APPENDIX B: PARK AND TRAIL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The Park and Trail Planning and Development Guidelines provide direction to City staff, developers and citizens for planning, designing and renewing public parks in Longmont. These are intended to address site selection, design program, and other aspects of park planning, and are complementary to the City of Longmont Park Design Guidelines, as well as the Design Standards and Construction Specifications, which provide standards for materials, products and construction.

The Park Planning and Development Guidelines apply to all proposed public parks within the City, as well as renovations to existing parks and updates to existing master plans. The guidelines consist of four parts:

1. **Park Purpose:** Provides a summary of park characteristics for selecting new sites or improving existing parks.

2. **Park Design Principles:** Outlines how sites should be planned and developed to achieve the utmost efficiency, sustainability and performance.

3. **Park Facility Compatibility Matrix:** Indicates which park facilities are compatible for each park type.

4. **Park Facility Guidelines:** Outlines where and how a variety of specific park facilities should be located, designed and developed when adding to park and recreation sites.

1. PARK PURPOSE

	Neighborhood Parks	Community Parks	District Parks
Purpose	Provides space for close-to-home recreation activities.	Provides space for concentrations of sport facilities, such as athletic field complexes, and major indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, such as pools and recreation centers.	Protects and provides access to and enjoyment of important natural and cultural resources.
Intended Function	• Provides a place to play and access to the outdoors. • Contributes to neighborhood identity. • Provides green space within neighborhoods. • Provides space for family and small group gatherings.	• Supports competitive sports. • Provides space for recreation programming. • Provides a variety of recreation experiences for all age groups. • Provides for fitness opportunities, including walking and running. • Provides opportunities for small and large scale social and cultural activities. • Contributes to community identity. • Functions as a neighborhood park where local access is limited	• Provides opportunities for experiencing nature and low-impact, nature-based outdoor recreation (including nature play areas). • Provides walking, biking and hiking opportunities. • Protects valuable natural and cultural resources and wildlife habitat. • Contributes to community identity.
Size	5-20 acres	40-100 acres	20 acres and greater depending on unique characteristics of site.
Desired Travel Distance	½-mile, using the street and trail network (a distance based on a 5-10 minute walk)	1 to 1 ½ mile, using the street and trail network area to balance access and distribution across the community	Located based on opportunity

	Neighborhood Parks	Community Parks	District Parks
Orientation	Centralized in the neighborhood the park is intended to serve. Should be fronted on all sides by streets and/or public areas with no rear residential lots adjacent to the park, and in close proximity to school facilities to share functions where possible. Vehicle access shall be from a collector or arterial street.	Sited in non-residential areas where possible. Sited to minimize light, glare and noise impacts on adjacent residential development. Vehicle access is from a collector or arterial street.	Encompasses or abuts the specific feature the park is intended to preserve or highlight.

2. PARK DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1. **Design for people.**
   a. **Public Process:** Continue to engage community members of all ages and areas of the City in meaningful participation in the park planning and design process.
   b. Incorporate universal design principles to improve accessibility where possible. Universal design seeks to maximize the access and usability of a site for all ages and abilities rather than simply removing barriers to defined disabilities.

2. **Design for flexibility and adaptability.** Create simple and/or flexible use areas and reserve open areas to accommodate change, so that parks and public spaces retain their relevancy and appeal over time.

3. **Preserve and enhance the park's characteristic landscape.** Use design to capitalize on existing environmental conditions, re-create past environmental features, and teach visitors about the local or regional environment.

4. **Design for maintenance and programming.** Great parks can't last without maintenance. Public spaces aren't well used or memorable without well thought out programming. Involve maintenance and programming staff at each stage of park design to ensure that creative design is also efficient and meets maintenance needs. Utilize standardized materials where possible for efficiency of maintenance.

5. **Use site design and art to enhance identity.** Promote local identity through the selection and design of a park theme with related park features unique to the site. Include works of art that emphasize cultural, visual and conceptual

diversity. Use public art to create visible landmarks and artistic reference points. Develop identifiable design elements for each site or park cluster.

