (16%), poor facility conditions (11%), programs being full (9%), high fees (9%), and safety concerns (8%). Less common factors are registration difficulty (4%), lack of representation (3%), transportation (3%), and instructor quality (2%).

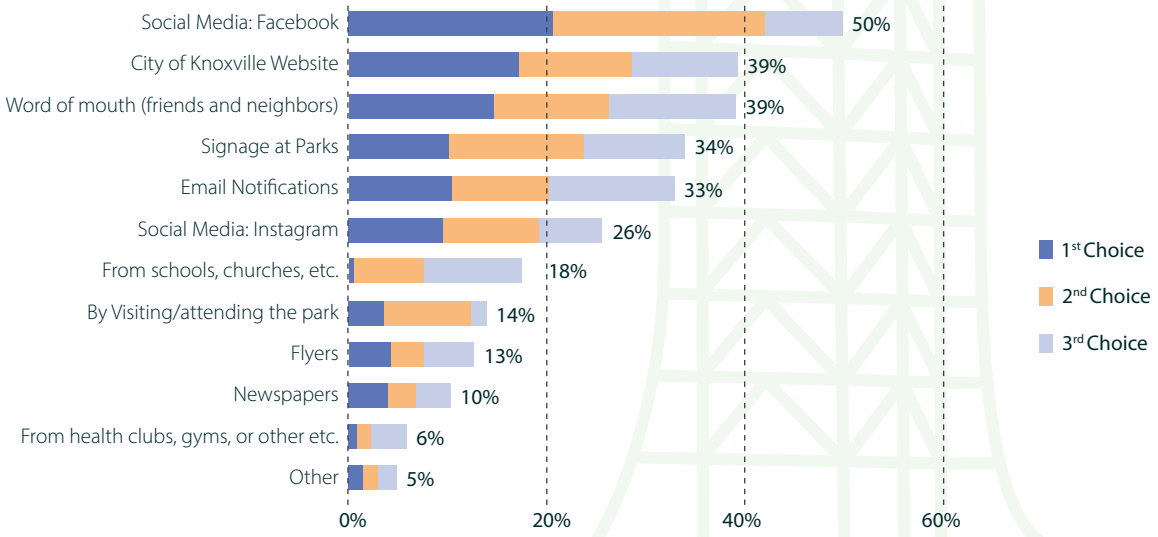
Figure 3.1q - Barriers to Recreation Program Participation – Knoxville vs. National Benchmark



Communication

- **Preferences:** Based on the sum of top three choices, the preferred methods for awareness were: Facebook (50%), City of Knoxville website (39%), word of mouth (39%), and signage at parks (34%).

Figure 3.3r - Top Communication Channels for Recreation Program Awareness



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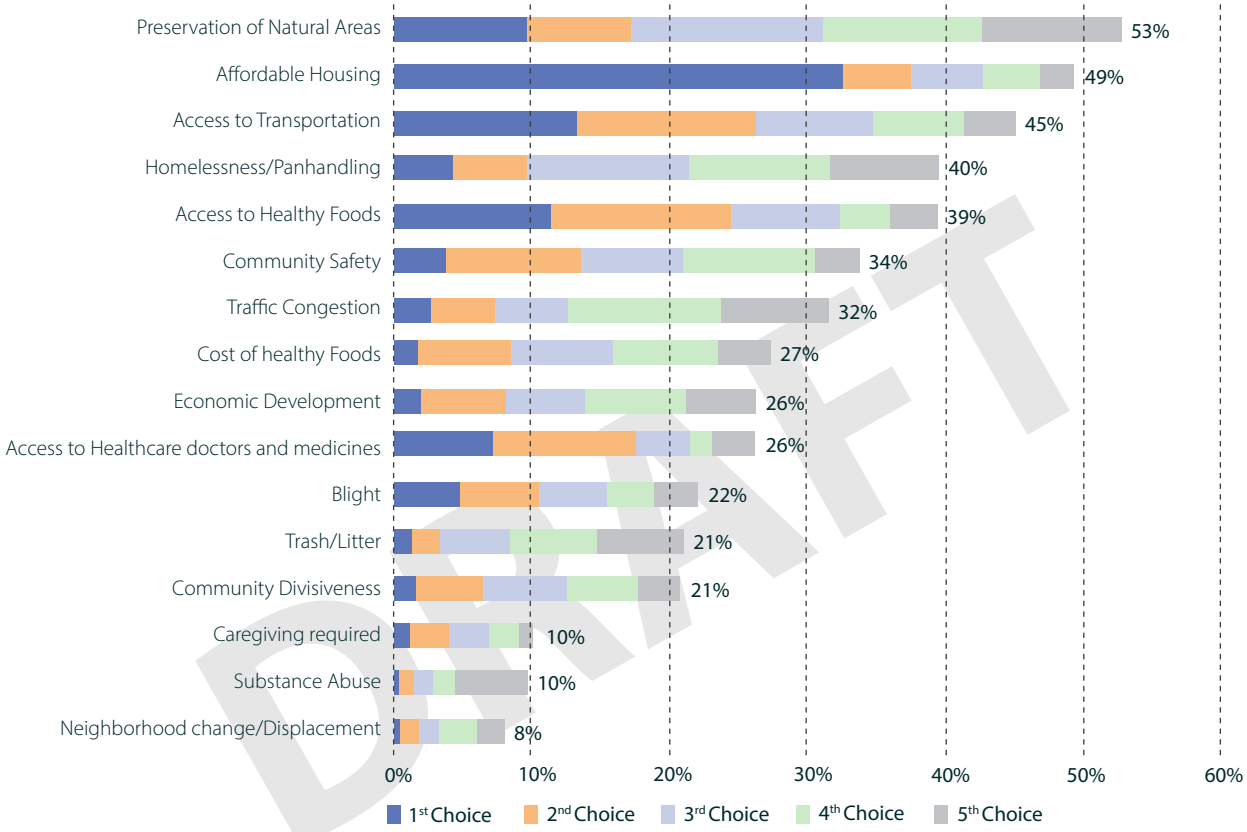
Community Health Concerns, Benefits, Importance, and Improvements to Parks and Recreation

- **Community Health Concerns:** Survey respondents identified their top community health concerns as preservation of natural areas (53%), affordable housing (49%), and access to transportation (45%). Other leading issues include homelessness and panhandling (40%) and access to healthy foods (39%). Additional concerns such as community safety (34%), traffic congestion (32%), and the cost of healthy foods (27%) also emerged as priorities. These results highlight the importance of addressing environmental preservation, housing, transportation, and public health, areas where parks and recreation systems can contribute to community well-being.

Figure 3.1s - Top Five Community Concerns Identified by Survey Respondents. Percentage of respondents selecting each issue as one of their top five priorities



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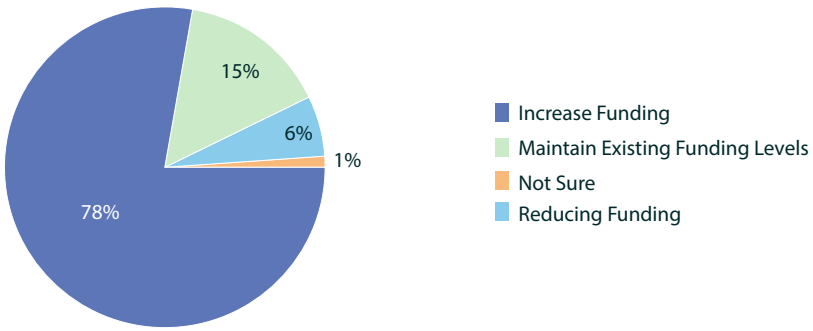
Additional Findings

- **Funding:** Based on their perception of value, 78 percent of respondents support increasing funding for future parks, recreation, trails, and open space needs in Knoxville. A smaller share (15%) prefer maintaining existing funding levels, while only 6 percent favor reducing funding. Additionally, 1 percent of respondents are unsure. The results demonstrate strong community support for greater investment in parks and recreation.

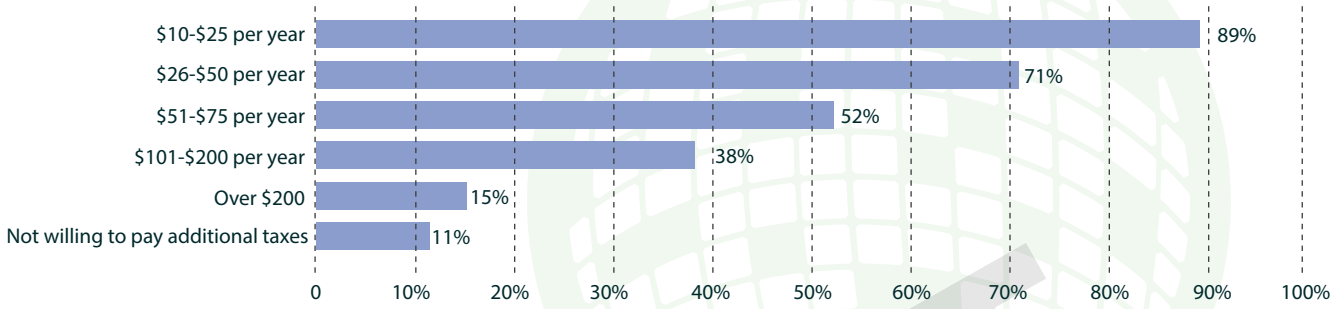
Figure 3.1t - Public Preference for Future Parks and Recreation Funding in Knoxville



Additional Annual Taxes

- The majority of respondents (89%) are willing to pay an additional $10–$25 per year for park and recreation improvements. This is followed by 71 percent willing to pay $26–$50, 52 percent willing to pay $51–$75, and 38 percent willing to pay $101–$200 annually. A smaller portion (15%) are willing to contribute over $200 per year, while 11 percent are not willing to pay additional taxes.

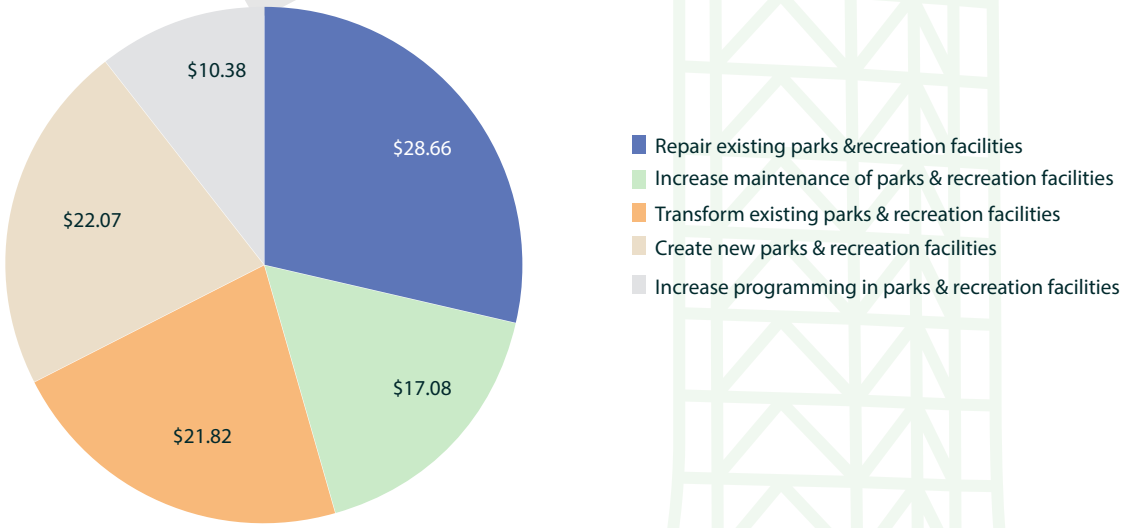
Figure 3.1u - Willingness to Pay Additional Annual Taxes for Park and Recreation Improvements



Funding Allocation Priorities for Parks and Recreation – Respondent-Based Budgeting of $100

- **Funding:** This pie chart presents how respondents would allocate $100 across five categories of parks and recreation investments. The highest funding priority is repairing existing facilities ($28.66), followed by creating new parks and facilities ($22.07), transforming existing facilities ($21.82) and increasing maintenance ($17.08). The lowest priority is increasing programming ($10.38).

Figure 3.1v - Funding Allocation Priorities for Parks and Recreation



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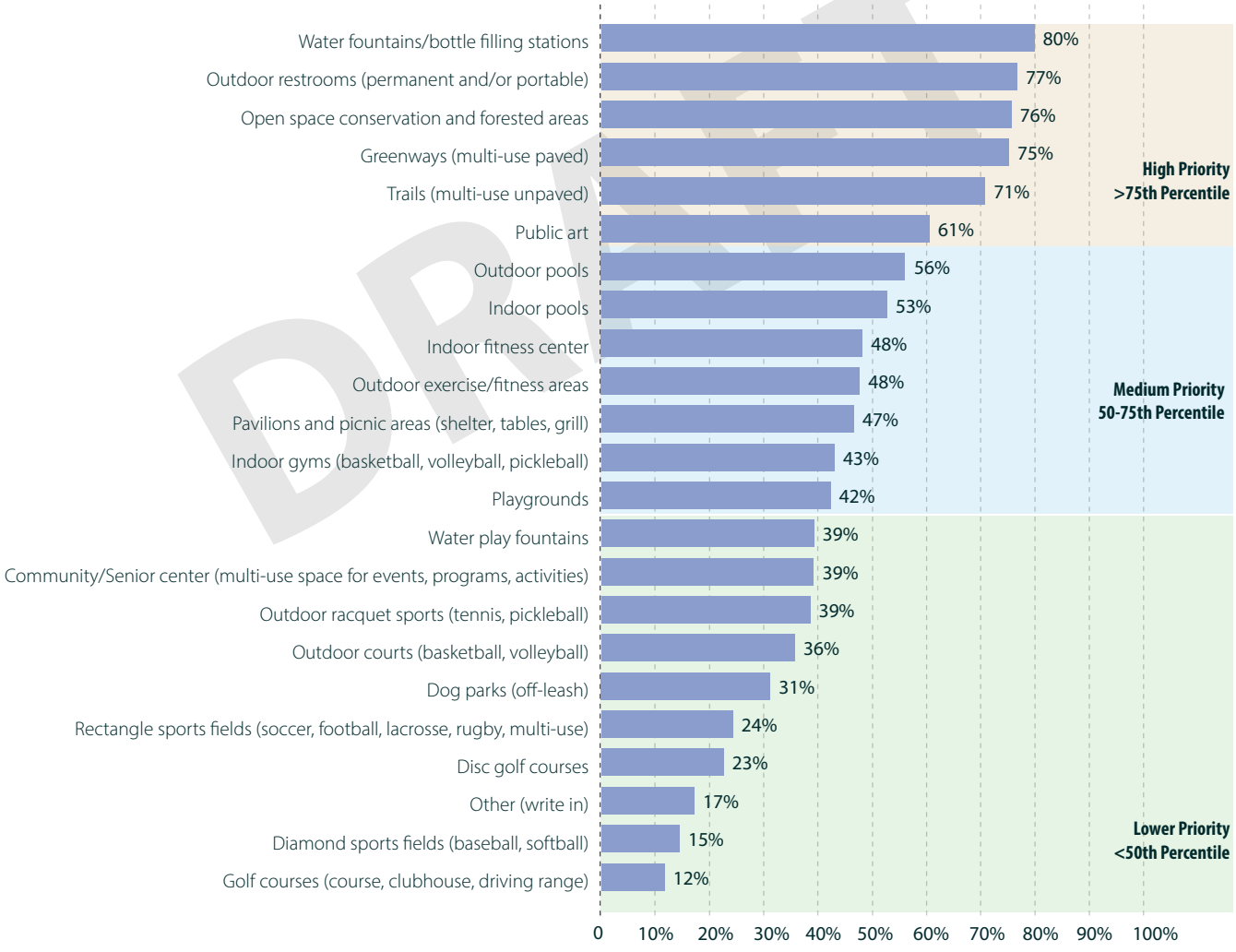
Recreation Facilities/Amenities Needs and Priorities

- **Facilities Needs:** Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 22 recreation facilities/ amenities assessed on the survey, based on their priority to respondents.

Facility Priority: Based on the results, the 2025 Knoxville survey identifies high-priority investment needs (>75th percentile) in essential outdoor infrastructure and nature access, including water fountains (80%), outdoor restrooms (77%), open space conservation (76%), greenways (75%), unpaved trails (71%) and public art. These results reflect strong public demand for hydration, sanitation, and natural connectivity. Medium-priority amenities (50-75th percentile) include, pools, fitness areas, picnic shelters, indoor gyms, and playgrounds, highlighting continued interest in wellness, recreation, and community gathering spaces. Lower-priority investments (<50th percentile) include water play fountains, community/senior centers, racquet sports, outdoor courts, dog parks, sports fields, disc golf, and golf courses, indicating lower public urgency for large-scale, single-use athletic facilities. These findings suggest a planning focus on inclusive, accessible, and nature-integrated spaces.

Figure. 3.1w - Priority Parks and Recreation Facilities in Knoxville



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Recreation Programs/Activities Needs and Priorities

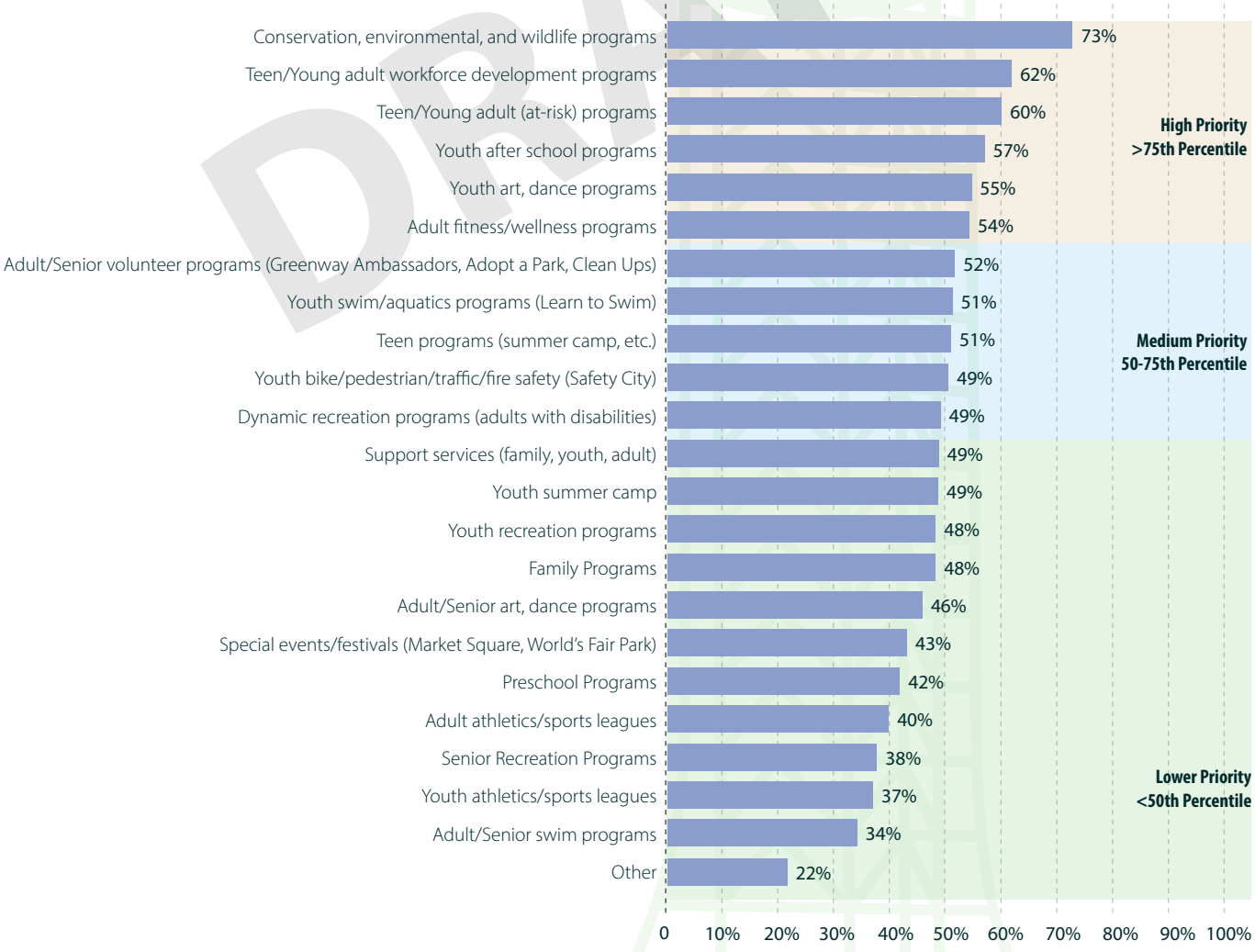
- **Programs Needs:** Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 22 recreation programs and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met.

Program Priority: The survey results reveal that the highest priority investments for parks and recreation program needs (>75th percentile) is in conservation, environmental, and wildlife programs (73%), followed by teen and young adult workforce development (62%) and at-risk youth programs (60%). Other high-ranking needs include youth after-school programs (57%), youth art/dance programs (55%), and adult fitness/wellness programs (54%), reflecting strong community interest in youth development, creative engagement, and healthy living.

Medium-priority programs (50-75th percentile) include volunteer initiatives, swim lessons, teen summer camps, traffic/fire safety education, and inclusive recreation for individuals with disabilities. These suggest continued value for programs that support community safety, inclusion, and multi-generational engagement.

Lower-priority programs (<50th percentile) include support services, youth summer camps, youth recreation programs, family programs, adult/ senior art and dance programming, indicating relatively lower urgency for traditional or age-specific recreational offerings. Overall, the community's preferences emphasize youth enrichment, environmental stewardship, and wellness-oriented programs.

Figure 3.1x - Priority Investment Ratings for Parks and Recreation Programs in Knoxville (2025 Survey)



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Online Map Input

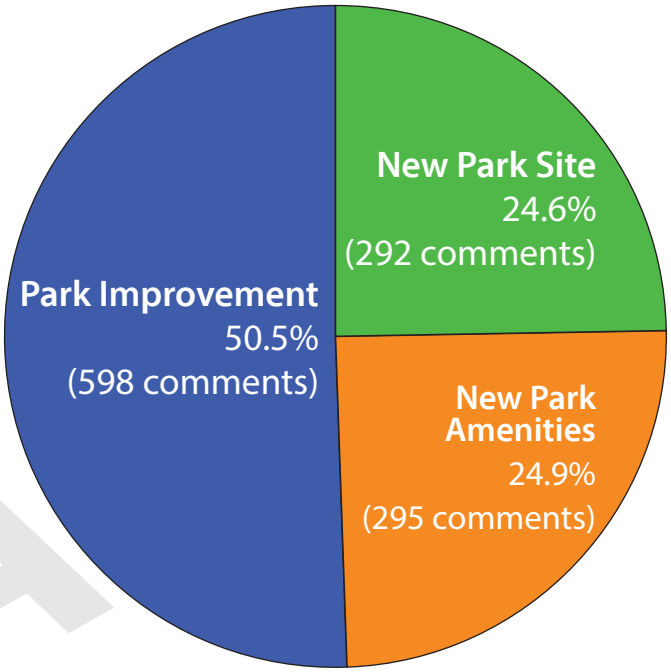
OVERVIEW

The Social Pinpoint-based project website included an interactive map where users could provide location-based input. The map allowed users to navigate across the City of Knoxville and leave a comment on any location. Users were required to label their comment within one of three categories, to help organize the feedback:

- **New Park Amenities:** Comments to identify a location for a NEW park amenity (playground, court, pavilion, boat launch, etc.) in an EXISTING City park.
- **Park Improvement:** Comments to identify EXISTING amenities or parks that need repairs, maintenance, or other improvements.
- **New Park Site:** Comments to identify locations where a COMPLETELY NEW PARK is needed.

The survey received 1,185 posts from 479 respondents. Additionally, map users had the option to "Upvote" posts, indicating their approval of a comment; 2,046 total votes were recorded, equating to roughly 2.9 average votes per post.

The chart (right) depicts the breakdown of comments by category.



Most Upvoted Comments

Figures 3.1y - Figure 3.1 aa include the top 10 comments for each category based on the total upvotes.

Figure 3.1y - Park Improvement Comments

Comment	Upvotes	Locations Noted
Greater greenway connection should be prioritized. It's dangerous to get to Knoxville's most beautiful park by any other means than car. This is a shame, particularly considering the park's proximity to the Bearden greenway and residential communities off of Northshore and Westland.	19	Lakeshore Park
Ned McWherter Park should be a priority for development along the north waterfront. Including greenway expansions, new park amenities, adaptive river access infrastructure, and boat storage.	17	Governor Ned McWherter Riverside Landing Park
Sidewalk from the intersection of Boyds Bridge pike and Holston Hills Rd to Holston Hills Park.	15	Holston Hills Park
The road crossing need improvement	11	Adair Park
Connect the Mary Vestal Greenway to Fort Dickerson via a more accessible trail.	11	Fort Dickerson Park & Augusta Quarry
Park improvements and access to the track area to other parts of the park would help define this space and better utilize the space. Bike pump track or tracks would be fun and work well with the skate park.	11	Fountain City Skate Park & Dog Park
I support youth sports through knoxville's partnership and investment in the programming, facilities, mission and operations of FCRC. I would love to see more parking added, equipment that works (e.g., lights and scoreboard), easier access points to park, better fencing for fields, better seats for spectators, another bathroom or two.	10	Fountain City Ballfields/Rec Center
Add a path from the crosswalk to the park assets. There are sidewalks throughout the neighborhood and a crosswalk to the park but then no accessible path from the top of the park to the playground/green way/field below.	9	Island Home Park
Please do not add a dog park here; instead, please devote more resources to enforcing existing prohibitions on off-leash dogs.	9	Sequoyah Hills Park
Connect high ground to Fort D Park via soft surface trail.	9	Fort Dickerson Park

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Figure 3.1z - New Park Amenities Comments		
Comment	**Upvotes**	**Parks/Locations Noted**
Would be fantastic to connect this park to existing greenways/bike paths. Currently no legal or safe pedestrian way to get here from a hot location like Kerns. Thank you for soliciting input!	14	Fort Dickerson Park & Augusta Quarry
Continue greenway along old railroad bed, to connect Caswell Park to Old City stadium area.	12	Caswell Park
Finish the proposed connector trail to Governor Ned McWherter / Riverside Landing Park and the James White Greenway.	12	Riverside Landing & James White Greenway
The gateway area is ripe for some native plant landscaping, perennial grasses that grow under 12-inches so they wouldn't limit visibility for drivers, create an educational space, and help with water runoff. Lower maintenance than keeping it mowed. Love this place.	12	Urban Wilderness Gateway Park
With the eventual removal of the rubble yard in this corner of the park, 2.1 acres would become available for public amenities. This parcel is large enough to have a moderately sized mountain bike gravel pump track around the perimeter, with a natural playscape in the center. The site already has several large boulders and many cubic yards of fill dirt that could be incorporated into the theme. These two aspects would not take all of the space on the site, and the remaining space could be used for additional amenities that are available to the surrounding community.	11	Caswell Park
There should be a safe way for pedestrians and cyclists to cross Broadway from the First Creek Greenway to the Fellini Kroger. Make it happen.	10	First Creek Park
Large tract on preserved, undeveloped property, but nobody knows about it. It needs an entranceway that invites people to come in. Great nature walks.	10	William Hastie Natural Area
This would be a fantastic greenway connection between Old Broadway and the existing Adair Greenway.	9	Adair Greenway
There has been talk of putting a dog park in this greenspace. Please do not put a dog park here. As a dog owner, I type this with love - dog parks are unsafe and a disgusting muddy mess. I am a long-time resident of east Knoxville and would never take my dog to a dog park in the area because there are too many intact dogs nearby, which greatly increases the chance of having situations where dogs and owners get hurt. This is also the only space in the neighborhood for sledding. I know that's an activity that happens only a handful of times a year, but it means a lot to the kids, parents, and community. For those few weeks out of the year, it's not just a hill to sled down, it's a gathering place for neighbors where they know their kids will see friends and parents can have a break and some social activity themselves after long periods indoors with kids who are unexpectedly home during the week.	8	Caswell Park
As a regular user of Holston River Park, an overlook near the highest section of the trail would be a great addition. This would provide an expansive view of Boyce Island and much of the river and perhaps the railroad bridge.	8	Holston River Park

Figure 3.1aa - New Park Site Comments		
Comment	**Upvotes**	**Parks/Locations Noted**
Once the pedestrian bridge to Thompson Boling is complete we need to have an accessible riverfront loop greenway completed between the new bridge and gay street bridge. Something like town lake in Austin or the Riverwalk in Chattanooga. We need more riverfront recreation in general.	23	Riverfront near Gay St.
The General Shale / KUB site could be a transformational outdoor recreation asset for Knoxville's north waterfront.	14	1744 Riverside Dr
Need greenway across James White PKWY.	13	1530 Island Home Avenue
UT owns so much property that could be better served as a community asset. Great place for a passive park with hiking trails and access to the river.	11	3300 Holston Hills Road
Collaborate with TVA to create Knoxville's first "paddle park" by installing "No wake zone" buoys at the head and tail of Looney Island on the Sequoyah Park side of the island. This would still allow for the use of boat ramp by motorized boats, but would create sheltered space between Looney Island and Sequoyah Park dedicated paddling. This would not interrupt commercial traffic on the river as the navigation channel is on the east side of Looney Island.	9	Sequoyah Park / 1503 Cherokee Boulevard
Collaborate with TVA to develop a new park on Looney Island with day use amenities for kayak/canoe such including docks, picnic tables, and walking trails.	8	Looney Island
This stretch of waterfront from Suttree Landing to Gay St. bridge should be utilized for community use with a large open green space, benches and tables, splash pad, paved paths, kayak launch etc. for gatherings, events. Eminent domain the industrial areas. The access via Gay street bridge (for pedestrians or cars when repaired) will give quick access to downtown or via Sevier Ave for people to shop and support local restaurants, breweries and boutiques. Coolidge Park Chattanooga, Tennessee and Tom McCall in Portland, Oregon are good examples of riverfront usage for the community. The elongated stretch of grass on Suttree's doesn't make it and ideal gathering spot for community events, festivals etc.	8	Riverfront from Suttree Landing to Gay St
Added underpass as part of greenway. It is one of the few north south cut throughs. Provide a path that remains open 24/7. Should eventually connect with new Marion St greenway.	8	941 Grand Avenue
Connect First Creek Greenway to Caswell Park.	8	Caswell Park
Park/gardens/path through city owned utility plots in belle Morris neighborhood!	8	Belle Morris / 1930 Lawson Avenue

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Figure 3.1ab
Online Comment Locations Map

ONLINE MAP COMMENTS

Park Improvement
New Park Amenities
New Park Site

LEGEND
Knox County
City of Knoxville
City Council Districts
City of Knoxville Parks
Streams + Water Bodies
Major Roads + Highways

1
2
3
4
5
6

N 0 1 2 4 Miles
1" = 2 miles

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Youth Surveys

OVERVIEW

In order to capture the parks preferences of ALL Knoxville residents and to help inform future park design, the Parks and Recreation Department developed two youth surveys, called My Park Favorites. One survey was designed to collect the park activity preferences of kids ages 4-8, and the other survey was designed to collect the park activity preferences of kids ages 9-14. The surveys were offered in English and Spanish.

The surveys were distributed through schools, and additional responses were collected at indoor centers, public events, and meetings. Along with the surveys, the book "Home Is Where Your Park Is" by Cameron Levis was shared with youth participants. The 4-9 age group survey received 805 responses and the 9-14 age group survey received 593 responses.

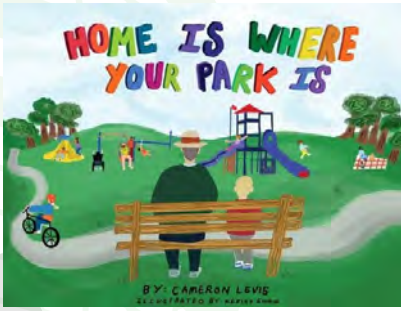


Figure 3.1ac - 3 Favorites at a Park (Ages 4-9)
Votes for each category as percentage of total votes

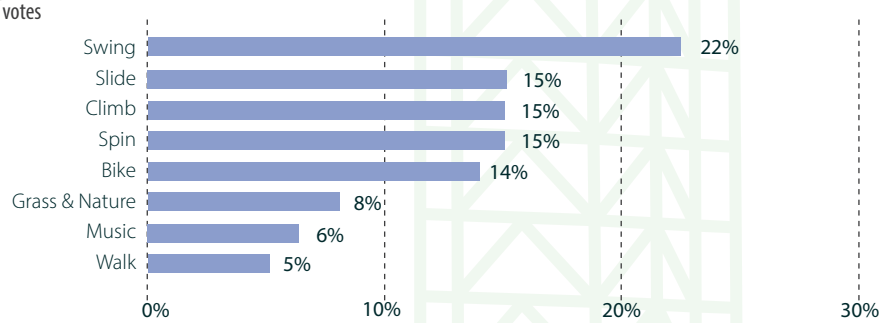
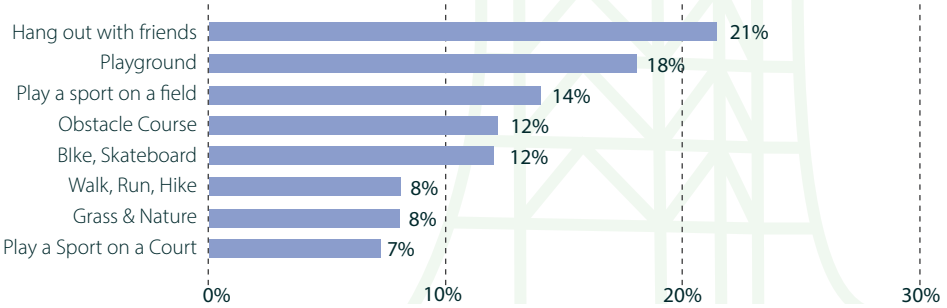


Figure 3.1ad - My Park Favorites (Ages 9-14)
Votes for each category as percentage of total votes



High School/College Survey

OVERVIEW

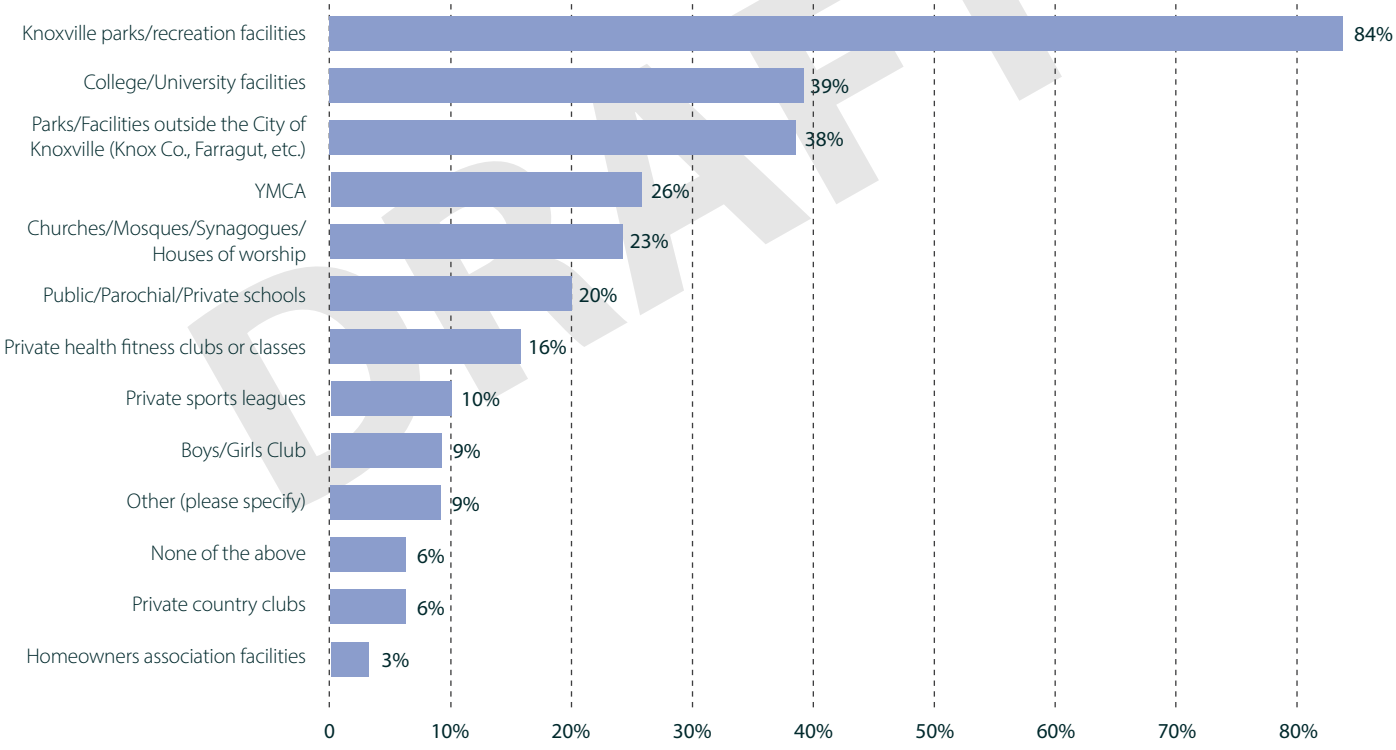
While the Statistically Valid Survey and Online Survey both captured the responses of Knoxville residents ages 18 and over (and the Online Survey was open to residents of any age) the Parks and Recreation Department was interested in specifically understanding the parks and recreation needs of high school and college-age residents, ages 15-22. This group is often underrepresented in analyses of park usage, despite parks serving as a primary option for a free location to spend time.

The survey was adapted from the Statistically Valid Survey and was distributed through the Department and City email listserves that include the desired age groups. A total of 70 responses were collected.

Parks and Recreation Providers

Respondents were asked to check all of the organizations they use for indoor and/or outdoor recreation. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1ae - Organizations used for recreation



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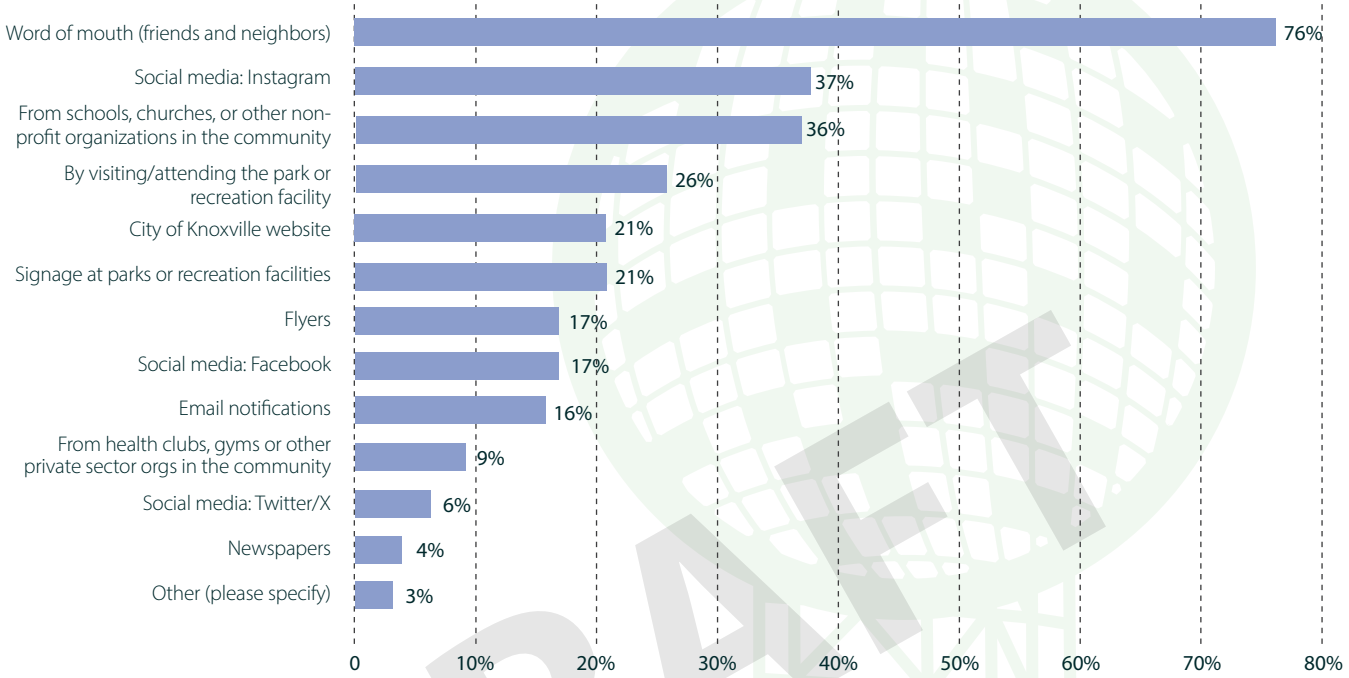
Parks and Recreation Awareness

Respondents were asked how they learn about the recreation programs, activities, and special events. The chart below reflects the results.

