

# 2009-2014 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

November 2008



Prepared By:



In Association With:



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- 2.0 Delphi Committee Report**
- 3.0 Developing A Recreation Center - NRPA**

**(Will be on file at the Park District Office)**

# executive summary

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## Master Plan Overview

Design Perspectives, Inc. in association with Strategic Management Alliance, LLC was commissioned to prepare a master plan update for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District. The Park District's last master plan document was prepared in-house with limited consultant assistance in 2002. The previous master plan provided the Park District basic direction, but this update will have a greater breadth via a comprehensive planning approach. The final document will create a strong sense of direction with a new visionary outlook for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District. Throughout the course of this project, we consistently heard a desire to dramatically improve the agency beyond the norm. The agency has made strides in improving the organization, but it is our hope for the next five years to take big steps in three primary areas of administration, capital construction and recreational programming.

A total of eight vision statements were generated early on in the process were as follows:

**1. Be Bold for the Future!** Let's build an outstanding park district for the present and future.

**2. Increase Staff Support.** Add increases across the board.

**3. Understand the Need of the Residents.** Look at all walks of life from youth, special needs, seniors, athletics, etc.

**4. Invest in Technology.** Keep updating and expanding ways to make our jobs more efficient.

**5. Be green in all Aspects.** Look at eco-friendly ways to improve the park district.

**6. Set Budgets to Reflect Direction.** There is a need to have budgets be in line with district direction.

**7. Develop Policies and Procedures.** They need to be clear and updated.

**8. Transportation.** The movement of people in all capacities (Bike, car, bus, etc.) to events and programs is important for improved programming.

In taking a lead from the vision statements and significant findings from the community needs assessment, several key recommendations for this plan include;

- Build better community relationships.
- Re-organize roles and responsibilities of park district staff with emphasis in the recreation department.
- Develop better policies and procedures.
- Increase funding through tax increases.
- Plan for large scale capital projects to increase recreation opportunities for the future.
- Implement small to medium size capital improvement project immediately to show plan commitment.

## executive summary

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- Increase marketing presence within community.

The plan needs to gain critical momentum in the first year to be truly effective. In closing, the Park District has done an admirable job with the limited resources that it has been given. Some of these limitations were self imposed however due to a highly conservative decision making process. Limited capital dollars have renovated very little except for the pool, but the one of the primary objectives of building a community center have not advanced. A proper community center with true community partners would be a successful endeavor. However, it is essential that the right mixtures of program elements are identified to be truly successful. This master plan will provide the political cover to elevate the District and restore community confidence in the Park District's mission of providing quality recreation opportunities for the residents of the city of Rochelle and the township of Flagg.

### **The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board of Commissioners:**

The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District is composed of seven members, each who is elected for a 6 year term. The terms are staggered. The support and vision of the park board has assured preparation and implementation of the Master Plan. Currently, the Board is made up of the following members:

Al Rogers-President

Kathy Marchesi-Vice President

Kim Bear-Treasurer

Steve Hudson-Secretary

Roger Bunger-Commissioner

Terry Dickow-Commissioner

Neil Swanson-Commissioner

### **Administrative Staff:**

Mr. Stephen Liezert, Executive Director

Ms. Elizabeth Martinez, Superintendent of Recreation

Ms. Melodie Clark, Office Manager

Ms. Natalie Fenwick, Hickory Grove Manager

Mr. Dale Wood, Superintendent of Parks

Mr. Matt Milligan, Maintenance I

Ms. Marianne Swanson, Aquatic Manager

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**Special Thanks to:**

We would like to thank Mr. Stephen Liezert and his staff of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District for input and guidance throughout the master planning process.

## Previous Planning Efforts

The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District has completed two previous master plans. The first plan covered years 1996 to 2001. The second plan covered years 2002 to 2007. Both of these documents were produced in house with limited input from outside consultants. Both of the plans provided very limited public input and were focused on internal opinions for community needs. The recommendation highlights from these master plans included the following:

1. An affordable public golf course that would be open to the public.
2. Completion of a proposed bike trail from Tilton Park to Atwood Park.
3. All Purpose Community Center recommendation.
4. Installation of new playground equipment at park sites.
5. Start Completing the ADA Action Plan.
6. Look into Inter-agency cooperation opportunities.
7. Acquire suitable properties for use as parks.
8. Increase recreation programming, especially for teenagers.
9. Improve existing parks.

10. Invest capital into developing existing parks.
11. Develop recommendations for ice skating within the community.
12. Develop a financial information system which reflects the Park District finances.
13. Develop a Park District Foundation.
14. Upgrade the appearance of Park District publications to better market the Park District to the public.

The recommendations are not ranked in order of importance and many of the tasks appear to have been started. However, the primary tasks of improving the District's financing, acquiring additional park land, constructing a new Community Center and Inter-Agency cooperation have not been fully addressed and resolved.

The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District current Mission Statement is:

***The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District shall develop and maintain a responsive, efficient and creative parks and recreation system for all citizens, composed of a variety of services, park areas and facilities contributing to the well-being of the individuals, family, the attractiveness of the neighborhood, and the socio-economic health of the community.***

## This Planning Effort

This plan takes a different approach. Recognizing that community needs cannot be a random

mixture of opinions, determined by national benchmarks, or even generated by the Park District staff or Commissioners, the plan assumes that the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District is unique and needs to manage its growth using careful considerations specific to its own unique circumstances.

This plan recognizes that Flagg-Rochelle's needs are a function of the difference between the services that Flagg-Rochelle has and the services that its citizens want and are willing to pay to provide.

To assess what services the community needs, and is willing to pay for, community needs assessments went beyond public hearings. While public hearings were held, more effective techniques were used to gather information.

The most effective method was an assessment using social science survey research. To identify Flagg-Rochelle's community needs, two types of surveys were specified by the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District. The first was a telephone survey of a random sample of community residents.

The second was a random sample mail survey of community residents asking similar questions.

The reason that two survey methodologies were used was that each has its own strength and its own limitation. For instance, telephone surveys have face validity because they tend to be less skewed than mail surveys. Mail surveys must be voluntarily returned, while telephones are less

voluntary.

Both collect representative samples of the community, the findings of which appear to be valid because every household has the same chance of being selected to be surveyed.

On the other hand, social science researchers know that telephone survey respondents are less likely to be critical, due to the fact that a human being (the surveyor) is asking the question and respondents might not want to offend them. Mail survey respondents feel more willing to be critical because they are doing so on paper rather than in person.

The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District chose to contract with Strategic Management Alliance and Design Perspectives because they offered a blended methodology where survey data from both data gathering techniques could be used.

Using the two methodologies, the offsetting strengths and weaknesses of telephone and mail surveys result in findings closer to being representative of public opinion. Earnestly concerned with fulfilling public needs, seeking the best tools to identify those recreational needs was important.

Another technique that enhanced the planning process was the gathering of data from community leaders, called the Delphi method. Community leader opinion is important because it is understood that community leaders shape public opinion in general. Community leaders are more informed than the general public about

public policy, the availability of financial resources, and the potential for intergovernmental cooperation that can conserve financial resources. The public knows this to be true and is often guided by leaders' opinions.

Another method used in this planning effort was gathering input from interest groups. Park districts in Illinois tend to serve as hosts for recreational programs operated by community-based nonprofit organizations such as Little Leagues, basketball clubs, museum associations and so forth. These organizations serve thousands of people.

As an interest group, they can be mobilized to support the funding of the construction of new facilities, their needs and opinions matter.

To summarize the needs assessment process, this plan conducted public hearings, a telephone survey, a mail survey, and meetings with interest groups, meetings with the staff and board, and the creation of a Delphi committee of community leaders to provide input.

From all of this input, this plan recommends meaningful goals and objectives that take into consideration Flagg-Rochelle's unique needs and its ability to meet those identified needs.

## **Purpose of the Plan**

This Comprehensive Plan is for the period of

2009-2014. Five years is generally considered a reasonable horizon in master planning because social, cultural and political conditions tend to change enough over five years for the goals and objectives that derived from the plan to change.

This plan begins with a review of the previous goals and objectives that were not implemented, to determine if any are still relevant or priorities. The method of doing so was to ask the community what it would like to see done. If

any and objectives previously considered by the board re-emerged, consideration was given to making them a high priority.

However, if new goals and objectives appeared as priorities, elected officials or the staff, then it was assumed that conditions had changed in Rochelle and that a new direction for the parks and

recreation department is in order.

Since the primary purpose of this master plan is to develop feasible goals and objectives that can be implemented over the next five years, it was important that the process manage the expectations of everyone involved.

This plan does not include every wish that was dreamed through the planning process. But through negotiation of reasonable goals and objectives, it does contain the most important items which most of the community wanted



and that which the Park District Board can reasonably fund, those needs and desires into themes.

Therefore, the purpose of this plan is to establish reasonable goals and objectives that represent the negotiated views of the community and to quickly begin the process of implementing those goals.

Ultimately, this plan represents an agreement between the public of the Flagg-Rochelle Park District, the park board and the staff. The agreement represents rationality in the public policy formulation process. It also represents the democratic process at its best.

The public has stated its park and recreational needs and desires in straightforward terms. The staff has identified those needs and brought them to the park board in order to fund the solutions. The park board has agreed and the community will benefit with the improvements that are on its way.

## **Structure of this Plan**

As stated, the most important elements of a master plan are the goals and objectives that it generates. The primary purpose of the plan is to identify goals and objectives to improve parks and recreation services in the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District.

This plan does so by telling the story of how it arrived at the goals and objectives, how the park board collected information about the needs and desires of the public, how the board interpreted the data that it received, and how it translated

The story includes the levels of engagement between the park board, city council and school district. It tells how the park board expanded the mission of improving parks and recreation services to include the collection of input from a Delphi committee of community leaders and that the commission brainstormed ideas that led to a prioritization of administrative goals and objectives.

The story is important because, even though the planning horizon is five years, within the next five years new park board members, city council and school board members may be elected, new park and recreation staff may be hired and new people will move into the community.

These new people may not feel the ownership in the plan that the previous boards, staff felt and community members felt. However, it needs to be assumed that desires of the public are still the same, so the agreement needs to be in force.

The story of the planning process is told in five sections of this 2009-2014 Master Plan. The first is the community demographics section, which begins with a brief history of Flagg-Rochelle. Location maps are provided and population characteristics interpreted. Projections for growth are also made.

The second section of this plan is an inventory of the current parks and recreation services offered at the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District.

These services include an inventory of the park district's parks and recreation programs. It also includes the services offered by non-profit and commercial recreation service providers.

The third section of this plan tells the story of how community needs were assessed. The telephone survey and its findings are presented. The mail survey responses are compared to the telephone survey responses, with the level of reliability of the survey instruments considered and the validity of process discussed.

The third section also includes summaries of the public hearings which members of the general public participated and summaries of interest group meetings. Meetings with the board and staff are also included.

Within the third section, there will be the recommendations made by the Delphi committee, which met on several occasions, producing its own goals and objectives for the park district.

The fourth section is the most important. Based on the rationale presented in the preceding three sections, the fourth sections presents the goals and objectives for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District for the period of 2009-2014.

The goals are supported by specific objectives, which if implemented, will lead to the attainment of the goals. The categories of the goals

and objectives are administration, recreation programs, land acquisition and development, park maintenance, and facilities. Perhaps the most important of these are those dealing with administrative changes.

The fifth and final section of this plan will be the implementation schedule. This section articulates the bonding process that is already underway to fund land acquisition and facility development. It also discusses the grant schedule with which the

Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District will participate to raise funding to accomplish its capital goals and objectives.

The implementation section of this plan also presents the timeline within which administrative goals will be achieved and the new operating schedule for operating services will be provided. To implement these

goals, commitment in addition to funding will be the issue, making these goals largely strategic.



# community demographics

## Introduction

The Park District's principal population base is the city of Rochelle, even though it does encompass the entire township of Flagg. The demographics of the township will be highlighted shortly, but the following is a brief introduction to the city. Rochelle is a city in Ogle County, Illinois, located about 75 miles west of Chicago and 25 miles south of Rockford. As of the census of 2000, there were 9,424 people, 3,688 households, and 2,415 families residing in the city. The population density was 1,260.9 people per square mile (487.1/km<sup>2</sup>). There were 3,895 housing units at an average density of 521.1/sq mi (201.3/km<sup>2</sup>).

According to the 2000 Census, the racial makeup of the city was 86.81% White, 1.14% African American, 0.49% Native American, 0.92% Asian, 0.02% Pacific Islander, 8.69% from other races, and 1.93% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 19.16% of the population.

The 2000 Census showed there were 3,688 households out of which 33.4% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 49.7% were married couples living together, 11.1% had a female householder with no husband present, and 34.5% were non-families. 29.3% of all households were made up of individuals and 12.1% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.52 and the average family size was 3.13.

The 2000 Census figures showed that, in the City of Rochelle, its population was spread out with 27.1% under the age of 18, 10.1% from 18 to 24, 28.7% from 25 to 44, 19.6% from 45 to 64, and 14.5% who

were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 34 years. For every 100 females there were 97.0 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 93.1 males.

The median income for a household in the city was \$37,984, and the median income for a family was \$46,563. Males had a median income of \$35,890 versus \$25,058 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$18,139. About 7.6% of families and 10.4% of the population were below the poverty line, including 11.1% of those under age 18 and 4.3% of those aged 65 or over.

Rochelle is known as the "**Hub City**" because of its location at the intersection of several major transportation routes. The first transcontinental highway in the United States, the Lincoln Highway, passed through Rochelle, as did US-51, one of the first highways to go the full north-south length of the United States.

Both these roads have diminished in importance (and are now state highways 38 and 251, respectively), but Rochelle continues to be crossed by major highways, especially Interstates 88 and 39.

Besides roadways, Rochelle is also crossed by two major rail lines; the Union Pacific Railroad and BNSF Railway lines cross inside of the city limits. The effect, as seen on a map, was one of the spokes of an old wagon wheel meeting at the "hub", and hence the nickname was born.