6. **Design for sustainability and low impact development.** Consider integrating renewable or efficient energy infrastructure in the design of parks and facilities. Make use of sustainable materials and green building/landscape techniques, such as using recycled or sustainably harvested lumber when constructing park facilities, waste management during construction , use of raw water systems when feastible, and utilize storm water pre-treatment prior to leaving the site. Adequately insulate buildings to minimize operations costs.

7. **Use lighting thoughtfully and sensitively.** Design sites and facilities to maximize use of natural light. Consider lighting to extend use in the evening hours and to increase safety, but only in contextually appropriate locations. Design lighting systems and select fixtures to minimize light pollution and energy use. An additional consideration for fixtures is the long-term durability and ease of replacement. Utilize natural light within restrooms and structures. Buffer lighting from off-site spill.

8. **Preserve and enhance the urban tree canopy in parks.** Include trees within parks to provide to help build a continuous canopy between street trees, greenways and trails and open spaces. Protect mature trees for their importance to the natural environment, user comfort and the aesthetic value of park sites. Design should include a diverse planting plan with hardy materials selected to meet long term urban forestry goals.

9. **Choose plants & materials wisely.** Provide irrigated turf only where it contributes to recreation opportunities. Consider lawn substitutes which require less fertilizers, water consumption and mowing than traditional lawns. Incorporate drought-tolerant and native species in landscape plans, particularly on or adjacent to Open Space lands, greenways and riparian corridors. Xeriscaping should be the basis of all park landscape design. Utilize the pricipals of CPTED (Community Policing Through Environmental Design) to minimize future safety issues. Select building materials for long-term durability and ease of maintenance.

10. **Design for compatibility within neighborhoods.** Provide green space and vegetation along park edges. Site parks along Collector streets to minimize traffic disruption to residents. Avoid fronting lots onto parks to allow streets to provide additional buffering, enjoyment of the park view by all, and eliminate the need for on-site parking lots.

3. PARK FACILITY COMPATIBILITY MATRIX

In chapter 3 of the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan the recommendations under the Goal 2: Complete - identify the recommended park type (or combination) for each future park development area on the Park System Concept Map. The following table should be referenced when designing improvements or site renewals and compatibility should be evaluated based on this table and the purpose of the site. In the case of community or district parks expected to serve local park needs, there is no need for a fixed line in the site but the mix and orientation of facilities should be carefully considered against both park type guidelines.

Facility Type	Neighborhood Parks	Community Parks	District Parks
Fields and Courts			
Multi-purpose field	●	●	○
Ball field	●	●	○
Field with lighting	○	●	○
Sport court (tennis, basketball, volleyball)	●	●	○
Sport court with lighting	○	●	○
Sports complexes	○	●	○
Open turf area	●	●	●
Playgrounds and Gathering Areas			
Small-scale playground	●	●	○
Nature Themed/Natural Play Features	●	●	●
Large-scale playground or thematic play area	●	●	○
Small shelter (1-20 users)	●	●	●
Large shelter (20+ users)	○	●	●
Outdoor performance space or amphitheater	○	●	●
Aquatics and Water Access			
Activity pool	●	●	○
Swimming pool	○	●	○
Splash pad	●	●	○
Swim beach	○	●	●
Boat launch/dock	○	●	●
Fishing pier/fishing	●	●	●
Aquatics center	○	●	○
Gardens			
Arboreta/decorative/demonstration garden	●	●	●
Community garden	●	●	●

Facility Type	Neighborhood Parks	Community Parks	District Parks
Outdoor Specialized Facilities			
Roller hockey rink	●	●	○
Wheel park (skate, bike, etc)	●	●	○
Dog off-leash area	●	●	○
Outdoor fitness equipment	●	●	○
Climbing structure	●	●	○
Bike park or skills area	●	●	○
Disc golf course	●	●	○
Horseshoe pit	●	●	○
Indoor Facilities			
Recreation center	○	●	○
Environmental education center	○	●	●
Restroom	●	●	●
Trails and Trailheads			
Internal pathway	●	●	●
Greenway connection or trailhead	●	●	●
Parking			
On-street parking	●	●	○
Off-street parking	○	●	●
For all other facilities see Compatibility of Unlisted Facilities below			

● = Compatible: facilities are appropriate for the classification. ○ = Not Suitable: facilities that are not compatible and should not be considered.