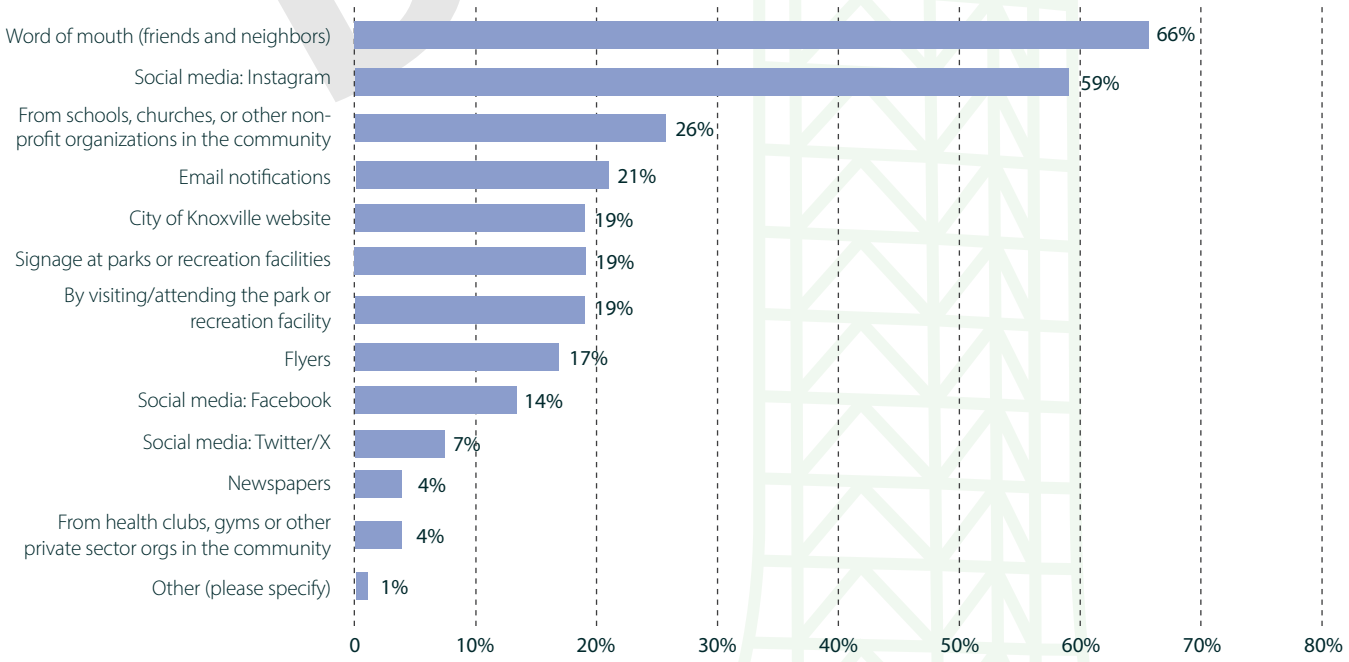
Figure 3.1af - Sources of Parks and Recreation Information



Parks and Recreation Awareness Preferences

Respondents were asked to identify their THREE most preferred ways of learning about recreation programs, activities, and special events. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1ag - Preferred Sources of Parks and Recreation Information



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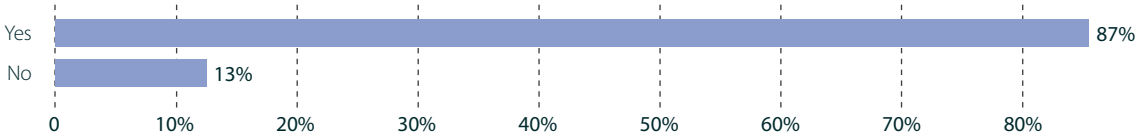
Parks Usage

Respondents were asked if they have visited any City of Knoxville parks within the past 12 months. The chart below reflects the results.

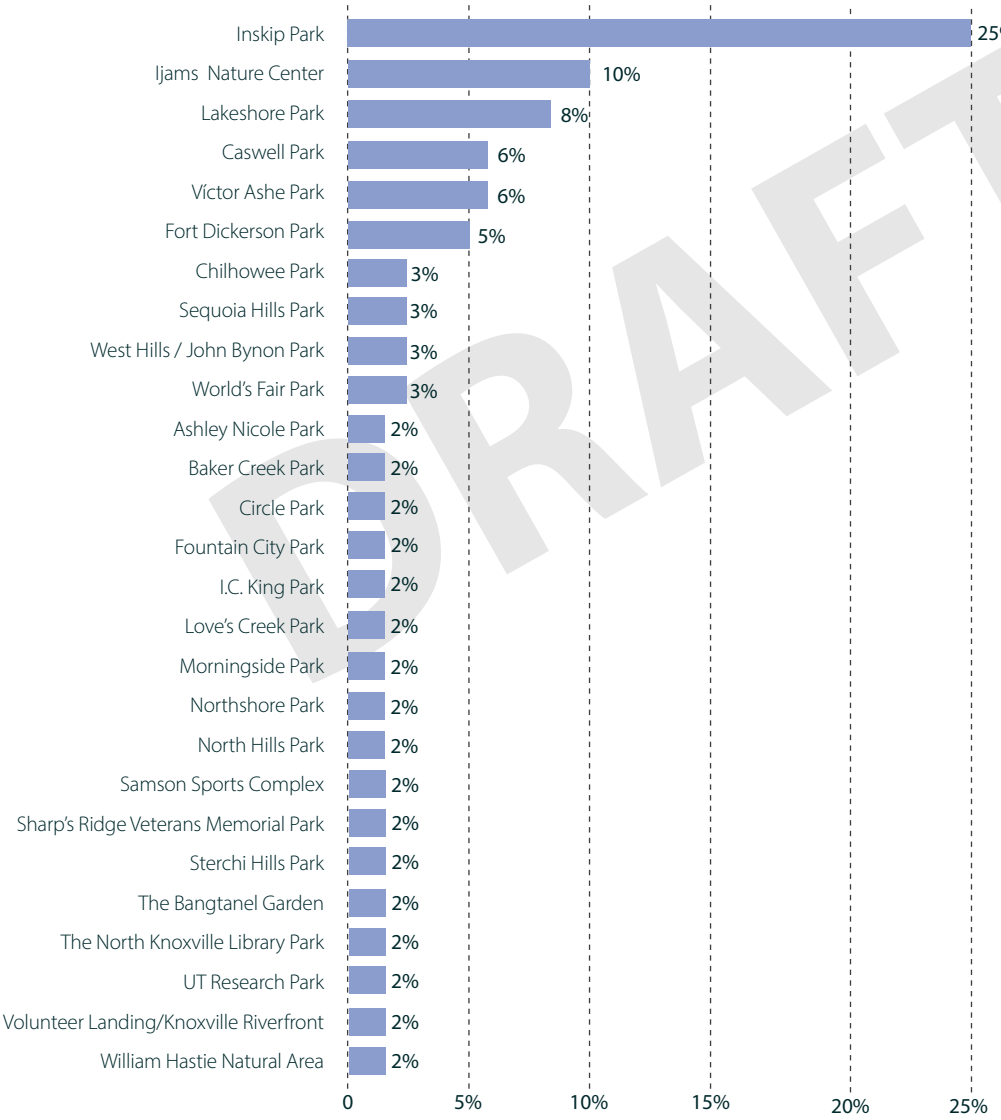
Figure 3.1ah - Park Usage



Favorite Parks

Respondents were asked to identify their favorite park in the City of Knoxville. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1ai - Favorite Parks



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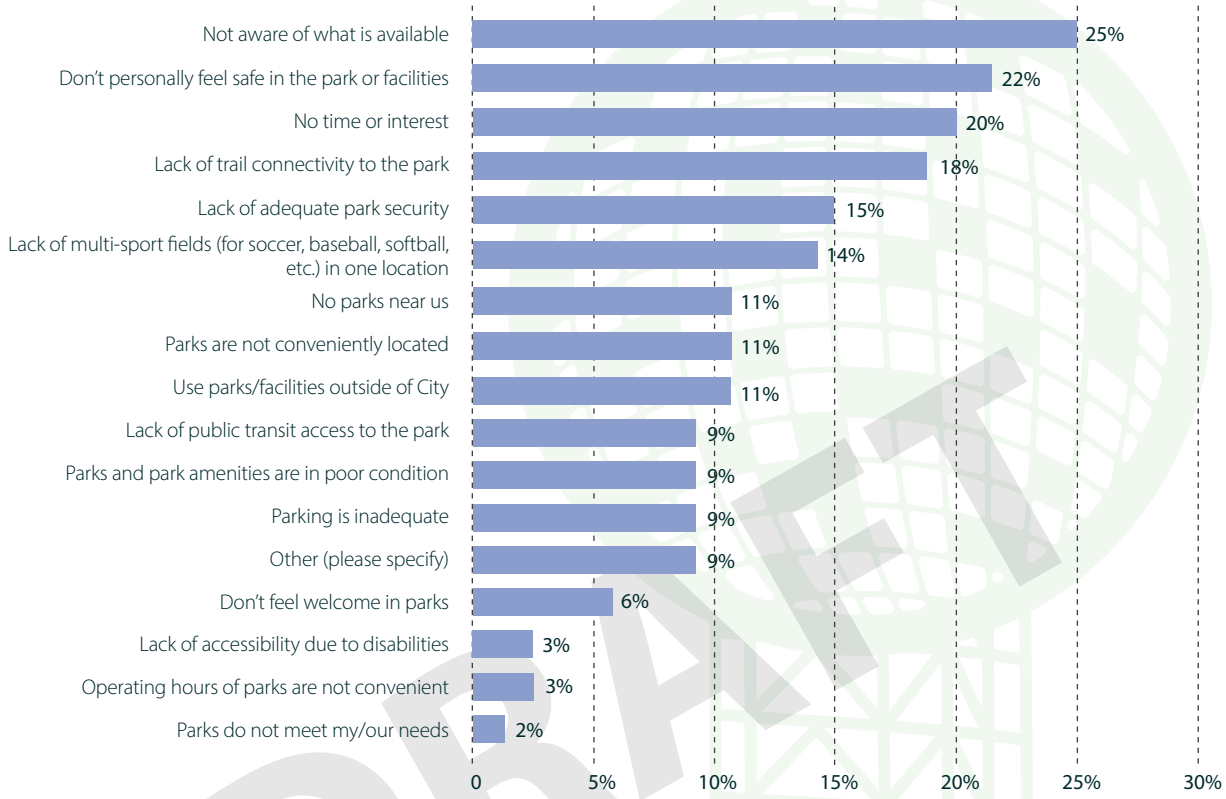
Barriers to Park Usage

Respondents were asked to select all the reasons that deter them from using City of Knoxville parks more often. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1aj - Barriers



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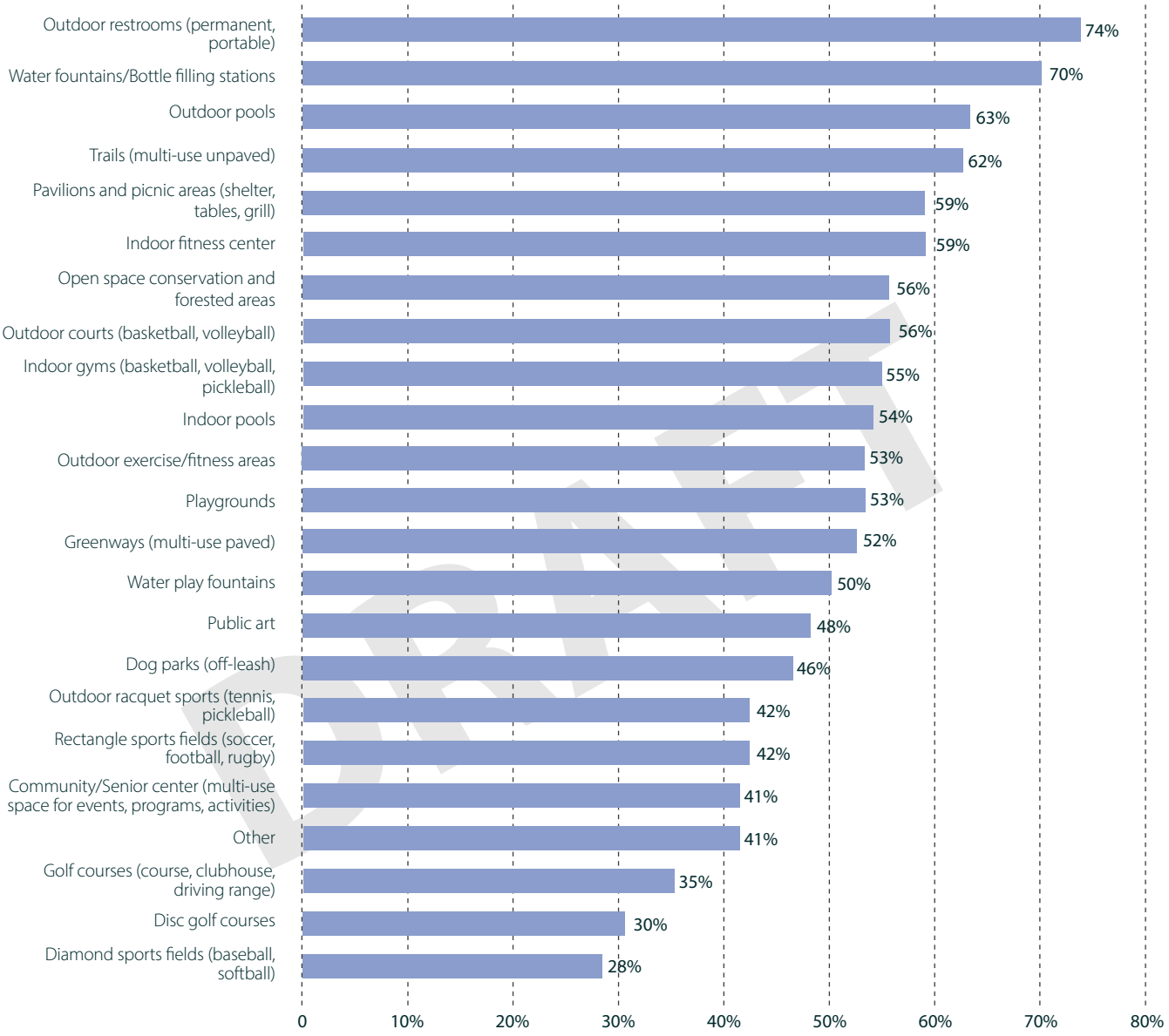
Facilities/Amenities Needs

Respondents were asked to indicate for each of the parks and recreation facilities/amenities below, how well their needs are being met by selecting from the options of "Need MORE/Need IMPROVEMENT", "Already ENOUGH/Well Served", or "Too MANY". The chart reflects responses that indicated "Need MORE/Need IMPROVEMENT."

Figure 3.1ak - Facilities/Amenities with Needs



Facilities/Amenities Priorities

Respondents were asked to identify the top FOUR facilities/amenities from the list in Question 14 that are MOST IMPORTANT to them. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1al - Facilities/Amenities Priorities

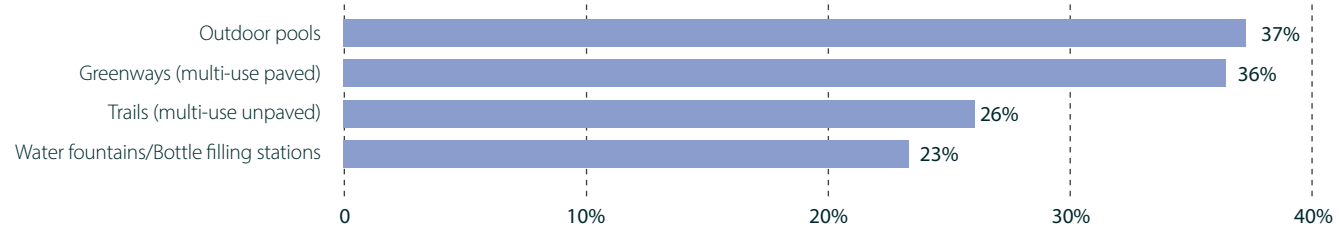


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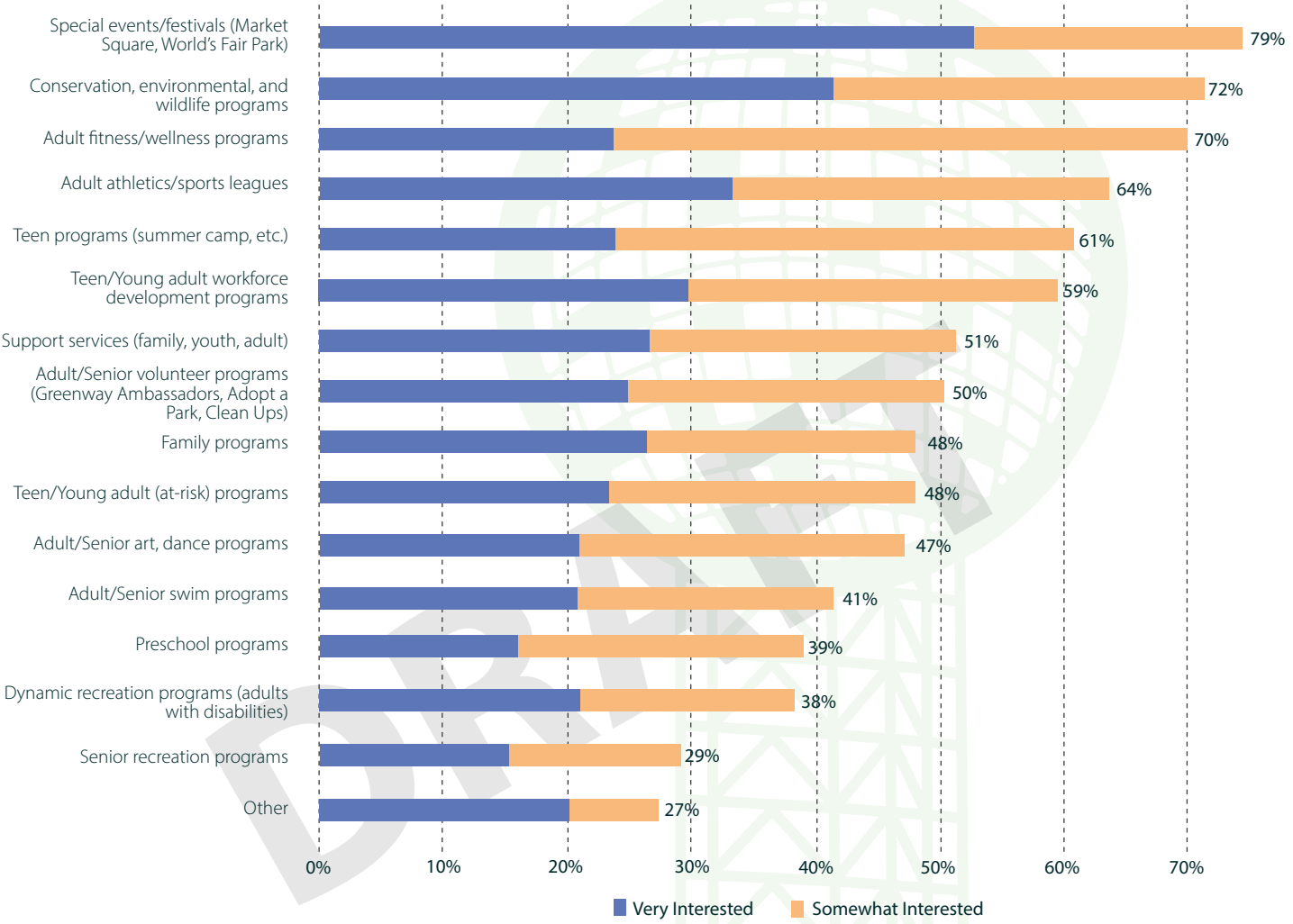
Figure 3.1am - Top Five Community Concerns Identified by Survey Respondents.

Respondents were asked to indicate their interest in 16programs/activities listed. The chart reflects all results that indicated interest.



Programs/Activities Priorities

Respondents were asked to identify the top FOUR facilities/amenities from the list in Question 14 that are MOST IMPORTANT to them. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1an - Programs/Activities Priorities

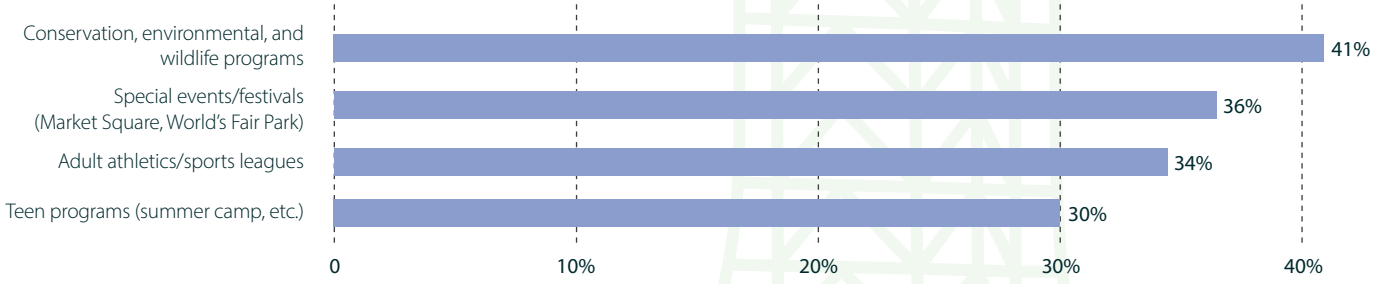
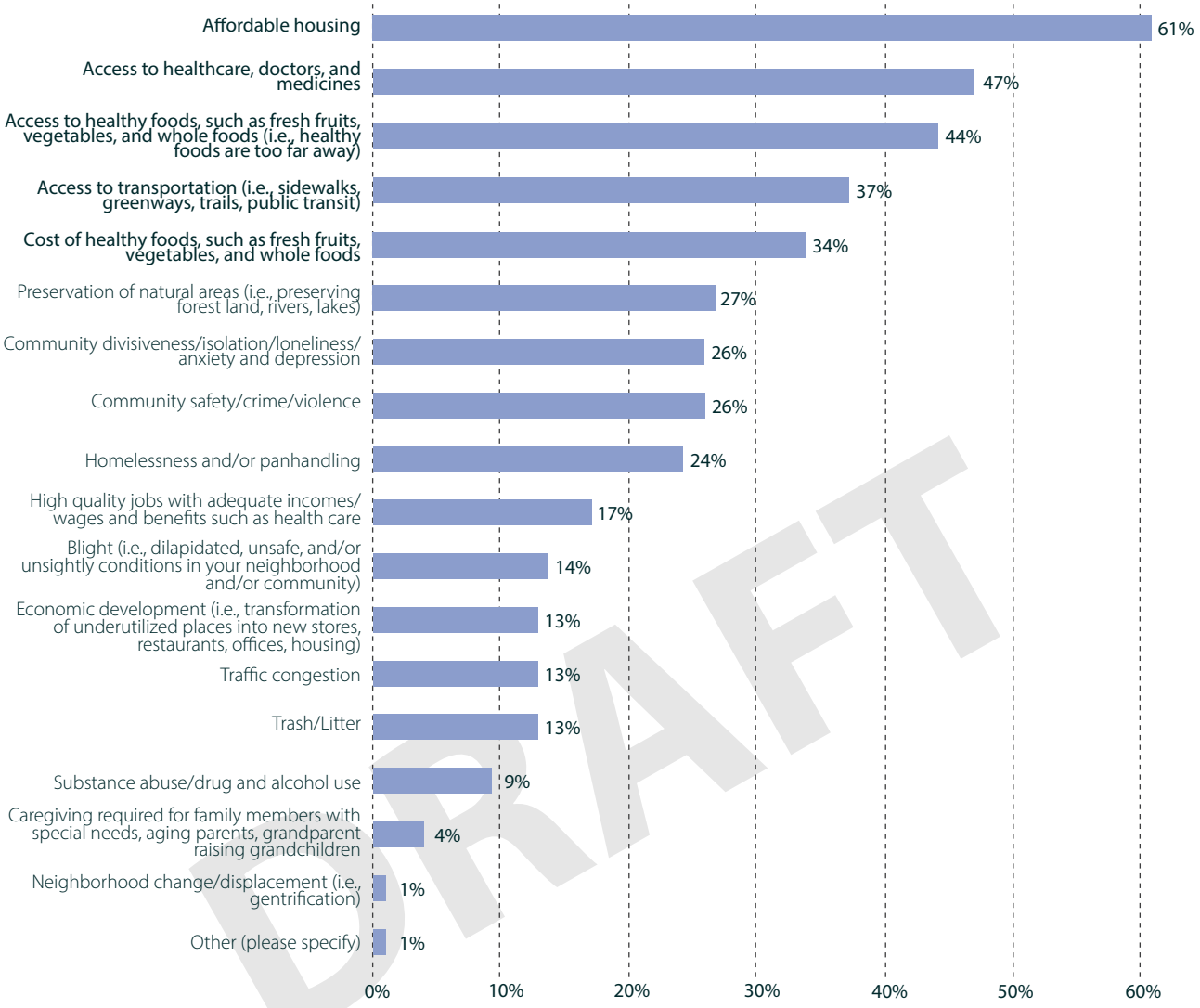


Figure 3.1ao - Top Five Community Health Concerns.

Respondents were asked to identify the top-five community health concerns that are most important to them. The chart below reflects the results.



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Public Meetings + Special Events

OVERVIEW

The Parks and Recreation Department and Consultant Team hosted eight public meetings specific to this plan to collect public input. Meetings were held at sites across the city to provide ample access to residents in each of the City's six Council Districts. Team members also attended a planned neighborhood meeting to collect input from the West Hills community to ensure adequate representation from Council District 2.

Figure 3.1ap
Public Meetings

Date	Day	Event	Location	Time
10-Apr	Thursday	Public Meeting - Deane Hill CC	Deane Hill CC	6pm-7:30pm
14-Apr	Monday	Public Meeting - South Knoxville CC	South Knoxville CC	6pm-7:30pm
17-Apr	Thursday	Public Meeting - Dr EV Davidson CC	Dr. EV Davidson CC	6pm-7:30pm
21-Apr	Monday	Public Meeting - Lonsdale	Haslam-Sansom Ministry Complex	6pm-7:30pm
22-Apr	Tuesday	Public Meeting - John T O'Connor Sr Center	John T O'Connor Senior Center	6pm-7:30pm
1-May	Thursday	Public Meeting - Cumberland Estates CC	Cumberland Estates CC	6pm-7:30pm
14-May	Wednesday	Public Meeting - Lakeshore Park	Lakeshore Park Marble Hall	6pm-7:30pm
19-May	Monday	West Hills Community Assoc. Meeting	Church of Nazarene	7pm-8:30pm
20-May	Tuesday	Public Meeting - Fountain City	Central Baptist Church Fountain City	6pm-7:30pm

At each of the meetings, five stations were set up with posterboards where attendees could provide input on the following topics:

- Facility Needs
- Program Needs
- Community Challenges
- Spending Priorities
- Willingness to Pay for Parks and Recreation Services

In addition, the Project Team attended two planned Public Events to collect similar input, although only three of the input boards were used: Facility Priorities, Program Priorities, Willingness to Pay for Parks and Recreation Services.

Figure 3.1aq
Special Events

Date	Day	Event	Location	Time
21-Apr	Monday	Open Ride At Safety City	Safety City	10am-2pm
3-May	Saturday	Outlandish Festival	Ijams Nature Center	8am-3pm

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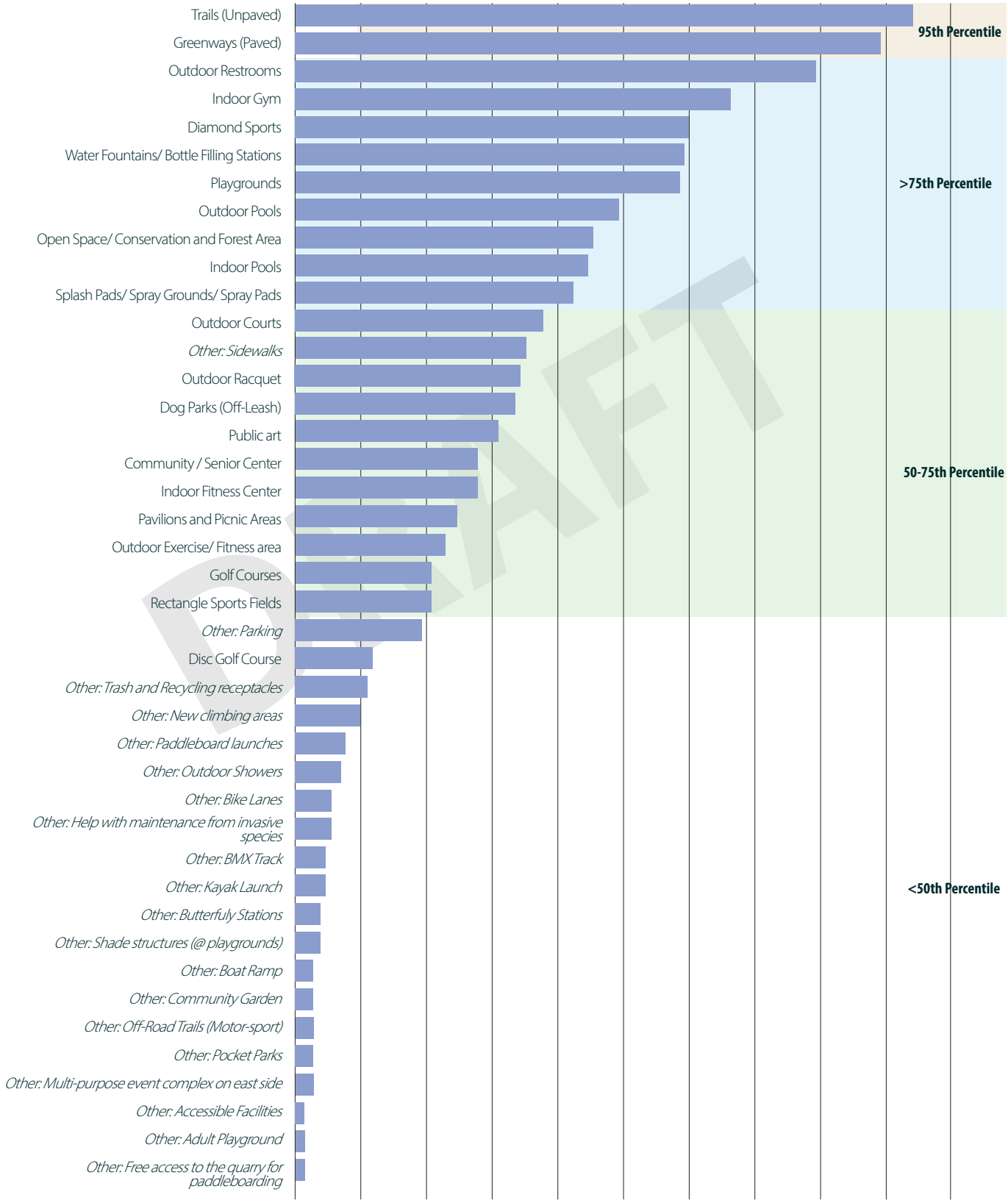
Facilities/Amenities Needs

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 40 facilities and amenities, participants were asked to place a dot on the facilities and amenities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the City. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1ar
Facilities/Amenities Needs



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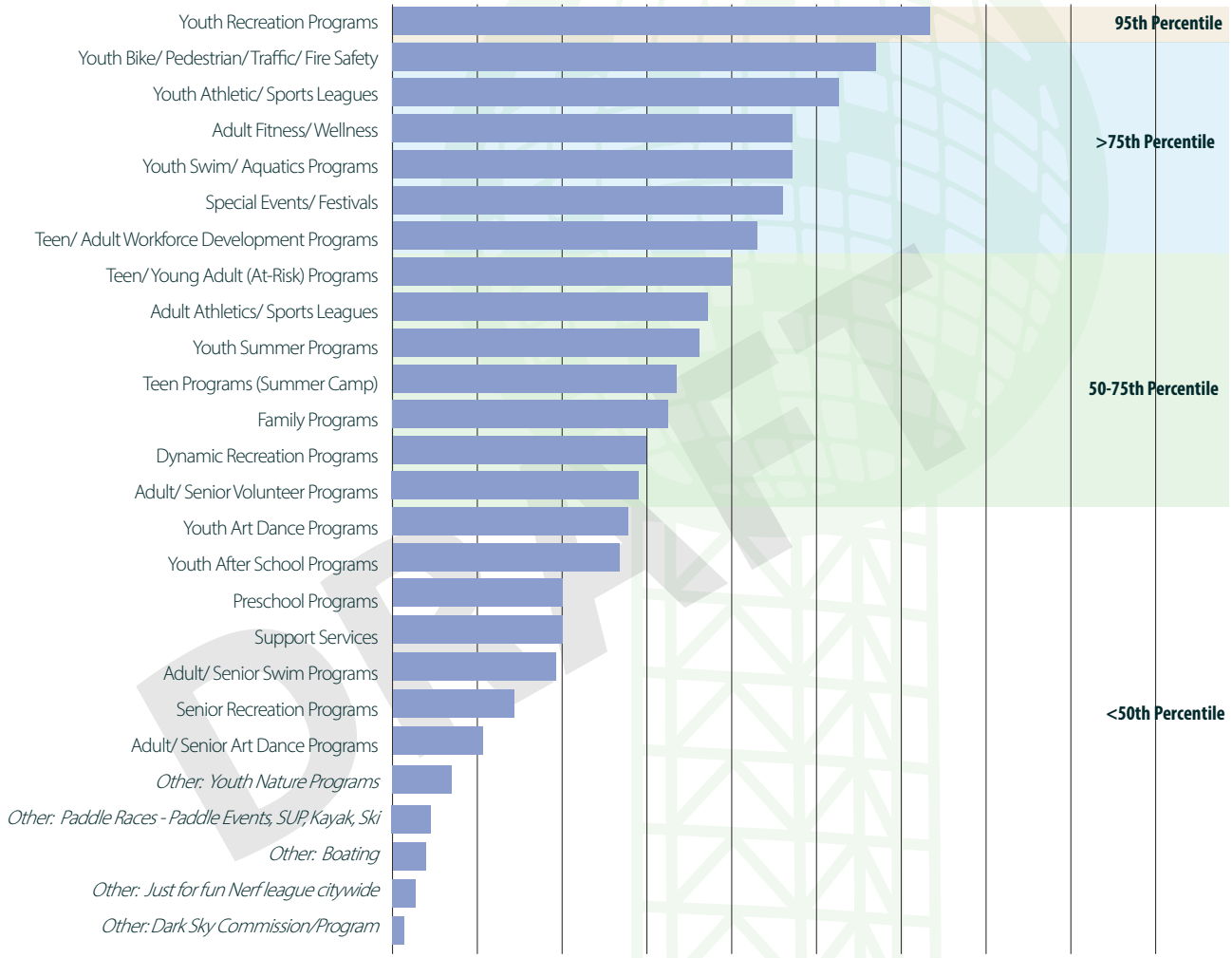
Program Needs

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 35 programs and activities, participants were asked to place a dot on the programs and activities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the City. The chart below reflects the results.

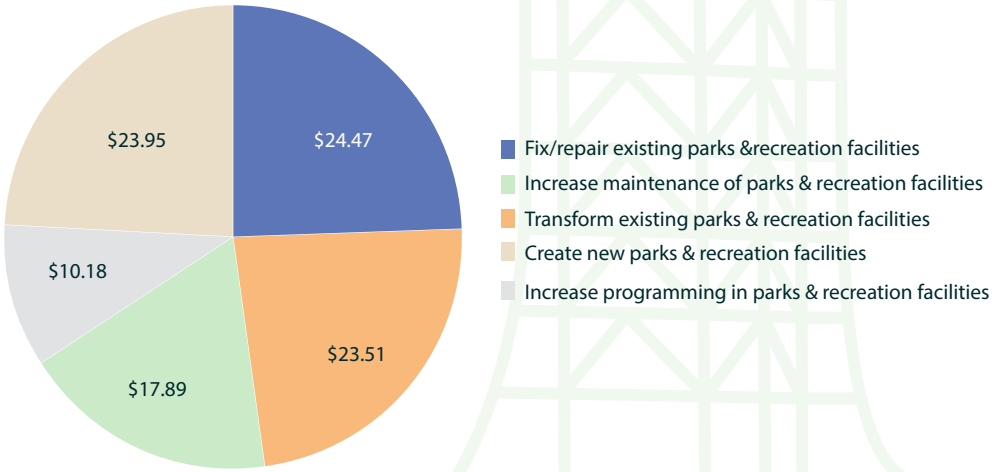
Figure 3.1as
Program Needs



Spending Priorities

Participants were given a hypothetical budget of $100 (represented by 10 coins, each coin worth $10) to allocate across five different categories of park system investment. The chart below reflects the results.

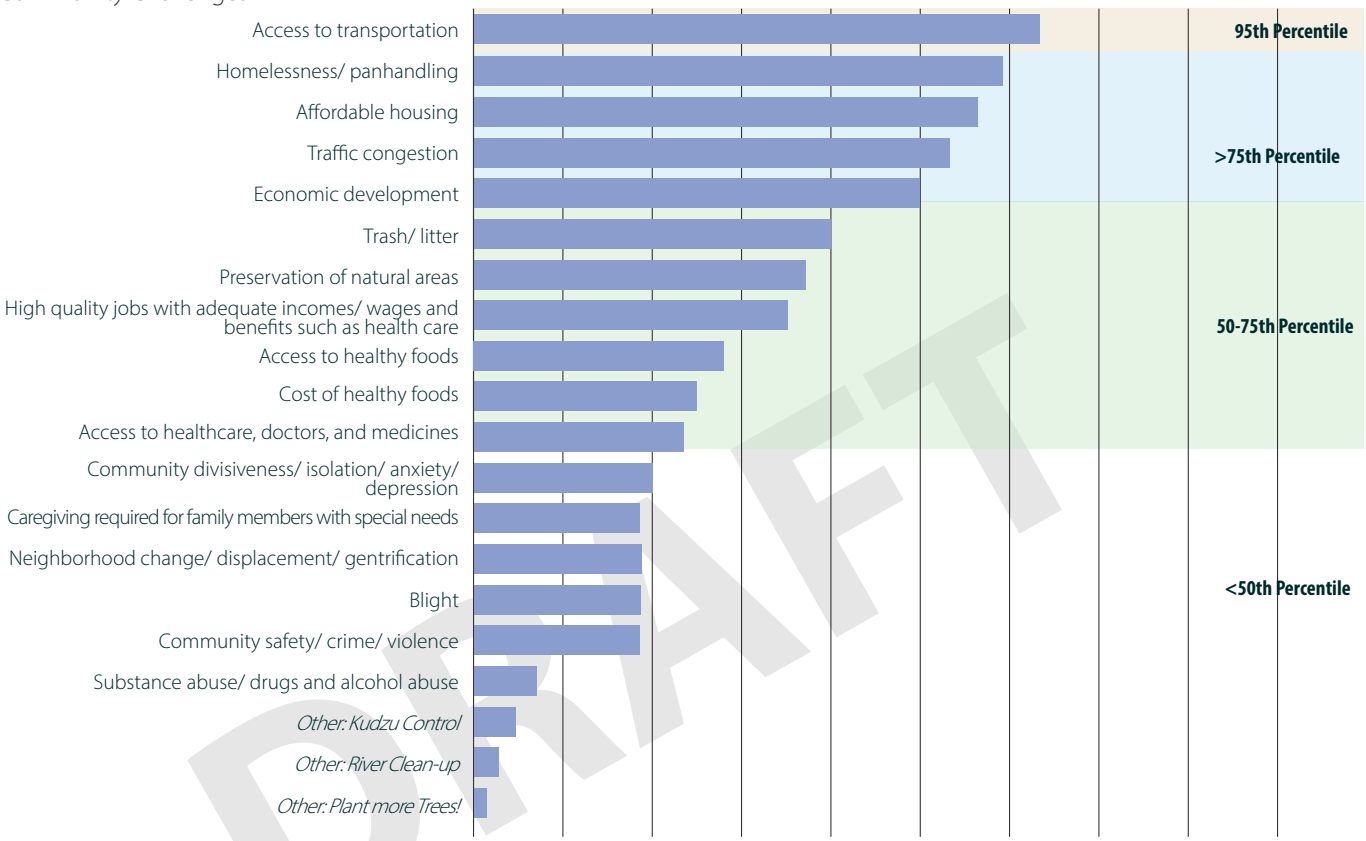
Figure 3.1at
Spending Priorities



Community Health Challenges

Based on a matrix with 16 community health challenges that the City of Knoxville may be facing, participants were asked to place a dot on the community health challenges which are important to their household, with the understanding that the Consultant Teams believes that the parks and recreation system has a role to play in helping to address a wide range of issues facing the community. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1au
Community Challenges



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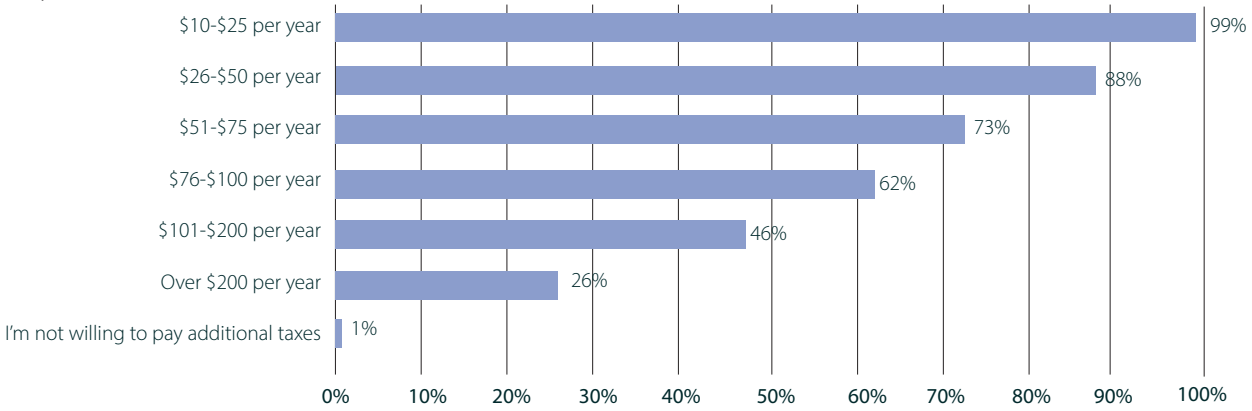
Willingness to Pay Additional Annual Taxes for Park and Recreation Improvements

Respondents were asked to indicate the maximum amount of additional annual taxes they would be willing to pay to improve local parks and recreation facilities. The chart below reflects the results.