Rochelle is well known among rail fans as the location of the Rochelle Railroad Park,



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# community demographics

which has spawned many imitators, such as the Railroad Platform in Folkston, Georgia. For many years the Whitcomb Locomotive Works, founded by George Dexter Whitcomb, manufactured industrial locomotives as well as the Partin Palmer automobile, in Rochelle.

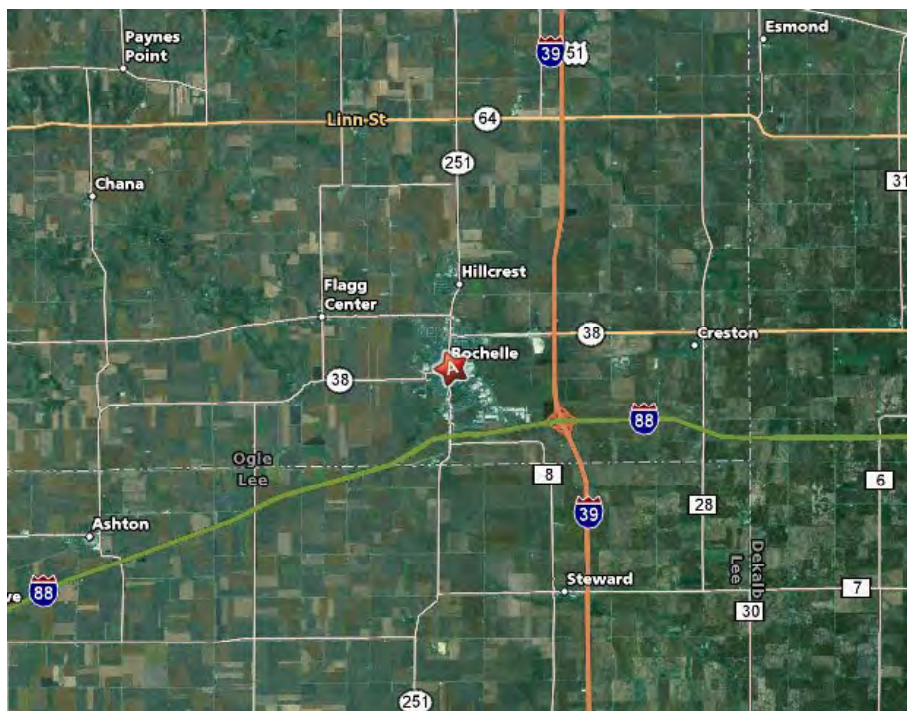
Rochelle is the new home to Union Pacific's Global III Intermodal Facility, at the time it opened it was Union Pacific's largest intermodal facility. Construction on the state-of-the-art facility was completed in 2003.

Rochelle is served by two separate school districts. Rochelle Community Consolidated District 231 serves Rochelle and limited areas just outside of town. District 231 has four elementary schools serving grades K-5: Abraham Lincoln Elementary, Central Elementary, Floyd J. Tilton Elementary, and Phillip May Elementary.

The district also operates one middle school, Rochelle Middle School, serving grades 6-8. Rochelle Township High School District 212 operates Rochelle Township High School. About half of the high school's students come from Rochelle and District 231; the remaining students come from a number of outlying communities, including Kings, Steward, Creston, Hillcrest, Esmond, and Lindenwood.

## Location Maps

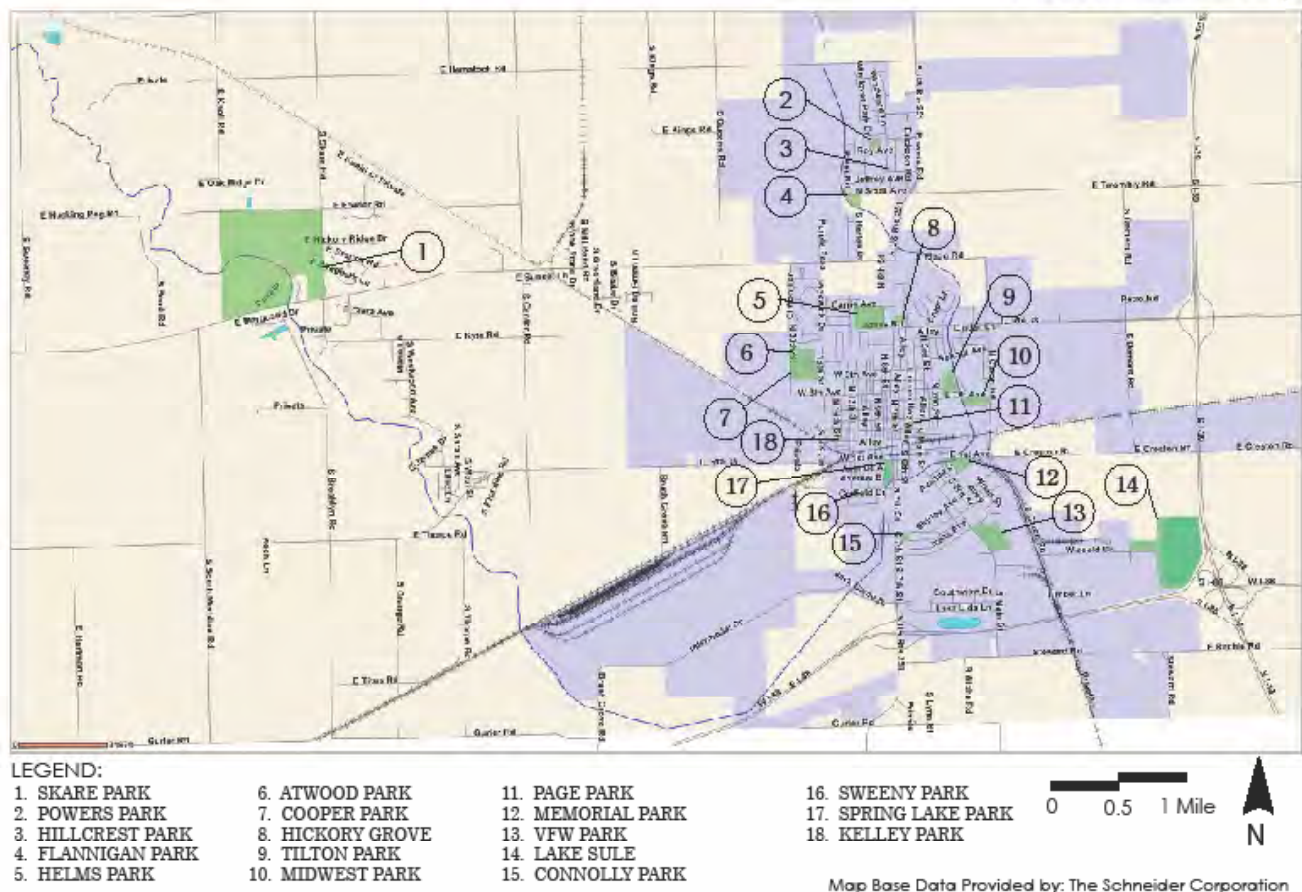
The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District is a special purpose governmental unit with boundaries that are more or less coterminous with Flagg Township. The location of city of Rochelle is shown below:



# community demographics

The location of the parks of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District is pictured below:

Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District  
Parks Location Map



In 1964, a referendum was passed in Flagg Township and the City of Rochelle to create the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District to provide parks and recreation services.

Over the past 44 years, the district acquired 18 parks, a small community center, an outdoor aquatic park, and a park maintenance shop that also houses district offices. In addition, the district leases property owned by the Ogle County Convention Authority that provides a fitness center and indoor swimming pool for \$1 per year.

The growth of the Flagg-Rochelle Community has been slow and steady since the 1960's when the park district was created, as has the growth of the Flagg-Rochelle Park District.

Unfortunately, the growth of the park district has been relatively random because there has been little in the way of formal planning to guide the district in the management of that growth.

# community demographics

As has been the case for many other park districts as well, the management of the growth of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District has been dependent upon ideas generated by the staff and board of commissioners, often in response to political pressures brought to bear by constituents.

Recently, beginning in the 1990's when residential growth in Rochelle began to increase in response to industrial and transportation base increases, the growth of the park system has been driven by donations of park lands donated by developers as part of their required fulfillment of obligations exacted by the City of Rochelle's subdivision code. This growth in the park system was without much forethought, largely due to the absence of formal planning.

## A History of the Park District

Since its creation, the park district has built a system with 20 parks and facilities totaling approximately 890 acres and valued in excess of \$20 million, including the following properties:

Atwood Park	Powers Park
Connolly Park	Skare Park
Cooper Park	Sweeney Park
Flannigan Park	Tilton Memorial Park
Hillcrest Park	V.F.W. Park
Kelley Park	Skate Park
Hickory Grove Rec Center	Helms Park
Lyle Kunde (Lake Sule)	Midwest Park
Spring Lake Aquatic Park	Memorial Park

President, Kathy Marchesi as Vice President, Kim Bear as Treasurer, Steve Hudson as-Secretary, and commissioners Roger Bunger, Terry Dickow, and Neil Swanson. Park District Board Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month, 6:30 p.m., at Independence Hall in the Hickory Grove Civic Center. The public is encouraged to attend.

The following is an excerpt of the history of the park district.

Today, the Flagg-Rochelle Park District has a seven person board with Al Rogers serving as

## **FLAGG ROCHELLE COMMUNITY PARK DISTRICT**

### **Why the Park District was Formed**

Rochelle has historically been the center of culture and social contact for the surrounding area. Churches and schools thrived in its early years. Civic, social and fraternal orders found ready acceptance by its population. Memorial Park and Spring Lake are the earliest indications of park awareness – the latter developed by the city about 1928. Memorial Park was the community's summer gathering place and its natural growth of trees and grasses were little changed from nature's original design. Music figures to Rochelle's background when fiddle contest, signing groups and instrumentalists formed the heart of community recreational interest. Today's bandshell is evidence of the musical interest of yester-year.

With the addition of several parks in the 50's and 60's, the cost to maintain was more than the municipal budget could handle. There was also a dissatisfaction with the \$10,000 annual municipal appropriation for parks and it was realized that this pattern would cause the community to fail it's population and their needs for recreational space, equipment and leadership. Concerned citizens felt that Rochelle's parks and recreation might be improved by the formation of a general park district, assuming that a separate governing body might better coordinate and correlate all activities which would prove most conducive to a more efficient park system.

### **Park District Formed**

The first organization that was formed was know as the Rochelle Parks and Recreation Incorporated,

a non-profit organization chartered by the state of Illinois. The purpose of Rochelle Parks and Recreation Incorporated was to investigate the possibility and feasibility of forming a corporate park district. The concept was found not only possible or feasible, but highly recommended by known authorities in the profession of park administration.

Little realizing the tremendous amount of time and energy that would be needed and not having any way of anticipation the hours of legal work and technical barriers involved in forming a new corporate governing body, the group went to work. About three years later, in August 1966, the issue went before the voters. The voters were asked whether they would rather leave things status quo with only \$10,000 a year being allotted for park maintenance and recreation, or would it be better to levy one mill tax (\$.10 per \$100.00 assessed valuation) which based on an assessed valuation of approximately \$34,000,000.00 would bring in about \$34,000.00 for maintaining the existing parks. The interested voters saw the advantages of having a park district; the issue passed and Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District was formed. On the same ballot were the names of five people running for office of park commissioner. John Gross – President, Gene Lehmkuhl – Vice President, Mrs. Jacqueline Whetston – Sec. – Tres., Mrs. Gertrude Sexton – Commissioner, and Ralph Strang – Commissioner were elected to office. Upon the recommendation of the Illinois Department of Park and Recreation Administration, a superintendent of Parks and Recreation was hired. At this point, the park district didn't even own a hammer.

## community demographics

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Plans had to be made, equipment had to be purchased, help had to be hired, repairs to be made, buildings had to be painted, and Spring Lake had to be made ready; summer was rapidly approaching. There was only one problem. The first half of the tax money wasn't due to be received until late June. There had already been quite a bit of expense incurred for election fees, legal work and payroll would certainly be going strong before the end of June. So, what to do? The decision was between two points – not to do anything to the parks for a year and wait until the money comes in, or to issue Tax Anticipation Warrants which are to be paid off upon receiving tax moneys. The latter method was most logical and so the district operated on borrow money that is to come in the following year after election.

The district was then in business; equipping bids were let, people lined up for labor, Spring Lake was readied for swimming, and things were really rolling along. Then the park district realized several things. First, the district gets another ½ mill or about \$17,000.00 next year which can be used for recreation salaries and equipment only. This will relived some of the load from the General Fund of the park district. Second, that it can sell general Obligation Bonds up to about \$175,000. Third, that there are several areas in the district which need neighborhood parks in order that the smaller children won't have to cross railroad tracks and major highways in order to get to a playground. And fourth, that the district needs and office, garage and winter storage space.

In 1968 the park district issued \$60,000.00 of general obligation bonds at 4% interests and which was

paid off in five years. The money was used for the following capital investments:

1. Five lots in Lake View subdivision for a neighborhood playground
2. Three lots in Cleveland subdivision for a neighborhood playground
3. Tractors and trucks for park maintenance work
4. New building for garage and offices



# community demographics

## Demographics

As a township park district, a separate government from Flagg Township itself, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District serves the people living within Flagg Township, which includes most of residents of the City of Rochelle, all of the people who reside in Flagg Center, as well as rural residents in Flagg Township outside of the municipalities.

Demographically, while Rochelle has gained in population since the 2000 Census, Flagg Center and the rural areas in the township have not experienced much growth. While at this writing, the data is eight years old, the Census data provides the base from which community demographics exist today.

<b>Flagg Township Total population</b>	<b>13,276</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
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### SEX AND AGE

Male	6,583	49.6%
Female	6,693	50.4%

Under 5 years . . . . .	1,011	7.6%
5 to 9 years . . . . .	1,071	8.1%
10 to 14 years . . . . .	1,059	8.0%
15 to 19 years . . . . .	1,018	7.7%
20 to 24 years . . . . .	856	6.4%
25 to 34 years . . . . .	1,844	13.9%
35 to 44 years . . . . .	2,056	15.5%
45 to 54 years . . . . .	1,616	12.2%
55 to 59 years . . . . .	619	4.7%
60 to 64 years . . . . .	490	3.7%
65 to 74 years . . . . .	847	6.4%
75 to 84 years . . . . .	599	4.5%
85 years and over . . . . .	190	1.4%
Median age (years) . . . . .	33.9	

Demographics, particularly age and gender demographics, need to be placed in context to have meaning.