Facilities that are considered suitable for a specific park classification may or may not be included in the park design depending on the site conditions, space, funding, community interest and need for that facility type in the area.

Compatibility of Unlisted Facilities

In addition to the facilities listed in the matrix above, community members may also identify the need for a recreation facility or project idea that has yet-to-be identified. In general, unlisted facilities should first be reviewed for compatibility with the purpose and intended function of the park type. Unlisted facilities should be sited in parks based on the anticipated user base, scale of needed resources (development maintenance and operations costs) and impacts on adjoining users and neighbors.

Facilities that are intended to serve individual neighborhoods, that have minimal to moderate resource needs and minimal impacts on adjacent uses should generally be considered for neighborhood parks. Features that are one-of-a-kind, resource

intensive and intended to draw users throughout the community should generally be considered for community parks. Features that align with a cultural or natural resource focus and are generally more passive in nature should generally be considered for district parks. Facilities that are likely to create a higher degree of impacts such as a high degree of traffic, noise and disruption to other park users should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4. Park Facility Guidelines

General Guidelines

- **Create compatible and context sensitive environments.** Locate park features which will generate more noise or light, in context-appropriate locations. For example, provide an adequate buffer between athletic fields and neighboring homes.
- **Provide centers of activity.** Create a sense of enclosure when designing centers of activity. For example, provide a centralized and formal access point, with a perimeter pathway and landscaping to contain formal play areas, athletic fields and courts.
- **Design for open space and informal play.** Encourage site programming and placement of recreation facilities that conserves space, creating concentrations of activity while also allowing open space for future expansion, informal play or for future alternative uses.
- **Maximize safety and visibility**. Locate amenities such as playground equipment, wheel parks, and basketball courts proximate to adjacent streets and highly visible areas with high visitation. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles guide facility location and lines of sight to improve visibility, promote use, and enhance user safety.

Provide adequate buffering. Allow for adequate buffers between use areas and within activity areas to allow for future modification. For example, tournaments will occasionally draw many spectators. Avoid impacts to other nearby facilities through a large enough congregation area.

Fields and Courts

Siting

Athletic fields and sport courts should be located on the most level portions of the site and be crowned where possible to minimize gradient across the length of the field. Ideally, fields and courts should be oriented in a north-south direction to reduce sun glare. Fields should be grouped to accommodate tournaments and maximize maintenance and programming efficiency. Open turf areas can be located adjacent to other recreation facilities to encourage informal play or other low impact uses such as observation.

- Court complexes and competitive level athletic fields should be included in community parks. Typically cities are more constrained by the availability of land than the demand for athletic fields. With this in mind, the limit on new athletic fields in the Longmont system should be the cost of ongoing operation and maintenance of fields.

- The most efficient and distributed addition of capacity would include:
    1. completion of phased park sites,
    2. Upgrades, including artificial turf and lights to increase capacity,
    3. New fields at future park development areas.

Access

Fields and courts should be easily and directly accessible from park entrances and parking areas to reduce traffic and disruption with other park uses.

General Design
- Individual courts (pairs of courts for tennis) should be included in neighborhood parks for casual play.
- Ball fields and tennis courts should have perimeter fencing and should be grouped to accommodate multiple games, league play and tournaments.
- Multi-purpose fields should be designed to accommodate multiple sports and should be contained outside the infield area of ball fields.
- In neighborhood parks, multi-use fields should be limited to practice level, not competitive level, in keeping with the local nature of the park setting.
- Lighted facilities should only be provided in community parks as necessary to extend playing time.
- Because concentrations of fields and courts can attract large groups, these facilities will require a greater need for parking. Parking should be scaled to fit the intended character and purpose of the park it is located within, while accommodating the field use. For example, a lower intensity multi-use field at a neighborhood park should be served by the basic parking suggestions outlined below. Multiple athletic fields at a community park will require larger parking areas, overflow parking areas or shared parking lots to accommodate large groups as well as other park users. On average, 20 additional spaces (above other park needs) per field should be required at competitive facilities.
- Parking needs are a function of the number of users per field (full size soccer fields can support as many as four youth games or 40 users) estimated number of spectators and the timing and turnover of games/practices. However, parking to accommodate field turn-over (when as many as twice the normal number of users are on site while one game or practice ends and another begins) should not be included at the expense of park space.
- Fields and courts should include shaded areas, trash and recycling, seating and drinking fountains. Athletic fields should have close access to restrooms.
- Sports groups should be provided areas to stage storage facilities for equipment. Agreements should be formalized that identify design standards for such facilities that make them compatible with the park, their responsibility to maintain these lockers and limit City liability for loss.