Figure 3.1av
Willingness to Pay



Focus Group Interviews

The Consultant Team conducted virtual meetings with seventeen different focus groups to ascertain needs and priorities for the parks and recreation system. Each focus group comprised 5-10 members of the community engaged in work or volunteer efforts related to their focus group topic. The conversations typically lasted 45 minutes to an hour and covered four major topics:

1. Needs related to the parks and recreation system, in particular related to the group
2. Broader city challenges and the role parks and recreation may be able to play in addressing
3. Priorities for parks and recreation improvements
4. Funding and Implementation Strategies

The focus groups included:

1. Youth Sports Providers and Partners | 3/6/2025
2. Outdoor Recreation Partners | 3/6/2025
3. Parks Advocacy Community | 3/7/2025
4. Aging and Disability Partners | 3/10/2025
5. Neighborhood Advocacy Partners | 3/10/2025
6. After school and Summer Camp Providers | 3/10/2025
7. Greenways and Trail Partners | 3/10/2025
8. Housing/Community Development | 3/11/2025
9. Special Events in Parks (small scale) | 3/11/2025
10. Media Outlets | 3/12/2025
11. Programming Partners | 3/12/2025
12. Special Events in Parks (large scale) | 3/12/2025
13. Youth and Young Adult Empowerment Partners | 3/13/2025
14. Hispanic/Latino Community Leaders | 3/14/2025
15. Local Food Community | 4/23/2025
16. Univ. of Tennessee #1 | 4/29/2025
17. Univ. of Tennessee #2 | 4/30/2025

The following summary presents the major themes and frequently noted comments for each topic.

Parks and Recreation Needs

Facility Shortages and Aging Infrastructure: There is a widespread lack of basketball gyms, athletics fields (baseball, football, soccer, lacrosse, etc.), multi-use spaces, and indoor facilities across the city, especially in North Knoxville. Many existing parks and indoor centers are outdated, unsafe, or under-maintained—some haven't been upgraded since the 1950s or 60s.

Program Access and Equity: Youth and teen programming is limited, especially in lower-income areas. Private clubs are outpricing local recreation leagues, and programming for middle/high school students and youth with disabilities is insufficient. Accessibility for families without vehicles is a major issue.

Geographic Disparity: South and West Knoxville have seen investment (e.g., Lakeshore Park, Urban Wilderness), but North and East are underserved. Lower-income and Latino communities report fewer amenities, lower quality, and a lack of culturally appropriate offerings.

Outdoor Recreation and Connectivity: There's strong interest in riverfront access, trail systems, bike/pedestrian infrastructure, and expanding greenways. Safety and shade, especially for seniors and young children, restrooms, water access, and lighting are consistent gaps.

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Broader City Needs

Equity and Inclusion: Participants emphasized the need to ensure equitable access to parks, safe transportation, and quality programming—particularly in underserved neighborhoods. Programs should reflect cultural, economic, and physical accessibility needs.

Connectivity and Transportation: Safe pedestrian and bike connections to parks are lacking. Public transit often doesn't extend to parks or stops short of them. Infrastructure, such as sidewalks, bike lanes is fragmented.

Public Safety and Homelessness: Concerns about drug use, homelessness, and general safety in parks were voiced frequently. Call boxes, lighting, and social service collaboration are suggested.

Youth Empowerment and Mentorship: Parks are seen as key platforms for addressing social challenges such as violence prevention, mental health, community engagement. There's a strong push for youth mentorship, workforce development, and more programs that engage older teens and young adults.

Environmental Needs: Better environmental stewardship was emphasized—managing stormwater, increasing tree canopy, maintaining green space, removing invasive species, and climate-resilient design (e.g., floodplain buffers).

Parks and Recreation Priorities

Top priorities repeatedly mentioned include:

- Expanding and modernizing facilities, especially indoor centers with multiple courts, turf fields, and walking tracks.
- Upgrading aging parks and playgrounds to improve safety, lighting, shade, restrooms, and accessibility.
- Improving trail and park connectivity, both for recreation and transportation.
- Focusing investment in underserved areas, especially North and East Knoxville, and areas with high-density, low-income populations.
- Culturally responsive and age-inclusive programming, especially for teens, adults, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.
- Building partnerships and support systems, particularly for volunteer organizations, youth sports commissions, and outdoor program providers.

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Funding and Implementation Strategies

Participants were supportive of the full mix of pay-as-you-go and borrowing mechanisms, including:

Pay-As-You-Go:

- General Fund / CIP (increase parks budget)
- Sales Tax (increase or larger allocation)
- Park Impact Fees/ Developer Contributions / Fees
- Grants
- User Fees (with caution to avoid pricing out low-income users)
- Special Assessments

Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds

Additional notes:

- **Philanthropy and Public-Private Partnerships:** There is a strong call to expand partnerships like Legacy Parks, seek out philanthropic champions, and tap into community fundraising for improvements.
- **Local Emphasis:** Given uncertainty around federal funding, there is a desire to focus on local solutions—community organizing, streamlined grant access, and neighborhood-based programs.
- **Implementation Advice:** Break master plan goals into smaller, actionable phases with public accountability and regular check-ins. Ensure maintenance funding and staffing are addressed alongside capital investments.

Elected Officials/City Leadership Interviews

The Consultant Team conducted virtual discussions with City Council Members, the Mayor, and City Leaders to ascertain needs and priorities for the parks and recreation system, especially as they related to the broader challenges and opportunities the City leaders are focused on addressing. The conversations typically lasted 45 minutes to an hour and covered the same four topics as the focus groups:

1. Needs related to the parks and recreation system, in particular related to the group
2. Broader city challenges and the role parks and recreation may be able to play in addressing
3. Priorities for parks and recreation improvements
4. Funding and Implementation Strategies

The following officials were interviewed:

- Chief Operating Officer Grant Rosenberg
- Chief of Urban Design and Development Rebekah Jane Justice
- Chief of Staff David Brace
- Chief Financial Officer Boyce Evans and Deputy Chief Financial Officer Kittrin Smith
- Mayor Indya Kincannon
- Vice Mayor Tommy Smith | District 1
- Councilman Andrew Roberto | District 2
- Councilwoman Seema Singh | District 3
- Councilwoman Lauren Rider | District 4
- Councilman Charles Thomas | District 5
- Councilwoman Gwen McKenzie | District 6
- Councilwoman Lynne Fugate | At Large Seat A
- Councilwoman Debbie Helsley | At Large Seat B
- Councilwoman Amelia Parker – At Large Seat C

Parks and Recreation Needs

Connectivity and Access: Nearly all Council members highlighted the need for better connectivity via greenways, sidewalks, and safe pedestrian/bike infrastructure. This includes addressing physical barriers (e.g., interstates, blighted corridors) and ensuring equitable access in underserved areas.

Park Distribution and Infrastructure:

- Some Council Districts lack a "Crown Jewel" park (e.g., District 4), while others note an over-concentration of investment (e.g., South Knoxville).
- Smaller, neighborhood-based parks and pocket parks are highly valued, especially in denser areas.
- Many parks are aging and under-maintained. There's a clear call for systematic repair/replacement schedules and upgrading restrooms, lighting, playgrounds, and trails.
- There is concern over vandalism, lack of ADA accessibility, and the condition of recreation centers, especially in East and North Knoxville.

Facilities and Programming:

- Requests for more outdoor basketball courts, splash pads, community centers, and inclusive spaces.
- Limited access to pools and gyms after school or on weekends.
- Strong desire for more programming, particularly for youth, seniors, and multicultural groups. Many indoor centers are fully booked and turning people away.
- Unused or inactive parks are seen as hotspots for crime or homelessness, underlining the need for activation strategies.
- Recreation System Standards: A call for unified design and maintenance standards, and possibly a new Outdoor Recreation Division to ensure programming and facility quality citywide.

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Broader City Needs

- Housing Affordability: Identified as a major and growing crisis across Council Districts. It contributes to homelessness and displaces long-term residents.
- Homelessness and Public Safety: Park use is impacted by the presence of unhoused individuals. Council members advocate for a balanced approach—offering compassionate services while addressing public space concerns.
- Social Isolation and Community Cohesion: Officials recognize a rise in loneliness, alienation, and lack of public gathering spaces. Parks are seen as "third spaces" where people can connect. Suggestions include community gardens, clubs, and civic programming.
- Stormwater and Climate Resilience: Parks can serve as infrastructure for stormwater management, erosion control, and climate resilience. Opportunities exist to align park investments with green infrastructure goals.
- Equity & Inclusion: Emphasis on geographic and demographic equity, particularly for underserved communities, seniors, immigrants, and people with disabilities.

Parks and Recreation Priorities

Across interviews, the following top priorities were repeated:

Improved Maintenance and Replacement Schedules: Systematic upkeep of park infrastructure, restrooms, indoor centers, trails, etc.

Enhanced Connectivity: Close trail and greenway gaps, connect parks, improve pedestrian/bike infrastructure, and ensure access to/from neighborhoods.

Activation of Parks: Expand programming, especially youth/senior-focused, reinstitute recreation leagues, and engage communities with low- or no-cost activities.

Smaller, Equitable Parks: Build or enhance neighborhood-scale parks close to homes, especially in areas like North and Northwest Knoxville.

More Inclusive Public Facilities: ADA compliance, access for non-English speakers, age-inclusive programming, safe and visible trails, restrooms, shaded seating, etc.

Riverfront and Natural Area Utilization: Leverage the Tennessee River, First Creek, and other natural resources to increase access and enjoyment while protecting ecological health.

Funding and Implementation Strategies

In general, there's broad support for funding improvements but also caution about debt due to recent bond commitments (e.g., stadium, convention center).

- User fees and special assessments are generally unpopular.
- Sales tax and property tax have some potential if transparently earmarked and time-limited.
- Grants and state/federal funding are strongly encouraged.
- Interest in public-private partnerships (e.g., developer incentives, community fundraising).
- Several expressed interest in dedicated funding sources for parks (e.g., via development impact fees, SPLOST-style programs).
- Support for clearer public communications around what taxes or fees support.

Implementation Suggestions:

- Create a priority project list for transparency and focus.
- Break down large plans into manageable phases.
- Ensure collaboration across City Departments and with community organizations.
- Emphasize maintenance and staffing, not just capital projects.

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3.2 level of service analysis + benchmarking

Unlike other major public infrastructure, such as traffic engineering, roadway design, or stormwater management guidelines, there are no industry standards or regulations for establishing Levels of Service (LOS) for parks and recreation services. The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) does not publish traditional population-based LOS standards such as park acres and facilities per 1,000 residents.

Instead, communities are encouraged to conduct community-wide needs assessments and benchmark themselves against other similar communities in order to establish their own LOS standards.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed its benchmarking website Park Metrics, "the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies" to help municipalities develop LOS metrics. Knoxville LOS findings were benchmarked against communities that have a similar population and population density as Knoxville.

Five different LOS methods were used to determine how well the City's parks and recreation system is meeting residents' needs:

1. **Acreage LOS:** Measures the quantity of parkland acreage that is available per 1,000 residents.
2. **Indoor Center Square Footage LOS:** Measures the quantity of indoor center space available per resident.
3. **Facilities LOS:** Measures the number of recreation facilities available per capita.
4. **Access LOS:** Measures the geographic areas served by parks or recreation facilities.
5. **Financial LOS:** Measures the Department's budget expenditures per capita.

It is important to note that these LOS Analyses are just one tool for determining the community's needs. The findings alone may not be indicative of residents' needs and priorities. LOS analyses are based on the gross population of a community, not preferences or priorities based on unique community demographics, lifestyles, or values. The findings from the LOS analyses must be compared to the findings from the other needs assessment techniques in order to verify parks and recreation needs and priorities.

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Acreage LOS

Acreage LOS measures the total park acreage available for every 1,000 members of the population.

Park Acreage LOS was analyzed using three different acreage considerations:

- City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department (PRD) Parks
- City of Knoxville PRD + Knox County Parks
- City of Knoxville PRD + Knox County Parks + State Parks and Other Publicly-owned Greenspaces/ Preserves

Acreage amounts were divided by the population estimates for the years 2024, 2029, and 2034. Figure 3.2a illustrates the findings from these analyses and compares the City's 2024 Acreage LOS to NRPA benchmarks for cities with a similar population and population density as Knoxville.

Based on the Acreage LOS analyses, Knoxville's Acreage LOS in 2024 ranges from 11.9 to 21.2 acres per 1,000 population, depending on which types of parks and greenspaces are included. This broad range reflects the complexity of determining what constitutes recreation space, as well as the opportunity to maximize available publicly owned lands for recreation opportunities.

If the Department does not acquire or open any additional park land by the year 2034, park acreage LOS would decline to a range between 11.1 and 19.7 acres per 1,000 population. This would still be near or well above the 75th percentile benchmarks.

To meet the 75th Percentile Acreage LOS benchmark of 11.5 acres per 1,000 population by the year 2034, Knoxville would have to add approximately 79 acres, based on Department acreage alone (excluding other public lands).

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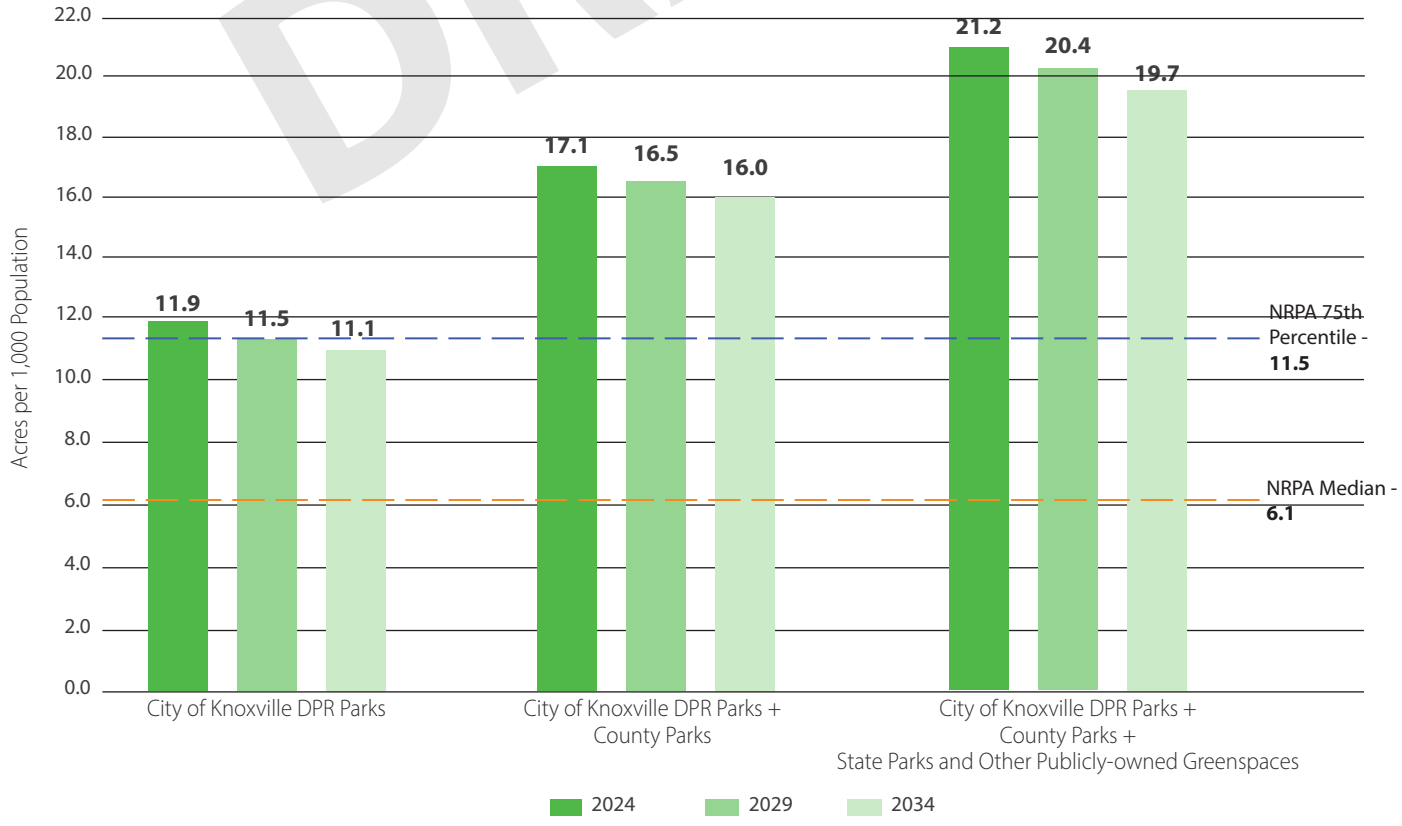
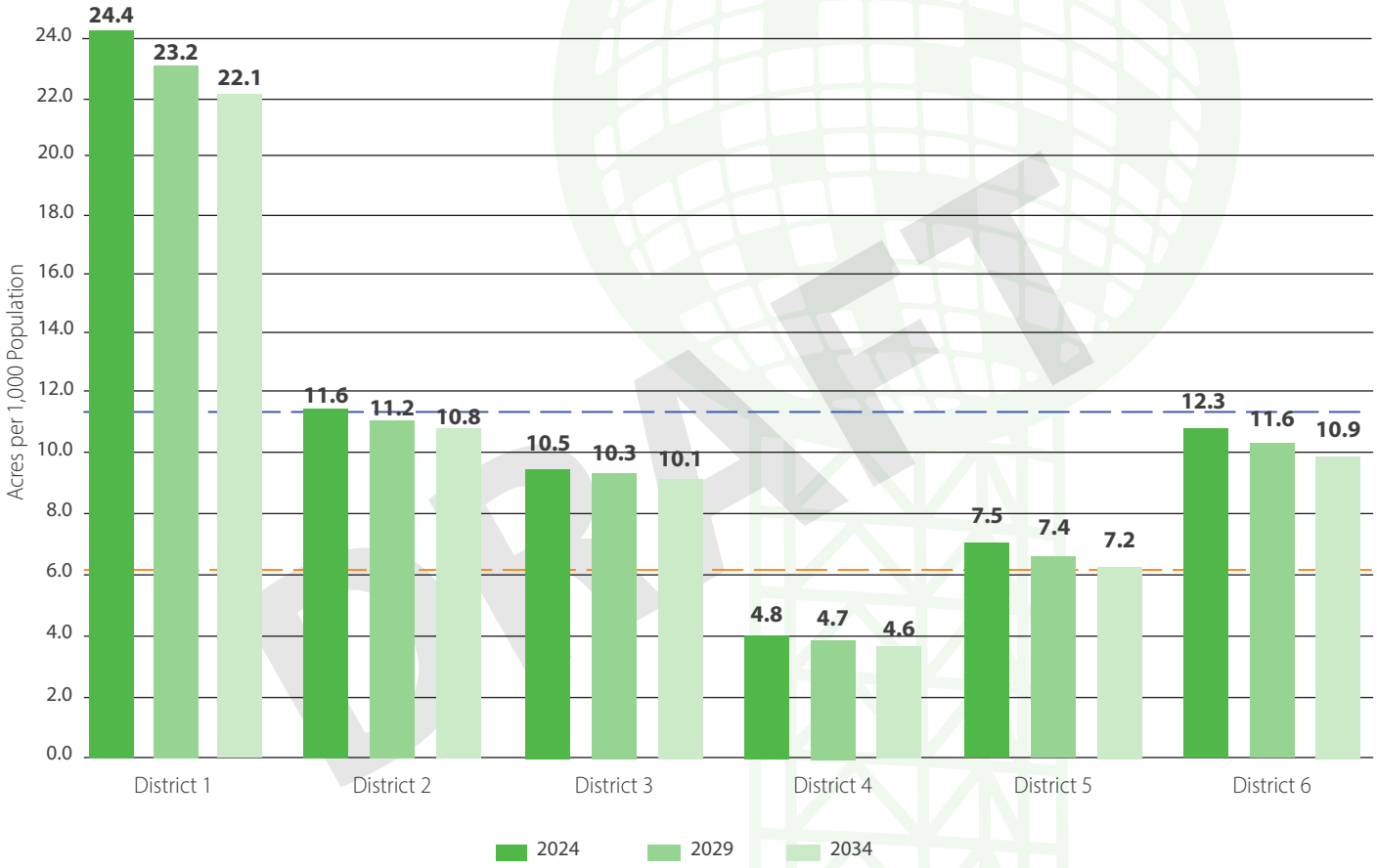
Figure 3.2a
Acreage Level of Service Analysis



Comparing the City's park land by Council District reveals significant differences between the LOS across the City. Based purely on Department park acreage, District 1 has by far the most acreage, 24.4 acres per 1,000 as of 2024. Districts 4 and 5 are notably low on parkland, with District 4 well below the median of 6.1.

Figure 3.2b
Acreage Level of Service Analysis by Council District



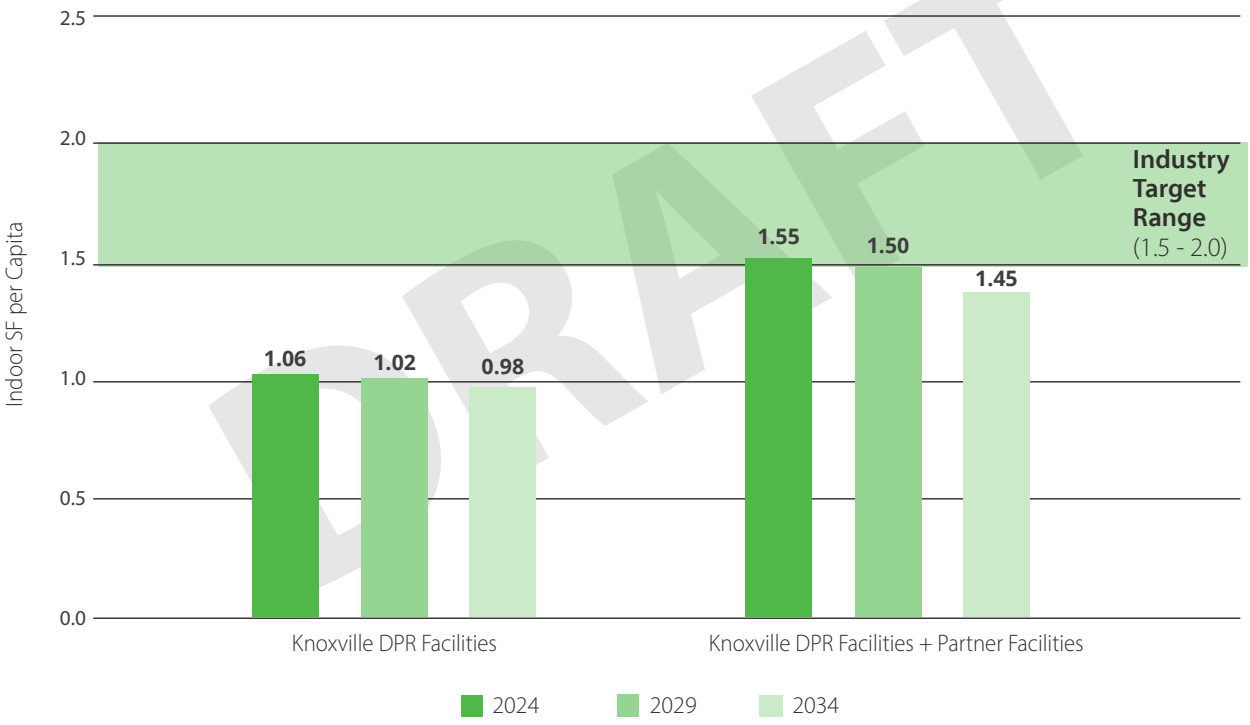
Indoor Center Space LOS

Indoor Center Space LOS is measured by dividing the amount of indoor center space available to residents by the number of residents in the City.

Knoxville PRD currently offers approximately 208,000 square feet of indoor center space. This equates to approximately 1.06 square feet of indoor space per resident in 2024, 1.02 in 2029, and 0.98 in 2034.

Industry guidelines suggest that communities with high quality indoor center services should have a minimum of 1.5 square feet of space per resident, with 2.0 square feet considered a best practice. Figure 2.3c illustrates the findings from this analysis considering Knoxville's 2024, 2029, and 2034 population estimates.

Figure 3.2c
Indoor Square Footage Level of Service Analysis



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If the square footage of other public indoor space is considered (including the Ijams Nature Center and the Knox County New Harvest Park), the total indoor recreation center square footage increases by about 98,700 to approximately 307,000 square feet. This equates to approximately 1.55 square feet of indoor space per resident in 2024, 1.50 in 2029, and 1.45 in 2034.

Based on this analysis, it appears that the City has a need of 109,859 square feet of indoor center space to reach 1.5 square feet per resident by 2034, or 215,116 square feet to reach 2.0 square feet per resident by 2034.

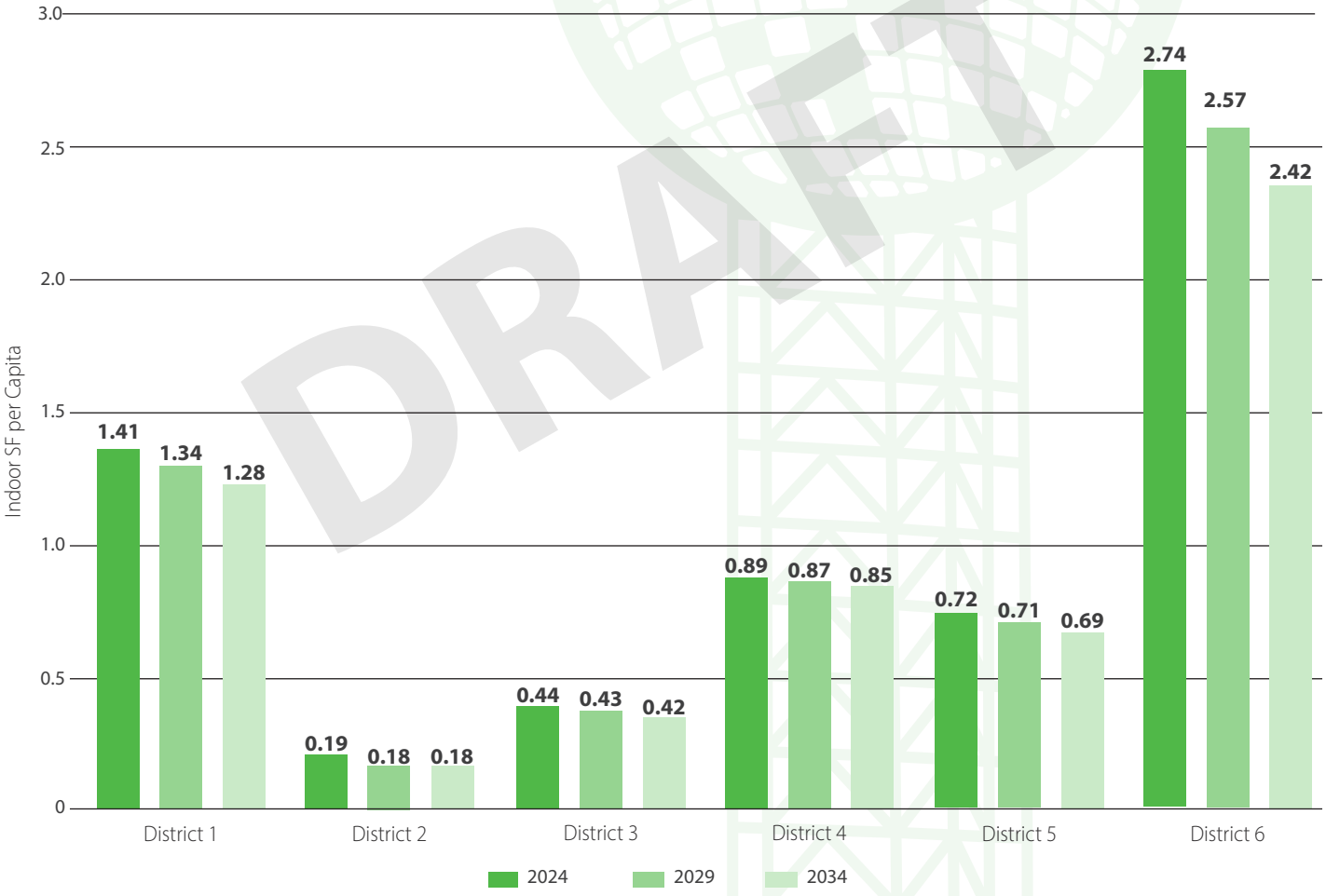
New Square Footage Needed to reach 1.5 square feet per resident by 2034

109,859

Comparing by indoor center space by Council District reveals significant differences between the LOS across the City. Based purely on Department indoor center square footage, District 6 has the most space, with 2.7 square feet per resident as of 2024, followed by District 1 at 1.4. Notably, Districts 2-5 are all below 1 square foot per resident, with Districts 2 and 3 below 0.5 square feet per capita.

Figure 3.2d

Indoor Square Footage Level of Service Analysis by Council District



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Facilities LOS

Facilities LOS is measured by dividing the number of residents by the number of parks and recreation facilities. The higher the Facilities LOS number, the fewer facilities there are per resident, and the more of a need there may be for that particular recreation facility. The lower the Facilities LOS number, the more facilities there are per resident, and the less of a need there may be for that particular recreation facility.

Population estimates for the years 2024 and 2034 were divided by the number of existing facilities to identify the Facilities LOS. The Median Facility LOS benchmarks were then used to calculate the need or surplus of facilities based on the projected 2034 population. Figure 3.2e illustrates the findings to this analysis.

Based on this analysis, it appears that the City may have a need for the following parks and recreation facilities:

- Teen Centers
- Stadiums
- Performance Amphitheaters
- Disc Golf Course
- Rectangular fields: multi-purpose (natural turf)
- Executive 9-hole courses
- Aquatics centers
- Indoor competitive swimming pools
- Tennis courts (outdoor only)
- Pickleball (indoor)

The City also appears to have an adequate number of the following facilities:

- Recreation Centers (typ. includes gym/fitness areas)
- Community Centers (typ. includes multi-purpose rooms)
- Senior Centers
- Nature Centers
- Playground
- Community Gardens
- Basketball Courts
- Diamond fields
- Skate Parks
- Dog Parks
- Splash Pads
- Walking Loops
- Trail Miles
- Tennis Courts (outdoor)
- Pickleball Courts (outdoor)

The need and surplus quantity will be revisited in Chapter 4: Vision based on the proposed vision for the City and related recommended Facilities LOS.

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Figure 3.2e
Facilities Level of Service Analysis

	Facilities	City of Knoxville			NRPA Park Metrics			Need / Surplus
					Aggregated Benchmarks (Pop. 150k-300k; Dens. 1,500-2,500/sq mi.)			Based on NRPA Median Benchmark
		Inventory	2024	2034	25th	Median	75th	2034
Indoor Facilities	Recreation Centers	11	18,015	19,308	34,458	53,895	87,024	**8**
	Community Centers	12	16,513	17,699	117,888	159,769	216,139	**11**
	Senior Centers	3	66,053	70,795	73,277	75,177	144,239	**1**
	Teen Centers	0	-	-	213,301	213,301	213,301	**-1**
	Stadiums	0	-	-	180,422	191,659	202,896	**-2**
	Arenas	1	-	-	214,133	214,133	214,133	1
	Performance Amphitheaters	1	198,160	212,384	67,007	102,671	138,061	**-2**
	Nature Centers	1	198,160	212,384	169,185	213,301	231,790	1
	Gyms	11	18,015	19,308	-	-	-	-
Outdoor Facilities	Playgrounds	66	3,002	3,218	4,292	6,912	8,672	**36**
	Totlots	0	-	-	13,331	16,919	35,689	**-13**
	Community gardens	2	99,080	106,192	77,922	107,067	222,546	**1**
	Basketball courts	26	7,622	8,169	10,349	13,542	17,394	**11**
	Multiuse courts - basketball, volleyball, futsal	1	198,160	212,384	50,118	77,263	213,301	**-2**
	Diamond fields: total	61	3,249	3,482	7,408	9,484	10,195	**39**
	Diamond fields: baseball - youth	58	3,417	3,662	-	-	-	-
	Diamond fields: baseball - adult	1	198,160	212,384	-	-	-	-
	Diamond fields: softball fields - youth	1	198,160	212,384	-	-	-	-
	Diamond fields: softball fields - adult	1	198,160	212,384	-	-	-	-
	Disc Golf Course	3	99,080	106,192	53,585	75,177	115,895	**-1**
	Skate parks	2	99,080	106,192	163,561	191,243	213,925	**1**
	Dog parks	8	24,770	26,548	68,020	78,010	96,935	**6**
	Rectangular fields: multi-purpose (natural turf)	13	15,243	16,337	8,327	10,709	11,885	**-7**
	Rectangular fields: football field	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Rectangular fields: soccer field - adult	6	33,027	35,397	-	-	-	-
	Rectangular fields: soccer field - youth	4	49,540	53,096	-	-	-	-
	Multipurpose synthetic field	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Splash Pads/Spraygrounds	4	49,540	53,096	33,568	102,124	164,477	**2**
	Walking Loops	47	4,216	4,519	13,673	34,142	126,161	**41**
	Trail Miles Maintained	0	6	6				**4**
Golf	Regulation 18-hole courses	3	66,053	70,795	75,861	125,498	200,397	**2**
	Regulation 9-hole courses	0	-	-	19,489	35,320	51,151	**-7**
Swimming/ Aquatics	Aquatics centers	0	-	-	118,317	142,158	155,061	**-2**
	Swimming pools (outdoor only)	2	99,080	106,192	53,895	107,067	150,353	**1**
	Indoor competitive swimming pools: total	0	-	-	155,061	159,769	164,477	**-2**
	Indoor pool designated exclusively for leisure (i.e. non-competitive)	2	99,080	106,192	153,186	156,020	158,853	**1**
	Therapeutic pool	1	198,160	212,384	-	-	-	-
Racquet Sports	Tennis courts (outdoor only)	38	5,215	5,589	7,973	16,643	19,653	**26**
	Pickleball (outdoor)	16	12,385	13,274	8,069	19,971	46,873	**6**
	Pickleball (indoor)	0	-	-	26,948	30,590	44,655	**-7**
	Multiuse courts - Tennis, Pickleball (outdoor)	19	10,429	11,178	19,803	29,723	35,809	**12**
	Racquetball/handball/squash courts (outdoor)	0	-	-	42,570	64,069	85,568	**-4**

Access LOS

Access LOS measures the distance residents have to travel to access parks and recreation facilities. It is used to understand how park access varies between different neighborhoods in a community. Informed by industry best practices, the following distances were used to analyze Access LOS for the City's park system.

- Knoxville PRD - All Parks – ½ mile, 1 mile
- Community Parks – 3 miles
- Regional Parks - 5 miles
- Indoor Centers – 3 miles

Figures 3.2g – 3.2k provide the results from this mapping analysis while Figure 3.2f provides a summary of these findings.