Compared to the total population of the State of Illinois, Flagg Township had a slightly higher percentage of males, 49.6% compared to 49.0%, than the statewide population. Flagg Township's average age was lower than the statewide average, 33.9 years of age compared to 34.7 years of age.

# community demographics

The finding of age is somewhat significant, because most downstate townships in Illinois tend to be older than the state average. For example, Oregon-Nasua Township to the north of Flagg Township had an average age of 39.2 years old for its population compared to 34.7 years old for Flagg Township.

With a population somewhat younger than the state average and much younger than comparable downstate townships, this finding indicates that Flagg Township might have different recreational needs than might be typically expected.

In terms of comparing the racial and ethnic makeup of Flagg Township to the state and comparable downstate townships, the statewide population for Illinois was 12.3% Hispanic and 15.6% African American in 2000.

Flagg Township was 18.1% Hispanic and only 1.2% African American. In the way of comparison, Oregon-Nashua Township to the north was 1.9% Hispanic and 1.2% African American.

The higher than state average Hispanic and lower than state average African American populations are also demographics that could have culturally based implications of recreational habits. What those are might be tested in the survey portion of this study.

## Growth Projections

2010	2007	2000	1990
10,083	9,854	9,424	8,764

The city of Rochell experiences a 7% growth rate between 1990 and 2000. The table shows 2007 and 2010 estimated population based on historic data.





# current parks and recreation services

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## Flagg-Rochelle Park District Park System

The Flagg-Rochelle Park District has an adequate park system for the size of the township. The Park District's population in 2000 is 13,276. The park district current has 497 acres in the current park system. This equals 37.45 acres per 1000 agency residents. It is our conclusion that this is a high acreage per 1000 compared to state and national standards that typically target 10 to 20 acres per thousand. Our analysis would state that the basic outdoor needs in terms of space of the community are being met and that the biggest need is indoor space.

In general, park and recreation agencies have three basic components; 1) recreational offerings, 2) capital plan development, and 3) parks maintenance. The lack of current and convenient facilities in the planning phase and those constructed, including both buildings and parks, has created a void in providing the recreational programs needed and in some regards, expected by the community. Furthermore, the maintenance responsibility has seen limited dollars spent on improving the operations for the upkeep of the district's land holdings. However, the parks are maintained in an above average condition which is a testament to the dedication of the parks department. It is our goal to increase the recreation, capital spending and maintenance spending to meet the community's expectations. This chapter will address both the parks and recreation programming as found today.

The agency currently has a total of 16 parks plus a trail network for recreational use. It also has an Aquatic & Fitness Center, Recreation Center,

Outdoor Pool, Marina and an Administration/Maintenance facility. In order to develop goals and objectives to meet the future recreational requirements of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District, it is important to study the existing parks and facilities. An inventory and analysis provides the framework for reinvestment into the spaces and the need to continue to improve the park spaces for future enjoyment. It is the essential first step to determine the constraining forces which will affect the overall park system.

The parks in the inventory were classified into different groups. The Park System Level of Service is included in this section which illustrates these classifications and the service radius they cover inside the village. Each of the parks contains a budget breakdown to list each park improvement with a realistic construction cost to upgrade the quality level of the existing park spaces that can be found in Chapter 6.

The Park District advocated a process of public participation that was central to the development of the individual park site plans. A public workshop was held to discuss the potential actions for improvements to each of the different park sites under the 5 year planning timeframe. Each of these park plans also contained a budget breakdown to list each park improvement with a realistic construction cost to upgrade the quality level of the existing park spaces.

## Level of Service

In terms of acreage per person, the Flagg-Rochelle Community District is above the average of standards used to measure this goal.

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## current parks and recreation services

However, one land holding, Skare Park makes up 64% of the total acreage. This is also the only significant park space that is located in Flagg Township. It is our position that arbitrary standards from state and national organizations are generally a good guide, but should not be the adopted standard due to convenience. This plan will provide a custom approach by developing needs based on local site analysis, relying on survey data, public input, park locations and finally capital costs to justify the needed level of service the community expects. As the Park District's population has recently stabilized due to the economic slowdown, the agency could experience an increase in growth rate. The Park District should continue to seek out land donations from developers in the future for neighborhood park spaces. This will reduce the potential for future gaps in service at the neighborhood level. With this being said, this will not cover the gaps in service within the township. Additional community parkland should be sought to strategically in-fill park sites in the southwestern and northeastern portion of the township to balance the park system. The ideal size of each parcel would be 20 to 50 acres.

### **Site Inventory & Analysis**

The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District's existing park system is depicted with this summary. The system is composed of park sites of various sizes, one outdoor pool, a collection of buildings that include a recreation center, aquatic and fitness center and a maintenance facility. Each park site on the following pages was reviewed during the spring of 2008 when all the park sites were examined and evaluated.

The park system as a whole has suffered from a lack of comprehensive planning and detailed site design in the past. In the past five years, the park district has completed a series of small renovations that mostly included playground equipment replacement. This is nearly always a symptom of lack of capital budgeting to improve the park spaces. This approach is apparent from the time spent in each park.

Many of the park sites have accessibility issues that will need to be corrected to achieve basic compliance. The entire park land holdings should be re-evaluated to match the level of service evaluation for redundancies in park locations and amenities. Our conclusion is that many of the issues surrounding the physical park space will be solved with examining the level of service standard for the Park District, input from residents and the development of a realistic capital improvement plan included in this Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan.

### **Site Inventory Methodology**

Design Perspectives, Inc. conducted a site field visit and analysis for the comprehensive park & recreation master plan in which each park site was walked to review the existing conditions found. The survey and analysis was conducted as follows:

1. Observations (Visual Assessment) – A visual inspection was conducted examining existing conditions of the park site. No mechanical or physical testing was undertaken.

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# current parks and recreation services

2. Photographic Documentation – Photographs were taken of existing conditions to document typical areas for reference and probable problem areas.
3. General Park Impressions – First reaction to the park space and characteristics of the site.

## Park Classification

### A. Regional Parks

A regional park is generally larger than 50 acres and serves a system wide service area and a total population. They should have a blend of active and passive recreational opportunities and can house buildings and athletic complexes.

The following is a list of Regional Parks:

#### 1. Lake Sule

Lyle Kunde Recreation Area and Lake Sule is a 75 acre regional park. Its amenities include Lake Sule, ADA accessible picnic shelter, picnic tables, park grills, motorized boating, launch area, fishing, kayaking/canoeing, ice fishing, ice skating and fishing piers. The Kyte River runs into Lake Sule.





# current parks and recreation services

## 2. Skare Park

Skare Park is a 320 acre regional park. Its amenities include restroom facilities, picnic shelter, playground, baseball field backstop, driving range, the Kyte River, bank fishing (also one official access point), hiking/walking/equestrian trails (7.5 miles), Norman Skare Museum and storage facility for equipment.



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# current parks and recreation services

## B. Community Parks

A community park is generally between 10 and 49 acres and serves up to a 2 mile service area. The community park provides recreational facilities for a large segment of the town's population. These parks are usually developed to support intensive recreational opportunities for both active and passive uses. These parks are typically located on or near major roads, bike paths or multi-use trails to allow for accessibility to several neighborhoods.

The following is a list of Community Parks:

### 1. Cooper Park

Cooper Park is a 14 acre community park. Amenities for this park include restroom facilities, picnic shelters, ADA accessible picnic tables, playground, soccer field, basketball court, volleyball court, horseshoe pits and a skatepark.





# current parks and recreation services

## 2. Helms Sports Complex (Includes Helms Park South)

Helms Sports Complex is a 19 acres community park. Its amenities include restroom facilities, concession building, locker rooms, maintenance shed, softball field, baseball field, soccer field, football field with lights, running track with lights, tennis court with lights, commentators booth, pole vault and long jump pits.



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## current parks and recreation services

### 3. Atwood Park

Atwood Park is a 10 acres community park, which includes a banshell, gravel trails, drinking fountain, benches and a memorial area. The bike trail runs along the edge of the park.





# current parks and recreation services

## 4. V.F.W. Park

V.F.W. Park is a 19 acre community park. Amenities for this park included restroom facilities, concession building, picnic shelter, ADA accessible playground, softball fields and a basketball court.



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# current parks and recreation services

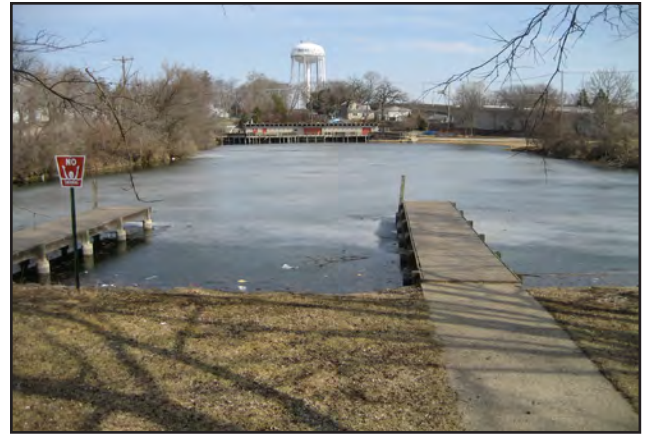
## C. Neighborhood Parks

A neighborhood park is generally between 1 to 9 acres serves a 1 mile service area. Typical facilities are within walking distance of the service area. The neighborhood park provides for localized needs in both active and passive play spaces mostly for children.

The following is a list of Neighborhood Parks:

### 1. Spring Lake Marina

Spring Lake Marina sits on 4.5 acres of land. Its amenities include the Marina building which has restroom facilities, kitchen area and meeting space. There is a deck facing the marina and two fishing piers extending off the back of the marina.





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# current parks and recreation services

## 2. Memorial Park

Memorial Park is an 8 acres neighborhood park. Its amenities include a picnic shelter, picnic tables, playground, basketball court, volleyball court, horseshoe pits, restroom facilities, the Kyte River and a stage area.



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# current parks and recreation services

## 3. Flannigan Park

Flannigan Park is a 6.5 acre neighborhood park. Amenities for this park include ADA accessible picnic shelter, ADA accessible playground, park grills, baseball backstop, soccer field, basketball court, the Kyte River and an ADA accessible multi-use trail (.5 miles).



## current parks and recreation services

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### 4. Midwest Park

Midwest Park is a 7 acre neighborhood park. Its amenities include a soccer field.





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## current parks and recreation services

### 5. Tilton Memorial Park

Tilton Memorial Park is a 9 acre neighborhood park. Amenities for this park include a playground (2-5 and 5-12), baseball field, basketball court and multi-use trail.



### **6. Powers Park**

Powers Park is a 3 acre park consisting of open space, baseball backstop and landscaping.



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# current parks and recreation services

## D. Pocket Park

A pocket park is a small neighborhood park less than an acre and serves an area less than ¼ service areas. It can usually only accommodate a playground for active uses or remain as open space for passive uses. Even though these parks are small, they can serve a useful purpose by providing drop in recreation opportunities within neighborhoods.

The following is a list of Pocket Parks:

### 1. Hillcrest Park

Hillcrest Park is a .64 acre pocket park. Amenities for this park include a playground.



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# current parks and recreation services

## 2. Connolly Park

Connolly Park is a 1 acre pocket park. Its amenities include a playground, baseball backstop and basketball court.





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# current parks and recreation services

## 3. Kelley Park

Kelley Park is a .30 acre pocket park. Its amenities include a basketball court.



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# current parks and recreation services

## 4. Sweeney Park

Sweeney Park is a .90 pocket park. Its amenities include a playground and basketball court.





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# current parks and recreation services

## E. Special Use Parks/Facilities

These park sites usually do not have a specified service radius and are typically buildings with a special purpose. Other types of uses include development for a single purpose such as a skate park or bike trail.

The following is a list of Special Use Parks/Facilities:

### 1. Hickory Grove Aquatics & Fitness Center

Hickory Grove Aquatics & Fitness Center is a community facility featuring amenities such as a pool, whirlpool, dry sauna, massage service, childcare, party room, locker rooms, fitness ares (lifting, cardio) and banquet hall.



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# current parks and recreation services

## 2. Spring Lake Aquatic Park

Spring Lake Aquatic Park sits on 4.5 acres of land, which is also shared with the Marina facilities. The aquatic park includes restroom facilities, bathhouse, picnic tables, outdoor swimming pool, wading pool, water slide and a diving area.





## 3. Teentown/Recreation Center

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## current parks and recreation services

### 4. Bike Trail System

The Bike Trail System runs through out the community connecting various parks. It is looking to be expanded as parks are renovated and new developments continue to grow.