Playgrounds and Gathering Areas

Siting

Playgrounds and gathering areas are key features in all parks that are serving local access needs, including all neighborhood parks and community parks as well as district parks located in park access gap areas including:

- o Izaak Walton Park,
- o Jim Hamm Nature Area (serving gap area N4),
- o Golden Ponds (serving gap area C1), and
- o Future District Park P5 (serving gap area S5).

Playgrounds and gathering areas should occupy prominent locations near the main pedestrian entrance to a park and restroom facilities. At least one gathering area should be adjacent to the playground with additional perimeter seating and shade. Shelters to accommodate reserved picnic use should be located close to vehicular access to facilitate bringing food and supplies for larger gatherings.

Access

Playgrounds and play environments should be conveniently located in parks and have direct access to park entrances and parking areas. In playgrounds intended for younger children, place them so they are easily monitored by parents or guardians and limit the number of exits. A buffer should be provided between play areas and streets or parking lots.

Gathering areas should be located close to access points

General Design

- Play areas should fit the scale of the parks in which they are located, and should take inspiration from the site or neighborhood character.
- Ensure that the character of play equipment reflects the character of the park. For example, consider brightly colored, prominent and attention-getting equipment in highly developed parks, but not in a more naturalized district park.
- Provide a range of exercise, coordination and confidence building opportunities including opportunities for free play, creating environments that invite children to explore their environment and construct their own play scenarios. This can include play shelters and niches, sand areas, natural play elements, etc.
- Playgrounds can be constructed using a variety of materials, but must include resilient surfacing and a sufficient separation between preschool and school age features and keep children safe from traffic and conflicting uses.
- Playgrounds can include a wide variety of play experiences that do not involve traditional structures. Facilities can incorporate thematic areas with interpretive, imaginative and educational elements as well as natural play areas that provide creative play and exploration.
- Seating and environments that welcome guardians into play areas should be provided to encourage supervision.
- Shade structures and/or shade trees should be incorporated into the design.

- Nearby shelter structures should be provided in appropriate community and neighborhood parks, to accommodate birthday parties and family picnics centered on the play area.
- Drinking water and restrooms should be located within easy walking distance.
    - Allow adequate expansion area in playgrounds so that curbing and surfacing doesn't need to change with future equipment upgrades.
    - Provide adequate buffering or screening from adjacent play areas. For instance, care should be taken to protect playground participants from fly balls of nearby ballfields.

Aquatics & Water Access

Siting

Aquatics opportunities can be located in a variety of park types depending on the size of the feature. Splash pads have the potential to be small enough for neighborhood parks, scaled up to community park scale or included as part of a larger play area. Water play, such as a splash pad should be central to the play area. Activity pools, outdoor and indoor pools should be limited to community parks where supporting facilities such as parking and restrooms can be shared with other uses. Opportunities for water access (such as river, lake or reservoir)are limited and should be maximized where it exists.

Access

Aquatics and water access, even at a small scale are typically opportunities that users will travel to from beyond walking distance. Swim beaches, boat launches, swimming pools and aquatics centers should have access from arterial streets and provide parking adequate to average in-season use. The high cost to provide aquatics opportunities limits the number of facilities the system can support and sites should be distributed around the city with special attention paid to neighborhoods with less mobility.

General Design

- Design will vary greatly based on the type of facility.
- Due to the limited number of sites the system will support, accessibility (in terms of ability) is important to incorporate at the highest practical level at all sites.
- A variety of opportunities across the system and within larger aquatics facilities will maximize the interest value of the system as a whole. Providing variety to support competition as well as many types of water play will also increase the financial return on the community's investment in high cost facilities.

Gardens (arboreta, demonstration, decorative, community, etc.)