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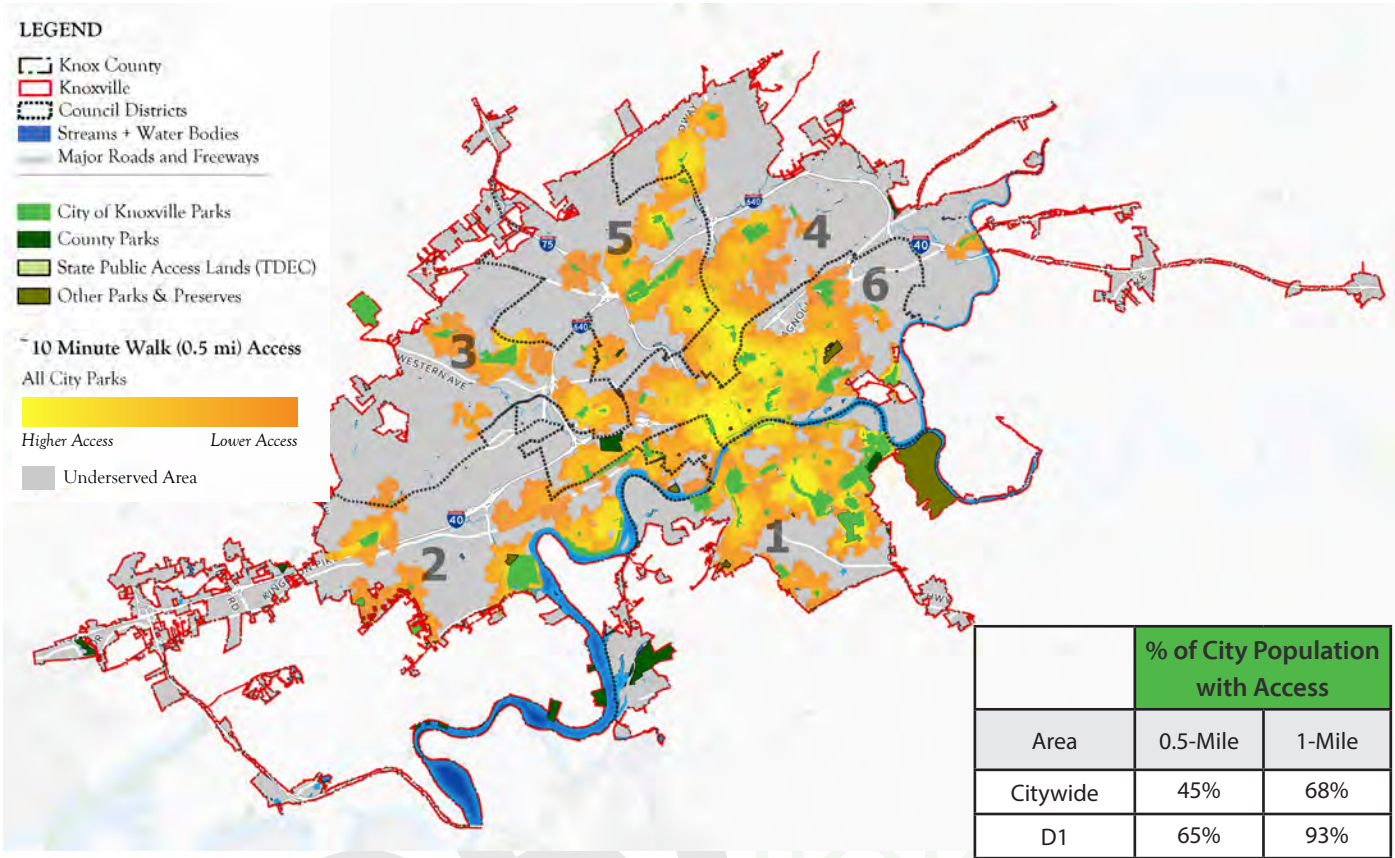
Figure 3.2f
Access LOS Analysis Summary

Park Type Analyzed	½ Mile	1 Mile	3 Miles	5 Miles
All Parks	●	●	-	-
Community Parks	-	-	●	-
Regional Parks	-	-	-	●
Indoor Recreation Centers	-	-	●	-

● **Partial-Coverage** + **Full-Coverage**

Figure 3.2g
Acreage Level of Service Analysis | All Parks - Half Mile Access



	% of City Population with Access	
Area	0.5-Mile	1-Mile
Citywide	45%	68%
D1	65%	93%
D2	34%	59%
D3	18%	41%
D4	43%	62%
D5	40%	67%
D6	70%	88%

Figure 3.2h
Acreage Level of Service Analysis | All Parks - One Mile Access

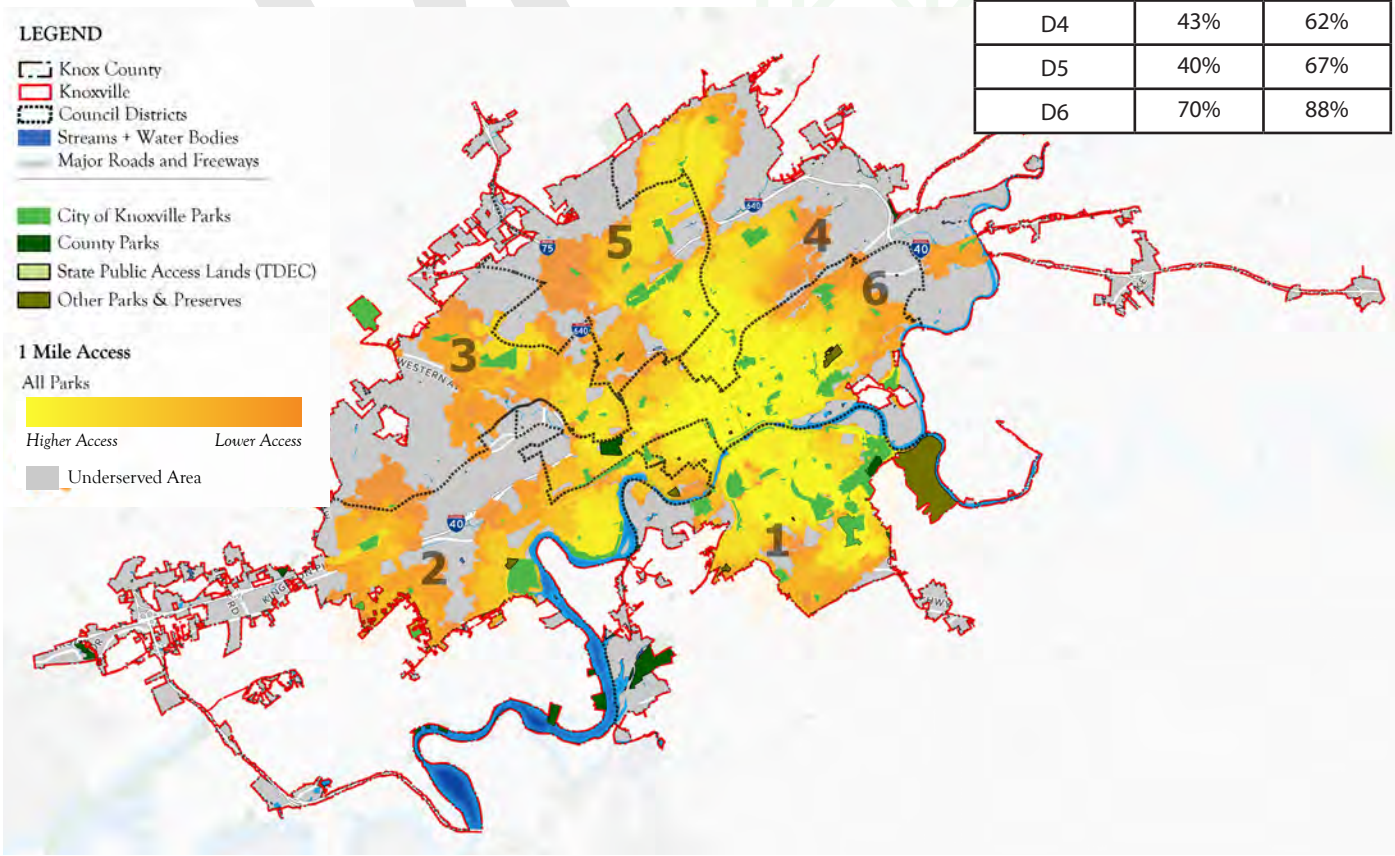
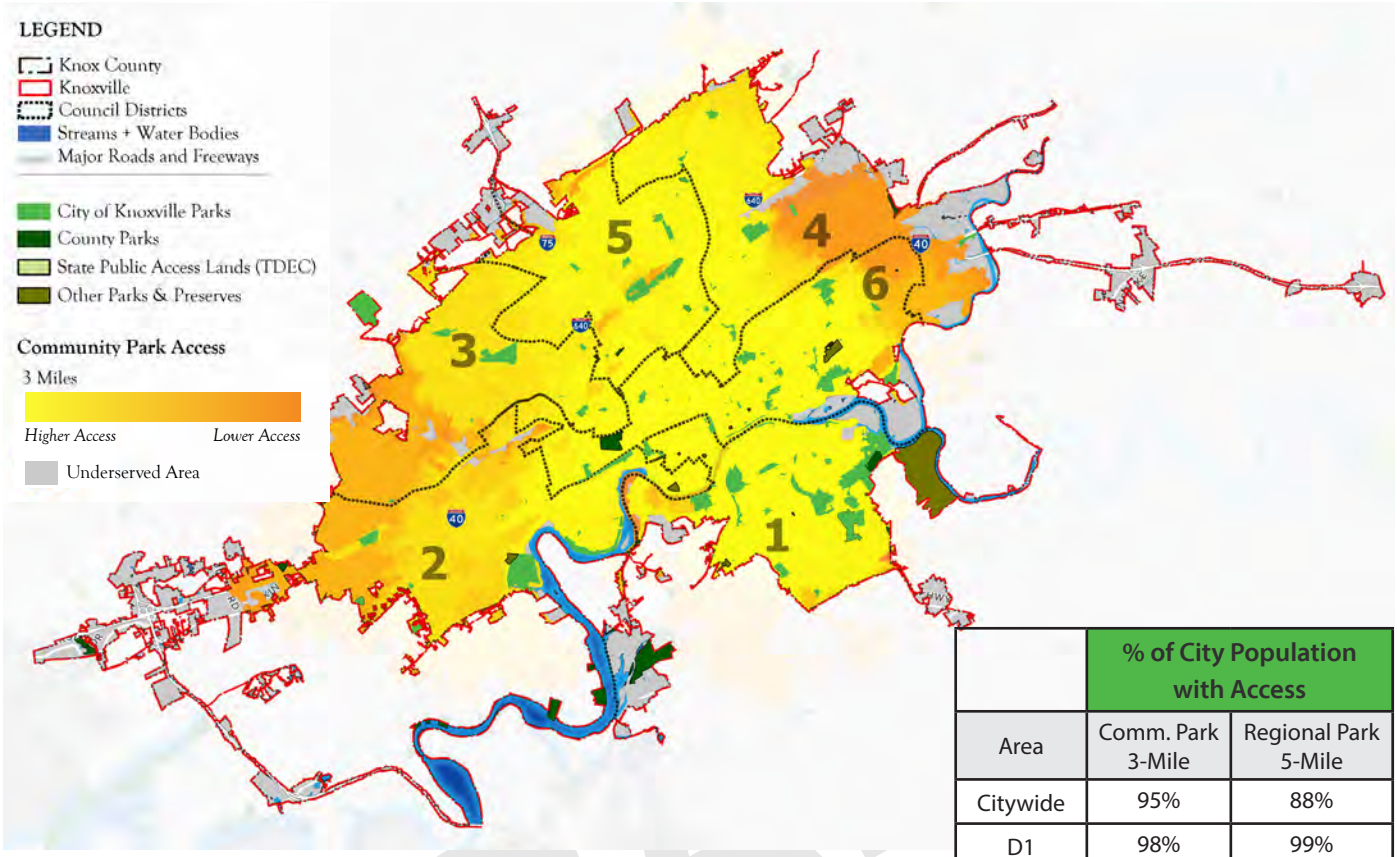


Figure 3.2i
Acreage Level of Service Analysis | Community Parks - Three Mile Access



	% of City Population with Access	
Area	Comm. Park 3-Mile	Regional Park 5-Mile
Citywide	95%	88%
D1	98%	99%
D2	92%	91%
D3	96%	99%
D4	91%	51%
D5	96%	93%
D6	100%	96%

Figure 3.2j
Acreage Level of Service Analysis | Regional Parks - Five Mile Access

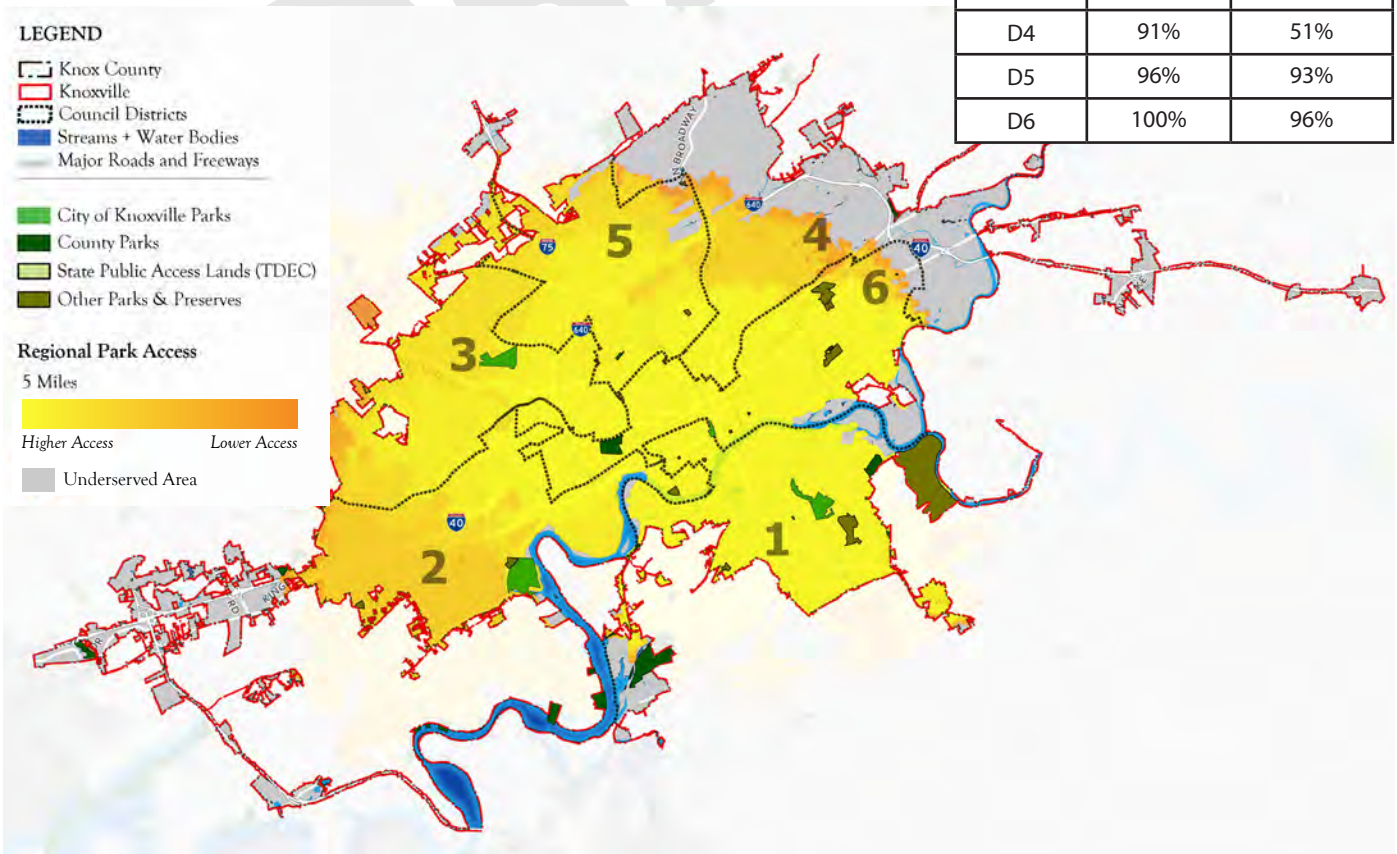
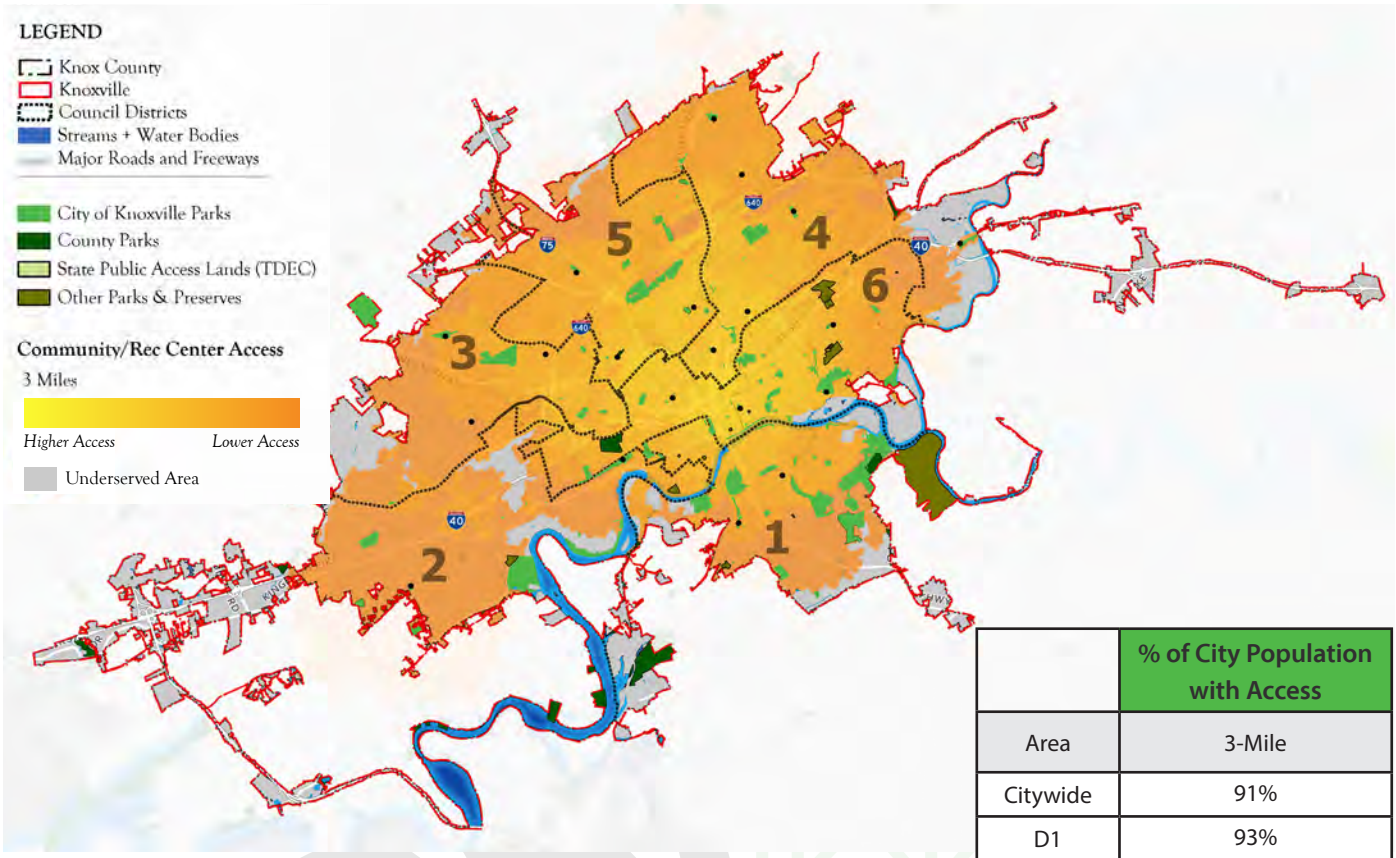


Figure 3.2k
Acreage Level of Service Analysis | Indoor Centers - Three Mile Access



	% of City Population with Access
Area	3-Mile
Citywide	91%
D1	93%
D2	82%
D3	79%
D4	96%
D5	97%
D6	100%

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Financial LOS

Funding LOS metrics are used to gauge whether a community is adequately funded to manage their parks and recreation system. The analysis performed here includes:

- Capital Improvements Expenditures (2004-2025) - the total amount of dollars spent on capital improvement projects per year
- Capital Spending Per Capita (5-year funding average) - the amount of capital dollars spent on parks and recreation services per resident

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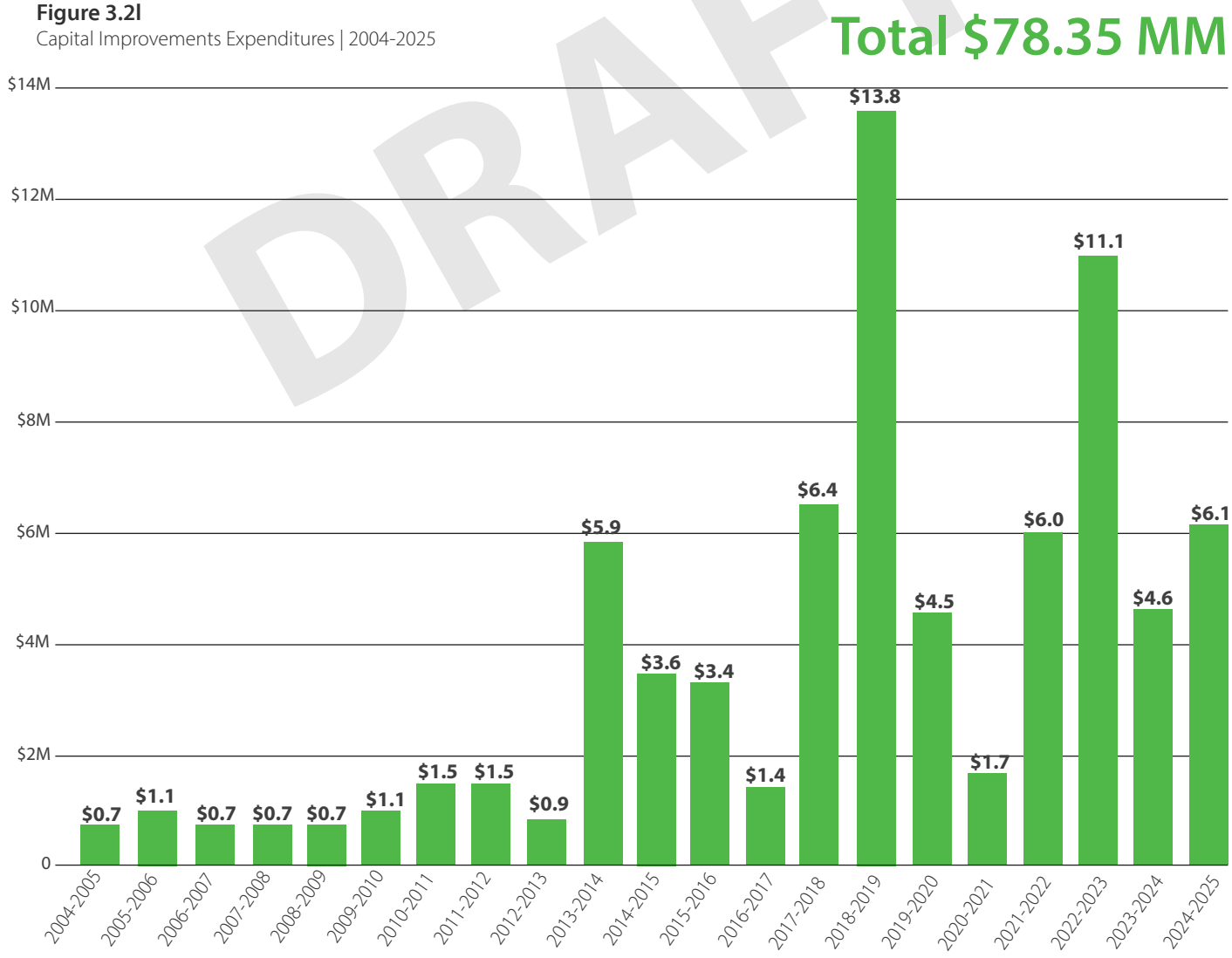
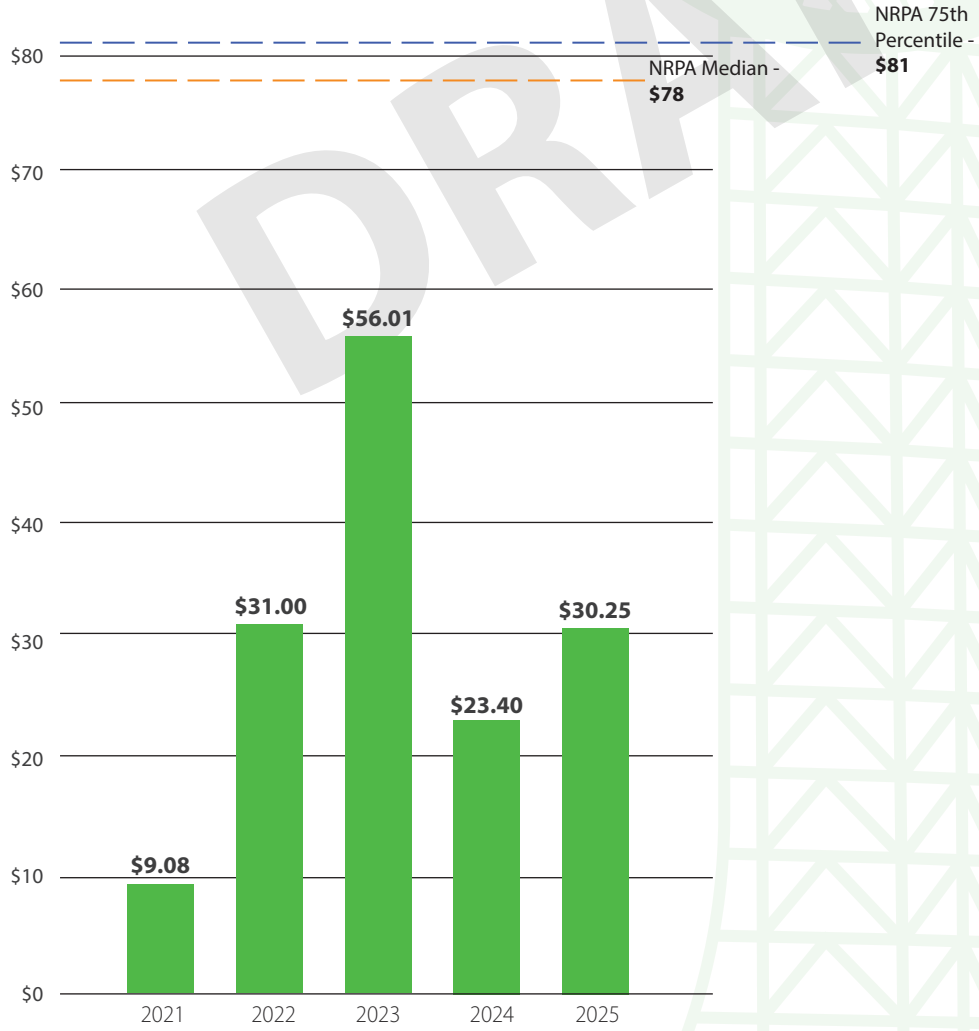
Figure 3.2l
Capital Improvements Expenditures | 2004-2025



Capital Funding LOS analyses were completed for FY 2021-2025 and compared to 2024 NRPA Benchmarks. The highest spending occurred in 2023, reach $56.01 per resident, while the lowest was 2021, at $9.08 per resident. The remaining years were in the $22-$32 range. Even the highest spending was well below the NRPA Median of $78 per resident. This suggest an opportunity to increase parks an recreation capital spending to be more line with national benchmarks and address the parks and recreation needs of the community.

Figure 3.2m
Capital Spending Per Capita



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3.3 summary findings

Based on the all the information collected, Figures 3.3a and 3.3b indicate how the findings from the statistically-valid survey - the most reliable and credible of the needs assessment techniques, with the largest sample size - are validated by many of the other techniques related to facilities/amenities, programs/activities, areas of community concern, actions, and funding allocation for facilities/capital improvements and programs/operations.

Following is a summary list of the priority rankings followed by comparison matrices.

Top Priority Facilities/Amenities

1. Water Fountains/ Bottle Filling Stations
2. Greenways (Paved)
3. Outdoor Restrooms
4. Trails (Unpaved)
5. Open Space Conservation and Forested Areas
6. Public Art
7. Pavilions and Picnic Areas

Top Priority Programs/Activities

1. Conservation, Environmental, and Wildlife Programs
2. Special Events/ Festivals
3. Adult Fitness/ Wellness Programs
4. Adult/ Senior Volunteer Programs
5. Adult/ Senior Art, Dance Programs
6. Family Programs
7. Adult Athletic/ Sports Leagues

Top Priority Areas of Community Health Concerns

1. Affordable housing
2. Preservation of natural areas
3. Homelessness and/ or panhandling
4. Community safety/ crime/ violence
5. Access to transportation

These findings can be summarized around the following four concepts:

- A need to **Revitalize** the existing parks and facilities, modernizing amenities and fostering ecological health
- A need to better **Connect** the parks and recreation system to the community, through new physical connections and social outreach
- A need to **Grow** the system to keep pace with the increasing population
- A need to better **Collaborate**, working across City departments and with partners to maximize benefits with limited resources

Chapter 4: Vision of this report will discuss recommendations for responding to these concepts and the top priority parks and recreation needs.

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Figure 3.3a
Summary Findings for Facilities, Programs and Community Concerns

NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE:	Statistically Valid Survey	Online Survey	City Leadership Interviews	Steering Committee	Public Meetings + Special Events	Focus Groups	HS/ College Survey
HIGH PRIORITY + MEDIUM PRIORITY FACILITIES/AMENITIES:							
Water Fountains/ Bottle Filling Stations	●	●		●	●		●
Greenways (Paved)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Outdoor Restrooms	●	●		●	●	●	●
Trails (Unpaved)	●	●	●	◐	●	●	●
Open Space Conservation and Forested Areas	●	●	●	◐	●	●	●
Public Art	◐	●		●	◐	●	●
Pavilions and Picnic Areas	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	●
HIGH PRIORITY + MEDIUM PRIORITY PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES:							
Conservation, Environmental, and Wildlife Programs	●	●	●	●		●	●
Special Events/ Festivals	●	●	●	◐	●	●	●
Adult Fitness/ Wellness Programs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Adult/ Senior Volunteer Programs	◐	●		◐	◐		●
Adult/ Senior Art, Dance Programs	◐	●		◐	◐		◐
Family Programs	◐	●	●	●	●	●	◐
Adult Athletic/ Sports Leagues	◐	●		●	●	●	●
AREAS OF COMMUNITY-WIDE CONCERN:							
Affordable housing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Preservation of natural areas	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Homelessness and/ or panhandling	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Community safety/ crime/ violence	●	●	●	●		●	●
Access to transportation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● High Priority
◐ Medium Priority

Figure 3.3b
Summary Findings for Willingness to Pay Additional Annual Taxes

INCREASED FUNDING AMOUNT	Statistically Valid Survey	Online Survey	Steering Committee	Public Meetings	Special Events
$10-25 per year	78%	89%	92%	99%	98%
$26-50 per year	59%	71%	73%	88%	88%
$51-75 per year	50%	51%	73%	70%	77%
$76-100 per year	32%	-	50%	58%	67%
$101-200 per year	23%	37%	42%	47%	41%
I am not willing to pay additional taxes	22%	11%	4%	1%	2%
Over $200 per year	15%	14%	42%	32%	16%

The results demonstrate that based on the Statistically Valid Survey, and considering all other input methods, the majority of respondents are willing to pay increased taxes of up to $26-50 per year.

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4 vision

Introduction

The purpose of the Vision is to present recommendations and potential solutions to the parks and recreation needs and priorities uncovered through the previous planning phases. As there are no state or national standards to guide the development of a long-range parks and recreation vision, the recommendations presented here are developed primarily in response to resident needs and the community's values, priorities, and resources informed by best practices from the fields of parks planning, urban design, and landscape architecture.

Vision Framework

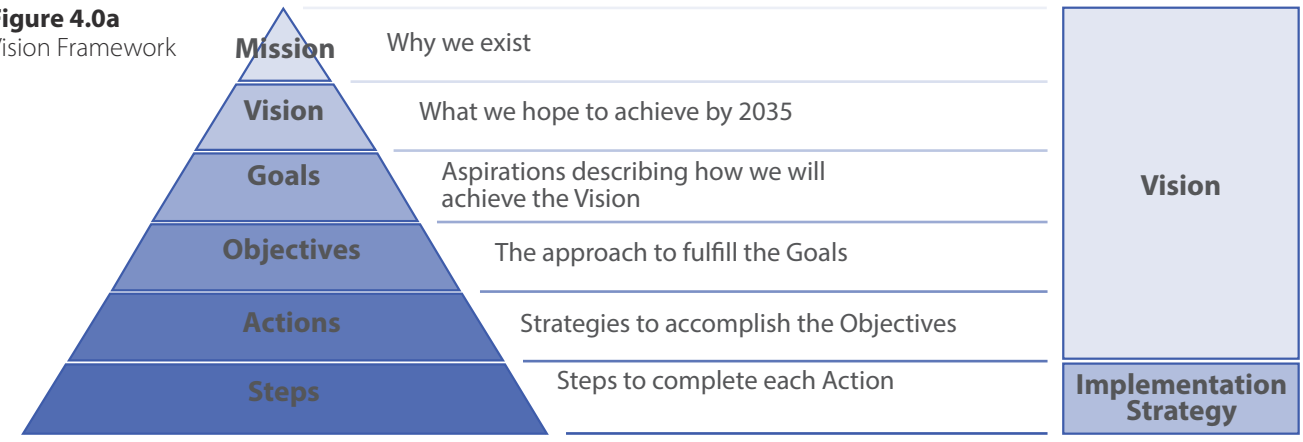
The findings of the first two planning phases produced a broad range of ideas, needs, challenges, and opportunities. These elements generally align under four overarching themes:

- Revitalize
- Connect
- Grow
- Collaborate

Based on these themes, and informed by specific results from the Context Analysis and Needs and Priorities Assessments, a Visioning Workshop was scheduled with City of Knoxville Staff on July 2025 to collaboratively establish the appropriate response to the identified parks and recreation needs.

The Visioning Workshop began the process of developing a Vision for the parks and recreation system and the Parks and Recreation Department. This Vision is organized around the Vision Framework illustrated in Figure 4.0a. This Vision Framework will guide the Department over the next 10-years and beyond. The following sections explore the elements of the Vision Framework in more detail.

Figure 4.0a
Vision Framework



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4.1 department mission and vision

The purpose of the Mission Statement is to express why the City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department exists. The purpose of the Vision Statement is to identify the future aspirations and state of the Department.

The Mission and Vision statements of the Department will serve as the foundation for the Vision.

Mission

Connecting our community to opportunities through **P**rograms and **L**andscapes that are **A**ccessible to **Y**ou.

#**PLAY**KNOXVILLE

Vision

Create vibrant, innovative, healthy, and connected places in Knoxville.

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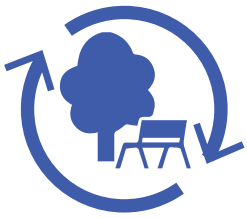
4.2 vision goals

The Vision Goals provide focused, overarching targets for implementing the Department's Vision over the next 10-years while also describing the aspirations the Department will seek to achieve.

The four overarching themes previously outlined, which were informed by the findings of the first two phases of the project, provided a structure for organizing the Vision Workshop. These themes were revised and are proposed as the four primary goals for improving the parks and recreation system over the next 10-years:



Goal 1:

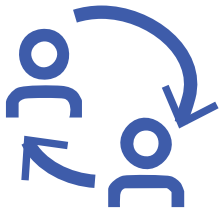
Revitalize existing natural areas, parks, recreation facilities, greenways, and programs.

Goal 2:

Connect the community to the parks and recreation system.

Goal 3:

Grow the parks and recreation system to keep pace with the City's growth.



Goals 4:

Collaborate to maximize environmental, social, and economic benefits.

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4.3 goals, objectives, and actions

Within each of the Vision Goals are Objectives and Actions. The Objectives establish the means to achieve the overarching Goals. The Actions describe internal functions of the Department Staff as well as methods to expand the Department's reach and impact through initiatives. This section describes these Objectives and Actions organized around the four Vision Goals.

World's Fair Park

Source: https://spgfan.com

Goal 1:

Revitalize existing natural areas, parks, recreation facilities, greenways, and programs.

Natural Areas

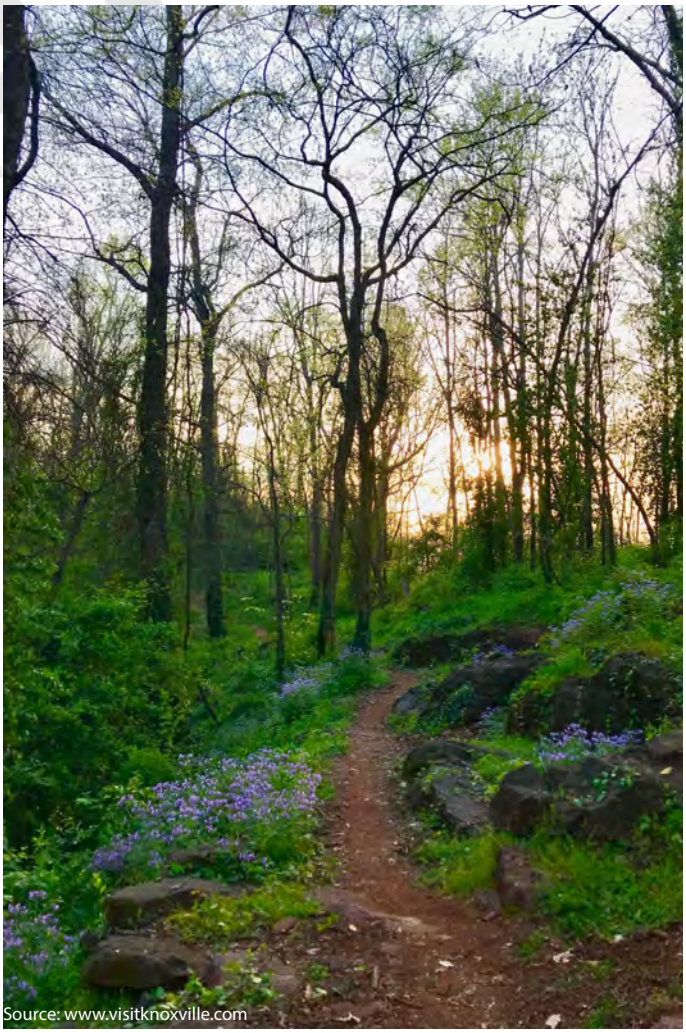
Objective 1.1: Rejuvenate and protect existing natural areas.

The City of Knoxville boasts over 950 acres of natural areas. Preservation of these natural areas and the need for open space conservation and forested areas emerged as a need in the Needs and Priorities Assessment. The City has already taken steps to protect forested areas through the completion of a comprehensive assessment of the City's tree canopy, the completion of the 2024 Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP), and collaboration between the City's Urban Forestry team and other City Departments.

There is an opportunity to continue to implement the UFMP and build on it to create formal guidance for managing natural resources in natural areas. This includes developing guiding principles for managing biological diversity, controlling invasive species, assuring canopy regeneration, and implementing other typical strategies to ensure the long-term sustainability of these areas.

- **Action 1.1.1 – Ensure Long-Term Forest Regeneration.** Implement and build on the Knoxville UFMP to protect biological diversity and assure long term regeneration of native canopy and midstory while restoring understory species diversity.
- **Action 1.1.2 – Conduct Species Inventories.** Implement and build on the Knoxville UFMP by conducting species inventories in natural areas to include entire parks, portions of parks, and along greenways. Decide how to use eBird, iNaturalist with citizen science applications.
- **Action 1.1.3 - Manage Water Quality.** Develop a plan to ensure that water quality leaving natural areas is sustained or enhanced. Consider ways to retrofit parcels with little or no stormwater management.
- **Action 1.1.4 – Incorporate Green Strategies.** Set comprehensive objectives and integrate best management practices for green strategies through reduced mowing and irrigation, and judicious use of chemicals, including herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers.
- **Action 1.1.5 - Establish Monitoring Protocols.** Create monitoring protocols to assess goals for invasive species management, maintaining the species inventory database (likely, most efficiently facilitated using citizen science applications), water quality, and objectives toward sustainability.

Knoxville's Urban Wilderness



Source: www.visitknoxville.com

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Parks and Recreation Facilities

Objective 1.2: Improve the condition of existing parks, recreation facilities, and greenways based on identified needs and the use of modern and technologically advanced amenities to improve operational efficiencies.

When residents were asked how they would spend $100 improving the parks and recreation system, repairing existing parks and recreation facilities was the highest budget allocation in all the public engagement techniques. In fact, much of the infrastructure within the Knoxville Parks and Recreation System is old and has been heavily used over time. This infrastructure is often outdated and operationally inefficient considering available new technology that offers enhanced operational performance.

As a result, older infrastructure requires increased maintenance while also underperforming compared to more modern counterparts. This can include but not be limited to utilities and lighting systems, irrigation systems, play equipment, restrooms, backboard systems, pavilions, etc. Feedback from City leaders, elected officials, and staff also supported the need to improve aging facilities.

- **Action 1.2.1 – Establish an Asset Management Plan.** Proactively plan for the improvement of park assets by developing an asset management plan and establishing a phased list of infrastructure improvements including lighting systems, irrigation system, play equipment, restrooms, pavilions, etc.
- **Action 1.2.2 – Expedite implementation.** Expedite the implementation of capital improvements by developing design, facility, and amenity guidelines for parks, recreation facilities, and greenways.
- **Action 1.2.3 – Confirm and prioritize the list of improvements.** Confirm and prioritize the list of parks, recreation facilities, and greenways to be improved based on identified needs and informed by the City's park classification prototypical park diagrams. The prototypical park diagrams could be used as a starting point for discussion with residents and stakeholders for future park improvements.

  In addition to the park, recreation facility, and greenway considerations included in the prototypical diagrams, potential improvements were identified through park site evaluations, the public engagement process, and based on previously completed plans.

  Five themes emerged from these recommendations:

  1. **Accessibility and Safety**
     - Improve ADA pedestrian access and circulation, lighting, and visibility to ensure parks are inclusive and secure.
  2. **Amenity and Infrastructure Upgrades**
     - Refresh facilities and amenities such as seating, shelters, restrooms, playgrounds, signage, and landscaping to enhance comfort, usability, and aesthetics.
  3. **Wayfinding and Identity**
     - Strengthen signage, branding, and park identity to improve navigation and highlight unique features.
     - Clarify park identity and amenities through cohesive branding.
     - Strengthen informational signage for cultural and historical features.
  4. **Community Engagement and Programming**
     - Expand events, recreational programs, and outreach to activate parks and foster community pride.
     - Introduce flexible spaces for diverse activities beyond sports such a multi-purpose open spaces, multi-use courts, etc.
  5. **Maintenance and Stewardship**
     - Ensure regular upkeep, upgrading aging infrastructure, cleanliness, and staff presence to maintain high-quality visitor experiences.

  It will be important for the City Capital Projects Committee to review these projects, prioritize them, and present them to the public through a public engagement-based park site master planning process.

- **Action 1.2.4 – Develop plans with the community.** Develop community-based feasibility/ conceptual plans based on available design and implementation funding.