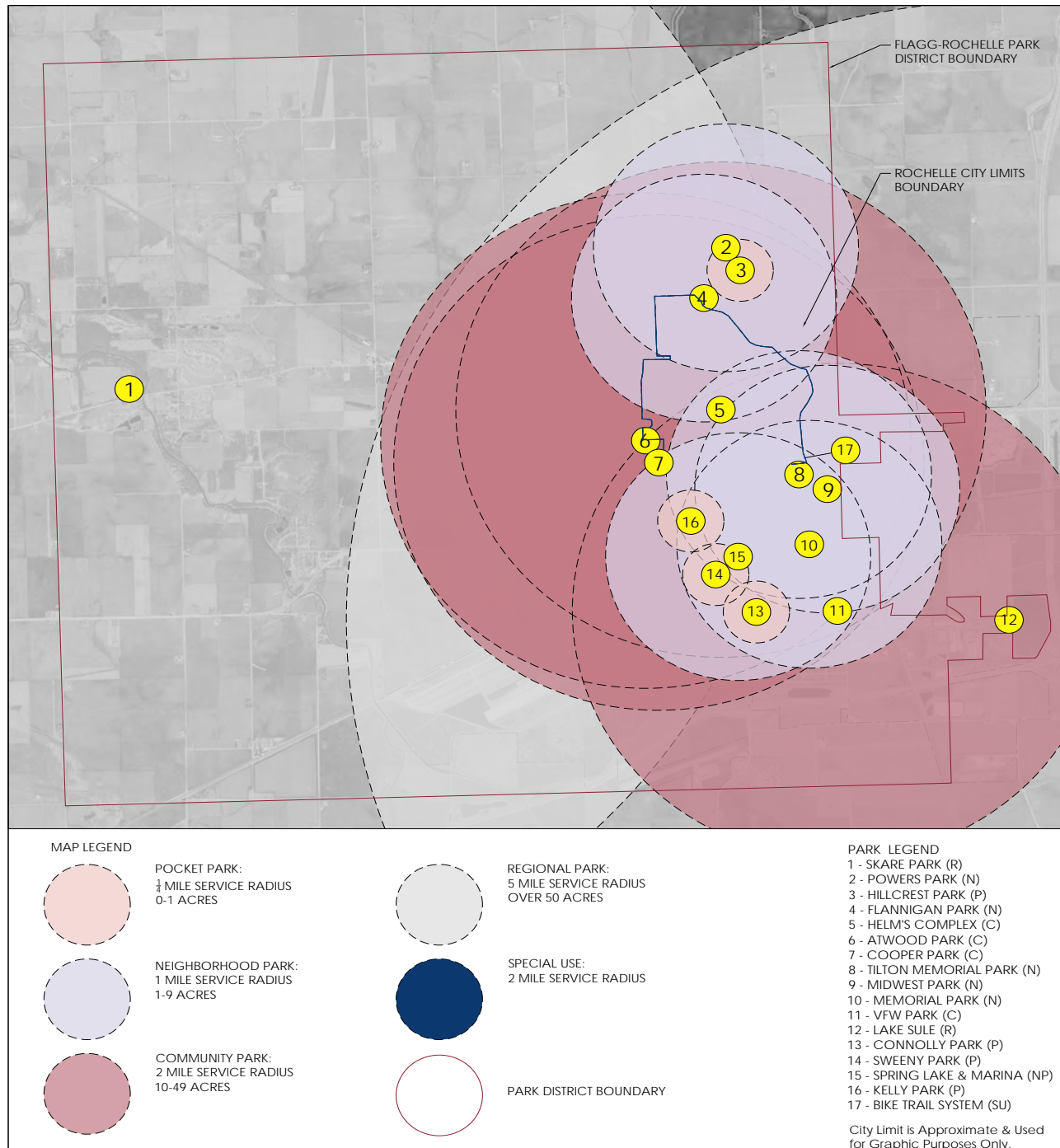
**Flagg-Rochelle  
Facility Matrix**

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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Existing Parks System Level of Service Map



Prepared for: The Flagg-Rochelle  
Community Park District  
Rochelle, Illinois

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www.design-perspectives.net

**DRAFT**  
July 2008  
0 1500 3000  
SCALE 1" = 1500'



# current parks and recreation services

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## **The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Recreational Programs**

The agency has a residential population of over 10,000 residents. The cornerstone of any park and recreation agency is its program offerings. The purpose of completing a recreation demand analysis is to evaluate recreational offerings in addition to collect information in planning for the future. We know today that recreation is often viewed as a product not a service. If a customer's needs are not met, they will seek it elsewhere. The survey data does show that residents do go outside the community for recreation services. The two primary reasons for this are that Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District does not offer what the potential customer was looking for and that another provider does a better job at providing it.

The survey also shows a high degree of importance at improving recreation services. This cannot happen unless expanding the core recreation programming spaces are improved and/or expanded to create better facilities. This is especially true for indoor recreation space. The Hickory Grove Aquatic & Fitness Center is showing its age and inability to meet the needs of residents in the 21st century. If a new Community Recreation Center is built to provide adequate space to enhance the recreation programming of the park district, a new and enhanced offering track of programs needs to be implemented immediately to capture the buzz surrounding the expansion.

The first step in identifying potential goals is to survey local recreation agencies to compare recreation structure, organization and offerings.

As you can see from the table that follows, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District on paper is keeping pace with surrounding communities. However, the quality of the parks and facilities, lack of full-time recreation staff and the low annual budget is causing a lack of competitive market share in recreation programming.

The data that was generated from the table illustrates that small agencies have to rely on limited program offerings due to staff and space restrictions. The trend in recreation is to have recreation programming dollars from fees and rentals become a significant revenue stream to the entire organization. A gimmick to obtain additional market share with this approach is to increase customer awareness by having a marketing agenda to position the park district in the minds of the local consumers.

A few interesting points to consider in looking at the recreational offerings is 1) the lack of useable indoor programming space limits control over scheduling, 2) only one full-time recreational program manager to oversee the recreational direction, 3) the reliance on affiliate groups to run recreational athletic leagues and 4) finally, the lack of a marketing initiative fee structure to raise income levels from program sales. These points need to be addressed and altered to produce a recreational department that will meet the needs of the customer and produce a viable revenue stream.



## current parks and recreation services

Recreational program types were reviewed through the previous master plan as well as a spot check of the Park District Program Brochures. The primary focus of the class offerings are mainly geared for youth sports and fitness. The other program types were special events, adult leagues and family classes. There was very little in terms of adult arts and crafts classes. It would be wise to prepare a business plan for a pre-school and before and after school program. This could be a significant revenue stream. Also, an increase in the family classes could explored for both athletics and arts and crafts since time away from the pressures of life and quality time with the family is hard to come by for many of us. Other age groups that need to be expanded are teens and seniors. These are untapped markets that could add additional dollars into the Park District and provide balance within the offerings. The fastest



and easiest way to increase these offerings is additional trips targeting for these age groups.

Overall, the agency provides the staple of expected programs, activities, classes, and events. The programs being offered fall into traditional core categories and are offered by age segments, but appear to built around availability of facilities or historical preferences instead of the needs of residents. This translates into revenue loss and has affected the growth and stature of the recreational department.

It is also unclear if program measurements are being tracked by successes and failures. Mostly these would include participation levels, cost recovery levels, cost per experience and participant to instructor ratios to be tracked on a regular basis. It is unknown that program policies and procedures are updated on an annual basis as well. After review of the information, the Recreation Department offers a traditional approach to program offerings, but should seek out a business approach to measure success and

failure, revenue potential and participant satisfaction. The lack of adequate facilities, preventive maintenance and upkeep, and additional full time staff possess a significant obstacle to increase its presence. It is also apparent that a major focus of recreation is in the operation of Hickory Grove. It would be our recommendation that a re-

focus and a re-organization of the Recreation Department to shift resources away from Hickory Grove and expand program offerings with new and exciting leagues/classes to meet the needs of the community.

## Recreation Demand Analysis



	Flagg Rochelle Park District	Byron Park District	Sterling Park District	Genoa Park District	Sycamore Park District
Number of Residents	11,007	10,000	15,500	7,000	14,500
Recreation Facilities (Pool, Community Center, Golf, Etc.)	3	1	4	0	3
Number of Parks	16	3	12	6	14
Park Acreage in System	490.9	1300	600	87	441
Number of Recreational Programs	115	50	89	112	195
Pre-School Program	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Number of Leagues Using Parks	7+	6	2	3	16
Number of Full Time Recreation Staff	1	3	7	2	1
Annual Total Budget	\$1.02 Million	\$3.3 Million	\$5.7 Million	\$1.25 Million	\$2.2 Million
Park Expenditures Per Person	\$93.30	\$330.00	\$367.74	\$178.57	\$151.00



# current parks and recreation services

## Public School Facilities

The local public school system offers a variety of recreational opportunities for the community. Public schools generally offer these in the form of unstructured play areas for the surrounding neighborhoods at elementary and middle schools such as playgrounds and structured activities such as tennis and ball fields at middle and high schools. In review of the previous master plan, the following are school facilities that offer recreational opportunities for Park District residents;

- May Elementary School
- Central Elementary School
- Tilton Elementary School
- Lincoln Elementary School
- St. Paul School
- Rochelle Middle School
- Rochelle Township High School

## Other Recreation Service Providers

The Flagg-Rochelle Community District is a governmental unit, providing parks and recreation services. Other governmental units, non-profit agencies and for-profit businesses also provide parks and recreation services, sometimes in competition with your services. The following section will consider these competing agencies in terms of how they might affect the Park District's mission.

In the public sector, it is often the mission of parks and recreation agencies to provide as many services as possible without duplicating services provided by other governmental units. The relationship between public sector parks and recreation agencies, non-profit agencies and for-

profit businesses is not as clear.

Particularly in the case of for-profit businesses, which are not responsible to serve the needs of low income families or people with special needs, there can be reasons that governmental units provide similar services.

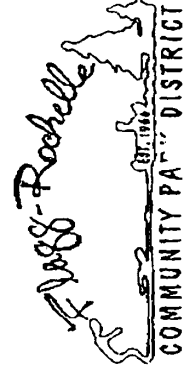
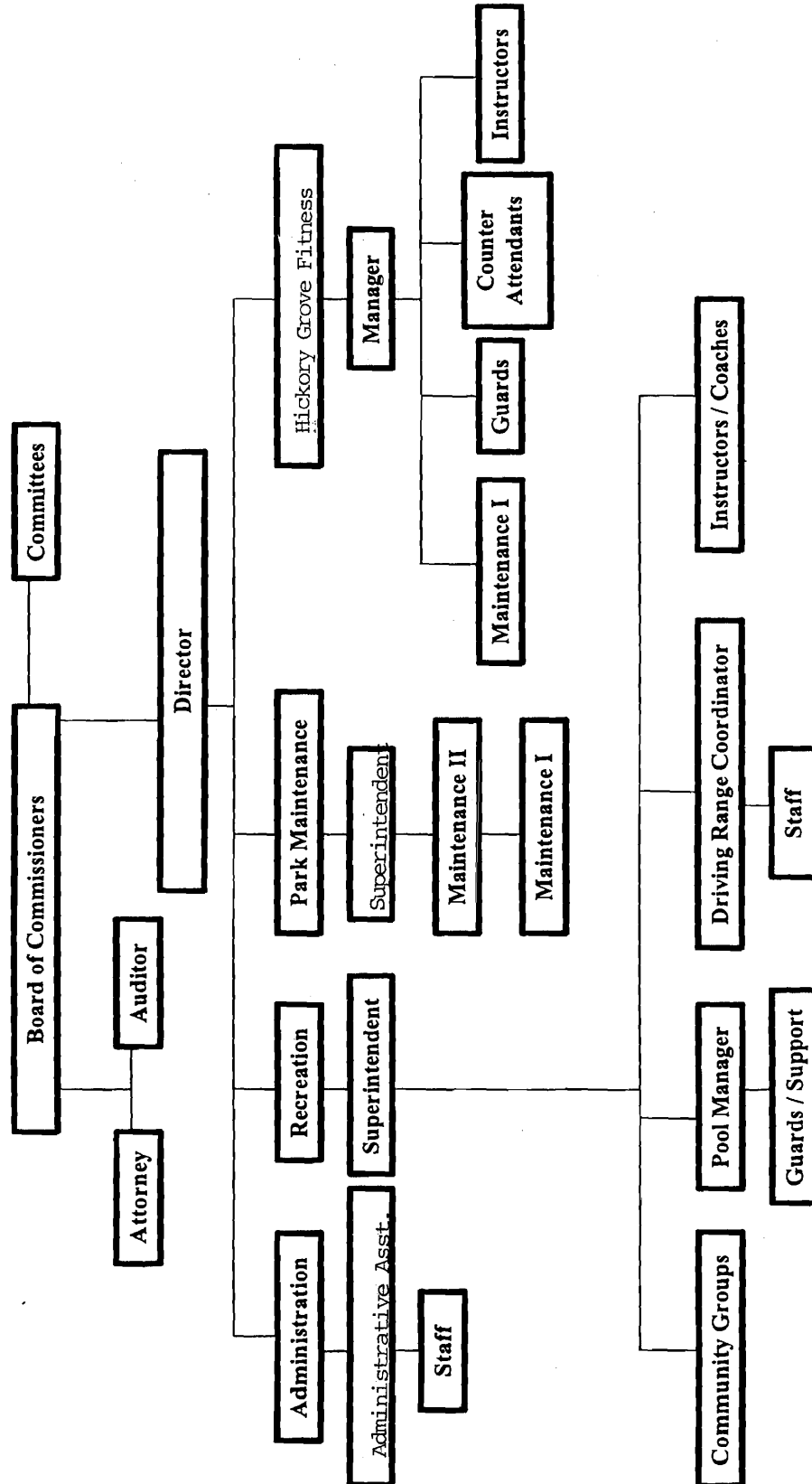
There also appears to be a few for profit gyms in the tri-county are that include;

- DeKalb – 2 providers
- Genoa – 1 provider
- Hinckley – 2 providers
- Rochelle – 2 providers
- Sycamore – 7 providers
- Waterman -1 provider

The two local providers in Rochelle are Concord Health Club and Curves.

These enterprises do not appear to be a healthy threat to the Park District. However, other local Park Districts as well as Kishwaukee College and the Kishwaukee YMCA are competitors primarily due to their programs and newer facilities. It was clear in the survey data that the residents of the Park District are seeking out better programs and facilities to call their own.

# Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Organizational Chart





# community needs assessment

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## Community Survey

During the month of June 2008, Design Perspectives and Strategic Management Alliance conducted two community needs surveys as part of the data gathering process for the 2008-2014 Comprehensive Plan for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District.

The mail survey sought to obtain at least 200 responses and the telephone survey 100 responses. Both of have been blended to identify community recreational needs and preferences. The survey instrument used in both studies is presented in the Appendix of this study.

Other data gathering techniques have been utilized, including public hearings, meetings with the board, staff and interest groups. As mentioned earlier, a unique method of community input that has been utilized in the Flagg-Rochelle plan is the convening of a Delphi committee comprised of community leaders. This committee, which has met on a bi-weekly basis, has provided its expert insights into the direction the park district should go and the priorities it should focus on.

To date, 229 mail surveys have been returned from the 1,000 mailed out, for a response rate of about 23%. The completed telephone survey data included 107 responses from a sample of 315 households for a response rate of 33.9%.