Siting

Gardens should be located on land that is level in a location that receives a minimum of six hours of sunlight during growing season and has access to adequate water supply. These sites should be separated from more active park uses such as athletic fields and wheel parks.

- Community gardens should be sited based on specific neighborhood requests, no minimum or maximum number of sites is recommended. Gardens should be expanded on a pilot project basis but only to locations where it is possible for them to be a permanent feature.
- Decorative gardens or arboreta should only be placed in community parks and only where the more intensive maintenance can be provided. These gardens would be ideal partnership areas with trained volunteers to assist with maintenance.
- Interpretive or educational gardens are appropriate for District Parks or community parks.

Access

Gardens should be directly accessible to site or park entrances and the street, and allow for machinery or equipment access when necessary. Arboreta should have access for machinery or equipment.

General Design

- Involve the community in the planning, construction and operation of community gardens to minimize the need for City resources. Seek partnerships for management of community gardens where they prove successful.
- Analyze the suitability of existing conditions when siting gardens and arboreta such as soil quality, available sunlight, water and utility availability, and presence of other supporting infrastructure.
- Garden sites should have secure storage areas for tools and equipment for use by garden plot holders and/or maintenance staff and volunteers.
- Different scales of gardens are possible from small urban gardens (such as Alta Park) to larger plot models that might fit well in an agricultural setting. Typically each site should include at least 20 garden plots, which do not need to be a fixed size.
- Refuse, recycling and composting areas should be provided. These should be located away from entrances and public streets and screened from view.
- Fencing the perimeter of community gardens will reduce vandalism and theft.
- Provide separate water taps for community garden use to maximize opportunities for management agreements.

Landscaping

Siting

Landscaping should be appropriate for the microclimate of each specific area. Consider specific use areas and the impact to the landscaping in selection of plant materials.

- Xeriscaping should be required for all public areas. Modeling water conservation is a compatible goal for public parks and greenways.
- CPTED (Community Policing Through Environmental Design) should be a focus of landscape design. Visibility should be maintained along pathways and to key sites within the park or trail.
- Use native plants exclusively along trails and habitat areas unless specifically allowed otherwise. Include hardy adapted species in parks to enhance the plant palate. Use specific turf types tolerant of intensive use such as in sports fields.

Access

Limit access to specific landscape areas where needed.

- Protect wetlands and sensitive habitats through incorporating taller grasses or woody species that discourage public use.
- Edible landscape should be used where appropriate either as wildlife species or for public consumption. Provide adequate access for those areas suitable for public harvesting.

General Design

- Analyze the suitability of existing conditions when designing landscapes such as soil texture and type, available sunlight, water and adjacency of nearby facilities.
- Use native grasses in buffer areas and to buffer sensitive habitats. These provide not only wildlife benefit but also reduce water consumption.
- Consider maintenance needs for specific landscape materials and limit those that are maintenance intensive such as floral displays or non-hardy plants for the Colorado climate.
- Include native edible landscape materials in habitat areas to support wildlife. Include non-native fruit bearing trees only in areas away from walkways and facilities (to eliminate fruit drop maintenance) but to encourage public stewardship of these areas.
- Elevate the canopy of trees and place tall shrubs away from trails and use areas to enhance visibility.

Outdoor Specialized Facilities

Siting
Due to the specialized nature of these facilities, siting will vary based on anticipated impacts and facility size. Smaller facilities, including outdoor fitness equipment and horseshoe pits, have minimal impacts to other park users and can be located in many locations and most parks. Other facilities, including roller hockey rinks and wheel parks can attract larger crowds and require buffering from other uses. These types of facilities should be provided in highly visible, active locations of parks where there is high user traffic. Dog off-leash areas require areas of sufficient size to support their intended use and can often (but not always) be sited in undeveloped areas.

Additional facility ideas generated during the planning analysis and public input include:
- Bike park: could include skills area or pump track
- Outdoor adventure facilities: zip line, climbing features or ropes course
- Senior playgrounds or outdoor fitness equipment

Access
Specialized facilities can be located away from off-street parking areas but should be connected to park entrances and parking areas with a direct and accessible route.