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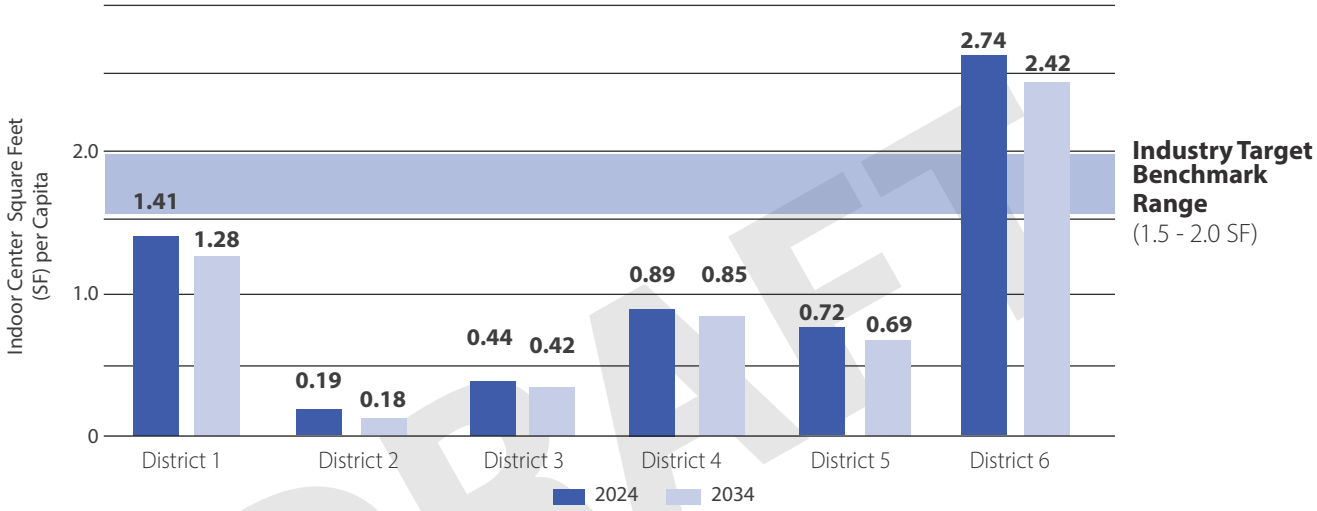
Recreation Centers

Objective 1.3: Improve the condition of existing indoor centers.

The City of Knoxville currently has 26 indoor centers that amount to almost 208,696 square feet of indoor center space. Of those 26 indoor centers, 16 are staffed and programmed by the City. The others are either used occasionally, staffed by the City at specific times, or leased to partner organizations. Additionally, other providers such as the Ijams Nature Center, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, and Emerald YF manage another nine indoor centers.

Not all areas in the City have access to the same amount and quality of indoor center space. Figure 4.3a illustrates the amount of City managed indoor center space that each Council District has in comparison to the recommended Indoor Center Square Footage Level of Service (LOS) of 1.5 to 2.0.

Figure 4.3a
Indoor Center Space LOS per Council District



Most of the City's indoor centers are old and small. Many of the indoor centers were built over 50 years ago and are showing signs of disrepair. In fact, a recent building assessment completed by the City found that many of the assessed indoor centers are in critical or poor condition and in need of capital improvements.

Furthermore, 24 indoor centers are sized to provide neighborhood related programs and services while only 1 is sized to provide community related programs and services. This leads to inefficiencies in program delivery, management, and maintenance.

To improve service delivery, maintenance, and manage future capital improvements, the Indoor Center Vision proposes a two-tiered system of indoor center classifications – Neighborhood Centers and Community Centers.

Based on these tiers, the City can further explore the improvement of key indoor centers and the transition of other centers to partner organizations for management.

Figure 4.3b maps these challenges and opportunities while Figure 4.3c illustrates the information in chart form.

- **Action 1.3.1 - Complete an Indoor Center Action Plan.** Develop a community-based Indoor Center Action Plan to identify indoor centers to be improved and transitioned based on identified programmatic needs and informed by the City's indoor center classifications. These classifications could be used as a starting point for discussions with City leaders, residents, and stakeholders for future indoor center improvements and management.
- **Action 1.3.2 - Complete Indoor Center Improvement Plans.** Informed by the findings from the Indoor Center Action Plan, develop improvement and transition plans based on available funding for design and implementation.

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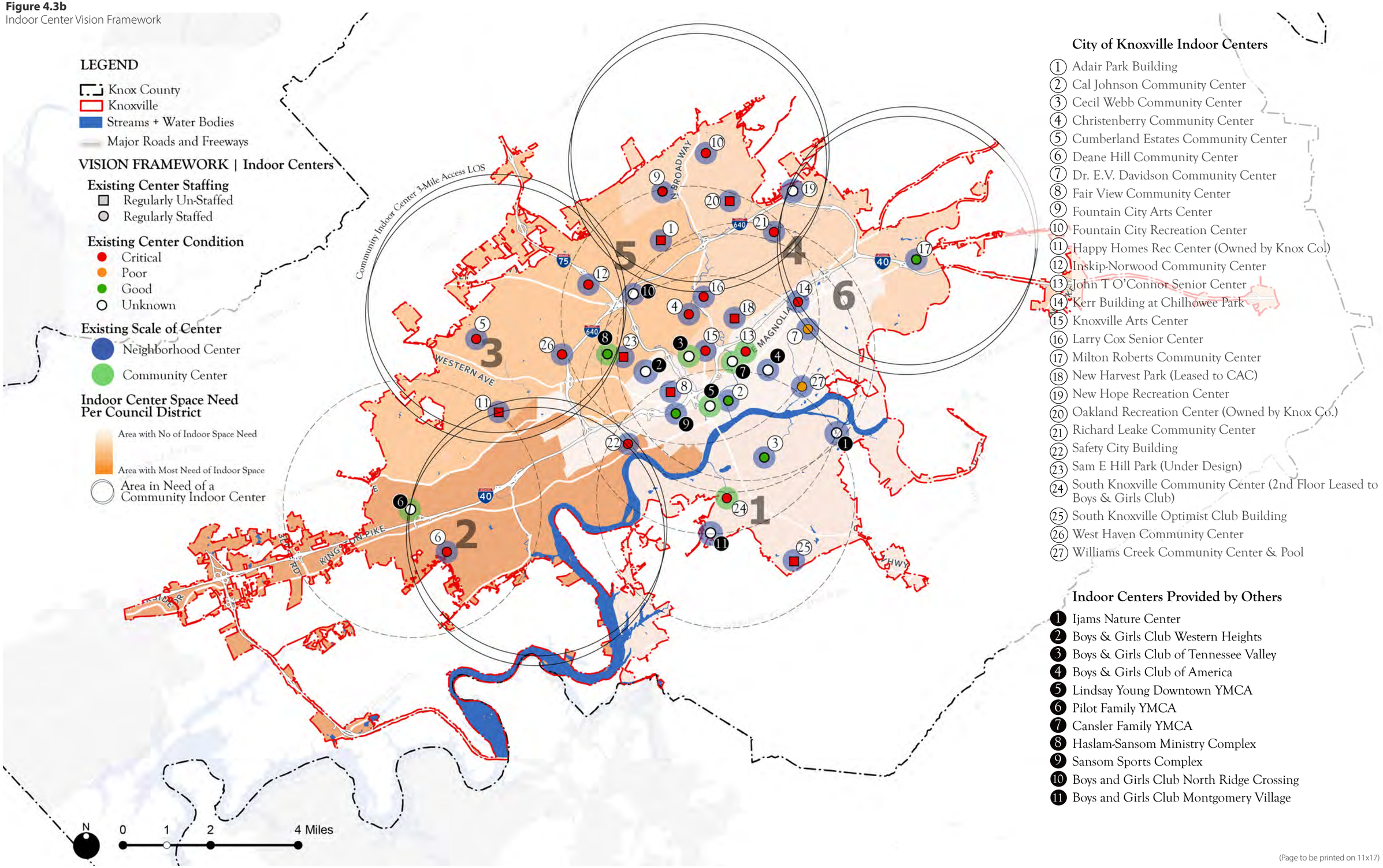
Figure 4.3b
Indoor Center Vision Framework



City of Knoxville Indoor Centers

1. Adair Park Building
2. Cal Johnson Community Center
3. Cecil Webb Community Center
4. Christenberry Community Center
5. Cumberland Estates Community Center
6. Deane Hill Community Center
7. Dr. E.V. Davidson Community Center
8. Fair View Community Center
9. Fountain City Arts Center
10. Fountain City Recreation Center
11. Happy Homes Rec Center (Owned by Knox Co.)
12. Inskip-Norwood Community Center
13. John T O'Connor Senior Center
14. Kerr Building at Chilhowee Park
15. Knoxville Arts Center
16. Larry Cox Senior Center
17. Milton Roberts Community Center
18. New Harvest Park (Leased to CAC)
19. New Hope Recreation Center
20. Oakland Recreation Center (Owned by Knox Co.)
21. Richard Leake Community Center
22. Safety City Building
23. Sam E Hill Park (Under Design)
24. South Knoxville Community Center (2nd Floor Leased to Boys & Girls Club)
25. South Knoxville Optimist Club Building
26. West Haven Community Center
27. Williams Creek Community Center & Pool

Indoor Centers Provided by Others

1. Ijams Nature Center
2. Boys & Girls Club Western Heights
3. Boys & Girls Club of Tennessee Valley
4. Boys & Girls Club of America
5. Lindsay Young Downtown YMCA
6. Pilot Family YMCA
7. Cansler Family YMCA
8. Haslam-Sansom Ministry Complex
9. Sansom Sports Complex
10. Boys and Girls Club North Ridge Crossing
11. Boys and Girls Club Montgomery Village

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Figure 4.3c
Indoor Center Vision Framework Chart

No.	Indoor Center	Indoor Center Staffing	Indoor Center SF	Indoor Center Classification	Site Area (Acres)	Land Use Adjacency
1	Adair Park Building	Regularly Unstaffed	489	Neighborhood	0.47	Single Family Residential
2	Cal Johnson Community Center	Regularly Staffed	11,011	Neighborhood	1.18	Highway and Multi-family Residential
3	Cecil Webb Community Center	Regularly Staffed	14,274	Neighborhood	0.77	Elementary School and Museum
4	Christenberry Community Center	Regularly Staffed	8,385	Neighborhood	0.92	Elementary School and Single Family Residential
5	Cumberland Estates Community Center	Regularly Staffed	10,200	Neighborhood	3.23	Single Family Residential
6	Deane Hill Community Center	Regularly Staffed	6,500	Neighborhood	2.05	Single Family Residential
7	Dr. E.V. Davidson Community Center	Regularly Staffed	15,700	Neighborhood	2.92	Single Family Residential
8	Fairview Community Center	Leased - Regularly Unstaffed	475	Neighborhood	0.19	Single Family Residential
9	Fountain City Arts Center	Leased - Regularly Staffed & Used by Partner Organization	4,000	Neighborhood	0.32	Commercial Area
10	Fountain City Recreation Center	Leased - Regularly Unstaffed by Partner Organization	3,650	Neighborhood	0.82	Single Family Residential
11	Happy Homes Rec Center (Owned by Knox Co.)	Used by Partner Organization - Regularly Unstaffed	1,000	Neighborhood	0.35	Single Family Residential
12	Inskip-Norwood Community Center	Regularly Staffed	4,836	Neighborhood	1.66	Single Family Residential
13	John T O'Connor Senior Center	Leased - Regularly Staffed	30,000	Community	3.63	Commercial Areas and Parks
14	Kerr Building at Chilhowee Park	Leased - Regularly Unstaffed	19,000	Neighborhood	3.12	Single Family Residential and Commercial Area
15	Knoxville Arts Center	Regularly Staffed	4,000	Neighborhood	1.61	Single Family Residential and Places of Worship
16	Larry Cox Senior Center	Regularly Staffed	2,702	Neighborhood	0.89	Single Family Residential, Multi-family Residential, and Commercial Area
17	Milton Roberts Community Center	Regularly Staffed	5,986	Neighborhood	1.65	Industrial and Single Family Residential
18	New Hope Recreation Center	Leased - Regularly Unstaffed by Partner Organization	4,030	Neighborhood	0.69	Single Family Residential
19	Oakland Recreation Center (Owned by Knox Co.)	Used by Partner Organization - Regularly Unstaffed	1,140	Neighborhood	1.70	Cemetery and Single Family Residential
20	Richard Leake Community Center	Regularly Staffed	4,308	Neighborhood	1.52	Single Family Residential
21	Safety City Building	Regularly Staffed	3,000	Neighborhood	2.00	Railroad Tracks and Creek.
22	Sam E Hill Park (In Design)	Not Open	9,000	Neighborhood	3.3	Park, Multi-family Residential, Indoor Center, and Single Family Residential
23	South Knoxville Community Center	Regularly Staffed - Partially Leased	32,000	Community	2.43	Commercial, Multi-family Residential, Railroad Tracks
24	South Knoxville Optimist Club Building	Regularly Unstaffed	2,000	Neighborhood	1.95	Single Family Residential
25	West Haven Community Center	Regularly Staffed	2,910	Neighborhood	0.37	Single Family Residential and Civic Building
26	Williams Creek Community Center & Pool	Regularly Staffed	8,100	Neighborhood	3.03	Golf Course and Single Family Residential

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Programs and Activities

Objective 1.4: Re-energize recreational programming in a manner that meets current and emerging community needs, explores financially sustainable operational models, and is properly aligned with the capacity of the Department.

The Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department has a long tradition of high-quality programs and services. However, current staffing models are outdated and need to be modernized to improve overall efficiency, effectiveness of serving the community, and cost recovery.

Additionally, considering limited future financial resources, there is an opportunity to explore the management and operations of indoor centers with business principles that lead to a financial sustainable operational vision, cost recovery, and overall approach to delivering services.

- **Action 1.4.1 – Develop a Comprehensive Recreation Program Plan.** Complete a Comprehensive Recreation Program Plan that evaluates current conditions and provides clear strategies for improving the development and delivery of recreation programs with a focus on, at a minimum, alternative staffing models of indoor centers and park/ recreation facilities, evolution of the recreation program portfolio with a focus on growth or enhancements to teen programs, greater spread of outdoor recreation programs, STEAM programming, and senior/older adult programming while ensuring equitable access for all ages, and program fees.
- **Action 1.4.2 – Complete cost recovery plans for programs and business plans for Indoor Centers.** Complete a cost recovery plan for recreation programs that includes both direct and indirect costs, earned revenues, and performance goals for cost recovery for each program and/or service that is linked to program classifications and pricing strategies. Develop Business Plans for Indoor Centers that integrate cost recovery plans from applicable Indoor Center services and programs.
- **Action 1.4.3 – Establish continuous engagement opportunities.** Develop ongoing community and participant feedback opportunities to online and post-program surveys. Develop appropriate KPIs and other performance metrics in order to measure success and maintain a 90%+ participant satisfaction rate on all programs.

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Administration and Staffing

Objective 1.5: Enhance maintenance of natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities.

Improving the maintenance of parks and recreation facilities was one of the highest budget allocations supported by residents when asked how they would allocate $100 in parks and recreation system improvements. Findings from the site evaluations also supported the need to increase maintenance in natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities.

- **Action 1.5.1 - Pursue training best management practices.** Pursue best management practices for training natural areas staff so that they can implement natural resource management task such as invasive species control, erosion or stormwater management, and biodiversity enhancements.
- **Action 1.5.2 – Develop a Maintenance Management Plan.** Complete a Maintenance Management Plan for Knoxville parks and recreation facilities that includes a time-task analysis of optimal park and facility maintenance activities, evaluates current park and facility maintenance and associated staffing requirements, and provides recommendations on optimal staffing levels.
    - Include services that are or could be contracted from outside vendors or providers.
    - Include consideration that facilities are rapidly aging and heavily used, maintenance expectations have evolved, but resources to support those expectations have not.
    - Include maintenance requirements of partner organizations that are responsible for facility maintenance per their use agreement with the City.
- **Action 1.5.3 - Update staffing needs.** Review and update staffing needs to better support park and amenity maintenance and compliance with national best practices.
- **Action 1.5.4 - Develop maintenance zones.** Evaluate opportunities to "re-zone" certain areas within the parks system to apply more efficient maintenance expectations and practices where applicable.
    - Include coordination with Stormwater Management and Urban Forestry to identify opportunities to utilize alternative forestry/ landscaping strategies to reduce mowing requirements.
- **Action 1.5.5 - Update existing maintenance agreements.** Update existing agreements with partners and user groups to improve partner accountability, more equitably share current and future maintenance requirements of affected sites/facilities based on partner activities and improvements, and modernizes the terms of the agreements to better address differences between partners and their capacity to meet agreement expectations.

Low maintenance zones in the form of Meadows at Lakeshore Park that require minimal maintenance and achieve multiple environmental, social, and economic benefits

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Goal 2:

Connect the community to the parks and recreation system.

Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Greenways

Objective 2.1: Provide high-quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect the parks and recreation system to neighborhoods, schools, and activity centers.

Knoxville residents identified paved multi-purpose trails as one of the highest-priority facility needs in the Needs and Priorities Assessment. In fact, when asked about the reasons that deter park users from using City of Knoxville parks more often, 20% of respondents cited a lack of trail connectivity to parks. The City is already taking steps to address this challenge. For example, in 2016, the City completed a Greenway Corridor Feasibility & Assessment Study that identified 13 greenway corridors that could be improved to better connect the majority of Knoxville's existing greenway trails. Additionally, the City of Knoxville's Bicycle Facilities Plan Update (2026) provides recommendations for creating an interconnected network of high-quality bicycle facilities. The City should continue to improve connectivity to parks and recreation facilities by implementing these and other projects.

- **Action 2.1.1** – **Continue implementing greenway improvement projects.** Implement Greenway Corridor Feasibility & Assessment Study recommendations as well as proposed greenway improvements identified through the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. It will be important for the City Capital Projects Committee to review these improvements, prioritize them, and present them to the public through a public engagement-based park site master planning process.
- **Action 2.1.2 - Advocate for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect to parks.** Advocate and support the implementation of high-quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities proposed in the Bicycle Facilities Plan Update prioritizing segments that connect to natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities.
- **Action 2.1.3** – **Increase trails in parks.** Increase the network of paved and unpaved trails for pedestrians and bicyclist in parks and integrate them into the City's bike and pedestrian system to increase park activity.

Increasing Park Activity and Improving Public Health through Walking Loops in Parks

"Parks with walking loops had 80% more users and levels of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity were 90% higher."

The RAND Corporation in partnership with the City Parks Alliance completed a National Study of Neighborhood Parks to determine what park amenities where used most to achieve the recommended levels of Moderate-to-Vigorous Physical Activity (MVPA).

The study found that walking loops and gymnasia each generated the most moderate to vigorous physical activity. When the findings related to walking loops were further analyzed, the data suggests that overall, compared to parks without walking loops, on average during an hourly observation, parks with walking loops had 80% more users and levels of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity were 90% higher. The additional park use and park-based physical activity occurred not only on the walking loops but throughout the park.

The study suggests that walking loops may be a promising means of increasing population level physical activity. The City of Knoxville should consider increasing walking loops in the City's parks system. Figure 4.3d illustrates a vision for Walking Loops that proposes a paved walking loop within 1 mile of every resident in the City.

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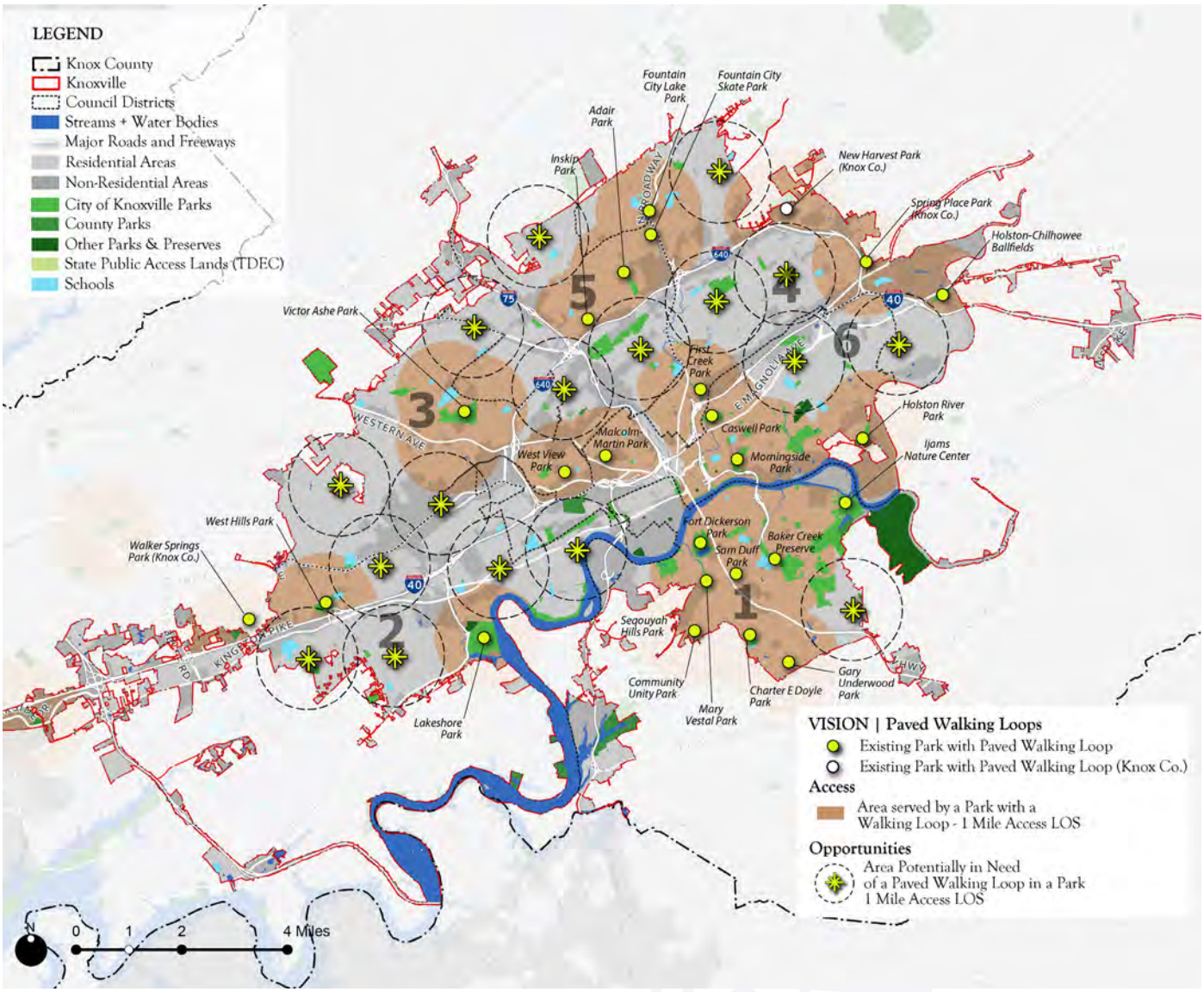
Figure 4.3d
Walking Loop Vision



Walking Loop Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes 21 parks with paved walking loops, including Park Loop Greenways. The County provides an additional 3 parks with paved walking loops within 1 mile of the City.
- **Facilities Level of Service (LOS).** N/A.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Paved trails was one of the highest priority amenities in the Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) and across most of the input methods. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan can extend the city-wide connectivity by providing paved walking loops within the City's parks.
- **Access.** There are various underserved areas in all the Council Districts.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends 17 additional walking loops with an Access LOS of 1 mile.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for the feasibility of walking loops. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for paved walking loops as well as other potential amenities.

Objective 2.2: Leverage greenways and trails to provide park experiences.

Greenways provide an opportunity for multifunctional uses, combining active transportation with recreation to create valuable recreation corridors. Figure 4.3e illustrates how recreational experiences could be integrated into a greenway corridor to create a recreational corridor.

- **Action 2.2.1 – Create park experiences along greenways and trails.** Where applicable, design greenways and trails to facilitate the incremental integration of park experiences along the corridor based on the parks and recreation needs of the surrounding community.

Figure 4.3e
Using Underutilized Space Along a Greenway to Create Park Experiences

Objective 2.3: Enhance multi-modal access, including micro-mobility and transit to connect park users to natural areas, parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

Micro-mobility has rapidly flourished in cities throughout the nation. In a relatively short time, it has proven to be a popular transportation option for many users. In fact, many people that in the past were hesitant to ride bikes, are now more inclined to use bikes, especially to and from parks, recreation facilities, and natural areas. Enhancing access to micro-mobility devices, as well as transit options near natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities will help provide alternative transportation strategies to parks.

- **Action 2.3.1 - Expand multi-modal options to enhance access to parks.** Explore the expansion of multi-modal options such as micro-mobility, enhanced transit stop access, and universally accessible transit stop design to the parks and recreation system.
- **Action 2.3.2 - Provide transit service for community-wide special events and programs.** Provide transit or trolley service to key parks during special events, programs, and services.

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Programs and Services

Objective 2.4: Increase the diversity of programming and the location where programming is provided.

Solely relying on established recreation facilities and indoor centers as the primary location where programs and services are provided is limiting to the community at large. This is primarily due to the fact that many residents do not live in close proximity to these facilities and most of these facilities are too small or old to deliver programs. Thinking creatively about enhanced partnerships and programs that can be provided in parks and other City locations may help to distribute programs throughout the community and increase their accessibility.

- **Action 2.4.1 - Identify potential programs to be provided in other locations or through mobile recreation options.** Evaluate and identify potential programs and services that could provided using alternative delivery strategies such as the Knoxville Outdoor Recreation Experience (KORE) Mobile Outreach truck and city-owned buildings such as the World's Fair Exhibit Hall and the Knoxville Civic Auditorium and Coliseum (KCAC). These spaces could also be used for to attract tournaments and create Sports Tourism benefits for the city.
- **Action 2.4.2 - Identify potential program partnerships.** Evaluate and identify potential program partnerships, building on the existing Programs in the Parks, that could be further enhanced or built anew to expand offerings.

Still from short-form video about the Knoxville Parks & Greenway Map

Source: https://youtube.com

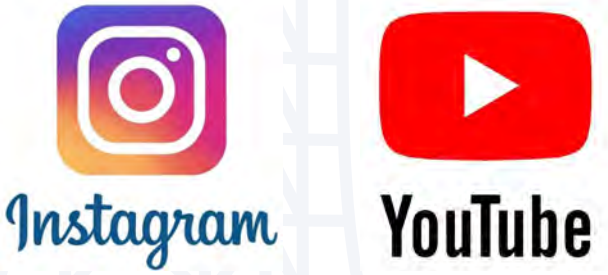
Administration and Staffing

Objective 2.5: Use a wide array of traditional and digital tools to reach diverse demographics and bring awareness to parks, programs, and services.

Sixty percent of statistically valid survey respondents acknowledged that the primary factor that prevents them from using parks and recreation programs more frequently is not knowing what is offered or available.

Considering that parks and recreation services are the only services in a city where residents choose to invest their time and disposable income, there is an opportunity for the Department to continue to broaden marketing strategies to bring awareness to parks, programs, and services.

- **Action 2.5.1 – Enhance Digital Engagement and Outreach.** Develop a multi-channel digital strategy to increase community engagement and promote parks and recreation programs and services. This may include using digital media strategies such as short-form videos, podcast series, targeted email and newsletter campaigns, and leveraging the City's app to reach targeted users
- **Action 2.5.2 - Develop a comprehensive park signage strategy.** Develop a comprehensive signage and wayfinding system in parks that creates a hierarchy of sign types including gateway entry signs, digital signs/ kiosks, contextual signs that show the location of the park within the entire park system, park site location maps, and regulatory, directional, and educational signage with QR codes that provide additional bilingual information related to parks and recreation system programs and services.



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Goal 3:

Grow the parks and recreation system to keep pace with the City's growth.

Natural Areas

Objective 3.1: Increase access to nature experiences.

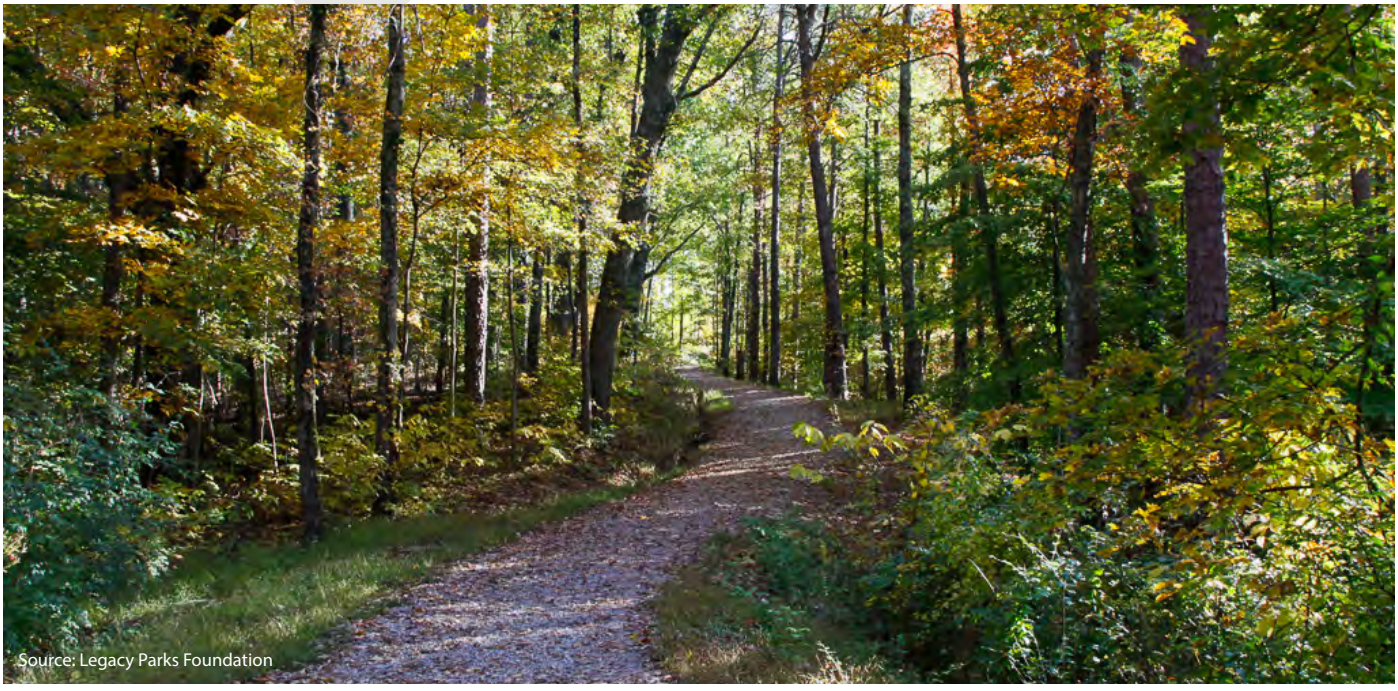
Additional open space, conservation, and forested areas emerged as a priority in the Needs and Priorities Assessment. While certain areas in the City have access to conservation and forested areas, others do not. There is an opportunity to grow these spaces within existing parks as well as new parks to provide residents with access to nature experiences in underserved areas and create an interconnected system of conservation and forested areas.

Figure 4.3f illustrates a conceptual Nature Vision for an expanded system of conservation and forested areas that builds on and connects existing Natural Areas. This expanded, interconnected vision seeks to preserve undeveloped forested areas and protect ecologically sensitive areas including floodzones and lands with slopes over 10%.

- **Action 3.1.1 – Confirm and prioritize protection of natural areas.** Further explore, confirm, and prioritize the protection of areas in existing parks as well as those identified in the Nature Vision that consider gaps in connectivity, objectives for the acquisition, potential funding sources, partners, and collaborators.

  It will be important for the City Capital Projects Committee to review these projects, prioritize them, and present them to the public through a public engagement-based park site master planning process.
- **Action 3.1.2 – Formalize the protection and acquisition of lands.** Explore strategies to obtain potential parcels including, but not limited to conservation easements, acquisition, transfer of development rights, etc.
- **Action 3.1.3 - Develop plans with the community.** Develop community-based management plans, conceptual natural area improvement plans, and construction documents based on available capital and management funding.

River Bluff Natural Area



Source: Legacy Parks Foundation

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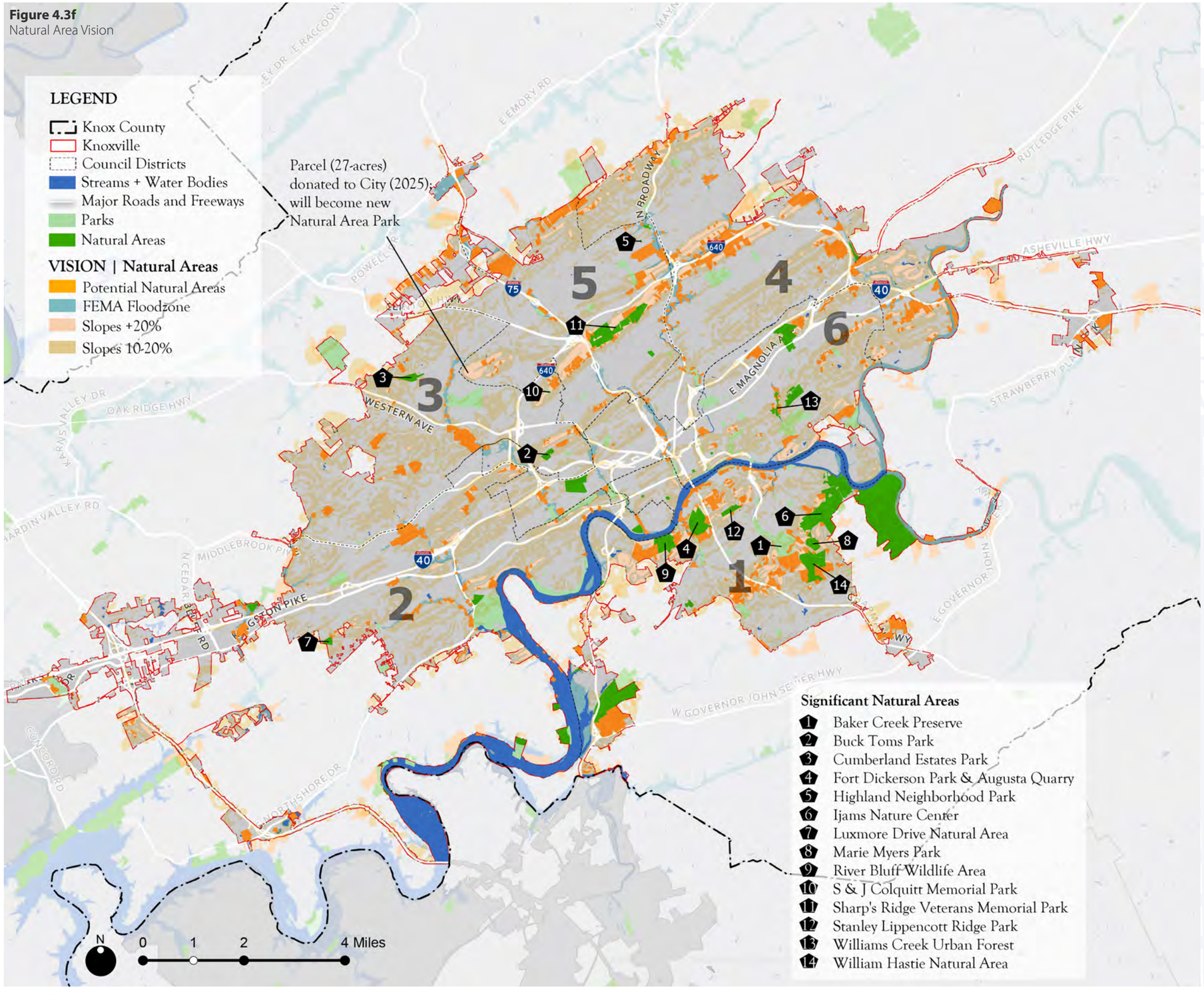
Figure 4.3f
Natural Area Vision



Objective 3.2: Increase access to water.

The Tennessee River is an important ecological, recreational, and economic asset for the City of Knoxville. Recognizing the value of the river, the Tennessee RiverLine is reframing the river corridor as "a continuous river park for exploration, health, learning, and connection—welcoming everyone to experience the beauty and richness of the Tennessee River Valley" through access to a variety of natural resource-based recreation activities. These activities include, amongst others, access to the river through paddling, fishing, boating, and more.

Increasing access to the Tennessee River and appropriate connecting creeks is critical for advancing the Tennessee RiverLine's vision as well as addressing residents' desires to increase access to water via motorized, non-motorized, and passive uses. Figure 4.3g identifies existing and potential areas of water access. Subsequent pages also include illustrations from the Governor Ned McWherter/ Riverside Landing Park + Downtown Water Trail Conceptual Plan. Implementing these and other proposed projects will help grow access to the Tennessee River.

- **Action 3.2.1 – Confirm and prioritize water access opportunities.** Further explore, confirm, and prioritize potential areas for increased water access for non-motorized, motorized, and passive uses.

  It will be important for the Integrated Capital Parks and Recreation Capital Projects Committee to review these projects, prioritize them, and present them to the public through a public engagement-based park site master planning process.
- **Action 3.2.2 – Formalize the protection and acquisition of lands that maximize opportunities for increase water access.** Explore strategies to obtain potential parcels for water access including, but not limited to conservation easements, acquisition, transfer of development rights, etc.
- **Action 3.2.3 – Develop water access plans with the community.** Develop community-based conceptual water access plans and construction documents based on available capital and management funding.

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Figure 4.3g
Water Access Vision

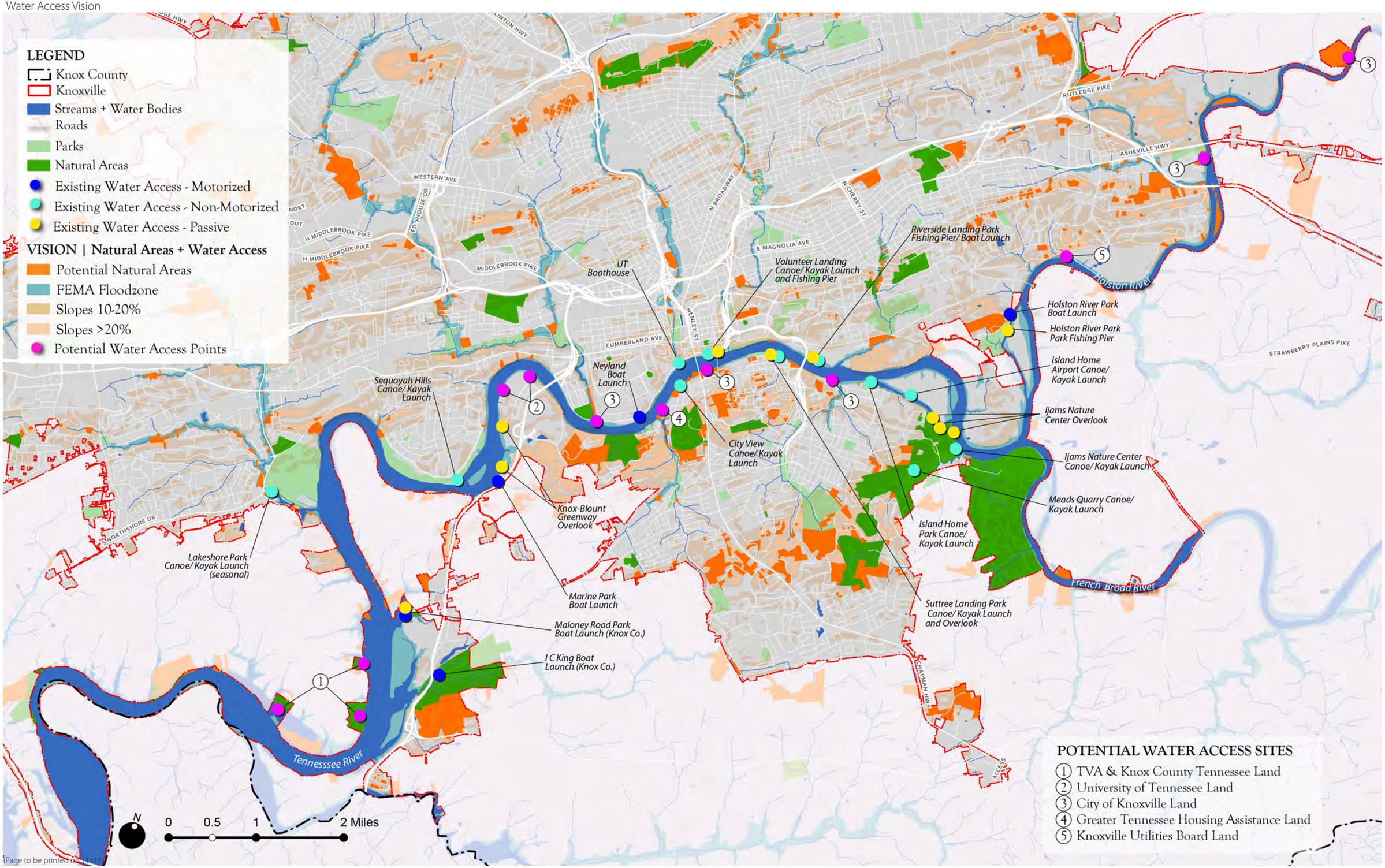

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Figure 4.3h

Governor Ned McWherter/ Riverside Landing Park + Downtown Water Trail Conceptual Plan Illustrations

Source: Tennessee RiverLine

Source: Tennessee RiverLine

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Objective 3.3: Provide residents with access to a meaningful greenspace within a 10-minute walk in urban areas and 10-minute bike ride in suburban areas.

The City of Knoxville has a robust amount of park land. Specifically, the City currently enjoys an Acreage Level of Service of 11.9 Acres per 1,000 population. This is well above the National Median of 6.1 Acres per 1,000 population for cities with a similar population and population density as the City of Knoxville.