It should be noted that the selection of the sample size and weighting of the responses using telephone and mail survey methodologies was done purposefully. Mail surveys tend to be returned by respondents who are motivated to do

so. Sometimes respondents return them because they are strongly in favor of actions to be taken by an agency and other times because they are opposed to them. Telephone surveys tend to have their own limitations. Aside from being expensive, respondents may feel they need to answer questions more favorably to please the interviewer. But combined, telephone and mail surveys tend to complement each other in such a way that their biases are balanced.

In this study, the total of 336 telephone and mail survey responses is a sample large enough for a confidence level of 95% that the sample responses are within plus or minus 3% of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District population.

The analysis of the combined responses will be provided more or less in the order that the questions were written. During the analysis, there will be occasions when the data will be presented separately with mail survey responses compared to telephone responses. At other times, when it is less important to show the differences, the data will be showed in combination.

Statistical data will be considered along with anecdotal data in such a way to provide a level of richness to the findings. While anecdotal data will not be generalized to the entire population of the park district, it should be considered as important as comments made at public hearings.

## Questions 1-3

Because the database for the mail and telephone surveys was obtained from the City of Rochelle utility billing system, it was important to establish

# community needs assessment

whether respondents understood that they were residents of the park district.

Question 1 asked if respondents resided within the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District.

Question 1 was intended to be a “warm-up” question more than anything, helping respondents understand that the survey would not be too difficult to complete and that it was primarily resident opinions that mattered.

Question 2 asked if respondents were familiar with the park district. This question was designed to have respondents think about the visibility level of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District and set the table for tougher questions.

Mail survey respondents might have returned their completed surveys, even if they did not understand they were residents. But telephone survey respondents were not permitted to continue with the survey unless they understood they were residents.

Are you a resident?

	Respondent	N	Mean
Resident	Mail	217	97%
Resident	Telephone	107	100%

The previous table shows that, of the 225 mail survey respondents, 217 answered the question, of which 97% said they were residents of the district. Of the telephone survey respondents, everyone was a resident.

The second question dealt with familiarity of the respondent to the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District.

Are you familiar with the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District?

	Respondent	N	Mean
Familiar	Mail	219	95%
Familiar	Telephone	107	93%

The responses show that there is very little difference between mail and telephone survey respondents, well within the margin of error. About 94% of those responding said they were familiar with the district.

Question 2 has meaning when placed in the context of comparing it with the familiarity that other park districts have had with their communities.

In the mail and telephone surveys done as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for the Sycamore Park District, 85% of respondents said they were familiar with the park district.

The higher rate that 94% of respondents to the 2008 Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District mail survey are familiar with the district could be related to the better job the park district is doing in Rochelle to publicize its services.

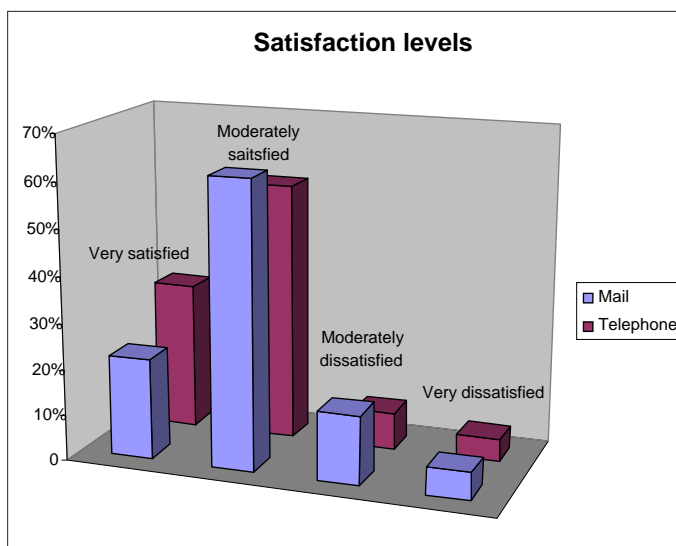
# community needs assessment

It could also be related to the lack of competition for recreation services that the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District currently enjoys. For whatever reason, familiarity is comparatively higher.

The third question in the mail survey asked how respondents would characterize their overall satisfaction levels with the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District.

This question is important, not only because it gauges the level of community satisfaction, but because its response rates can also be compared against other agencies levels of satisfaction.

The following graph compares the levels of satisfaction from responses provided for Question 3 in the mail and telephone surveys.



The graph shows that 22% of mail survey respondents and 32% of telephone survey respondents are very satisfied with the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District, providing a good example of the biases of telephone surveys.

Since familiarity with the agency was almost exactly the same for both samples, the fact that a substantial percentage of respondents were very satisfied in the telephone survey, some of them must have been responding that way to please the interviewer.

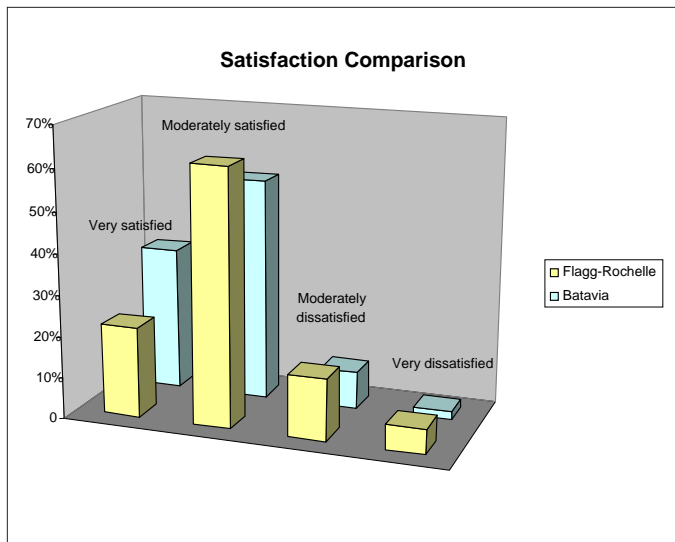
On the other hand, it is possible that people who were motivated to return their mail surveys tended to do so because they were less satisfied with the district. Blending would, therefore, provide a more accurate view of satisfaction with the agency.

Again, how the Flagg-Rochelle Park District is doing in terms of generating satisfaction with itself is relative. There needs to be a level of comparison for satisfaction to have meaning.

Some park districts, like Sycamore, opt not to have this question asked when they conduct community surveys, for any number of reasons.

One park district that did was the Batavia Park District which did so in a community mail survey done at the beginning of 2008. The following graph compares its percentages to those of Flagg-Rochelle's mail survey.

# community needs assessment



The graph shows that those who were very satisfied with the Batavia Park District were 35% compared to 22% for Flagg-Rochelle.

Because those who were very satisfied with Batavia was higher than Flagg-Rochelle, every other category for Batavia was, therefore, lower; 54% somewhat satisfied for Batavia compared to 62% for Flagg-Rochelle, 9% somewhat dissatisfied for Batavia compared to 14% for Flagg-Rochelle, and 2% very dissatisfied for Batavia compared to 6% for Flagg-Rochelle.

These differences are all outside the margin of error and are, therefore, a cause for concern, considering that Batavia also had a comparable 94% familiarity with the park district.

These findings suggest that the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District may want to focus on its image. If residents are less satisfied with agency services than are residents in other communities, this difference could affect the support for initiatives, including capital improvement projects as well as the tax increase to fund them.

## Question 4

Question 4 asked the very important question about in which recreational activities respondent households participated.

This question is important because, unless households currently participate in certain activities, it is uncertain whether they are serious about the need for the park district to provide them as services.

The following table shows the percentages of households participating in the activities presented, combining mail and telephone survey responses.

## Recreational activity combined responses

Activity	N	Mean
Walking/Bikepath	306	83%
Dog Obedience	305	9%
Swimming	306	57%
Swim Lessons	306	19%
Aerobic Classes	305	17%
Fitness Center Use	306	35%
Spinning Classes	305	3%
Basketball	306	17%
Continuing Ed Classes	305	9%
Volleyball	306	10%
Ice Skating	306	7%
Hockey	306	2%
Art Classes	306	8%
Indoor Tennis	306	5%
Gymnastics	306	7%



# community needs assessment

Activity	N	Mean
Racquetball	306	7%
Dance Classes	306	13%
Pre-School Programs	305	9%
Skateboard	306	9%
BMX Track	303	5%

The table shows that 83% of respondent households participate in walking and bikepath usage as a recreational activity. This was by far the highest percentage of participation.

The second highest activity in which respondents reported participating was swimming, at 57%, followed by 35% who reported using a fitness center.

Other activities were reported at somewhat lesser levels, with swimming lessons at 19%, basketball at 17%, aerobic classes at 17%, and dance classes at 13%.

These findings suggest that Flagg-Rochelle Park District residents are involved in a wide array of recreational programs.

One potential cause for concern is that the Flagg-Rochelle Park District does not offer many of these services, such as indoor soccer (8%), indoor tennis (5%), BMX track usage (5%), racquetball (7%), ice skating (7%), or hockey (2%).

In addition, based on the actual usage of the Flagg-Rochelle Park District's Hickory Grove fitness center, it would be hard to quantify that 35% of

the respondents reporting fitness center usage are using Hickory Grove.

This suggests a hypothesis that a substantial number of residents are leaving the community to make use of recreational facilities in other communities. Questions 5-7 test such a hypothesis.

## Questions 5-7

Questions 5 through 7 were designed to identify the percentages of respondents who go outside the park district for services, what services they go to receive, and why they do so.

Considering whether they go outside the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District, the following table shows the percentages of combined mail and telephone respondents who reported doing so.

Percentage of those who go outside for recreational services

	Respondent	N	Mean
Total Respondents	Mail		40%

The table shows that 40% of respondent households reported going outside the community for recreational services.

Considering that there are few other agencies that provide services within 15 miles and that the price of gasoline is increasing, the motivation for them to do so must be strong.

# community needs assessment

Question 6 asked what recreational programs and services respondents sought outside the community. The following table provides a summary of the most frequent responses.

Combined telephone and mail survey responses are presented in the table.

What other services do you go outside to receive?

Valid Narrative Responses
85% of what was listed
Adaptive sports for my son, DeKalb/Sycamore area and Rock
Additional bike paths, waling paths, hiking, camping
Baseball
Baseball and golf
Basketball, gymnastics, dance
Better fitness classes, better gym facilities
Bicycle trail
Bike path usage
Bike paths
BMX biking
BMX, bike park
Camp for older children
Camping
Camping
Camping, fishing, boating, hiking, 4 wheeling
Camping, paintball
Camping, roller skating, fishing, picnics
Children's dance classes, gymnastics
Concerts

Conservation club
Continuing education, swimming
Country club
Curves
Dance classes, racquetball, basketball
DeKalb
Discovery Center in Rockford
Dog Obedience, art & dance classes
Dog obedience, indoor swimming
Indoor soccer
Eating, drinking & bicycling
Fishing
Fishing, camping
Fitness center
Fitness center
Fitness center (24 hour)
Fitness center, biking, golf
Fitness center, classes
Fitness center, exercise programs
Fitness center, gymnastics, dance
Fitness center, hiking, camping
Fitness center, racquetball
Fitness center, racquetball, indoor track
Fitness classes, walking, continuing ed, sewing
Flag football, baseball, pre-school programs, swimming
Golf
Golf
Golf, disc golf, longer bike paths, soccer, racquetball
Golf, driving range, practice fields
Golf, roller skating, ice skating, winter festivals

# community needs assessment

Valid Narrative Responses	
Gymnastics	Racquetball, indoor tennis, biking, hiking, rock wall climbing
Gymnastics & fitness	Racquetball, rock climbing, kayaking
Gymnastics classes	Recreation centers
Gymnastics, basketball	Roller skating, ice skating
Gymnastics, special events	Running club, triathlon activities, and bad mitten league
Hiking, fishing, camping, horseback riding, ice skating	Sand volleyball
Hiking, swimming	Soccer, basketball, ice skating, dance, volleyball
Hiking, swimming, picnics, bus trips	Softball
I took my grandchildren over for swimming in Oregon	Sports games at Northern Illinois University, Green Bay, St. Charles and Geneva recreation
Ice skating	Swimming
Indoor basketball	Swimming
Indoor gymnastics and indoor swim team	Swimming and swim aerobic exercises at Oregon
Indoor running, indoor soccer	Swimming, racquetball, golf, canoeing, kayaking
Indoor soccer	Tennis
Indoor soccer	Volleyball
Indoor tennis	Volleyball and basketball
Indoor tennis	Walking, picnics, forest preserve usage
Indoor track	Water parks, bike trails, camping
Indoor walking	Weight room, golf, indoor tennis, outdoor tennis
Indoor walking track, dog park	Wrestling, swim lessons
Jazzercise, ice skating	YMCA
Karate, YMCA activities	YMCA in DeKalb Illinois, fishing, ice skating
Larger swimming pool	Yoga, dance, walking
Magic Waters	Youth and adult soccer
Major and minor league baseball	
Major league baseball	
Other parks also	
Park rental usage	
Playgrounds	
Racquetball	

# community needs assessment

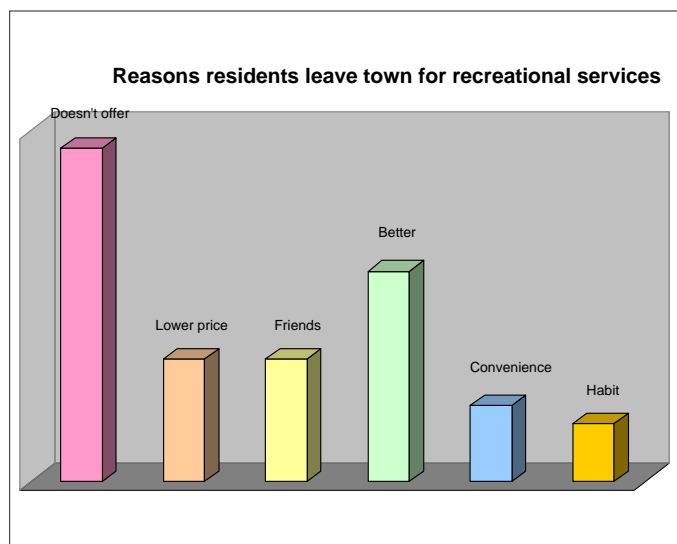
Preliminary scanning of the table suggests that many people drive to other communities to make use of their fitness centers, racquetball courts, indoor walking tracks. The Nash Center in Oregon seems to be a popular destination.