General Design
- Locate specialized facilities that generate noise and traffic near other active uses such as athletic fields to avoid impacts to quieter park users.
- For specialized facilities that attract viewers and non-participants, designs should include areas for seating and viewing, while also considering safety.
- For active use facilities such as wheel parks and bike parks, the design should provide a range of features to allow for different ability levels, providing places for beginners to feel comfortable, while offering challenges for more advanced users. Smaller parks might be limited to a specific skill level.
- An off-leash area should be at least one acre in size, be fenced with a double-gated entry, have adequate parking (not necessarily close to or specifically for the off-leash area), and include amenities such as dog waste stations, water, benches, and trash cans. The site should also be safe, not isolated, and noise impacts on neighbors should be considered. In some cases, adequate physical separation from other activity areas can substitute for fencing (such as the dog beach at Union Reservoir), signage should clearly indicate the boundaries of such an area. Surfacing choices should vary based on the size of the park, small sites (less than 2 acres) could use crushed rock or wood mulch while larger sites can use turf. In either case the perimeter of the park should be mulch or crushed rock to create a walking/running path and accommodate heavier wear, and ideally include at least some turf. Utilize surfacing materials that are sensitive to dog foot pads and also low maintenance.

- Enlist local users and user groups to help design specialized facilities such as wheel parks, disc golf courses and bike courses to ensure they meet user needs.
- Many specialized facilities can be located in areas where other, more traditional park facilities cannot be located. For example bike courses can be configured in a range of settings, from small areas with steep or varied topography, to narrow corridors with limited potential for other recreational opportunities. Disc golf courses can be located in areas with varied topography and under trees. Care should be taken to limit conflicts between uses such as pedestrians and cyclists, or trail users with disc golf. Signage to identify potential discs in the air, or for cyclists entering the trail helps mitigate points of conflict.

Indoor Facilities

Siting
Recreation centers and large, indoor specialize recreation buildings should only be placed in community parks. These facilities should be located for visibility and connected to the on-street and greenway trail network. Environmental education centers should be placed for visibility and visual or physical access to featured natural resources. While restrooms are appropriate for all park categories, the appropriate scale of restrooms changes with the park size, features and service area.
- Neighborhood Parks: screened portable restroom or single unisex restroom
- Community Parks: multiple restroom facility types scaled to serve the focus points of activity in the park such as sport complexes or key facilities
- District Parks: One or more restrooms as appropriate for the anticipated regular visitation.

Access
Access to recreation centers and environmental education centers will be a mix of multi-modal use. Vehicular access should be from an arterial street. Non-motorized access should include sidewalk or trail connections. Restrooms should be sited to maximize the ease of access from locations where people gather and spend longer amounts of time within the park, such as near playgrounds, picnic areas and athletic fields. Restrooms should have easy access for maintenance staff including vehicles.

General Design
- Where portable restrooms are used as an alternative to permanent restrooms, provide durable and attractive screening as an anchor point and to improve park aesthetics and reduce vandalism.
- Restrooms in neighborhood and district parks should be limited to single-occupant units.
- Restrooms should be integrated into park facilities where available (restroom/concession buildings, recreation centers or other buildings)

- All season restrooms should be included, as maintenance budget and allows, one to each community or district park for those parks with four-season use. All season restrooms should also be considered for trail and trailhead serving facilities, recognizing their all-season use.
- In major recreation facilities and at outdoor aquatics facilities, where changing may be required, include family restrooms.
- Restroom facilities should continue to be paired with drinking fountains to take advantage of the water supply.
- Buildings should incorporate natural lighting to minimize on-going energy use.
- Energy efficiency should be provided through use of low energy consuming fixtures, good insulation and alternative energy source (where reasonable).
- Durability should be included in design to minimize on going maintenance needs. Use of masonry and steel should be promoted.
- Anticipate future regulatory changes to ADA and other public access requirements through design that provides ample space for future modification.

Trails and Trailheads

Siting

Trails and internal pathways can be provided in all park types and should avoid steep topography and unnecessary grade changes and meandering. Primary trailheads should be provided at formal entrances to trails and greenways, such as primary greenways. Secondary trailheads (without parking but providing some information) should be provided for trail connections such as street intersections.