Yet, not all areas in the City have access to this park land. In fact, only 45% of residents have access to a meaningful greenspace within a 10-minute walk of their home.

While the Trust of Public Land (TPL) encourages access to greenspace within a 10-minute walk, this can be a challenge to achieve in communities with suburban development patterns. Given this reality, many cities instead seek to provide Differential Access Levels of Service for urban and suburban areas in the City – ½ mile Access LOS (10-minute walk) for urban areas and 1-mile Access LOS (10-minute bike ride) for suburban areas.

Figure 4.3i illustrates a Neighborhood Park Vision for the City of Knoxville that proposes to provide Knoxville residents within a 10-minute walk (1/2 mile) in urban areas and a 10-minute bicycle ride (1 mile) in suburban areas. The City should consider recreation corridors/ linear parks as a means to provide Neighborhood Park experiences in areas where the acquisition of open park land may be a challenge.

- **Action 3.3.1 – Confirm and prioritize Neighborhood Park Vision.** Further explore, confirm, and prioritize the creation of Neighborhood Parks based on the Neighborhood Parks Vision.

  It will be important for the City Capital Projects Committee to review these projects, prioritize them, and present them to the public through a public engagement-based park site master planning process.
- **Action 3.3.2 – Develop plans with the community.** Develop community-based conceptual master plans and construction documents based on available capital and management funding.

Suttree Landing Park

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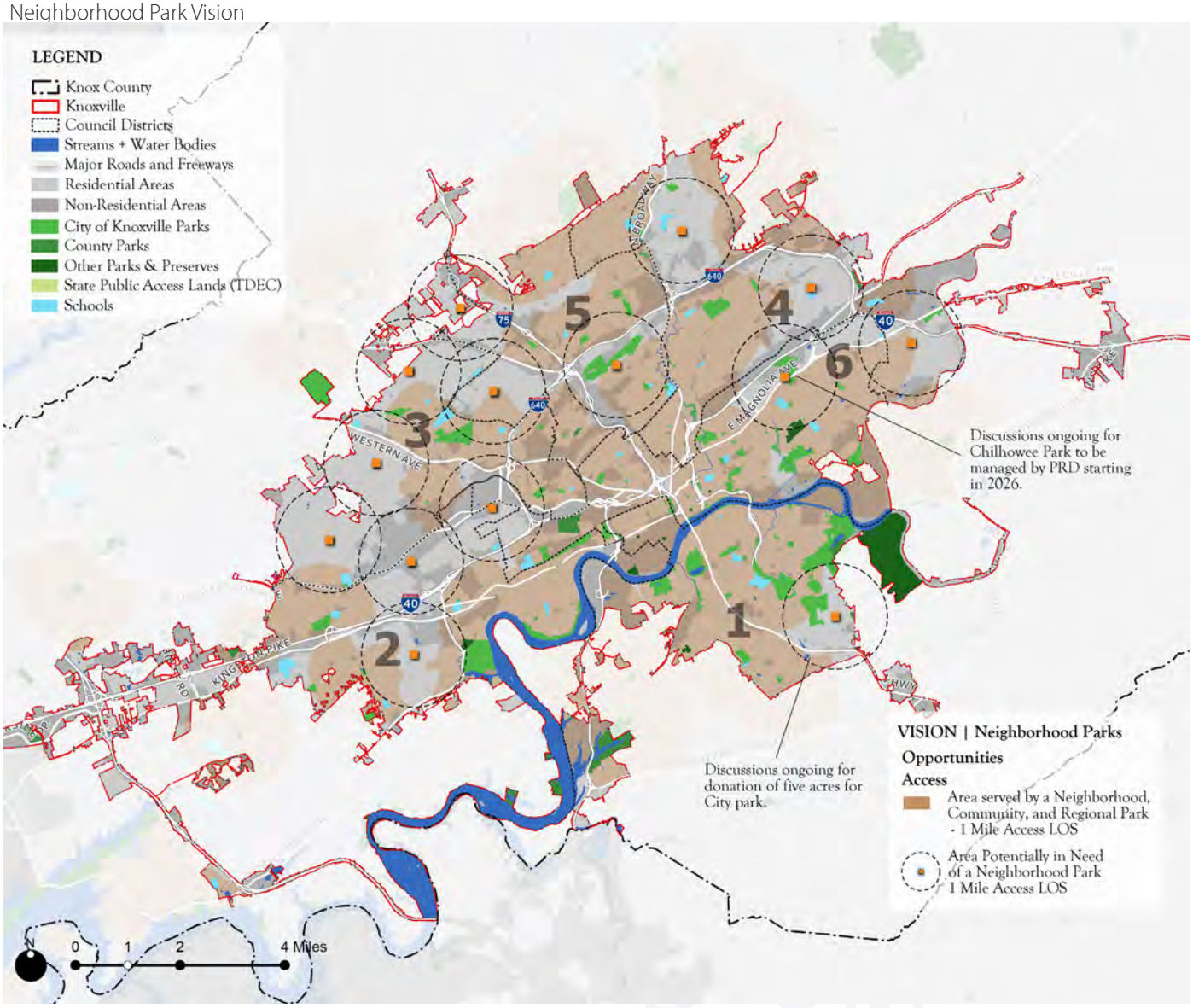
Figure 4.3i
Neighborhood Park Vision



Neighborhood Park Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes 47 Neighborhood, Community, and Regional Parks that provide residents with access to Neighborhood Park experiences within ½ mile Access LOS for urban areas and 1-mile Access LOS for suburban areas.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Neighborhood Parks were a priority across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** 45% of the City is served by a Neighborhood, Community, or Regional Park within ½ mile Access LOS for urban areas and 1-mile Access LOS for suburban areas.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends 14 additional Neighborhood Parks with an Access LOS of 1 mile.
- Explore existing City-owned lands or establishing agreements with schools in areas that are potentially in need of a Neighborhood Park to increase access to parks. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for neighborhood parks.
- Continue pursuing the potential donation of 5 acres of land (Butterfly Lake) which could address park need in District 1.

Objective 3.4: Increase parks and recreation facilities throughout the City.

As the City's population continues to grow, so will the need for additional parks and recreation facilities such as playgrounds, sports courts, fields, etc. Based on needs identified through the needs assessment process and informed by the City's demographics, local and national benchmarks, and outdoor recreation trends, the Vision recommends establishing Facilities and Access Level of Service (LOS) Guidelines that will inform the approximate number and general future location of parks and recreation facilities.

Figure 4.3j identifies the recommended Facility and Access LOS Guidelines while Figures 4.3k – 4.3v in subsequent pages map the areas potentially in need of proposed facilities.

Other potential facilities such as pavilions, shelters, restrooms, etc. not included in the Guidelines would be implemented in parks based on input from surrounding park residents and park planning and design best practices. The Facilities LOS Guidelines (Figure 4.3j) are informed by the City's existing number of facilities, findings from the Needs and Priorities Assessment, and national benchmarks for cities with a similar population and population density as the City of Knoxville. The City should review and update these Guidelines every five years.

- **Action 3.4.1 – Confirm and prioritize parks and recreation facility projects.** Further explore, confirm, and prioritize the implementation of proposed parks and recreation facilities.

  It will be important for the City Capital Projects Committee to review these projects, prioritize them, and present them to the public through a public engagement-based park site master planning process.
- **Action 3.4.2 – Develop plans with the community.** Develop community-based conceptual master plans and construction documents based on available capital and management funding.

Figure 4.3j
Recommended Facilities and Access LOS Guidelines

Facilities Category		2034 Level of Service	Need/Surplus Based on Proposed LOS	Access LOS Distances
		Proposed	2034	Proposed
Indoor Facilities	Indoor Pool	70,800	0	5 Miles
Outdoor Facilities	Basketball Courts	7,600	-2	2 Miles
	Diamond Fields	5,500	12	2 Miles
	Dog Parks	23,600	-3	2 Miles
	Outdoor Fitness Stations	11,000	-10	2 Miles
	Outdoor Pools/ Swimming Areas	42,720	-1	5 Miles
	Playgrounds	2,600	-16	1 Mile
	Pickleball Courts	5,300	-24	2 Miles
	Rectangle Fields	10,600	-7	2 Miles
	Splash Pads	23,700	-5	3 Miles
	Tennis Courts	5,000	-4	2 Miles

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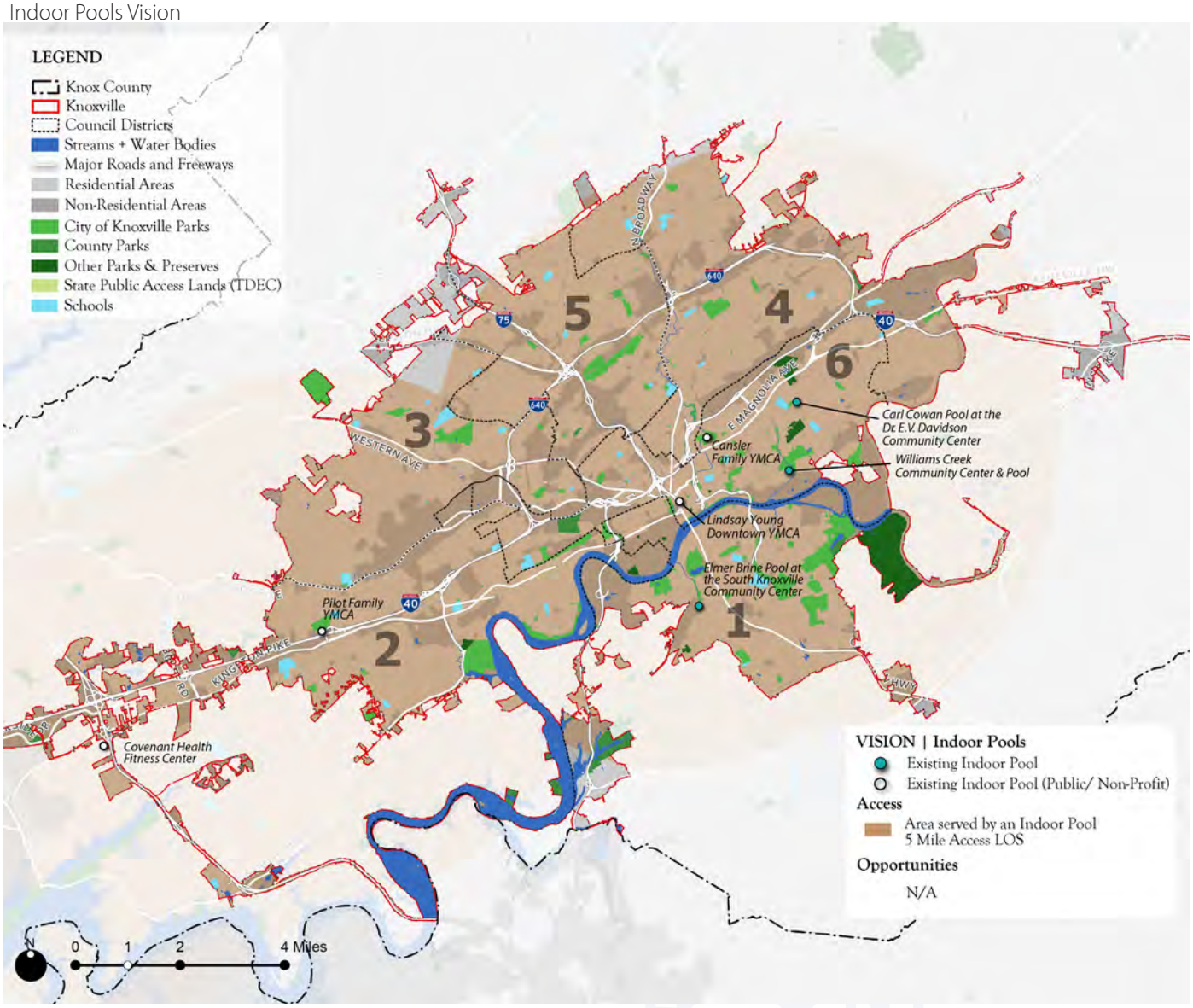
Figure 4.3k
Indoor Pools Vision



Indoor Pools Vision

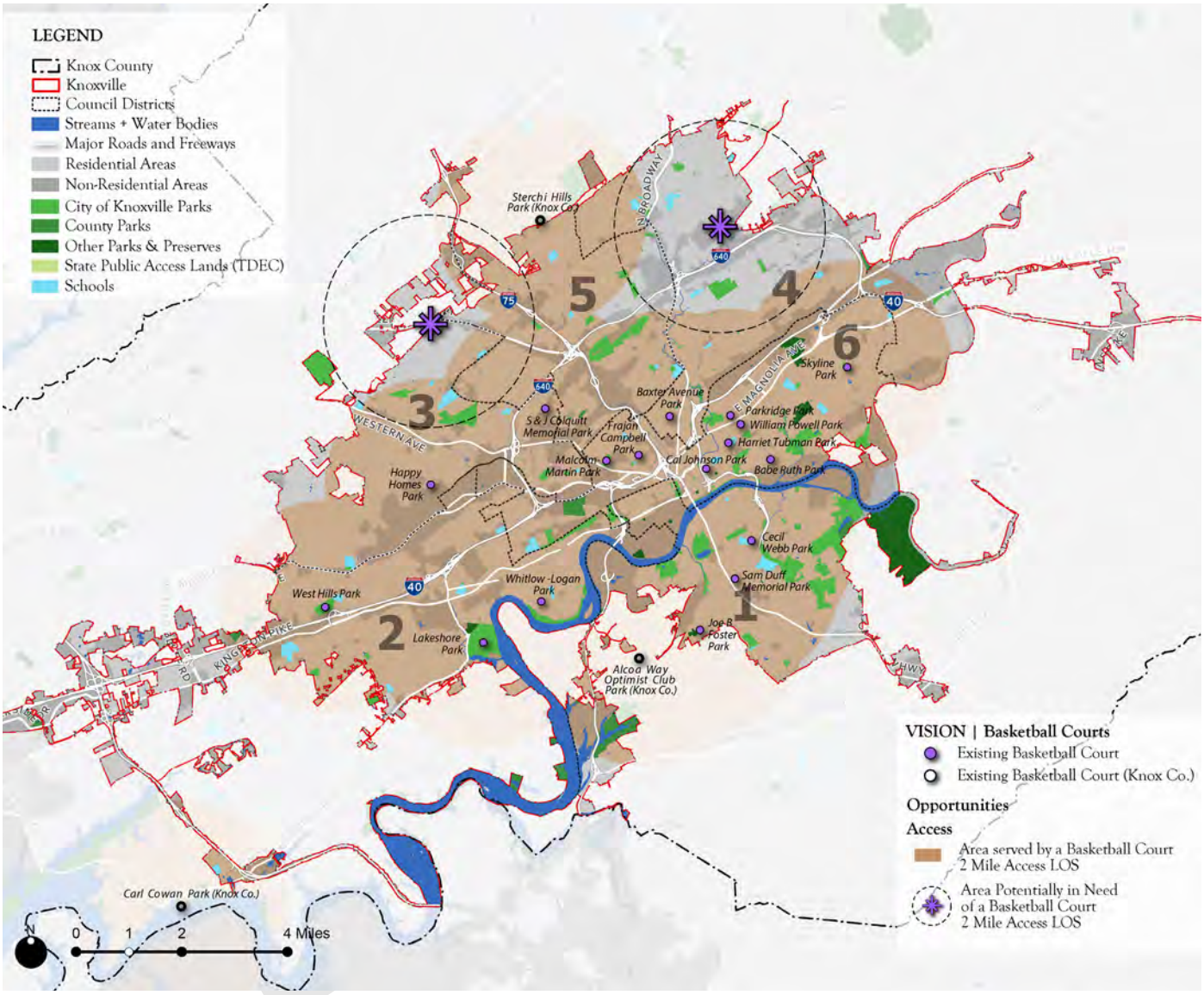
- **Current Inventory.** The City Inventory includes three indoor pools, with two operated by the City and the Carl Cowan pool operated by the Emerald Youth Foundation.

  Additionally, there are four pools in the City operated by non-profit organizations which allow public access.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS does not suggest a need for additional Indoor Pools.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Indoor pools were a lower priority amenity in the Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) and were noted as a low need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** Most of the City is served by the existing pools with an Access LOS of 5 miles.

Recommendations

- No new indoor pools are recommended at this time.
- Furthering partnerships with the non-profit pool operators to provide increased awareness and reduced fees based on ability to pay, is recommended to increase access to indoor pools.

Figure 4.3l
Basketball Courts Vision



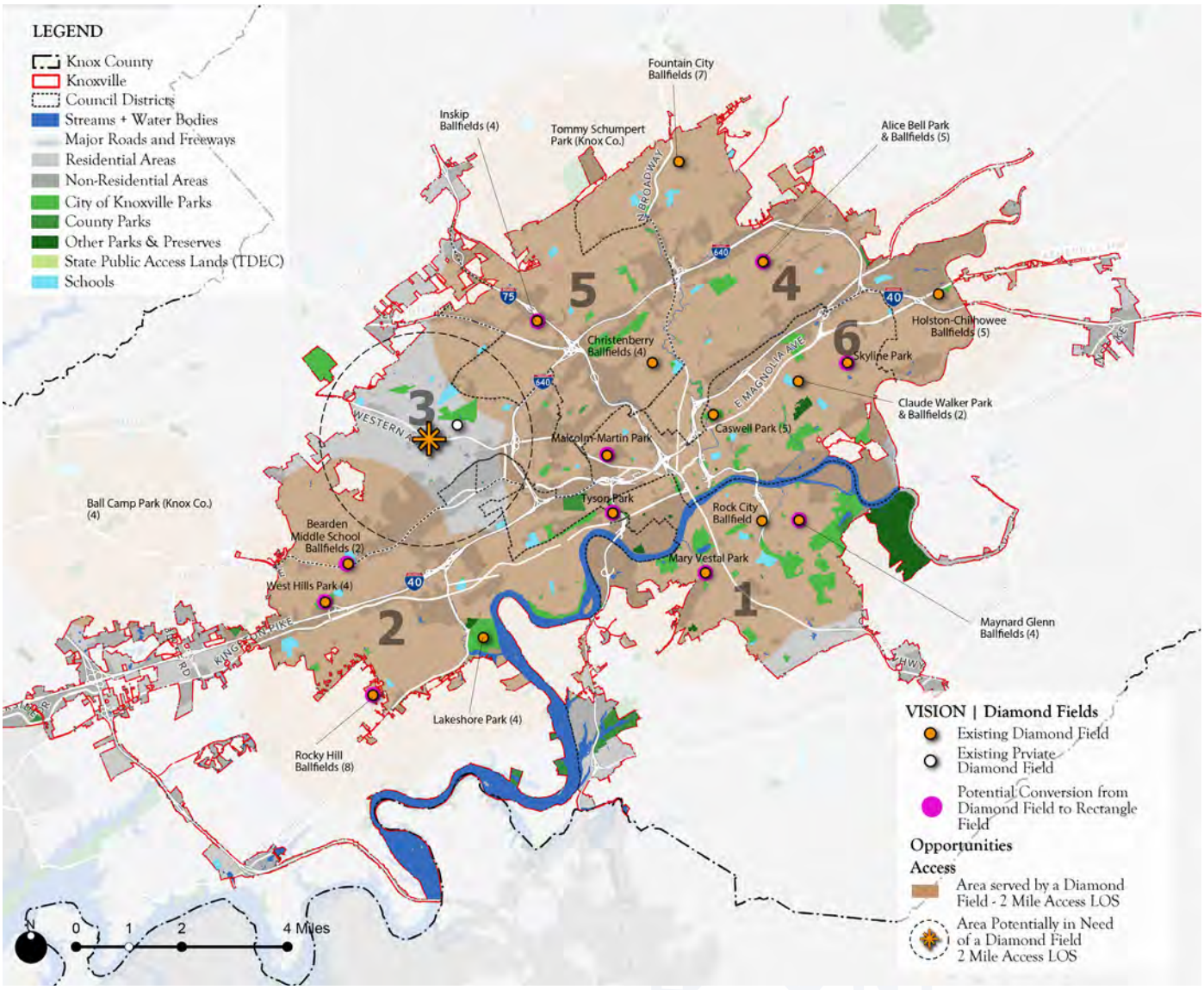
Basketball Courts Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes 26 basketball courts across 17 parks. Additionally, the County provides courts at three parks within 2 miles of the City.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggested a need for two additional basketball courts.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Outdoor courts were one of the lower priority amenity in the SVS and basketball was a low need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** There are limited underserved areas in the northeast (Districts 4) and west (Districts 3) side of the City.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends two additional basketball courts to address underserved areas with an Access LOS of 2 miles.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be considered for new courts, based on proven public demand. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for basketball courts as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3m
Diamond Fields Vision



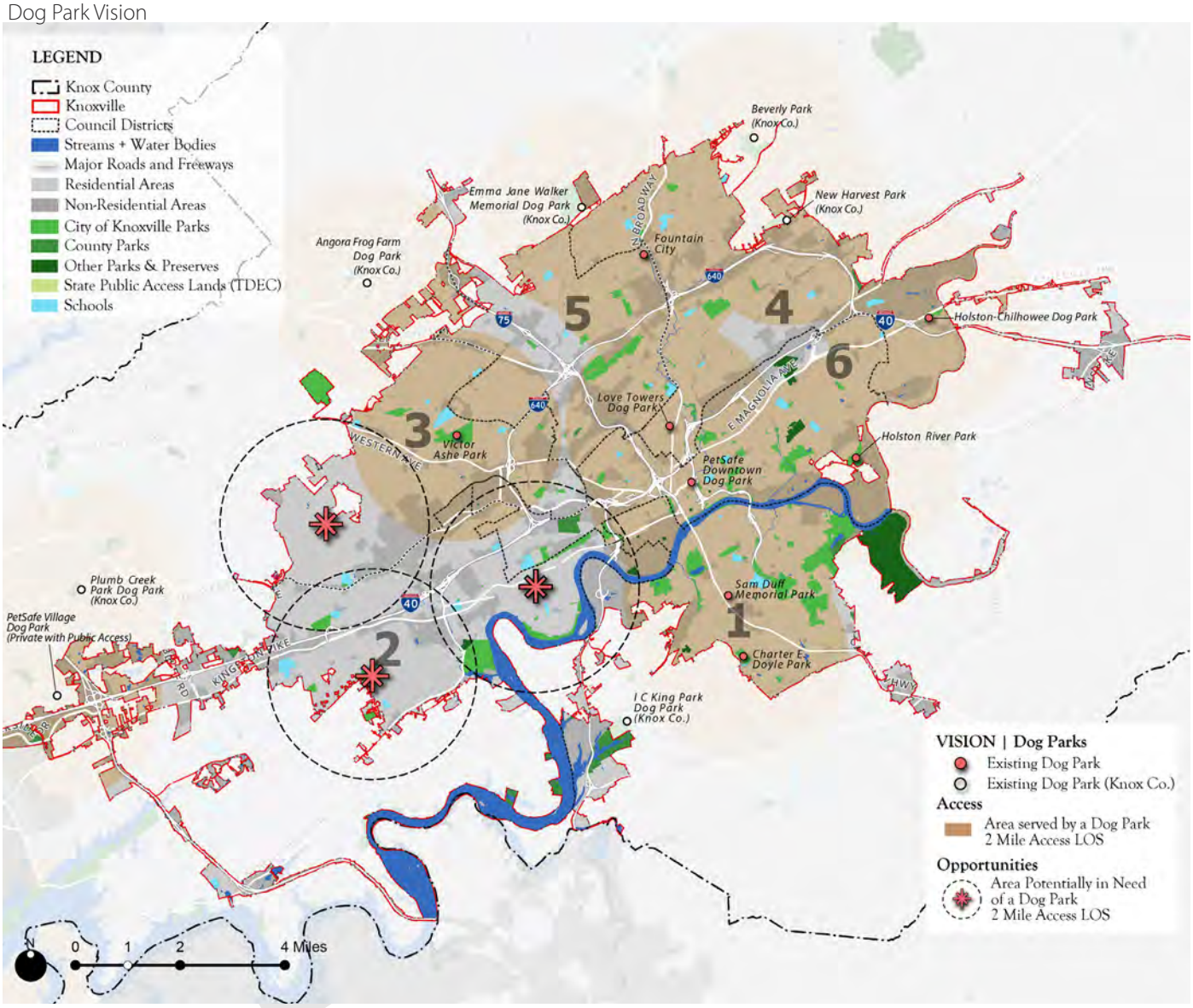
Diamond Fields Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes 59 diamond fields across 16 parks.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggested a surplus of 12 diamond fields citywide.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Diamond fields were one of the lower priority amenity in the SVS and youth diamond fields were a low need across most of the input methods. However, feedback from youth sports providers and park staff suggested potential need in certain areas.
- **Access.** Even though there may be a surplus in the number of diamond fields, there is an underserved area in the west (District 3) side of the City.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends adding diamond fields in the west (District 3) side of the City with an Access LOS of 2 miles. Other areas may have a surplus of diamond fields and as discussed in the Rectangle Field Vision, could be considered for conversion from diamond fields to rectangle fields.
- Existing parks in the underserved area should be considered for new fields, based on proven public demand. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for diamond fields as well as other potential amenities.
- Explore partnerships with the County and partners to provide fields at County parks close to the city, due to greater demand for youth sports fields.

Figure 4.3n
Dog Park Vision



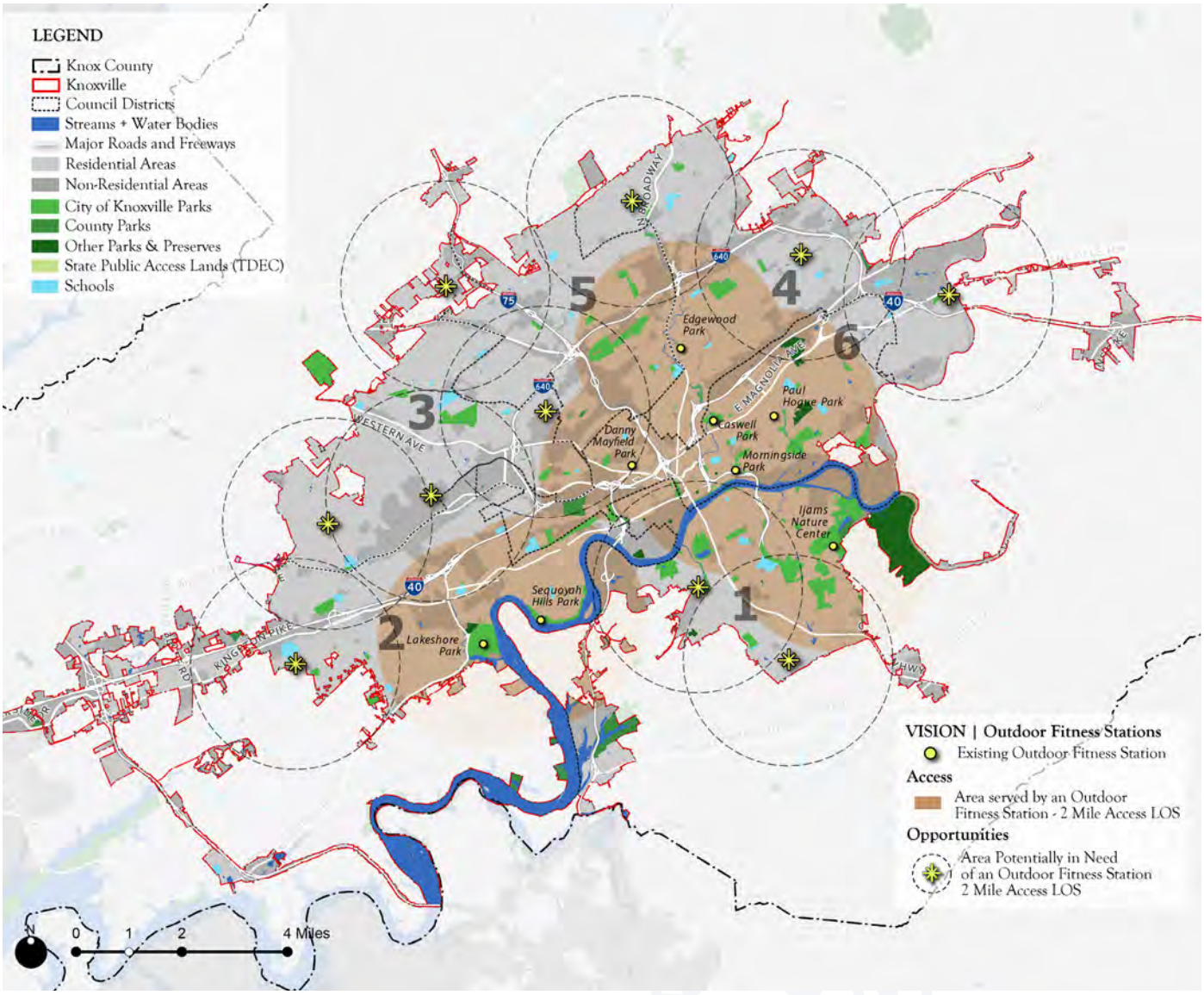
Dog Parks Vision

- **Current Inventory.** There are eight Dog Parks provided by the City at eight parks. Additionally, there are six Dog Parks provided at County locations within 2 miles of the City.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggests a need for three additional Dog Parks.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Dog Parks were a medium-low amenity in the SVS and were generally a lower need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** There is a large underserved area in the western side of the City, primarily in District 2 along the I-40 corridor.

Recommendations

- The Vision includes three additional Dog Parks in the western side of the City with an Access LOS of 3 miles.
- Existing Community and Regional Parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for the feasibility of additional Dog Parks, based on proven demand. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for Dog Parks as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3o
Outdoor Fitness Station Vision



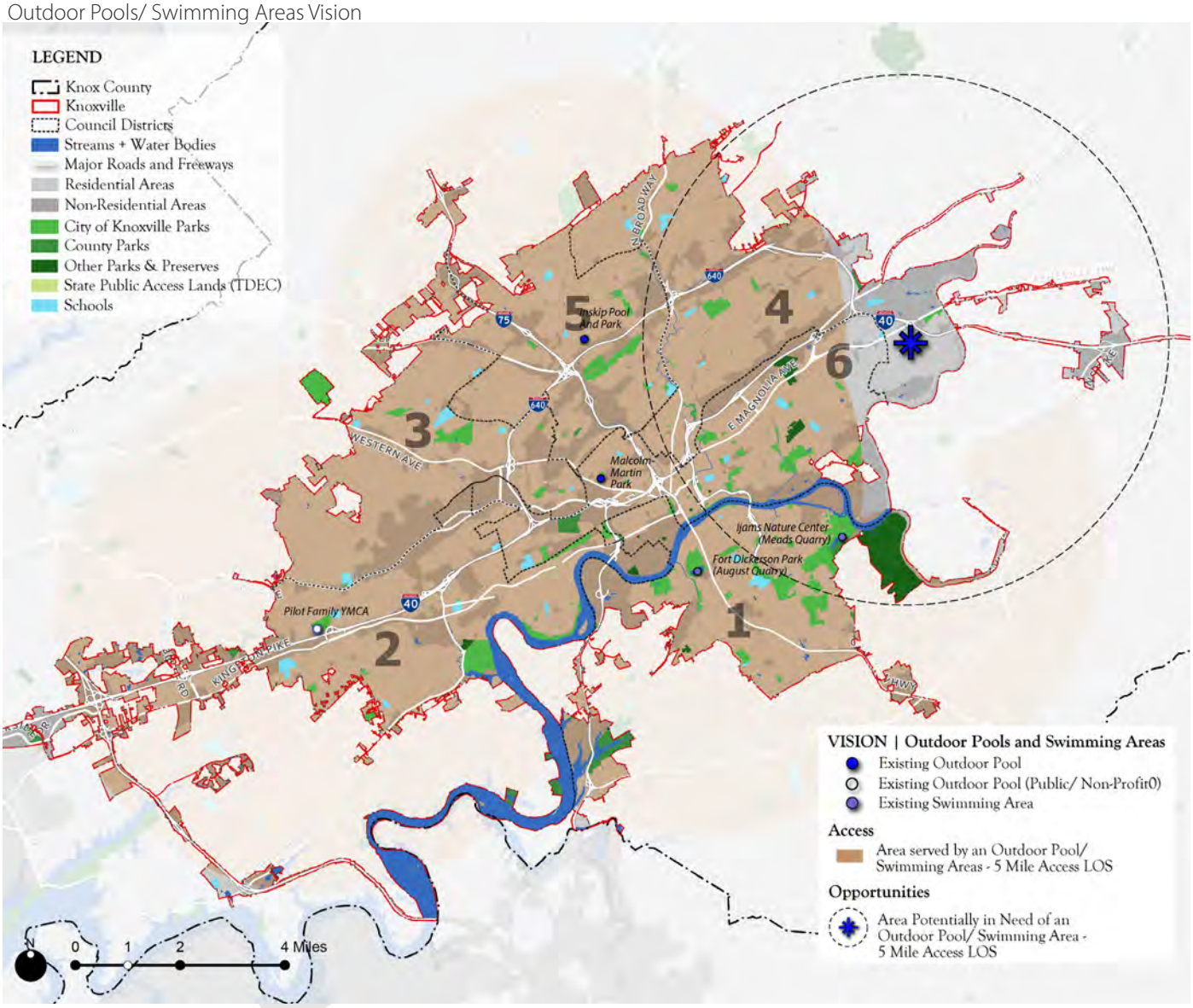
Outdoor Fitness Areas Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes eight outdoor fitness stations.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggests a need for 10 additional outdoor fitness stations.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Outdoor fitness stations were a lower priority amenity in the SVS and were noted as a medium-low need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** There are large portions of the City outside of the downtown core that are currently underserved.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends 10 additional outdoor fitness stations to address underserved areas with an Access LOS of 2 miles.
- Existing parks and greenways in the underserved areas should be evaluated for new outdoor fitness stations. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for outdoor fitness stations as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3p
Outdoor Pools/ Swimming Areas Vision



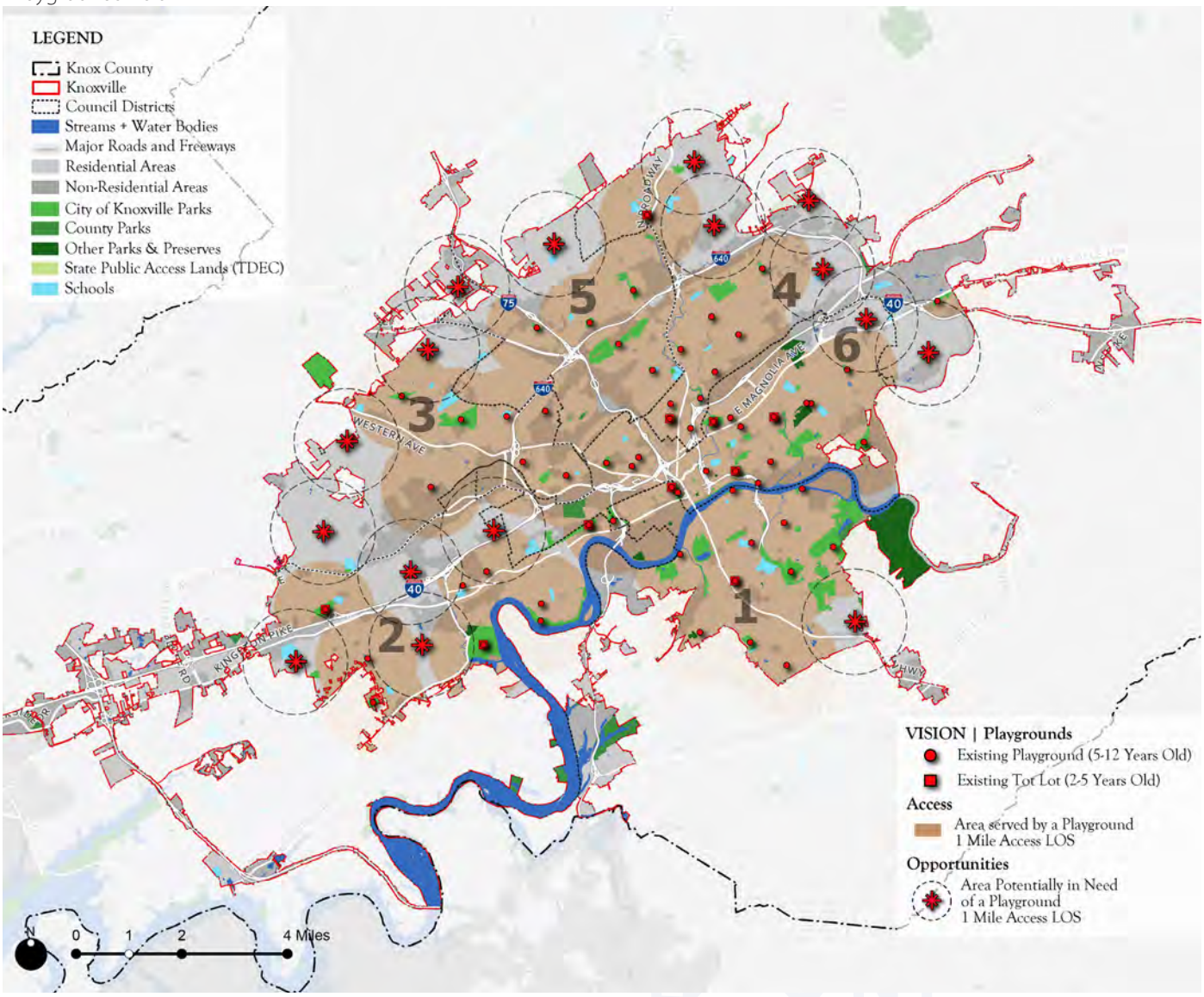
Outdoor Pools/Swimming Areas Vision

- **Current Inventory.** There are two outdoor pools provided by the City at two parks. Additionally, there are two outdoor swimming areas, Augusta Quarry (managed by PRD) and Meads Quarry (managed by Ijams).
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggests a need for one additional outdoor pool.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Outdoor Pools were a medium-high amenity in the SVS and were noted as a high need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** There is a an underserved area in the northeast (Districts 4 & 6) corner of the City.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends one outdoor pool on the east side with an Access LOS of 5 miles to address the underserved areas.
- Existing parks in the underserved area should be evaluated for the feasibility of new outdoor pool. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for an outdoor pool as well as other potential amenities.
- Coordinate with the Tennessee Riverline Partnership to explore potential swimming areas in the Tennessee River in existing and new riverside parks.