Among other indoor amenities, basketball, gymnastics and soccer facilities were frequently mentioned.

Interestingly, several respondents reported driving to other communities to make use of their longer walking and biking paths.

Other activities which were mentioned included camping, fishing and boating. These activities would be among those that people would prefer to go out to town anyway.

Question 7 asked why respondents felt it necessary to go out of town to use these recreational services. The following graph compares their responses.



The graph shows that 57% of those leaving the community for recreational services do so because the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park

District doesn't offer the services they want.

This is understandable, if the respondents who reported driving out of town do so to participate in fishing, camping, boating, major league baseball or any other activities that people in any community would leave town to do.

The finding that 36% do so because other agencies are better at providing recreational services is worthy of concern. The time and money to drive out of town are strong demotivators for leaving.

In the way of comparison, in the Midlothian Park District survey, 20% of those responding to the mail survey said they went out of town for recreational services because other agencies were doing a better job of providing them. In Batavia, 23% said they did so for the same reason.

Considering that the residents of suburban agencies don't have very far to drive compared to Flagg-Rochelle residents, the explanation of why 40% would go outside the community for recreational services when the drive is so far can partially be explained by the quality of services.

That is not to say that the staff or board is not doing its job. It is more of a reflection on the quality of facilities that are available to house these services, as the next few questions will demonstrate.

## Questions 8-10

Question 8 asked if respondents would be in favor of building a new community center or keep operating the Hickory Grove Aquatics and Fitness Center. Respondents were allowed to answer



# community needs assessment

both affirmatively or to answer "I don't know."

The following table compares mail to telephone survey responses.

Favor new center, keeping Hickory Grove or both

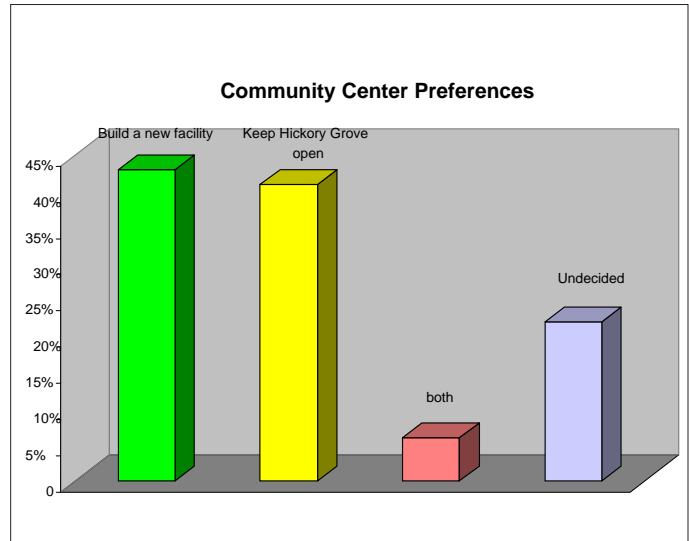
Preference	Respondent	N	Mean
Build a new community center	Mail Telephone	217 107	41% 45%
Keep Hickory Grove Open	Mail Telephone	217 107	37% 50%
Don't Know	Mail Telephone	217 107	29% 8%

The table shows that 41% of mail and 45% of telephone respondents were in favor of building a new facility. Of those in favor of keeping Hickory Grove open, 37% of mail and 50% of telephone survey respondents supported that initiative. And 29% of mail survey and 8% of telephone survey respondents weren't sure what they supported. .

Sorting the data using independent samples means-testing, overall 6% of those responding to the mail and telephone survey said they were in favor of both keeping Hickory Grove open and building a new facility. The remaining 94% chose one or the other, or couldn't decide.

Far more mail respondents were undecided than were telephone respondents, again, probably influenced by the desire to please the interviewer.

Combining the mail and telephone survey data, the following graph compares the responses.



The findings in the graph from Question 8 suggest that 43% of those surveyed favor building a new fitness facility, 41% favor keeping Hickory Grove open, 6% favor both, and 22% are undecided.

The findings suggest that undecided respondents will make the difference as to which option would be preferable to the community.

This is another indication that a concerted effort needs to be made to communicate with its residents needs to be made by the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District. But there certainly is a foundation for a majority sentiment to construct a new community center.

Question 9 asked respondents what amenities they would like to see included in a new community center, if the Flagg-Rochelle Park District decided to build one.

# community needs assessment

Respondents were allowed to answer “none, I oppose the idea” and “I don’t really care.” The following table shows the percentages of responses to each preference.

Amenity preferences

Preference	N	Mean
Indoor aquatic center	296	68%
Dance rooms	294	35%
Racquetball courts	295	39%
Indoor softball fields	295	17%
Outdoor softball	295	32%
Meeting rooms	296	44%
Performing arts center	294	33%
Senior citizen facilities	295	51%
Indoor track	295	52%
Outdoor aquatic center	295	34%
Aerobic rooms	296	48%
Gymnasiums	296	49%
Indoor ice rinks	294	23%
Walking/jogging track	294	61%
A gymnastics facility	295	32%
Hockey rink	293	12%
Daycare rooms	296	44%
Fitness center	296	69%
Spinning rooms	294	20%
Indoor soccer fields	296	21%
Outdoor ice rinks	295	25%
Classrooms	296	24%
Indoor basketball/volleyball	296	50%
None, I oppose the idea	298	8%
I don’t really care	298	2%

The table shows that only 8% of those responding said they opposed the idea of a new community center outright and 24% said they didn’t care.

This is a strong indication that there is a majority level of sentiment to support a new community center, considering that 90% of the respondents have at least one amenity preference and most of them have several.

Of those who expressed amenity preferences, 68% said they would like to see an indoor aquatic center, 61% a new fitness center, and 61% an indoor walking/running track.

Gymnasiums with indoor volleyball and basketball courts led the second tier of amenities, with 49% of respondents saying they would like to see those amenities, followed by aerobics rooms and racquetball courts at 48% and 39% respectively.

Day care rooms and a new outdoor aquatic center were also second tier amenities with 44% and 34% of respondents expressing a desire for those amenities.

What is clear from Question 9 is that there is a desire for new indoor and outdoor recreational amenities that is not being met by the current amenities provided by the park district.

This finding is consistent with responses to Questions 5, 6 and 7 that residents are leaving town to find recreational opportunities elsewhere.

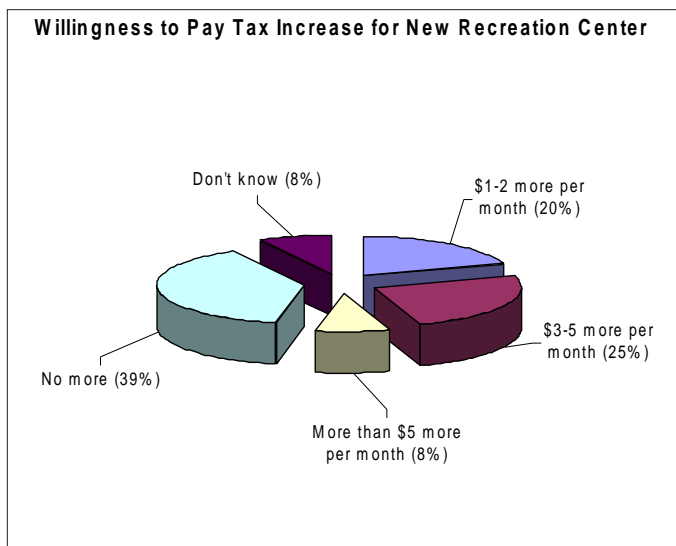
Question 10 is the first of this survey's two money questions.

# community needs assessment

It asks, whether respondents would use a new recreation center and would they be willing to pay for it.

This question is important because the willingness to pay for amenity improvements is the ultimate test of the public's resolve to support capital improvements.

The following graph compares the findings.



The graph shows that 20% of those responding to mail and telephone surveys said they would be willing to pay \$1-2 more per month (\$12-24 per year) in property taxes to the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District to support a new community center, whether they would use it or not.

Twenty-five per cent of those responding said they would be willing to pay \$3-5 more per month and eight per cent said they would be willing to pay more than \$5 per month. Combining these totals suggests that 53% of respondents said they would be willing to pay more in property taxes for

a new community center, 33% said no more and 13% were undecided.

Considering the fiscally conservative tendencies of downstate communities, this finding is an indication of strong community sentiment for a new community center.

Comparing mail to telephone survey findings for Question 10, the following table shows the differences in responses.

Mail and telephone tax increase comparison

Preference	Respondent	N	Mean
\$1-2/month	Mail	217	41%
	Telephone	107	45%
\$3-5/month	Mail	217	37%
	Telephone	107	50%
Over \$5/month	Mail	217	29%
	Telephone	107	8%
Don't Know			
None			

The findings show that mail survey respondents were less likely to oppose a tax increase than telephone survey respondents. In most communities the opposite is the case, again because of the desire of telephone survey respondents to please the interviewer.

In the cases of communities where mail survey respondents are more in favor of a tax increase than telephone respondents, it is an indication that the motivation for the survey to be returned was mail survey respondents' support for an initiative.

# community needs assessment

This is important in a close call, where about half of the community supports an initiative and half doesn't. It becomes a question of which group is more adamant and will work harder to win over the undecided community members.

In this case, it appears that those supporting a new community center will be the more vocal of the two groups.

## Questions 11-18

Questions 11 through 15 focused on facilities that the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District currently provides, including the parks, pathways and the Spring Lake Aquatic Center.

Prior to Question 11, mail survey respondents were presented a map of the park system so that respondents might remember which ones they utilized. Telephone survey respondents needed to rely on their memories.

The following table shows the percentages of respondents who said they used the various facilities.

Existing facility usage

	N	Mean
Atwood Park	305	51%
Connolly Park	300	9%
Teentown/Rec Center	305	23%
Cooper Park	306	77%
Flannigan Park	301	15%
Hillcrest Park	306	19%

Kelley Park	302	3%
Lyle Kunde/Lake Sule	305	36%
Memorial Park	305	30%
Skate Park	303	9%
Midwest Park	300	8%
Powers Park	302	4%
Skare Park	306	62%
Skare Homestead (Museum)	302	16%
Sweeney Park	304	4%
Tilton Memorial Park	303	16%
V.F.W. Park	306	39%
Hickory Grove Aquatics & Fitness Center	305	50%
Spring Lake Aquatic Park	305	42%
Spring Lake Marina	306	35%
Helms Complex	303	24%

The table shows that use of Cooper Park is the highest in the system, almost 26% higher than the next closest, Atwood Park, 27% higher than Hickory Grove and 35% higher than the Spring Lake Aquatic Center.

Skare Park is another park that has a high usage, with 62% of respondents utilizing its amenities.

Design Perspectives and Strategic Management Alliance find that, compared to other communities, use of the park system is quite high within the Flagg-Rochelle Park District.

This high usage of the parks is interesting, considering that the overall satisfaction level with the park district might not be as high as the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District might prefer.



# community needs assessment

The implications of this finding may be that focus groups, public hearings and park design analysis should focus on the parks themselves, including design issues and amenities.

Question 13 asked whether residents would be in favor of adding more parks to the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District. The combined mail and telephone survey findings are expressed in the following table.

Preference	N	Mean
Favor adding more parks	308	23%

This finding suggests that only 23% of those responding favor adding more parks to the existing park system.

The finding suggests that adding more parks is a low priority among mail survey respondents.

Question 16 asks respondents to prioritize the importance of improving or expanding the services of the Flagg-Rochelle Park District.

A Likert Scale was provided with 5 as very important, 4 as important, 3 as neutral, 2 as unimportant, and 1 as very unimportant.

The intention of this question was to create an index that allowed the comparison of maintaining existing services to adding new ones.

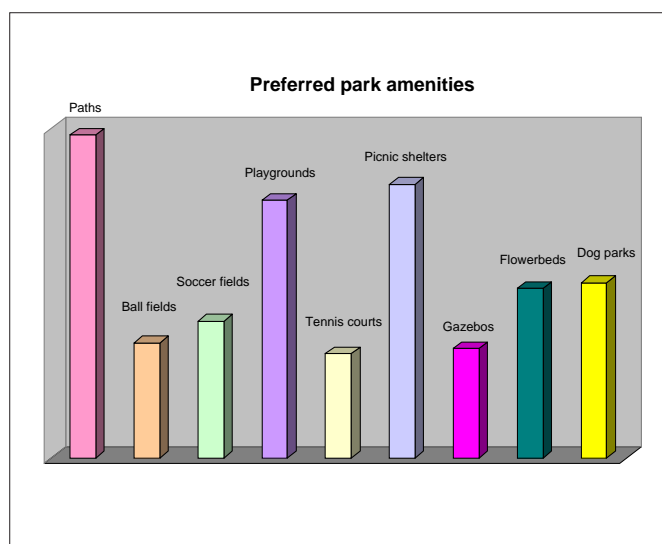
The following table compares the findings of the combined mail and telephone survey data.

Initiatives	Number Responding	Mean Score
Maintain existing services	312	4.26
Improve existing services	310	3.90
Acquire new park land	306	2.35
Improve existing park/facilities	308	3.82
Build new facilities	311	2.90

The mean score findings in the previous table suggests that maintaining and improving existing services are the highest priorities of survey respondents.

Acquiring new park land and building new facilities provide relatively low scores, consistent with what would be expected from the data in previous questions.

Question 14 asks what amenities respondents would like to see added to the parks. The following graph compares the findings.



# community needs assessment

The graph shows that the most popular park amenity was the construction of additional paths, with 59% of respondents supporting that initiative.

The construction of additional picnic shelters and playgrounds followed with 50% and 47% of respondents respectively.

The addition of dog parks and more flowerbeds provided 32% and 31% support from respondents. Less popular were the addition of more baseball and softball fields at 21%, the addition of more soccer fields at 25%, the construction of additional tennis courts at 19% and the construction of decorative gazebos at 20%.