- Greenway trail development will be guided by the Open Space and Trails Master Plan, Multi-modal Transportation Plan, and with the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan emphasizing the major network of recreation connections including on-street connections that bridge the gap between greenway trails and bike routes.
- Due to development along the waterways of the community, greenway trails are often in close proximity to sensitive natural environments. Reasonable effort should be made to buffer riverbanks and other sensitive areas from the trail while maintaining a pleasant and inviting trail experience.
- Connectivity to parks, schools, residential areas and other high use areas (such as recreation centers) should be made where possible.

Access

Trails and internal pathways should connect to park entrances and parking areas. Trailheads should be provided at greenway entrances and street intersections.

General Design

- Major trailheads (those intended for vehicular access) should include off-street parking, restrooms, a drinking fountain, trash/recycling collection, picnic areas and appropriate signage/directories.
- Secondary trailheads (intended for pedestrian access) should provide appropriate signage/maps/directories.
- Park sites with trail connections should be designed to also serve as trailheads.
- Measured loop walking paths should be provided in most parks, designed so that walkers and joggers can have a mostly uninterrupted route for exercise with physical route markers, informational signage or online tools to allow users to track their distances.
- Provide supporting amenities that enhance user experiences, such as directional, informational and interpretive signage, mileage markers, benches (at approximately ¼ mile increments), trash/recycling receptacles (where users will congregate), bicycle repair stations, dog waste stations (at entry areas), water fountains, kiosks, viewing blinds, boardwalks and outdoor exercise equipment.
- Trail development in natural areas should balance public access needs with the protection of natural resources. In some cases, design treatments such as raised boardwalks, fencing and signage can reduce unwanted encroachment into sensitive landscapes.
- Trails should be designed for full accessibility and with materials that match park character to the extent practicable. For example, district park and natural areas may be better suited to crusher fines pathways than to a concrete trail.
- Specialized recreation trails that offer fun and variety should be considered for inclusion in parks where practicable. Narrow and undulating natural surface trails are preferred by mountain bikers, trail runners and hikers. Wide, mostly level trails are preferred by runners and walkers alike. Design should discourage social trail development.
- Consider lighting in dark corridors or areas where there is limited visibility from surrounding uses to increase use and safety. Pathway lighting may not be appropriate in corridors outside of the urban areas of the community or district park/open space areas that close 1 hour after dusk; but should be included in underpasses and at trailhead parking lots.
- Comprehensive wayfinding signage should be provided on all trails and routes, with route maps and mileage information to inform users and improve connectivity to other greenways, bikeways and trails. You are Here notations should be included to orient trail users.
- Apply best practices and principles to design for safety such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and defensible space theory to improve actual and perceived safety.
  - Offsetting trails from dense vegetation;
  - Landscape management to reduce hiding areas and increase visibility;
  - Create long sight-lines and avoid blind corners.

Parking

Siting

Parking is appropriate for all park types. On-street parking is preferred for neighborhood parks. Off-street parking should be provided at community parks, district parks and trailheads to accommodate people traveling from a distance and minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

Access

- On-street parking should be available on two street faces where possible, with the park pathway system connecting to the street sidewalks.
- Off-street parking should be located convenient to activity areas without impeding pedestrian and bicycle circulation and access.
- Off-street parking should be placed in close proximity to the access street to minimize on-going maintenance costs for long driveways.

General Design

- Parking should be sized appropriately for the park size and uses provided. It should take up the least amount of space possible within park sites of all types, maximizing space for the park functions visitors arrive to use, however impacts outside of the site should be avoided. A parking study should be done with the design to ensure parking needs are accommodated.
- Parking lots should only be added to neighborhood parks that do not have room for at least 20 spaces of on-street parking..
- At larger sites, consider the entire site and the typical seasons of use for facilities such as athletic fields to maximize all parking on the site before adding to serve a specific area. Parking studies should identify seasons of use, maximum number of participants and spectators for each sports use area, and additional parking for other park users not engaged in active sports activities. Provide a reasonable number of spaces for closely scheduled games, but do not over accommodate this type of scheduling.
- Plan to manage infrequent peak demand such as tournaments and community events, through agreements with off-site parking alternatives, carpooling and shuttle programs.

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