Figure 4.3q
Playgrounds Vision



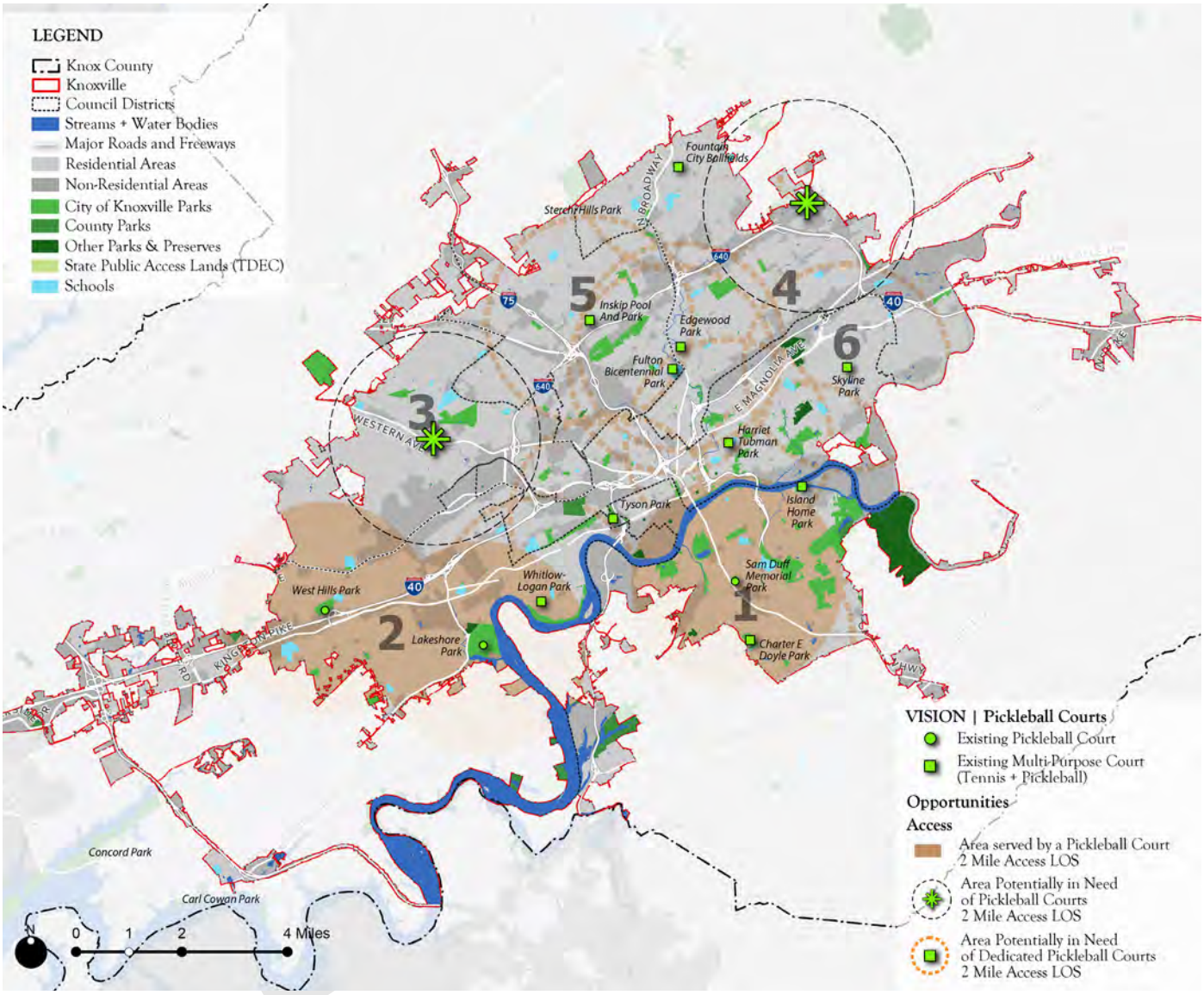
Playgrounds Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes 66 standard playgrounds (designed for ages 5-12) across 61 parks. Additionally, there are 10 Tot-lots (playgrounds designed for 2-5 year olds).
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggested a need for 14 additional playgrounds.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Playgrounds were a low amenity in the SVS and were noted as a lower need across most of the input methods. However, public input indicated a need in certain areas.
- **Access.** There are underserved areas across the City, particularly as distance increases from the central area.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends 14 additional playgrounds to address underserved areas with an Access LOS of 1 mile.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for the feasibility of new playgrounds. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for playgrounds as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3r
Pickleball Courts Vision



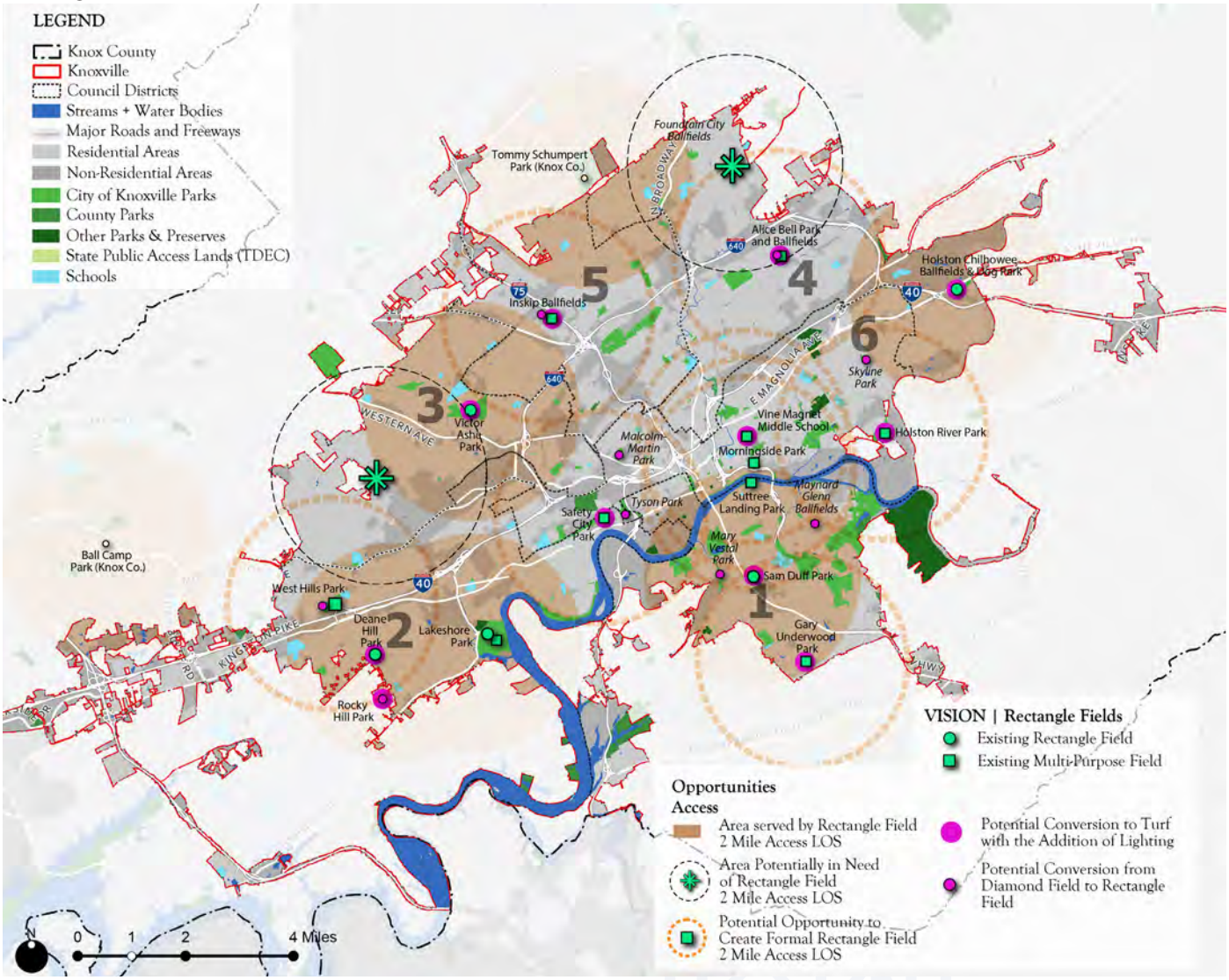
Pickleball Courts Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City pickleball inventory includes 16 permanent courts across three parks. There are also 19 multi-use courts marked for pickleball on tennis courts.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggested a need for 24 additional stand alone pickleball courts.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Outdoor racquet sports were one of the lower priority amenity in the SVS and were noted as a low need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** There are underserved areas throughout the City.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends 24 additional stand alone pickleball courts to address underserved areas with an Access LOS of 2 miles.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for new courts, based on proven public demand. Parks with tennis courts marked with pickleball court lines should be evaluated for the potential for standalone pickleball courts. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for pickleball courts as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3s
Rectangle Fields Vision



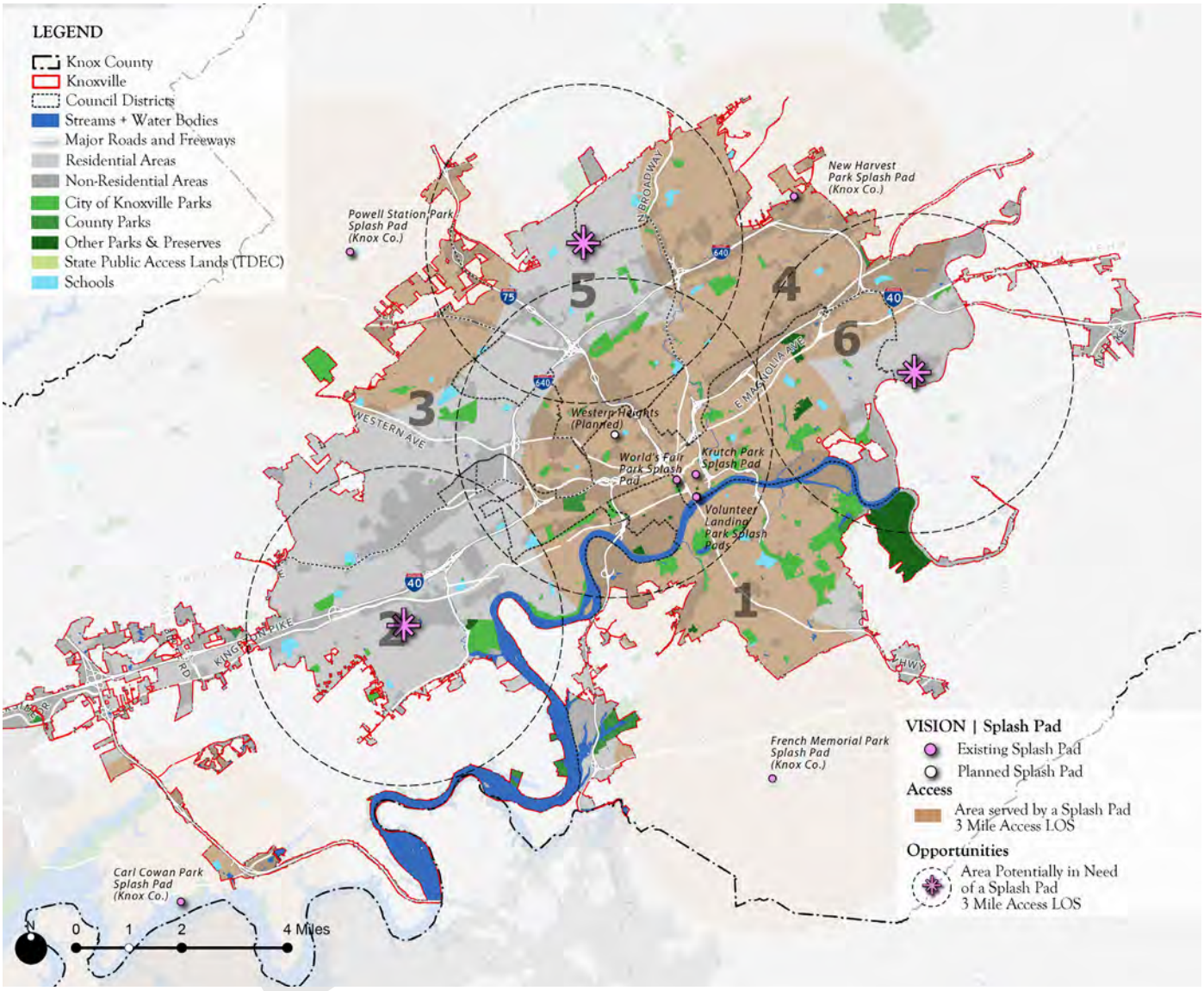
Rectangle Fields Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City rectangle field inventory totals 13 fields over four parks. Additionally, the County provides 19 youth soccer fields at two parks within 3 miles of the City. Furthermore, the City also provides 11 multi-use fields distributed across 11 parks.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggested a need for seven rectangle fields.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Rectangle fields were one of the lower priority amenities in the SVS and were noted as a low need across some of the input methods. However, feedback from youth sports providers and park staff suggested significant need throughout the City.
- **Access.** There are underserved areas north of the downtown core (Districts 4-6) and south of the river in District 1.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends seven additional rectangle fields to address underserved areas with an Access LOS of 2 miles.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be considered for new fields, based on proven public demand.
- Explore conversion of diamond fields to rectangle fields. For example, study the potential to redesign Rocky Hill Park (currently eight baseball fields, with only four being used), West Hills Park, Inskip Ballfields, Alice Bell Park and Ballfields, Mary Vestal Park, or Maynard Glenn Ballfields.
- Explore the role of synthetic turf and lighting to provide increased use of existing fields. In particular, study the potential to provide lighting and synthetic turf at Victor Ashe. Other fields to consider may include Rocky Hill Park, Deane Hill Park, Safety City Park, Sam Duff Park, Gary Underwood Park, Vine Magnet Middle School Field, Inskip Ballfields, Alice Bell Park and Ballfields, Holston River Park, and Holston-Chilhowee Ballfields & Dog Park.

Figure 4.3t
Splash Pads Vision



Splash Pads Vision

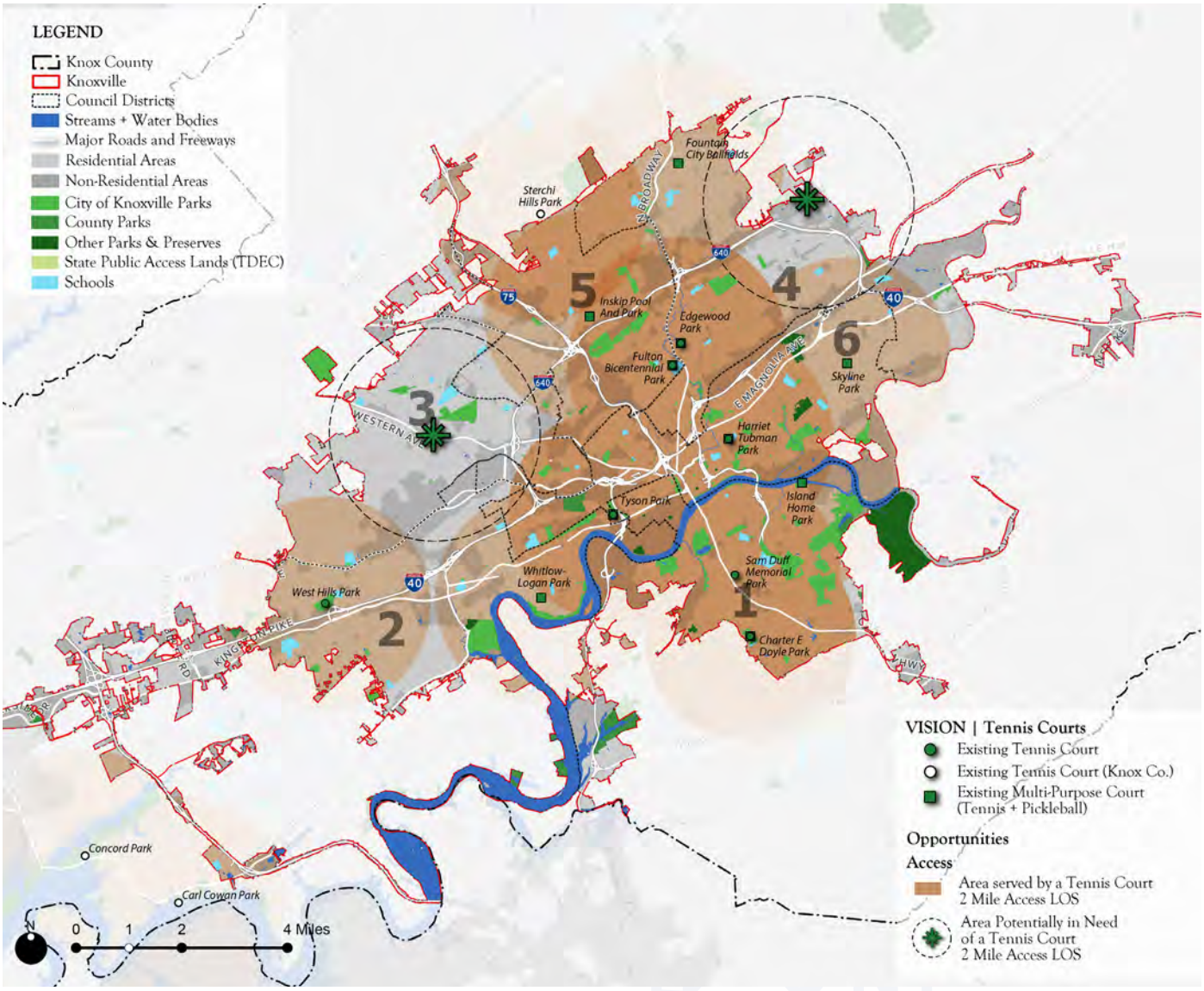
- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes four splash pads provided by the City distributed across three parks plus one at Market Square, with two splash pads managed in coordination with the Public Building Authority (PBA). A new splash pad is planned for Western Heights and is expected to open in 2027.

  The County provides an additional four splash pads within 3 miles of the City.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggested a need for five additional splash pads.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Splash pads were one of the lower priority amenities in the SVS and were noted as a low need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** Due to the concentration of splash pads in the downtown core, there are access gaps across much of the City.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends three additional splash pads to address underserved areas with an Access LOS of 3 miles.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for the feasibility of new splash pads, based on proven public demand. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for splash pads as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3u
Tennis Court Vision



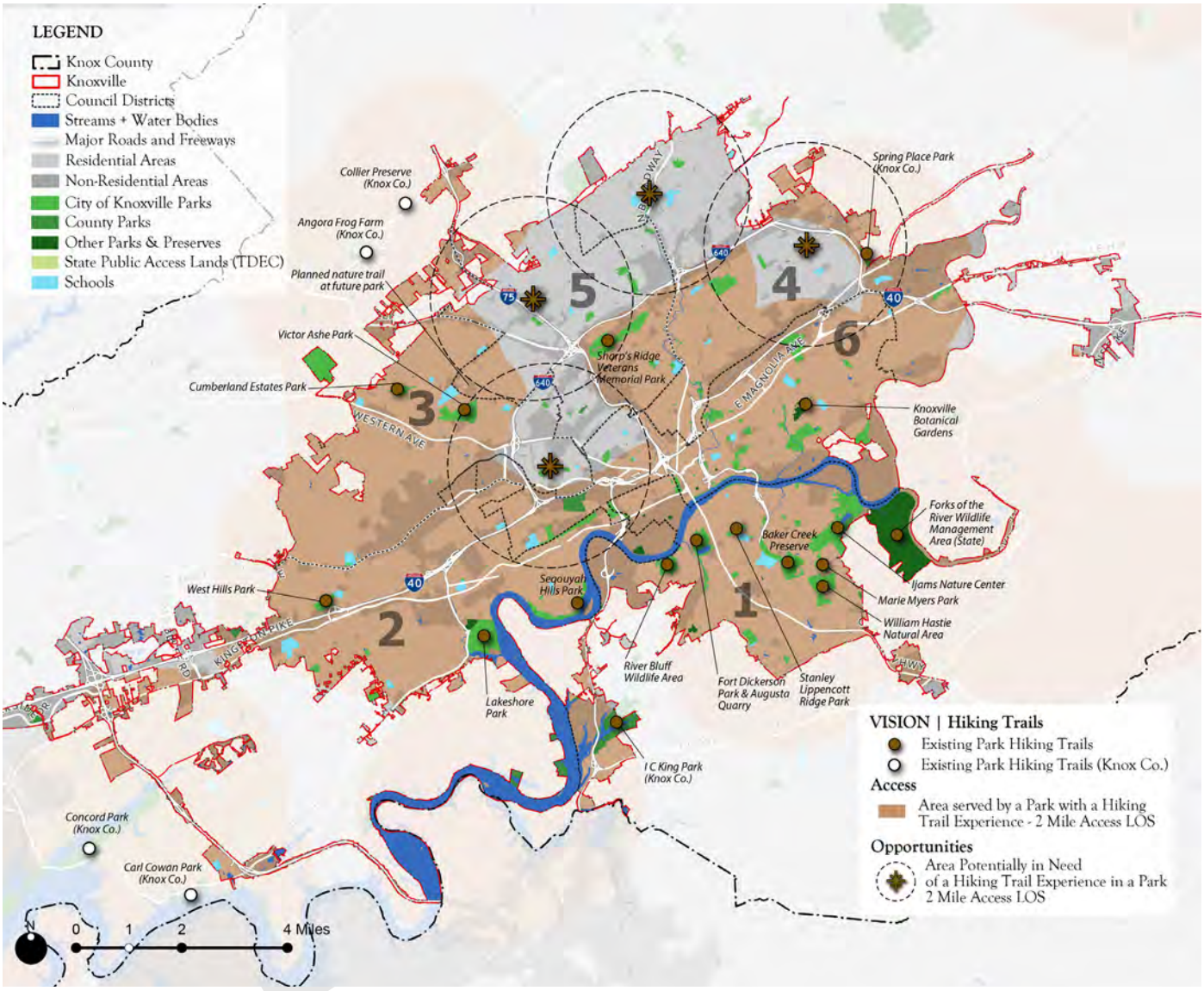
Tennis Court Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City tennis inventory includes 38 courts across eight parks, with tennis centers at Tyson Park and West Hills Park providing 14 and 11 courts respectively (four additional courts planned at West Hills will be constructed once funding is secured) . Additionally, the County provides courts at three parks within 2 miles of the City.
- **Facilities LOS.** The recommended Facilities LOS suggested a need for four additional tennis courts.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Outdoor racquet sports were one of the lower priority amenities in the SVS and were noted as a low need across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** Due to the concentration of courts at the two centers, there are a few areas that are underserved, the largest in District 3.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends two additional areas with a potential need for tennis courts to address underserved areas with an Access LOS of 2 miles.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for new courts, based on proven public demand. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land for tennis courts as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3v
Hiking Trails Vision



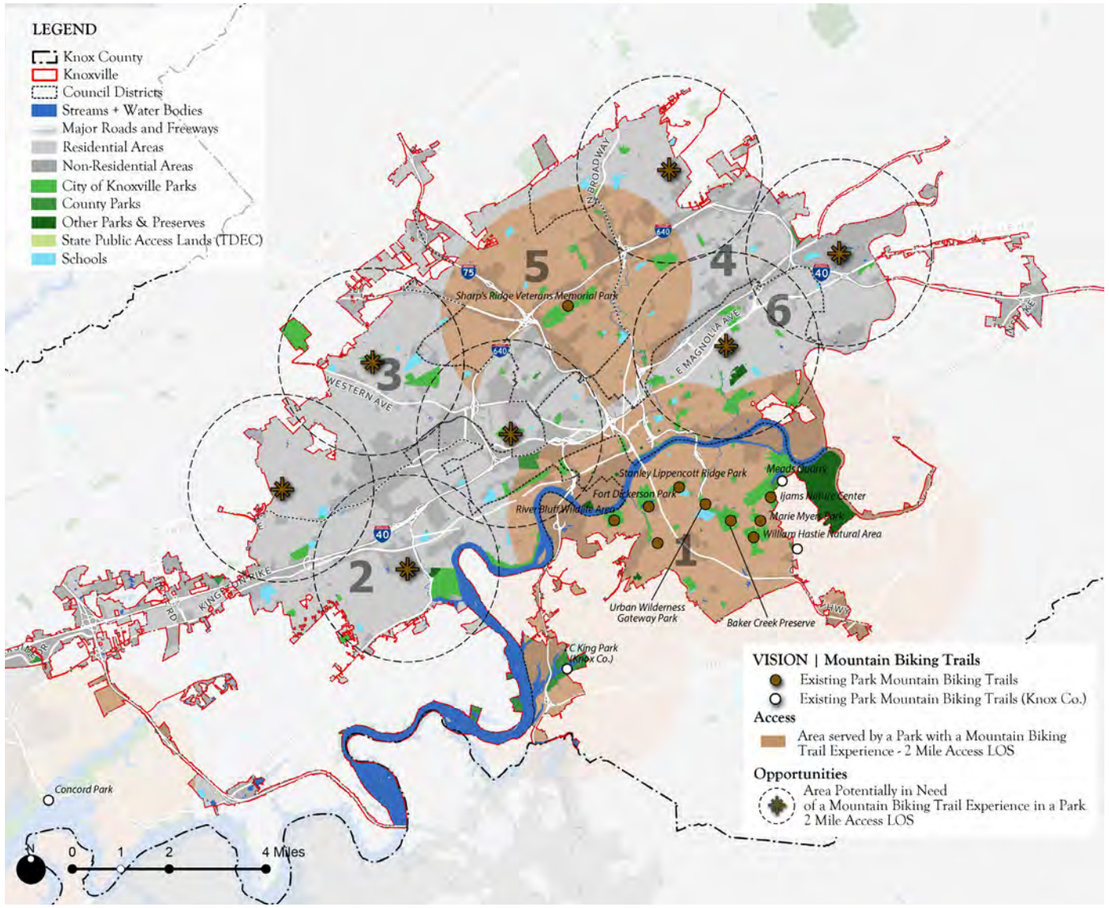
Hiking Trails Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes 15 parks with hiking trails. The County and State provide an additional 6 parks with hiking trails within 1 mile of the City.
- **Facilities LOS.** N/A.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Unpaved hiking trails was one of the highest priority amenities in the SVS and across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** There are underserved areas primarily across the north side of the City.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends 4 additional parks with hiking trails with an Access LOS of 2 miles.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for the feasibility of nature trails based on proven public demand. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land with natural areas for nature trails based on the Conceptual Nature Vision as well as other potential amenities.

Figure 4.3w
Mountain Biking Trails Vision



Mountain Biking Facilities Vision

- **Current Inventory.** The City inventory includes 9 parks with mountain biking trails/facilities. The County provides an additional 4 parks with mountain biking trails within 1 mile of the City.
- **Facilities LOS.** N/A.
- **SVS and Other Input.** Unpaved trails was one of the highest priority amenities in the SVS and across most of the input methods.
- **Access.** There are pockets of underserved areas around the City.

Recommendations

- The Vision recommends 7 additional parks with mountain biking trails with an Access LOS of 2 miles.
- Existing parks in the underserved areas should be evaluated for the feasibility of mountain biking trails based on proven public demand. Otherwise, there may be a need to acquire park land with areas for mountain biking trails based on the Conceptual Nature Vision as well as other potential amenities.

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Objective 3.5: Expand greenways.

As discussed previously, greenways are very important to Knoxville residents. In fact, Knoxville residents identified greenways as the second highest-priority facility need (after water fountain/ bottle filing stations) in the Statistically Valid Survey.

Greenways and paved trails also came up as a high priority consistently in other public engagement techniques such as public meetings, special events, focus group interviews, and elected official interviews. Additionally, 20% of respondents cited a lack of trail connectivity to parks as one of the main reasons that deter them from using City of Knoxville parks more often.

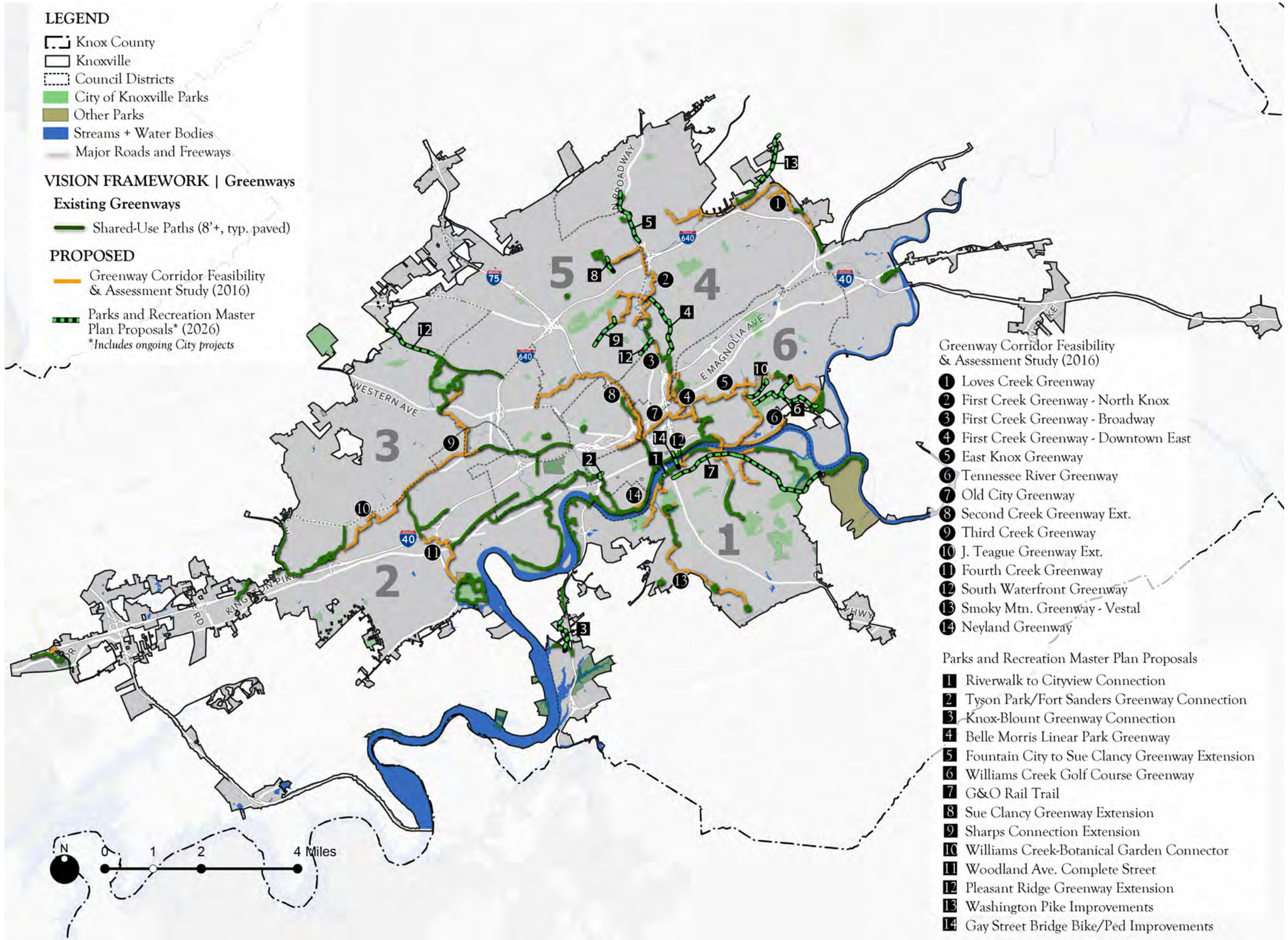
To address these needs and opportunities, and based on ideas provided by participants throughout the planning process, Figure 4.3x illustrates a greenways vision for the City of Knoxville. This vision builds on the City of Knoxville Greenway Corridor Feasibility & Assessment Study and considers connections identified in the City of Knoxville's Bicycle Facilities Plan Update.

- **Action 3.5.1 – Confirm and prioritize new greenway projects.** Further explore, confirm, and prioritize the implementation of new greenways.

  It will be important for the Integrated Capital Parks and Recreation Capital Projects Committee to review these projects, prioritize them, and present them to the public through a public engagement-based park site master planning process.

- **Action 3.5.2 – Develop plans with the community.** Develop community-based feasibility studies, conceptual master plans, and construction documents based on available capital and management funding.

Figure 4.3x
Greenways Vision



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Objective 3.6: Increase public art in parks.

Public art emerged as one of the highest priority needs in the needs assessment process. There is an opportunity for the City to integrate public art throughout the parks and recreation system including in parks, recreation facilities, indoor centers, and natural areas.

- **Action 3.6.1 –Develop a Public Art Master Plan.** Consider developing a Public Art Master Plan that explores integrating permanent, temporary, and performance art throughout the parks and recreation system.
- **Action 3.6.2 – Explore opportunities for public art in parks.** Work with the Public Arts Committee to explore opportunities to integrate permanent and temporary art throughout the parks and recreation system, including exploring a policy to allocate a percentage of capital expenditures to public art projects.

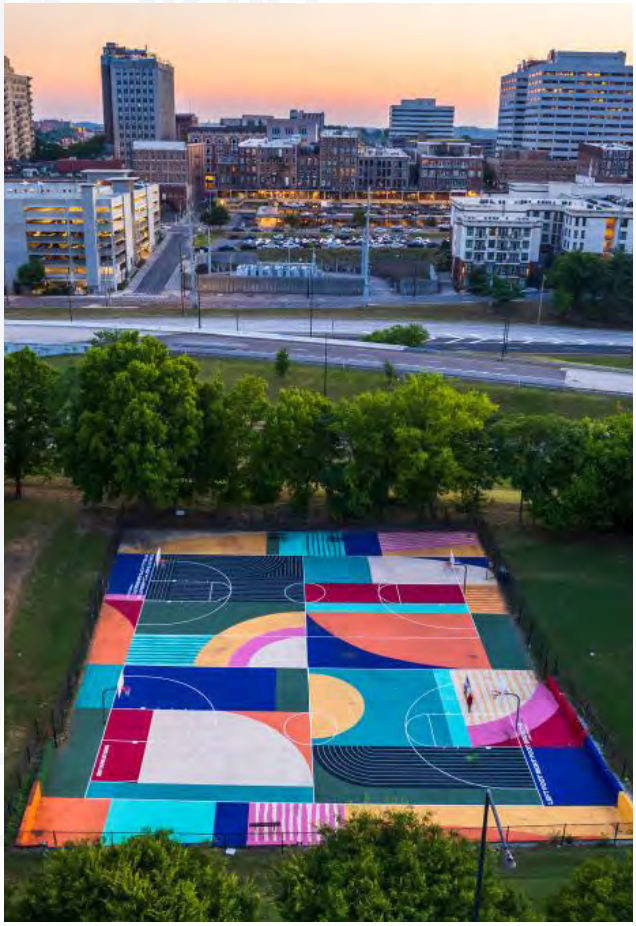
Programs

Objective 3.7: Grow program portfolio with a focus on teen programs, outdoor recreation programs, STEAM programming, and senior/ older adult programming.

While the Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department already manages a robust portfolio of recreational programs, there is an opportunity to, as the population increases, further grow these services to better meet community needs. Seeking opportunities to grow additional teen and outdoor recreation programs, STEAM programs, and senior programs that feature higher attention to issues of aging could broaden the impact of these programs across the community.

- **Action 3.7.1 – Discuss new programming with partners and staff.** Engage partners and staff in exploratory discussions regarding new program development on a quarterly basis.
- **Action 3.7.2 – Develop new programs.** Develop new and expanded programs starting in 2026 based on the priorities identified in this master plan and community input.

Examples of Public Art in Parks



Administration and Staffing

Objective 3.8: Grow staffing resources of the Parks and Recreation Department to improve service delivery of programming at parks, indoor centers, and recreation facilities.

The staffing resources of the Parks and Recreation Department are strained with a high reliance on part-time and seasonal employees for service delivery.

There are 19 Full Time Employee Equivalent (FTEs) and six (6) permanent part-time (PT) employees to operate a total of 14 facilities including two (2) senior centers, which equates to less than two (2) FTEs per facility.

Additionally, there is no single person to optimize coordination with Public Service that manages all maintenance for parks and facilities nor is there a certified playground inspector on staff.

Furthermore, existing program fees and employee compensation rates appear to be low in comparison to other providers. This has made it difficult for the Department to hire and maintain staff. Even just limited expansion of staffing resources could have a high impact on the ability to better serve the community with programs and services and improve maintenance of infrastructure and facilities.

- **Action 3.8.1 - Shift to FTE staffing model.** Explore shifting the staffing model of indoor centers and aquatic facilities to increase FTEs and reduce current reliance of PT/ Seasonal staff to operate these facilities for the public.
- **Action 3.8.2 - Hire needed staff.** Hire a Parks and Recreation Facilities Coordinator position to be a primary liaison with the Public Service and Engineering Departments, that also holds specialized certifications reflective of national best practices (certified playground inspector, etc.). Also hire a Safety and Training Coordinator and Marketing Coordinator.
- **Action 3.8.3 - Enhance Public Service Department staffing.** Evaluate and enhance staffing resources of the Public Service Department in divisions that oversee park and recreation site and facility maintenance to improve their capacity to meet modern demands and expectations.
- **Action 3.8.4 -Explore Outsourcing Opportunities.** Evaluate functions that an external vendor/partner could provide more effectively/efficiently than City FTEs.

Objective 3.9: Explore all possible strategies to increase funding for parks and recreation capital projects.

The City of Knoxville parks and recreation capital expenditures per capita over the last five years has been between $9.08 to $56.01 per capita. This amount is lower than the national median of $78.00 per capita per year for agencies with a similar population and population density as the City of Knoxville.

Considering the City's current low expenditure on parks and recreation capital projects, the Department should advocate for additional funding and pursue a variety of funding sources to implement the Vision.

- **Action 3.9.1 - Explore alternative funding sources.** Explore alternative funding sources including Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), sponsorships, grants, and others.
- **Action 3.9.2 - Explore dedicated funding sources.** Explore potential dedicated funding sources to fully resource the City's ability to provide and maintain high-quality park and recreation programs and facilities.

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Goal 4:

Collaborate to maximize environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Objective 4.1: Collaborate to successfully implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Successfully implementing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will require coordination and collaboration with multiple City Departments as well as external partners. The City should develop internal and external committees that meet at varying times throughout the year to maximize the collaborative implementation of the Plan.

- **Action 4.1.1 - Develop a City Capital Projects Committee.** The City should develop a City Capital Projects Committee to improve the coordination of project planning, design, and implementation of overall City capital projects, with parks, recreation, and greenway leaders well represented.

  The committee should review projects and prioritize parks and recreation projects yearly based on the prioritization criteria included in Section 5.2 - Phasing the Implementation of Play Knoxville.

  This committee should be comprised of representatives from various City Departments, including Urban Design and Development, Parks and Recreation, Public Service, and Engineering Departments.

- **Action 4.1.2 - Develop an integrated Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee.** The City should develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee to prioritize and implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

  The implementation should include, but not be limited to quarterly priorities identified and tracked in the areas of operations, capital planning, site and facility maintenance, recreation programming, and community engagement. The committee can also include a focus on identifying priorities that better integrate recreational amenities in non-park projects.

  This committee would primarily be comprised of parks and recreation staff, but include representatives from relevant City Departments such as Communications, Neighborhood Empowerment Operations, Special Events, Urban Design and Development, Public Service, Urban Wilderness.

  Additionally, this committee can schedule quarterly meetings with external partners to share updates and better coordinate projects across the City.

Ribbon Cutting of Gay Street Bridge Opening for Pedestrians and Cyclists

Source: Knoxville New Sentinel

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Objective 4.2: Collaboratively enhance the safety and security of parks and recreation facilities.

When asked what deters park users from visiting parks and recreation facilities more often, 20% of respondents of the Statistically Valid Survey said that they do not feel safe using parks and recreation facilities. This response rate is above the national average of 14%.

A follow-up park safety survey that further explored this topic found that the causes of feeling unsafe in parks included lack of lighting in the parks, park users that appear to be engaging in illicit activities vandalism, unrepaired facilities and amenities, and few people using parks.

The City is already implementing strategies to improve the feeling of safety in parks. These strategies include the PBA Park Patrol and designing and maintaining parks with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, while ultimately improving design standards to facilitate maintenance of facilities. There is an opportunity to expand on these strategies by, for example, investing in technology such as lighting and cameras in parks, increasing programming, and increasing staff presence in parks.

- **Action 4.2.1 – Enhance safety through design, maintenance, and technology.** Continue to enhance the design and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities to improve safety through inclusion of CPTED principles and improving design standards to facilitate maintenance of facilities. Invest in technology such as lighting, access control, and cameras in parks to improve safety in parks and recreation facilities.
- **Action 4.2.2 – Enhance safety through programming.** Activate parks through enhanced programming that address identified needs in the surrounding community and informed by the findings of the proposed Comprehensive Recreation Program Plan.
- **Action 4.2.3 – Enhance safety through staffing.** Increase staff presence in parks where possible and appropriate (in coordination with PBA) to enhance safety in parks.

Objective 4.3: Collaboratively address homelessness/ unhoused in parks.

The presence of homelessness/ unhoused individuals in parks was identified as the top reason park users reported feeling unsafe in the follow-up park safety survey. Additionally, many City Parks and Recreation Department Staff expressed concern about the behavior and in certain instances, trash that homeless/ unhoused leave in parks.

The City is in the process of exploring various strategies to address homeless/ unhoused in parks. These strategies include coordination with the Office of Housing Stability and the enforcement of the No-Trespass Policy and Rules of Contested Cases. There is an opportunity to continue to monitor the effectiveness of these strategies and expand on them as necessary.

- **Action 4.3.1 - Develop a detailed understanding of the challenges.** Build on the findings from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to develop a detailed understanding of the challenges residents and staff are facing with homelessness/ uhnouhsed in parks.
- **Action 4.3.2 – Provide staff with training.** Provide staff with appropriate training and resources to engage with homeless/ unhoused populations including developing resource cards that can be provided to homeless/ unhoused in parks and who to contact for assistance with homeless/ unhoused. Examples of training may include, but may not be limited to:
  - Partnership strategies for enforcing No-Trespass policy in coordination with Knoxville Police Department (KPD), PBA, and Office of Housing Stability.
  - Developing Bio-hazardous Trash Team with the equipment and training to remove hazardous trash from parks.
  - Working with partners to assist with appropriate programs and services to help with qualifying homeless/ unhoused populations.

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Objective 4.4: Explore opportunities for Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) to where appropriate, achieve mutually beneficial stormwater management and parks and recreation benefits.

City leaders identified stormwater management as one of the largest infrastructure challenges facing the City. The City is currently completing a Stormwater Management Master Plan that will inform improvements over the coming years. Parks systems can also help address site, local, and regional stormwater management needs. In fact, studies have found that using a Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) or "nature-based solutions" to address stormwater management versus a conventional gray infrastructure approach can reduce costs by upwards to 25%. There is an opportunity for the City to consider the role of the parks system as the Stormwater Management Master Plan is implemented.