The second money question of the survey was Question 15, which asked whether respondents would be willing to pay more for these amenities.

The following table compares the findings from the combined mail and telephone survey responses.

Preference	N	Mean
\$1-2/month	315	27%
\$3-5/month	315	16%
Over \$5/month	315	4%
Don't Know	315	46%
None	315	7%

The findings in the previous table show a similar willingness on the part of survey respondents to pay for park amenity improvements as compared

to the construction of a new community center.

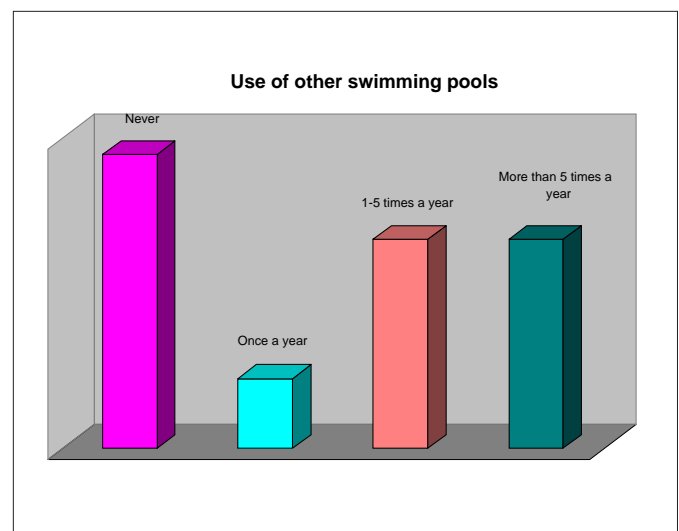
Of the 315 responding, 46% were opposed to a tax increase, 47% were willing to pay more, and 7% were undecided.

Considering the times that we are in, it might be fair to say that having half of the community willing to pay more in taxes for additional park services is important. While not a mandate for a tax increase, considering the fate of many communities' referenda, it's not a mandate against tax increases either.

The final question of the survey to be analyzed, Question 12, asks how frequently residents use an outdoor pool other than the Spring Lake Aquatic Center.

Considering that Question 11 found that 42% of the public uses the Spring Lake Aquatic Center, the purpose of this question was to identify what percentage of the public might be leaving Rochelle to use other aquatic facilities.

The following graph shows the findings.



# community needs assessment

The graph shows that 38% of those responding never use swimming facilities other than the Spring Lake Aquatic Center, and that 62% do.

Of those responding who do, 9% use other facilities only once a year, 27% one to five times per year, and 27% more than five times per year.

Comparing Flagg-Rochelle to Sycamore, a leakage of 62% usage of Spring Lake Aquatic Center business to other facilities is fairly comparable to Sycamore. In Sycamore, only 59% of respondents reported using facilities other than the Sycamore Community Swimming Pool.

The importance of this comparison is that Sycamore is now in the process of a major renovation to change that dynamic in an attempt to keep its residents in the community.

An aquatic center renovation at Spring Lake may also be a logical conclusion.

Similar to the findings from Question 10, the findings from Question 15 suggests that there is a general willingness on the part of residents to pay additional property taxes for services, although in somewhat lower percentages.

Of those responding to this question, 48% said they were willing to pay more in taxes, 41% said they would not, and 10% they hadn't decided.

## Leaving the Community to Receive Services Elsewhere

The Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Board of Commissioners was particularly interested in

the differences between those residents leaving the community to receive recreational services elsewhere and those not doing so.

One hypothesis was that those leaving were not as familiar with the Park District as those not leaving (Question 2) and, therefore, left because they simply didn't know the Park District provided the services that they sought elsewhere.

The following table employs independent samples t-testing, comparing those leaving the community for services and those not.

	Go Outside For Services	N	Mean
Familiar	Yes	126	93%
	No	194	96%

The table shows that residents going outside the community for recreational services are only slightly less familiar with the Park District than those not doing so, well within the margin of error. There is not enough evidence to support this hypothesis.

Another hypothesis would be that those residents going outside the community are less satisfied with the Park District than those remaining in the community for recreational services.

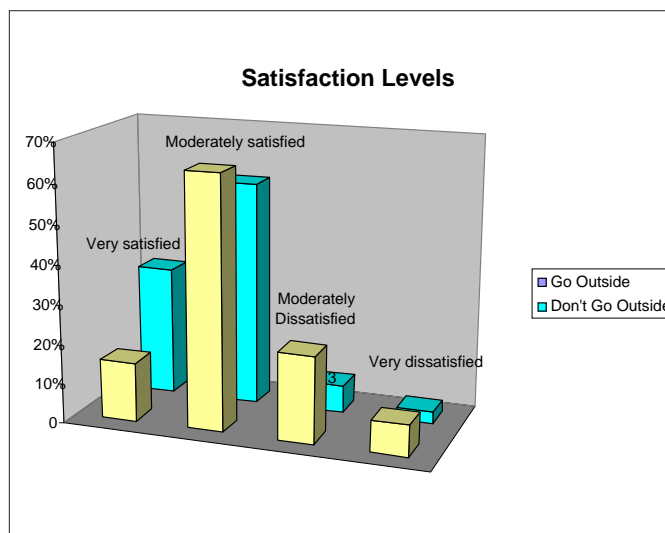
The following table and graph compares the levels of satisfaction by going outside for services.

# community needs assessment

## Satisfaction Levels

	Go Outside For Services	N	Mean
Very Satisfied	Yes	114	15%
	No	175	33%
Moderately Satisfied	Yes	111	64%
	No	174	57%
Moderately Dissatisfied	Yes	113	22%
	No	174	7%
Very Dissatisfied	Yes	113	8%
	No	173	3%

The previous table and graph show that the satisfaction levels for the Park District of those residents going outside the community for recreation services is significantly lower than for those not going outside the community.



Only 15% of those going outside are very satisfied, compared to 33% of those not going outside.

Of those who were somewhat dissatisfied with the Park District, 22% of those going outside were moderately dissatisfied compared to 7% not going outside.

And 8% of those going outside for services were very dissatisfied compared to only 3% of those not going outside.

The data would suggest that the need to go elsewhere for recreational services correlated with dissatisfaction with the Flagg-Rochelle Park District, therefore the hypothesis that leaving the community affects the satisfaction level with the Park District is supported.

The reason that this finding could be problematic for the Park District is that people who leave the community for recreational services elsewhere could carry a level of dissatisfaction with them because they can't get the services they seek from the government provider in their community.

Whether this affects their sentiments toward the Park District in other areas can be determined by additional analysis.

Considering the responses to Question 8, where respondents are asked if they would be in favor of building a new recreation center or that the Park District keep operating Hickory Grove, it could be hypothesized that those leaving the community for services would be more inclined to support the construction of a new community center than those not leaving.

The following table compares the responses.



# community needs assessment

	Go Outside For Services	N	Mean
Build a new community center	Yes No	129 190	55% 36%
Keep Hickory Grove Open	Yes No	129 190	33% 47%
Don't Know	Yes No	129 190	18% 23%

The table shows that 55% of those leaving the community for services elsewhere favor building a new recreation center, compared to 36% of those not leaving.

Likewise, only 33% of those leaving support keeping Hickory Grove open compared to 47% not leaving.

There is a difference between the undecided respondents, with those remaining in the community for services somewhat more undecided at 23% compared to 18% for those leaving.

The findings suggest that a majority of those leaving the community for recreational services might not need to do so as frequently if there were a new recreation center within the Flagg-Rochelle community.

Considering support for their willingness to pay additional property taxes (Question 10) to support the construction of a new recreation center, a hypothesis is that those who leave the community for services would be more willing to pay a tax increase to change the status quo than those not

leaving.

The rationale for this hypothesis is that there is a financial trade-off that those leaving the community would be willing to make, trading gasoline and time for additional property taxes.

The following table makes that comparison, using independent samples t-testing for Question 10.

More Property Taxes for a New Recreation Center

	Go Outside For Services	N	Mean
\$1-2/month	Yes No	123 189	28% 16%
\$3-5/month	Yes No	123 189	23% 26%
Over \$5/month	Yes No	123 189	15% 5%
Don't Know	Yes No	123 189	28% 46%
None	Yes No	123 189	10% 7%

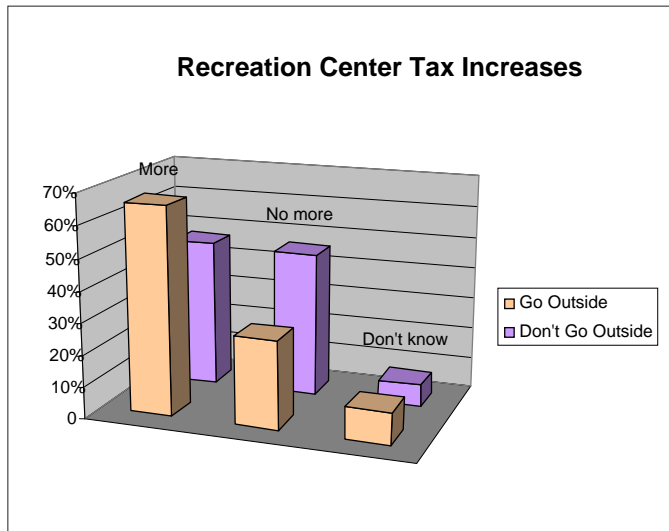
The table shows that there are relatively large differences in the support for property tax increases based on respondents leaving town for recreational services or not leaving the community.

Only 28% of those respondents leaving the community were opposed to a property tax increase compare to 46% of those not leaving.

# community needs assessment

Twenty-eight percent of those going elsewhere were willing to pay \$1-2 more per month compared to 16% of those not leaving. Fifteen percent of those leaving were willing to pay more than \$5 per month in additional taxes compared to 5% of those not leaving.

The following graph shows the differences when summed.



The graph shows that 66% of those going outside the community for services are willing to pay more in taxes to build a new community center compared to 47% of those not going outside.

This is a statistically significant difference that may demonstrate a causal relationship between the desires of people leaving the community to spend money to remain within the community.

To see if this willingness to pay carries over to the construction of park amenities, the following table makes the same comparison for Question 15, where it is asked how much respondents would be willing to pay for additional park amenities.

	Go Outside For Services	N	Mean
\$1-2/month	Yes	124	24%
	No	186	28%
\$3-5/month	Yes	124	16%
	No	186	16%
Over \$5/month	Yes	124	9%
	No	186	1%
Don't Know	Yes	124	42%
	No	186	48%
None	Yes	124	6%
	No	186	6%

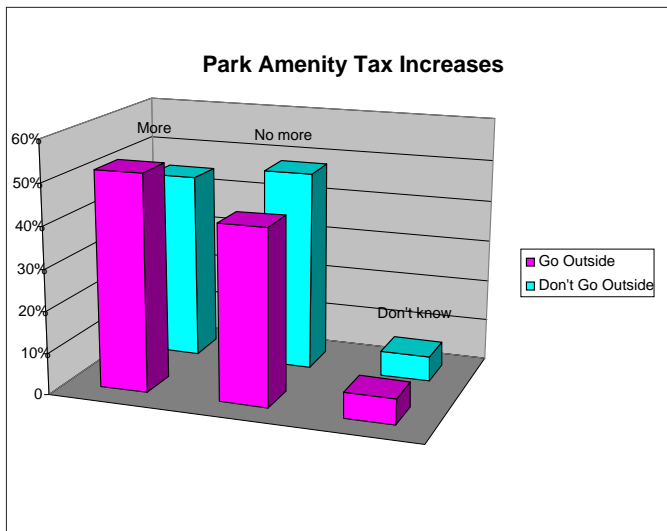
The table again shows that there is a lower percentage of people not willing to increase their taxes at all of those going outside the community for services compared to those not going, 42% compared to 48%. While not as great as the difference for construction of a new recreation center, the difference is also statistically significant.

The percentages of those supporting a \$1-2 and \$3-5 tax increase are nearly the same. But there is a significant difference between those willing to pay more than \$5 per month in additional taxes in those going outside the community to those not doing so, 9% compared to 1%.

The pattern seems to be emerging that those going outside the community for services elsewhere are more willing to pay tax increases than those not seeing the need to leave.

The following graph compares the summed totals of those willing to pay a tax increase of one amount or another to those not leaving the community for services.

# community needs assessment



The graph shows that 52% of those respondents going outside the community for recreational services are willing to pay more in property taxes to fund new park amenities compared to 45% of those not leaving.

This is a statistically significant difference that again demonstrates a potential causal relationship between the need to leave the community for recreational services and the willingness to pay for facilities in Flagg-Rochelle.

Residents leaving the community for services may see the value in paying more for services locally. It could be a financial issue or it could be a time issue. For these or other reasons, there is a difference between the two groups.

Comparing the park amenities that those leaving the community for services prefer compared to those not leaving the community, the following table shows the differences for Question 14.

## Park Amenities

	Go Outside For Services	N	Mean
Walking/ Biking Paths	Yes	116	62%
	No	160	58%
Softball/ baseball fields	Yes	117	20%
	No	160	23%
Soccer fields	Yes	117	22%
	No	160	27%
Playground equipment	Yes	117	43%
	No	157	52%
Tennis courts	Yes	117	24%
	No	159	17%
Picnic shelter	Yes	117	41%
	No	159	58%
Decorative gazebos	Yes	117	22%
	No	159	19%
More flower beds	Yes	117	24%
	No	159	38%
Dog park	Yes	117	35%
	No	158	28%

The table shows that there are some categories where there are differences between the two groups. People leaving the community prefer the addition of walking paths, tennis courts and dog parks in higher percentages compared to those not leaving town for services.

People remaining within the community for services prefer athletic fields, playgrounds, and picnic shelters.

This suggests that those leaving town for recreational services tend to prefer amenities used by adults, such as walking paths and tennis courts. Those staying in the community tend to prefer amenities that serve children, such as athletic fields and playgrounds.

# community needs assessment

These findings suggest that those leaving town for recreational services may be doing so for adult services, such as fitness, and are willing to pay additional taxes for these services.