- **Action 4.4.1 – Explore GSI solutions in projects.** Explore GSI strategies when studying site, local, and regional stormwater management solutions ranging from integrating GSI in parks to help address site and local stormwater management to developing regional detention strategies that also provide park experiences. Launch GSI pilot projects to provide an opportunity to test approaches, identify what works and refine strategies.
- **Action 4.4.2 – Standardized GSI.** Establish standardized processes for coordination and planning between agencies on GSI capital project planning, design, and maintenance.

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Example of Green Stormwater Infrastructure - University of Tennessee, Knoxville Stormwater Management Park

Source: Lose Design

Objective 4.5: Collaborate with partners to explore the intersectionality of parks and affordable housing.

When asked in the Statistically Valid Survey to identify the top five difficult social, economic, and environmental challenges facing Knoxville that were most important to households, affordable housing was number one.

There is an opportunity for the City to consider the how the parks system may be able to help with affordable housing challenges. Exploring this intersectionality provides three benefits: 1) it has the potential to lead to non-traditional partnerships that achieve multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits, 2) it has the potential to lead to non-traditional funding opportunities, and 3) it helps to educate the public of the power of parks to address complex and broad community health challenges and further position parks as critical infrastructure.

It is important to note that the City of Knoxville already has a robust set of strategies in place to help address the City's affordable housing challenges. These range from a ten year $50 million dollar affordable housing fund, housing programs that improve and construct affordable housing, to providing homebuyer assistance and repairing and rehabilitating properties to reduce the number of substandard rental and owner-occupied residential properties. However, the parks system may be able to expand on these opportunities.

- **Action 4.5.1 – Provide or reimagine parks and recreation near affordable housing.** Collaborate with the City of Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC) and other housing partners to maximize parks and recreation opportunities near and within existing and proposed affordable housing locations (such as playgrounds, which currently exist at many locations).
- **Action 4.5.2 – Promote integrated development of affordable housing with parks and recreation facilities.** Collaborate with City Departments, agencies, non-profit organizations, and developers to jointly develop affordable housing alongside greenspaces and recreation centers, and explore opportunities to redevelop underutilized and underperforming properties for integrated housing and parks.

Western Heights Destination Park and Arts & Culture Anchor Building in development

Source: wate.com

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Objective 4.6: Foster strategic partnerships that achieve mutually beneficial economic, environmental, and social benefits.

Strategic partnerships are critical to the successful delivery of programs and services. Like many Parks and Recreation Departments across the country, the Department does not have to do "everything for everyone." Rather, the Department can focus on Core Program areas that would be identified through the Comprehensive Program Plan.

Accordingly, the Department should evaluate existing partnerships and agreements to ensure that they continue to provide value to the community and the City and pursue new partners that are mutually beneficial to address the varied needs of the City of Knoxville.

- **Action 4.6.1** - **Complete a strategic partnerships and agreements evaluation process**. Review existing agreements and contracts with partner organizations to ensure that programs and services delivered are effective, provide fair and just opportunities to all partners, and can be enforced.
- **Action 4.6.2 – Develop strategic partnerships to enhance community benefits and parks and recreation opportunities.** Pursue and strengthen collaborations with mutually beneficial organizations such as non-profit park stewardship organizations, sports tourism groups, travel sports organizations, and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) to maximize parks and recreation opportunities that deliver mutually beneficial social, environmental, and economic benefits.

Splash Pad in Historic Market Square enhanced through a Public Private Partnership (PPP)

Source: Visit Knoxville

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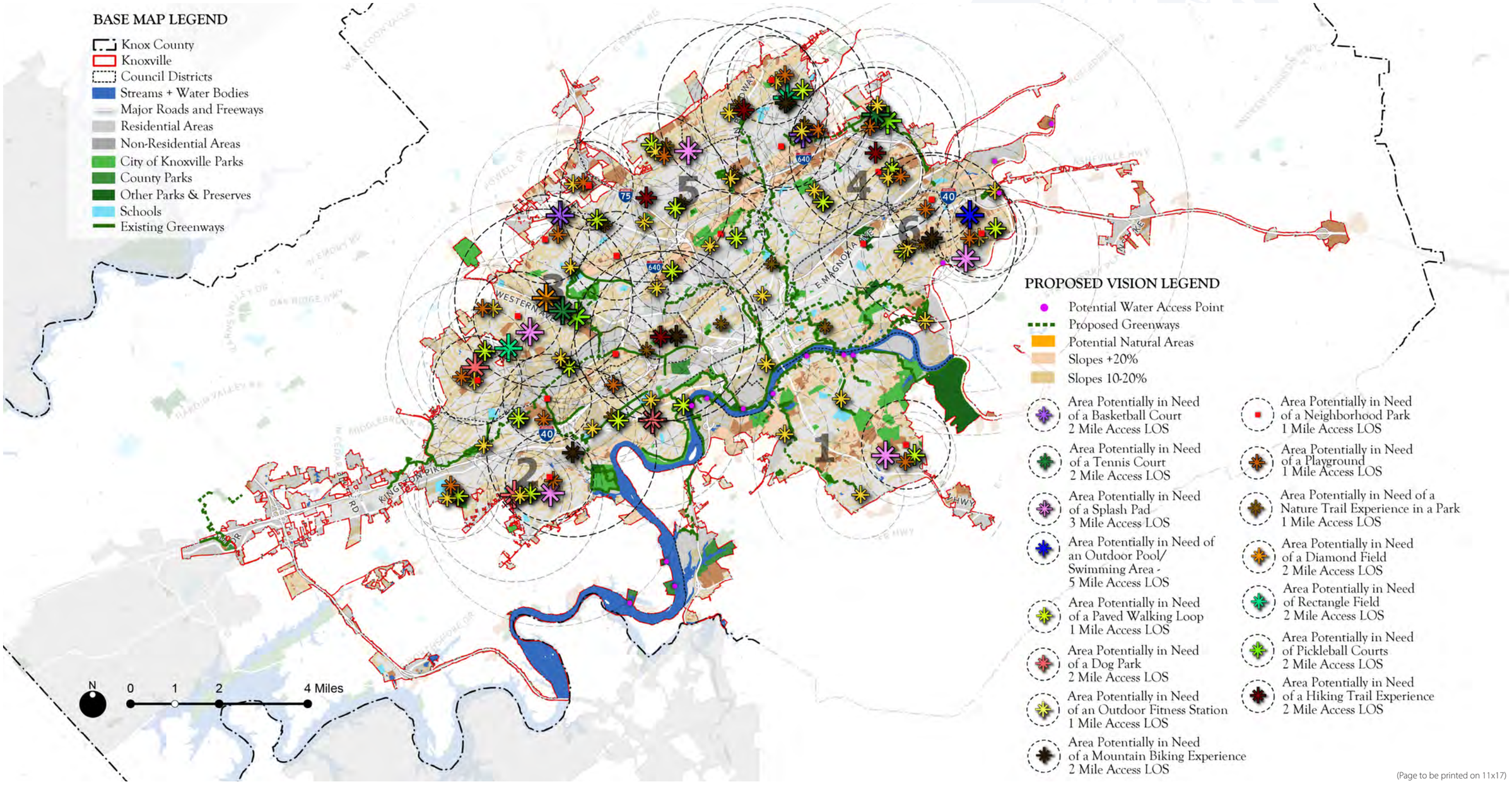
4.4 an integrated vision

At its core, this Parks and Recreation System Vision is about providing meaningful, fair, just, and impartial benefits for all residents of the City of Knoxville. The implementation of the City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation System Vision will lead to beautiful parks within a short walk and bicycle ride from everyone's home. It will mean a variety of recreation and parks facilities across the City; natural areas for residents and visitors to immerse themselves in nature; and indoor centers designed to support the Department's programs. Most importantly, it is a commitment to a high quality of life for everyone in the City of Knoxville. With this Vision, the Department is poised to create vibrant, innovative, healthy, and connected places by harnessing the "power of parks."

Figure 4.4a
Integrated Parks and Recreation System Vision



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5 implementation strategy

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Introduction

The implementation strategy for the City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Master Plan is comprised of two interrelated parts:

- **Funding Options** - The projected capacity to pay for capital projects and staffing needs;
- **Phasing Strategy** - Prioritization strategy to inform how parks, recreation facility, and greenway capital projects could be implemented over the next 10-years and beyond.

The following sections focus on these two interrelated parts:

1 Funding PLAY KNOXVILLE

2 Phasing the Implementation of PLAY KNOXVILLE

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5.1 funding Play Knoxville

Rooted in Reality

The ability to implement Play Knoxville's Vision is directly related to the amount of funding that will be available over the next 10-years and beyond.

Like many parks and recreation system visions of cities in the United States, the cost to implement the complete Vision as described in Chapter 4 is projected to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Seldom do cities have this amount of funding available. The opportunity lies in implementing the visions over time using a variety of funding sources and strategies. This is particularly important considering the diversity of project types and the range of needs. The primary forms of fundings typically are:

- Dedicated Funding Sources
- Partnerships
- Grants

Dedicated Funding Sources

The City of Knoxville currently funds parks and recreation capital improvement projects and operations and maintenance predominantly through the City's General Fund. The Consultant Team met with the City of Knoxville Finance Department to understand the amount of funding that may be available over the next 10-years to implement the Vision.

Based on historic and potential future available funding, there may be a combined total of between $5,200,000 - $6,100,000 annually available for Parks and Recreation Capital Projects, including support to partner agencies. An estimated $5,100,000 - $6,000,000 is expected to come from the General Fund with an additional $100,000 from focused grants. This suggests a total of about $57,500,000 for parks and recreation improvement projects in the next 10-years. Figure 5.1a illustrates the projected annual and 10-year projections.

Figure 5.1a
Projected Capital Funding

Funding Options	Projected Annual Amount	Projected 10-Year Amount
General Fund Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)	$ 5.1 M - $ 6 M	$ 56.5 M
Grants CIP	$ 100K	$ 1 M
Total	**$ 5.2 M - $ 6.1 M**	**$ 57.5 M**

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For Operations and Maintenance, there may be between $10,600,000 - $12,000,000 per year available over the next 10-years. Figure 5.1b illustrates the projected annual projection.

Figure 5.1b
Projected Operations and Maintenance Funding

Funding Options	Projected Annual Amount
General Fund	$ 9.5 M - $ 10 M
Special Revenue	$ 1.1 M - $ 2 M
Total	**$ 10.6 M - $ 12 M**

The City may also explore other dedicated funding sources to fund the implementation of the parks and recreation system Vision. Following is a list of these other sources.

- **Park Impact Fees** - one-time charges assessed on new development in order to help pay for new or expanded public facilities and/or the impact development may have on public facilities.
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** - a geographically targeted economic development tool that captures the increase in property taxes, and sometimes other taxes, resulting from new development, and diverts that revenue to subsidize that development.
- **Sales Tax (Surtax)** - consumption tax imposed by the government on the sale of goods and services. A sales tax is levied at the point of sale, collected by the retailer, and passed on to the local government.
- **Hotel-Motel Tax** - paid on lodging at hotels, motels, inns, hostels, and similar places. Users pay these taxes when they rent a room, bed, or other space. A portion of this revenue could be dedicated to overall parks, recreation, and connectivity projects or even specific park, recreation, or greenway/trail projects that are associated with increasing tourism in the community.
- **Excise Tax** - a legislated tax on specific goods or services at the time they are purchased. Goods subject to excise taxes could be fuel, tobacco, and alcohol, among others.
- **General Obligation Bonds** - a municipal debt security backed by the "full faith and credit" of the governmental agency, meaning the promise to repay from its general taxing power, not specific project revenues, funding public projects like schools or parks, requiring voter approval, and repaid with taxes (often property tax). This is the most popular form of funding for the implementation of parks and recreation projects.
- **Revenue Bonds** - a category of municipal bond supported by the revenue from a specific project, such as a parking deck, toll, or local stadium. Revenue bonds that finance income-producing projects are thus secured by a specified revenue source. Typically, revenue bonds can be issued by any government agency or fund that is managed in the manner of a business, such as entities having both operating revenues and expenses.

Partnerships

Partnerships can be a powerful strategy to implement projects. They can spread capital costs for park projects or operations and maintenance costs for programs and special event among multiple stakeholders. Typical partnerships include schools, hospitals, non-profits, faith-based organizations, and public-private partnerships.

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Grants

Grants allow municipalities to leverage public municipal funding dollars. The challenge with grants is that they tend to be competitive, meaning other municipalities are also competing for those some grant dollars. This requires the City to complete thoughtful and comprehensive applications in order to be competitive. Additionally, most large grants require a match, meaning the city would have to include funds from their capital budget to obtain the grant.

In certain instances, grants can be "stacked" or combined to draw funding from several sources. The idea of "Grant Stacking" refers to grouping grants of varying levels (federal, state, and local) to support one project. Careful selection of grants can result in one grant providing the matching funds requirement for another grant. This process can address acquisition and development in phases to best meet a project's purpose and schedule.

Figure 5.1c includes a list of grants totaling over $50 Million dollars that are available for parks, recreation, and trail projects in the State of Tennessee along with the amounts and the types of projects that grants will fund.

Figure 5.1d provides additional information on the available grants including grant amounts, match requirements, eligible items, and deadlines. The City should consider hiring or contracting with additional grant writers to pursue applicable grants.

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Figure 5.1c
List of Available Grants and the Types of Projects the Grants will Fund

Types of Projects that Grants will Fund	Available Grants														
	Creative Placemaking Grants	AARP Community Challenge	Arbor Day Foundation Grants	Bank of America Community Resilience Grant	Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	Community Champions Playground Grant	Community Development Block Grant	Community Tree Planting Grant	Environmental Education Grant	Federal Historic Preservation Fund	Healthy Built Environmental Grants	Historic Development Grant	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)	Land and Water Conservation Fund Program
Trails		●										●			●
Land Acquisition															●
Environmental Education / Interpretive Facilities										●					●
Active Recreational Elements (e.g., racquetball, soccer, volleyball, playgrounds, dog park, etc.)							●	●				●			●
Stormwater						●								●	●
Picnic Facilities								●							●
Cultural Facilities (e.g., amphitheater, art & gathering space, museums)	●														●
Support Facilities (e.g., restrooms, parking, benches, lighting, showers)								●							●
Landscaping			●	●				●	●						●
Water Access (e.g., piers, observation decks)					●										●
Streetscape/Sidewalks															
Historic/ Heritage	●										●		●		
Structure Hardening/ Elevation						●		●						●	

Figure 5.1c (Continued)
List of Available Grants and the Types of Projects the Grants will Fund

Types of Projects that Grants will Fund	Available Grants													
	Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) Program	Multimodal Access Grant	Nonpoint Source Pollution (Section 319)	Our Town Grant	Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program	Recreational Trails Program	Safe Streets For All (SS4A)	State Water Infrastructure Grants (SWIG)	Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund	Tourism Enhancement Grant	Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)	Transportation Planning Grant (TPG)	Urban & Community Forestry Grants	Urban Waters Restoration
Trails	●	●			●	●					●	●		
Land Acquisition					●									
Environmental Education / Interpretive Facilities	●				●									●
Active Recreational Elements (e.g., racquetball, soccer, volleyball, playgrounds, dog park, etc.)					●					●				
Stormwater					●			●						●
Picnic Facilities	●		●		●									
Cultural Facilities (e.g., amphitheater, art & gathering space, museums)					●					●				
Support Facilities (e.g., restrooms, parking, benches, lighting, showers)	●				●	●				●				
Landscaping	●		●		●			●					●	●
Water Access (e.g., piers, observation decks)	●				●									
Streetscape/Sidewalks		●									●	●		
Historic/ Heritage				●			●		●					
Structure Hardening/ Elevation														

Figure 5.1d
Grants List

Grant Opportunities					
Funding Program	**Funding Source**	**Grant Amount**	**Match Requirement**	**Types of Eligible Elements**	**Anticipated Deadline**
Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (LWCF)	Federal	$500,000*	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, Lighting, Landscaping	April
Urban Waters Restoration Program	Federal	$35,000*	100%	Urban Wildlife Corridors, Green Infrastructure, Stormwater	April
Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program	Federal	$15,000,000	100%	Land Acquisition and development for Outdoor Recreation Facilities	TBD
Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF)	State	$500,000+	100%	Trails, Parking, Landscaping and Other Support Facilities	April
Community Tree Planting Grant	State	$20,000	100%	Tree Planting	September
Arbor Day Foundation Grants	Private Org.	$25,000-$300,000	0%	Tree Planting	Rolling
Bank of America Community Resilience Grant	Private Org.	$50,000	0%	Landscaping, Stormwater, LID Elements	March
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	Federal*	$500,000+	20%	Construction of Trails and Support Facilities	April
AARP Community Challenge Grant	Private Org.	$50,000*	100%	Park Improvements, Mobility, Public Health	April
Healthy Built Environments Grant	State	$80,000*	0%	Greenways, Trails	TBD
Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant	Federal	$400,000*	40%	Stormwater/Water Quality Projects	December
Our Town Grant	Federal	$100,000	100%	Innovative Public Art Projects	July
CDBG	Federal	$100,000*	0%	Open Space & Recreational Facilities	TBD

*Approximate Grant Award Amount

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Figure 5.1d (Continued)
Grants List

Grant Opportunities					
Funding Program	**Funding Source**	**Grant Amount**	**Match Requirement**	**Types of Eligible Elements**	**Anticipated Deadline**
Urban & Community Forestry Grants (UCF)	Federal	$40,000	100%	Tree Plans/Programs, and Planting	September
Community Champions Playground Grant	Private Org.	$75,000*	100%	Playground Equipment	October
Creative Placemaking Grants	State	$30,000	0%	Arts and Cultural in Natural, Ecological, Recreational Assets	January
Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)	Federal	$2,000,000+	20%	Pedestrian & Bicycle Trails and Greenways	October
BUILD Grant Funding	Federal	$5,000,000*	20%	Non-motorized Transportation Elements, Safe Streets	March
Safe Streets for All (SSFA)	Federal	$1,000,000*	20%	Planning and Construction of Traffic Safety Elements including Multi-modal Elements	June
Transportation Planning Grant	Federal	$2,500,000	10%	Bike & Pedestrian Facilities	October
Multimodal Access Grant	State	$1,125,000	10%	Multi-Use Paths	July
State Water Infrastructure Grants	State	$500,000	100%	Green infrastructure, Low Impact Development (LID)	January
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	Federal	$1,000,000*	25%	Structure Hardening, Flood Protection	November
Historic Development Grant	State	$500,000	100%	Restoration Historic Structures	November
Environmental Education Grants	Federal	$91,000	25%	Educational Elements, Signage, Nature Trails, Internet Applications	April
Federal Historic Preservation	Federal	$50,000	40%	Planning Projects for Historic Resources	February

*Approximate Grant Award Amount

Figure 5.1d (Continued)
Grants List

Grant Opportunities					
Funding Program	**Funding Source**	**Grant Amount**	**Match Requirement**	**Types of Eligible Elements**	**Anticipated Deadline**
Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund	State	$500,000*	0%	Historic Property Acquisition	Rolling
Tourism Enhancement Grant	State	$100,000	Varies	Cultural Facilities, Performance Space, Attractions	August
National Leadership Grants for Museums	Federal	$500,000	100%	Nature Centers, Museums, Botanical Gardens, Children's Museums	December
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	Federal	$750,000*	25%	Structure Hardening, Flood Protection	TBD
Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program	Federal	$500,000*	25%	Construction, Renovation, and Maintenance of Public and Private Boating Infrastructure Tie-up Facilities	September

*Approximate Grant Award Amount

The integration of stormwater and other emergency management features into projects such as a recreation center or a trail can significantly increase the grant funding opportunities available to the City. Examples of design features that would introduce additional grant opportunities would include the construction of parking areas to act as drainage basins for severe weather events, stormwater retention ponds that alleviate localized flooding as part of park or trail project, and the hardening of an indoor facility such as a recreation center to act as a shelter and/or public outreach center before and after a disaster.

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5.2 phasing the implementation of Play Knoxville

Given the focused amount of funding that may be available to implement the Vision, prioritizing projects will be important.

City Staff and the Consultant Team collaboratively developed a prioritization strategy to inform how parks and recreation capital projects could be implemented over the next 10-years. Two steps were used to prioritize projects:

- **Step 1 - Funding Allocation Targets -** City-wide spending targets for Project Funding Categories based on the findings from the Needs and Priorities Assessment.

- **Step 2 - Prioritization Criteria -** Indicators used to score and prioritize projects within the Project Funding Categories based on the findings from the Context Analysis, Needs and Priorities Assessment, Vision, industry best practices, and staff input.

Step 1 - Funding Allocation Targets

Parks and recreation system capital projects can be organized into a series of project categories:

- **Repair existing parks, recreation facilities, and greenways:**
  - **Repair existing parks and recreation facilities** - Capital projects related to repairing and replacing aging and deteriorating parks and recreation facilities, amenities, and spaces such as replacing playgrounds, improving lighting, enhancing access to facilities within parks, enhancing landscaping and hardscaping, etc.
  - **Repair greenways** - Capital projects related to repairing and replacing aging and deteriorating greenways such as replacing hardscaping, landscaping, signage and wayfinding, lighting, etc. where appropriate.
- **Transform existing parks and recreation facilities** - Capital projects related to adding new parks and recreation facilities and amenities in existing parks to address identified parks and recreation needs in the community. For example, projects may include replacing underutilized diamond fields with multi-purpose fields, building new walking loops, sports courts, dog parks, nature trails, etc. in existing parks.
- **Create new parks, recreation facilities, and greenways:**
  - **Create new parks and recreation facilities -** Capital projects related to developing new parks and recreation facilities in areas that currently do not have parks.
  - **Create new greenways -** Capital projects related to developing new greenways.
- **Acquiring park land** - The acquisition of land that would be used for parks, recreation facilities, and greenways.

Based on the findings from the question in the Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) where respondents were asked to allocate $100 into capital improvement categories, as well discussions with City leadership, funding allocation targets were established for the project categories discussed previously. Figure 5.2a illustrates these percentage funding allocation targets per project category.

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These percentage funding allocation targets are proposed to be applied to the amount of funding that may be available to implement parks, recreation facilities, and greenway capital projects over the next 10-years. This ensures that each type of project receives some amount of funding over the next 10-years rather than all of the funding going to a certain type of project. Figure 5.2a also illustrates how the percentage funding allocation targets translate into funding amounts over the next 10-years based on the potential available funding discussed in Section 5.1 - Funding Play Knoxville.

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Figure 5.2a
Funding Allocation Targets

Primary Project Type	Funding Allocation Target Percentage	10-Year Funding Allocation Target Amounts
Repair Existing Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Greenways	40%	~ $ 23 M
Transform Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities	25%	~ $ 14.4 M
Create New Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Greenways	25%	~ $ 14.4 M
Acquiring New Park Land	10%	~ $ 5.7 M
Total	**100%**	**$ 57.5 M**

Step 2 - Prioritization Criteria

City Staff and the Consultant Team worked together to establish prioritization criteria for each project type, guiding the ranking of capital projects within their respective categories. The prioritization criteria that were developed were based on the Project Goals discussed in Chapter 4 - Vision and further informed by the findings from the Chapter 2 - Context Analysis, Chapter 3 - Needs and Priorities Assessment, industry best practices, and staff input. Figures 5.2b - 5.2g identify these prioritization criteria.

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Figure 5.2b
Prioritization Criteria for Repair Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR REPAIR EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES				
Goals	**Criteria**	**Criteria Description**	**Points**	**Metric**
REVITALIZE	Facility Condition	Does the project address a facility with significant disrepair and capital improvement?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Priority Facility Need	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Maintenance Importance Satisfaction Activity Rating	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Maintenance Importance-Satisfaction Activity Rating?	1,3,5	Medium, High, Very High
	Historical Investment	Has the park received investment in the last 10-years?	1,3,5	High, Medium, Low
	Socio-Economic Opportunity Area	Is the project located in a socio-economic opportunity area?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
CONNECT	Accessibility	Does the project present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
GROW	Facilities LOS	Does the project address a Facilities LOS Gap?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Previously Proposed Project	Was the project proposed in a previous planning, study, or strategic document?	1,5	No, Yes
COLLABORATE	Funding Opportunity	Does the project present an opportunity for funding partnerships?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	1,3,5	High Impact, Medium, Minimal
	Community Health	Does the project help improve community health opportunities that are important to the community (e.g., affordable housing, preservation of natural areas, unhoused population, community safety, access to transportation)?	0,1,3,5	No, Indirect, Direct, Multiple

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Figure 5.2c
Prioritization Criteria for Repair Existing Greenways Facilities

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR REPAIR EXISTING GREENWAY FACILITIES				
Goals	**Criteria**	**Criteria Description**	**Points**	**Metric**
REVITALIZE	Greenway Condition	What is the condition of the greenway where the project is located?	1,2,3,4,5	Excellent - Poor
	Maintenance Importance Satisfaction Activity Rating	Does the greenway project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Maintenance Importance-Satisfaction Activity Rating?	1,3,5	Medium, High, Very High
	Historical Investment	Has the greenway received investment in the last 10-years?	1,3,5	High, Medium, Low
	Socio-Economic Opportunity Area	Is the greenway project located in a socio-economic opportunity area?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
CONNECT	Connectivity	Does the greenway project enhance connectivity to an existing trail, park, or school?	0,3,5	No, Yes, Multiple Destinations
GROW	Access LOS	How does the greenway project address an Access LOS Gap?	0,3,5	No Gap, Partial Gap, Complete Gap
	Previously Proposed Project	Was the greenway project proposed in a previous planning, study, or strategic document?	1,5	No, Yes
COLLABORATE	Funding Opportunity	Does the greenway project present an opportunity for funding partnerships?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the greenway project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	1,3,5	High Impact, Medium, Minimal
	Community Health	Does the greenway project help improve community health opportunities that are important to the community (e.g., affordable housing, preservation of natural areas, unhoused population, community safety, access to transportation)?	0,1,3,5	No, Indirect, Direct, Multiple

Figure 5.2d
Prioritization Criteria for Transform Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR TRANSFORM EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES				
Goals	**Criteria**	**Criteria Description**	**Points**	**Metric**
REVITALIZE	Park Condition	What is the condition of the park where the project is located?	1,2,3,4,5	Excellent - Poor
	Priority Facility Need	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Maintenance Importance Satisfaction Activity Rating?	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Maintenance Importance-Satisfaction Activity Rating?	1,3,5	Medium, High, Very High
	Historical Investment	Has the park received investment in the last 10-years?	1,3,5	High, Medium, Low
	Socio-Economic Opportunity Area	Is the project located in a socio-economic opportunity area?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
CONNECT	Accessibility	Does the project present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
GROW	Facilities LOS	Does the project address a Facilities LOS Gap?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Access LOS	How does the project address an Access LOS Gap?	0,3,5	No Gap, Partial Gap, Complete Gap
	Previously Proposed Project	Was the project proposed in a previous planning, study, or strategic document?	1,5	No, Yes
COLLABORATE	Funding Opportunity	Does the project present an opportunity for funding partnerships?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	1,3,5	High Impact, Medium, Minimal
	Community Health	Does the project help improve community health opportunities that are important to the community (e.g., affordable housing, preservation of natural areas, unhoused population, community safety, access to transportation)?	0,1,3,5	No, Indirect, Direct, Multiple

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Figure 5.2e
Prioritization Criteria for Create New Parks and Recreation Facilities

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR CREATE NEW PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES				
Goals	**Criteria**	**Criteria Description**	**Points**	**Metric**
REVITALIZE	Priority Facility Need	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Priority Program Need	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) program need?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Socio-Economic Opportunity Area	Is the project located in a socio-economic opportunity area?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
CONNECT	Accessibility	Does the project present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
GROW	Facilities LOS	Does the project address a Facilities LOS Gap?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Access LOS	How does the project address an Access LOS Gap?	0,3,5	No Gap, Partial Gap, Complete Gap
	Previously Proposed Project	Was the project proposed in a previous planning, study, or strategic document?	1,5	No, Yes
COLLABORATE	Funding Opportunity	Does the project present an opportunity for funding partnerships?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	1,3,5	High Impact, Medium, Minimal
	Community Health	Does the project help improve community health opportunities that are important to the community (e.g., affordable housing, preservation of natural areas, unhoused population, community safety, access to transportation)?	0,1,3,5	No, Indirect, Direct, Multiple

Figure 5.2f
Prioritization Criteria for Create New Greenway Connectivity

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR CREATE NEW GREENWAY CONNECTIVITY				
Goals	**Criteria**	**Criteria Description**	**Points**	**Metric**
REVITALIZE	Socio-Economic Opportunity Area	Is the greenway project located in a socio-economic opportunity area?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
CONNECT	Connectivity	Does the greenway project enhance connectivity to an existing trail, park, or school?	0,3,5	No, Yes, Multiple Destinations
GROW	Access LOS	How does the greenway project address an Access LOS Gap?	0,3,5	No Gap, Partial Gap, Complete Gap
	Previously Proposed Project	Was the greenway project proposed in a previous planning, study, or strategic document?	1,5	No, Yes
COLLABORATE	Funding Opportunity	Does the greenway project present an opportunity for funding partnerships?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the greenway project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	1,3,5	High Impact, Medium, Minimal
	Community Health	Does the greenway project help improve community health opportunities that are important to the community (e.g., affordable housing, preservation of natural areas, unhoused population, community safety, access to transportation)?	0,1,3,5	No, Indirect, Direct, Multiple

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Figure 5.2g
Prioritization Criteria for Acquiring Park Land

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR ACQUIRING PARK LAND				
Goals	**Criteria**	**Criteria Description**	**Points**	**Metric**
REVITALIZE	Priority Facility Need	Does the land acquisition address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) facility need?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Priority Program Need	Does the land acquisition address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) program need?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Socio-Economic Opportunity Area	Is the land acquisition located in a socio-economic opportunity area?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
CONNECT	Accessibility	Does the land acquisition present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
GROW	Facilities LOS	Does the land acquisition project address a Facilities LOS Gap?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Access LOS	How does the land acquisition address a project in an Access LOS Gap?	0,3,5	No Gap, Partial Gap, Complete Gap
	Previously Proposed Project	Does the land acquisition address a project proposed in a previous planning, study, or strategic document?	1,5	No, Yes
COLLABORATE	Funding Opportunity	Does the land acquisition present an opportunity for funding partnerships?	1,3,5	Low, Medium, High
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the land acquisition impact to staffing and funding resources?	1,3,5	High Impact, Medium, Minimal
	Community Health	Does the land acquisition facilitate a project that helps address community health opportunities that are important to the community (e.g., affordable housing, preservation of natural areas, unhoused population, community safety, access to transportation)?	0,1,3,5	No, Indirect, Direct, Multiple

Actions Timeline and Partners

The Implementation Table (5.2h) on the following pages collects all the Goals, Objectives, and Actions and assigns them a timeline, based on available resources and discussions with the project team. It also suggests potential Action Leads and identifies Partners who may be able to assist in implementing Actions; additional information should be added to these columns as discussions occur and agreements are formed. This table is intended to assist project managers, including the Master Plan Project Committees, by providing a guide to be regularly updated as progress is made and new opportunities arise.

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Figure 5.2h
Goals, Objectives, Action Steps and Timeline for Implementation

Goal	Objective	Action	Timeline	Suggested Lead	Potential Partners
Revitalize existing natural areas, parks, recreation facilities, greenways, and programs.	1.1: Rejuvenate and protect existing natural areas.	Action 1.1.1 – Ensure Long-Term Forest Regeneration.	*Ongoing*		Trees Knoxville; Urban Forestry (Public Service); Sustainability; Knox Co.
		Action 1.1.2 – Conduct Species Inventories.	*Short Term*	Trees Knoxville	Urban Forestry (Public Service)
		Action 1.1.3 - Manage Water Quality.	*Ongoing*		UDD; Engineering; Sustainability; Knox Co.
		Action 1.1.4 – Incorporate Green Strategies.	*Mid Term*		UDD; Engineering; Trees Knoxville
		Action 1.1.5 - Establish Monitoring Protocols.	*Long Term*	Trees Knoxville	Urban Forestry (Public Service)
	1.2: Improve the condition of existing parks, recreation facilities, and greenways based on identified needs and the use of modern and technologically advanced amenities to improve operational efficiencies.	Action 1.2.1 – Establish an Asset Management Plan.	*Short Term*		
		Action 1.2.2 – Expedite implementation.	*Short Term*		
		Action 1.2.3 – Confirm and prioritize the list of improvements.	*Short Term*		
		Action 1.2.4 – Develop plans with the community.	*Short Term*		
	1.3: Improve the condition of existing indoor centers.	Action 1.3.1 - Complete an Indoor Center Action Plan.	*Short Term*		
		Action 1.3.2 - Complete Indoor Center Improvement Plans.	*Mid Term*		
	1.4: Re-energize recreational programming in a manner that meets current and emerging community needs, explores financially sustainable operational models, and is properly aligned with the capacity of the Department.	Action 1.4.1 – Develop a Comprehensive Recreation Program Plan.	*Short Term*		
		Action 1.4.2 – Complete cost recovery plans for programs and business plans for Indoor Centers.	*Short Term*		
		Action 1.4.3 – Establish continuous engagement opportunities.	*Short Term*		
	1.5: Enhance maintenance of natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities.	Action 1.5.1 - Pursue training best management practices.	*Mid Term*		
		Action 1.5.2 – Develop a Maintenance Management Plan.	*Short Term*		
		Action 1.5.3 - Update staffing needs.	*Ongoing*		
		Action 1.5.4 - Develop maintenance zones.	*Mid Term*		
		Action 1.5.5 - Update existing maintenance agreements.	*Mid Term*		
Connect the community to the parks and recreation system.	2.1: Provide high-quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect the parks and recreation system to neighborhoods, schools, and activity centers.	Action 2.1.1 – Continue implementing greenway improvement projects.	*Ongoing*	UDD	
		Action 2.1.2 - Advocate for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that connect to parks.	*Ongoing*		UDD; Engineering
		Action 2.1.3 – Increase trails in parks.	*Short Term*		UDD; Engineering
	2.2: Leverage greenways and trails to provide park experiences.	Action 2.2.1 – Create park experiences along greenways and trails.	*Mid Term*		
	2.3: Enhance multi-modal access, including micro-mobility and transit to connect park users to natural areas, parks, recreation facilities, and programs.	Action 2.3.1 - Expand multi-modal options to enhance access to parks.	*Mid Term*		KAT
		Action 2.3.2 - Provide transit service for community-wide special events and programs.	*Ongoing*	KAT	
	2.4: Increase the diversity of programming and the location where programming is provided.	Action 2.4.1 - Identify potential programs to be provided in other locations or through mobile recreation options.	*Mid Term*		
		Action 2.4.2 - Identify potential program partnerships.	*Mid Term*		

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Figure 5.2h (continued)
Goals, Objectives, Action Steps and Timeline for Implementation

Goal	Objective	Action	Timeline	Suggested Lead	Potential Partners
Connect the community to the parks and recreation system (cont.)	2.5: Use a wide array of traditional and digital tools to reach diverse demographics and bring awareness to parks, programs, and services.	Action 2.5.1 – Enhance Digital Engagement and Outreach.	*Mid Term*		
		Action 2.5.2 - Develop a comprehensive park signage strategy.	*Mid Term*		
Grow the parks and recreation system to keep pace with the City's growth.	3.1: Increase access to nature experiences.	Action 3.1.1 – Confirm and prioritize protection of natural areas.	*Short Term*		Trees Knoxville; Urban Forestry (Public Service); Sustainability; Knox Co.
		Action 3.1.2 – Formalize the protection and acquisition of lands.	*Mid Term*		
		Action 3.1.3 - Develop plans with the community.	*Mid Term*		
	3.2: Increase access to water.	Action 3.2.1 – Confirm and prioritize water access opportunities.	*Short Term*		UDD; Engineering; Sustainability; Knox Co.
		Action 3.2.2 – Formalize the protection and acquisition of lands that maximize opportunities for increase water access.	*Mid Term*		
		Action 3.2.3 – Develop water access plans with the community.	*Mid Term*		
	3.3: Provide residents with access to a meaningful greenspace within a 10-minute walk in urban areas and 10-minute bike ride in suburban areas.	Action 3.3.1 – Confirm and prioritize Neighborhood Park Vision.	*Short Term*		
		Action 3.3.2 – Develop plans with the community.	*Mid Term*		
	3.4: Increase parks and recreation facilities throughout the City.	Action 3.4.1 – Confirm and prioritize parks and recreation facility projects.	*Short Term*		
		Action 3.4.2 – Develop plans with the community.	*Mid Term*		
	3.5: Expand greenways.	Action 3.5.1 – Confirm and prioritize new greenway projects.	*Ongoing*		
		Action 3.5.2 – Develop plans with the community.	*Ongoing*		
	3.6: Increase public art in parks.	Action 3.6.1 –Develop a Public Art Master Plan.	*Mid Term*		
		Action 3.6.2 – Explore opportunities for public art in parks.	*Long Term*		
	3.7: Grow program portfolio with a focus on teen programs, outdoor recreation programs, STEAM programming, and senior/older adult programming.	Action 3.7.1 – Discuss new programming with partners and staff.	*Ongoing*		
		Action 3.7.2 – Develop new programs.	*Mid Term*		
	3.8: Grow staffing resources of the Parks and Recreation Department to improve service delivery of programming at parks, indoor centers, and recreation facilities.	Action 3.8.1 - Shift to FTE staffing model.	*Short Term*		
		Action 3.8.2 - Hire needed staff.	*Short Term*		
		Action 3.8.3 - Enhance Public Service Department staffing.	*Short Term*		
		Action 3.8.4 - Explore Outsourcing Opportunities.	*Short Term*		
	3.9: Explore all possible strategies to increase funding for parks and recreation capital projects.	Action 3.9.1 - Explore alternative funding sources.	*Ongoing*		
		Action 3.9.2 - Explore dedicated funding sources.	*Ongoing*		

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Figure 5.2h (continued)
Goals, Objectives, Action Steps and Timeline for Implementation

Goal	Objective	Action	Timeline	Suggested Lead	Potential Partners
Collaborate to maximize environmental, social, and economic benefits.	4.1: Collaborate to successfully implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	Action 4.1.1 - Develop a City Capital Projects Committee.	*Short Term*		UDD; Engineering
		Action 4.1.2 - Develop an integrated Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee.	*Short Term*		
	4.2: Collaboratively enhance the safety and security of parks and recreation facilities.	Action 4.2.1 – Enhance safety through design, maintenance, and technology.	*Short Term*		UDD; Engineering, KPD
		Action 4.2.2 – Enhance safety through programming.	*Short Term*		
		Action 4.2.3 – Enhance safety through staffing.	*Short Term*		
	4.3: Collaboratively address homelessness/ unhoused in parks.	Action 4.3.1 - Develop a detailed understanding of the challenges.	*Short Term*		
		Action 4.3.2 – Provide staff with training.	*Short Term*		
	4.4: Explore opportunities for Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) to where appropriate, achieve mutually beneficial stormwater management and parks and recreation benefits.	Action 4.4.1 – Explore GSI solutions in projects.	*Mid Term*		UDD; Engineering
		Action 4.4.2 – Standardized GSI.	*Mid Term*		UDD; Engineering
	4.5: Collaborate with partners to explore the intersectionality of parks and affordable housing.	Action 4.5.1 – Provide or reimagine parks and recreation near affordable housing.	*Mid Term*		KCDC
		Action 4.5.2 – Promote integrated development of affordable housing with parks and recreation facilities.	*Long Term*		KCDC
	4.6: Foster strategic partnerships that achieve mutually beneficial economic, environmental, and social benefits.	Action 4.6.1 - Complete a strategic partnerships and agreements evaluation process.	*Ongoing*		
		Action 4.6.2 – Develop strategic partnerships to enhance community benefits and parks and recreation opportunities.	*Ongoing*		

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Moving Forward

As discussed in Chapter 4 - Vision, successfully implementing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will require coordination and collaboration with multiple City Departments as well as external partners. Two committees will ensure the implementation of the Plan:

- **City Capital Projects Committee.** The City Capital Projects Committee will meet frequently to coordinate project planning, design, and implementation of parks, recreation, and greenway capital projects.

  Comprised of representatives from various City Departments, including Urban Design and Development, Parks and Recreation, Public Service, and Engineering Departments, the first task of this committee will be to review proposed capital projects and prioritize projects based on the prioritization criteria included in Section 5.2 - Phasing the Implementation of Play Knoxville. It will be important to review proposed capital projects yearly to ensure they are addressing emerging needs and priorities.

- **Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee.** A second committee, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee, will also meet frequently to prioritize, coordinate, and implement areas of operations, site and facility maintenance, recreation programming, and community engagement.

  Comprised primarily of parks and recreation staff, the committee will also include representatives from relevant City Departments such as Communications, Neighborhood Empowerment, Operations, Special Events, Urban Design and Development, and Public Service.

  Additionally, the committee will schedule quarterly meetings with external partners to share updates and better coordinate projects across the City.

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CITY OF KNOXVILLE