Residents who are not leaving town may tend to have children and, while preferring their parks to have children's amenities, are less willing to pay for them.

## Demographic Differences

One final level of analysis would be a comparison of responses to survey questions based on demographic differences, such as age. These differences can be important for a number of reasons.

One reason is the hypothesis that younger residents of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District might be higher users of its services than older residents. Another might be that older residents would vote in local elections at higher levels than younger residents.

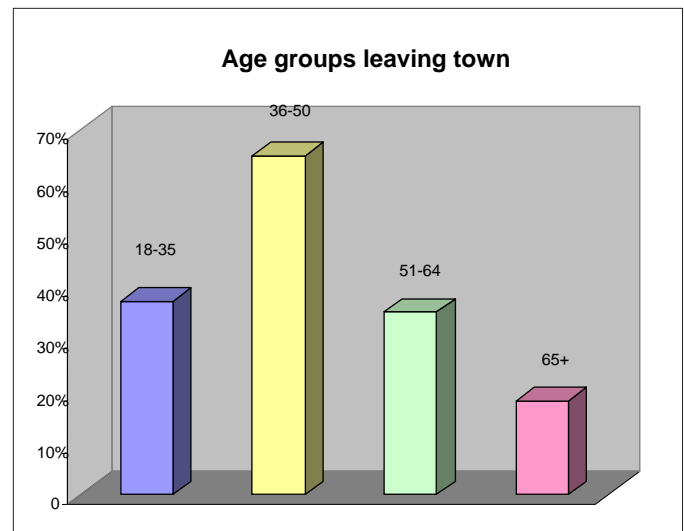
This phenomenon would be a paradox: the residents who participate in the decision making process might withhold financial support for services that the users might desire.

To test this and other age related hypothesis, the responses to Question 19 in the mail and telephone surveys was categorized. In Question 19, respondents were asked their age. Their responses were sorted into new variables which became 18-35 year olds (young adults), 36-50 year olds (middle adults), 51-64 year olds (empty nesters), and 65 and over year olds (senior

citizens).

A variable was also created for households that contained children 17 and under within them, in order to compare their responses to those of households with no children, based on the hypothesis that households with children would be more supportive of service improvements and would be more willing to pay for these services than households without children.

Considering the first hypothesis, that there are differences in the way age groups use and support recreation services in the Flagg-Rochelle community, the following graph compares the percentages of age group households that travel to other communities for recreational services.



The graph shows that 65% of respondents who were 36-50 years old said they went out of town for recreational services. This is significantly higher than the 18% for senior citizens (65 years old and over), 35% for empty nesters (51-64 year olds), and 37% for young adults (18-35 year olds) who said they went outside Rochelle for recreational services.



# community needs assessment

The finding that 65% of respondents who were 36-50 years old could be the result of the high percentages of household respondents who have at least one child 17 years of age or under within the household.

The following table shows the percentages of households that had children within based on the ages of the respondents.

	Children in the household	N	Mean
18-35	Yes	122	28%
36-50	Yes	122	52%
51-64	Yes	122	13%
65 & Over	Yes	122	2%

The table shows that where survey respondents were between 36 and 50 years old, 52% of these households reported have children within them, compared to 28% of households where the respondents were 18 to 35 years old, 13% where respondents were 51-64 years old, and 2% where respondents were 65 or older.

The findings from the previous graph and table would suggest that there might be a relationship between the age of respondents and whether they have children in the household, and whether they have children in the household and whether they go out of town for recreational services.

Considering the influence of having children in the

household to other issues discussed in the survey, the following table compares households with and without children in their responses to Question 8, where respondents were asked whether they supported building a new community center, keeping Hickory Grove open, or they didn't know.

	Children in the household	N	Mean
Build a new community center	Yes	121	56%
	No	195	35%
Keep Hickory Grove Open	Yes	121	30%
	No	195	48%
Don't Know	Yes	121	19%
	No	195	27%

The table shows that it makes a difference whether there are children in the household. Considering all households, regardless of the age of the respondents, 56% of respondents with children in their households supported building a new recreation/community center, compared to 35% of those without children.

Only 30% of households with children supported keeping Hickory Grove open compared to 48% without children. And fewer households with children were undecided about which would be a better option.

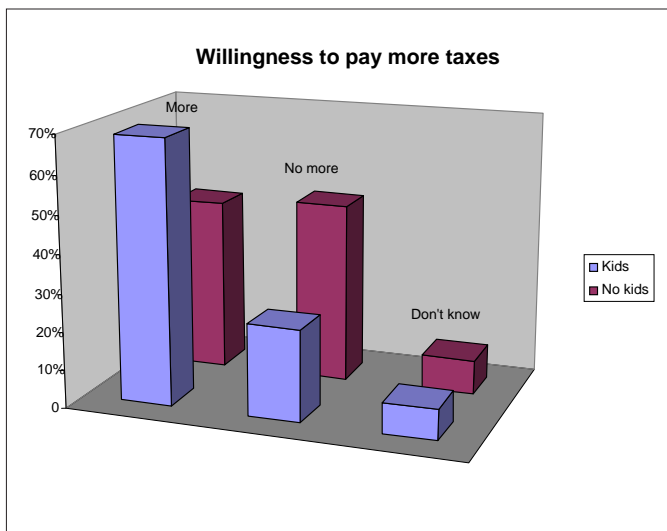
Considering their willingness to pay for a new recreation/community center (Question 10), the following table compares households with children to households without.

# community needs assessment

	Children in the household	N	Mean
\$1-2/month	Yes	120	24%
	No	188	18%
\$3-5/month	Yes	120	36%
	No	188	18%
Over \$5/month	Yes	120	9%
	No	188	9%
No More	Yes	120	24%
	No	188	47%
None	Yes	120	8%
	No	188	9%

The table shows that households with children are much more willing to pay a tax increase to build a new community center compared to households without children.

The following graph totals the categories willing to pay a tax increase and compares them to those who are unwilling and those who aren't sure.



The graph shows that 69% of households with children said they were willing to pay more in taxes to build a new recreation/community center compared to 45% of households without

children. Only 24% of households with children said they were unwilling to pay more in taxes for a new recreation/community center compared to 47% of households without children.

The importance of this finding is that, assuming that households with children would be likely to utilize a new recreation/community center, this may be a contributing factor to their greater willingness to pay for it.

Considering their usage of Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District parks, the following table compares households without children to those with children.

## Use of the parks

	Children in the household	N	Mean
Never Use	Yes	118	15%
	No	189	51%
Once a year	Yes	119	9%
	No	189	10%
1-5 times per year	Yes	119	37%
	No	189	21%
Over five times per year	Yes	119	40%
	No	189	20%

The table shows that only 15% of households with children never use the parks compared to 51% without children. Forty percent of households with children use the parks over five times per year compared to 20% of households without children.

This suggests that children are the primary users of the parks.

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While this may seem to be intuitive, recent national studies suggest that parks are often used by adults more than children. Such is clearly not the case in Flagg-Rochelle.

Considering their desire to add more parks to the Flagg-Rochelle park system, the following table compares households with and without children.

	Children in the household	N	Mean
Favor adding more parks	Yes	114	33%
	No	186	19%

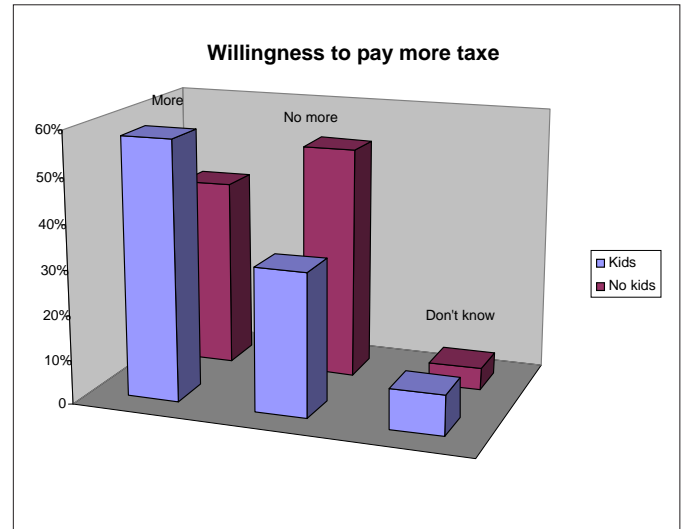
The table shows that 33% of those households with children favor adding more parks to the system compared to 19% of households without children. Since neither is a majority, this finding would confirm the earlier finding that the community is not overly supportive of adding new parks.

As far as their willingness to pay for amenity improvements to the existing parks, the following table compares households with and without children.

	Children in the household	N	Mean
\$1-2/month	Yes	117	34%
	No	189	23%
\$3-5/month	Yes	117	20%
	No	189	15%
Over \$5/month	Yes	117	4%
	No	189	4%
No More	Yes	117	32%
	No	189	52%

Don't Know	Yes	117	9%
	No	189	5%

The table shows that only 32% of those household with children are willing to pay no more per month in property taxes, compared to 52% of households without children. The following graph presents the findings in a more visually appealing format.



The graph shows that 58% of households with children are willing to pay more in taxes to improve their Flagg-Rochelle parks, compared to 42% of households without children.

These findings are again intuitive, considering that it would be expected that households with children would use the parks and therefore would be more willing to pay for updated amenities.

## Conclusions

Without the guidance of well constructed surveys, it is difficult for elected officials to know what the public really wants. So, as a reflection of the public will, generalizable survey conclusions often turn into policy decisions, as they should.

# community needs assessment

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The following conclusions emanate from the mail and telephone survey data. They are presented in the order of importance to the park district.

- Flagg-Rochelle residents are highly familiar with and moderately satisfied with the park district, indicating the need for an improved public relations program.
- Residents participate in recreation in large numbers and many go outside the park district for services, which should be of concern to the district and may contribute to the moderate satisfaction levels.
- The main reason residents go outside for services is that the Flagg-Rochelle Park District doesn't offer some of them. But another important reason is the quality of park district services, which should be a focus of future district efforts.
- Residents somewhat prefer building a new facility over keeping Hickory Grove open, possibly because nearly half of them report using Hickory Grove.
- Residents prefer indoor aquatics and fitness as new community center amenities, even though these amenities are currently being offered at Hickory Grove, suggesting a level of dissatisfaction with the pool there.
- There is a willingness to pay for a new recreation center by increasing property taxes, but the undecided citizens may need to be courted for this to become a reality.
- Residents use the parks more than other park district facilities, with some parks used in larger percentages than others, indicating that improvements to the more popular parks should precede improvements to the less popular.
- Even though they use parks in high percentages residents are not supportive of adding new parks to the existing system, which is counter-intuitive, suggesting that parks are not as important to some residents as their tax bills remaining low.
- Residents are in favor of adding more walking paths, picnic shelters and playgrounds to the parks more than any other amenities, suggesting that the most popular amenities be constructed in the most intensely used parks.
- There is a willingness to improve the parks by increasing property taxes, but slightly less than to build a new community center, suggesting that additional communicating needs to be done with the public to identify which is more important.
- There are differences between those leaving the community for recreational services and those remaining in the community. People who leave are more willing to pay property tax increases for a new recreation center and park amenities than those not leaving.
- Households with children favor a new recreation/ community center compared to keeping Hickory Grove open.



# community needs assessment

- Households with children would be more willing to pay increased taxes to fund a new recreation/ community center than households without children.

- Households with children would be more willing to pay increased taxes to fund new park amenities than households without children.

These conclusions suggest that the Flagg-Rochelle Park District is at a crossroads in terms of deciding which capital initiatives it needs to consider. With limited resources, it can't do everything.

It is apparent that Flagg-Rochelle residents are going to other communities in search of recreational services, and that as gasoline becomes more expensive, they might be more willing to pay higher taxes instead of higher gasoline prices.

Therefore, it is time for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District to anticipate this potential and determine ways that it can keep as many of its residents within the community.

Such an initiative will benefit those who leave the community and those who planned to stay here all along.

## Special Interest Group Meeting

A good plan will take into account the special interest groups that can be found in any community which can become a powerful lobbyist to seek out their individual agendas. To learn more about the special interest groups and their goals for the future, a meeting was held on April 29th.

The following were in attendance:

Stephen Liezert, Executive Director

Al Rogers, President

Sarah Huth, Design Perspectives, Inc.

Jay Bratko, AYSO

Greg Query, Park Foundation

Jim Nalley, VFW Softball

Kay Dobbs, RYBA

Marlon Ricketts, Junior Tackle

John Miller, Rochelle Little League

Javier Zepeda, RTHS & Hispanic Soccer League

Three primary topics were covered that included short term goals, long term goals and a general discussion of issues and/or concerns surrounding their organizations.

The short term goals were as follows:

- (VFW Softball): Add a permanent restroom facility; upgrade electric for concessions/lights

- (Junior Tackle): Parking, grand stand at Helms Field is far away for viewers

- (Park Foundation): Utilizing all park spaces

- (AYSO): Roll and seed their fields at the Middle School

- RYBA): More gym space

- (RTHS & Hispanic Soccer League): Indoor facility

- (Little League): Update contract

# community needs assessment

The long term goals were as follows:

- Diversify the Park Foundation, more members, and knowledge about it.

- Possible permanent location for AYSO to play and for equipment

- An indoor facility to use for practice and when the weather is bad, to offer all year round play

- A central location for specific groups, so they are not split up

- To offer programs for special needs, seniors (accessibility)

- To connect more of the parks/facilities to the bike path – many kids ride to practice/games

- A second girl's softball field

- To have some type of agreement between the Park District, Associations and the School District for using fields/facilities

- To have all the associations meet with the Park District on a regular basis (twice a year)

- Better utilization of the park spaces and facilities that we have

The evening concluded with an issue discussion with the organizations that were present. These included:

1. The fence at VFW Park – have to take down and put up as seasons change with the different

groups using the space. Maybe move all junior tackle practices, games and equipment to Helms Field.

2. Girls and boys basketball does not have enough gym space. Would like to offer more games, etc. but limited space. The boys league actually has to turn kids away. New indoor facility.

3. No traveling teams in Rochelle, don't have the ability to offer this because of space limits. Would like to have these kinds of teams to bring in economic revenue (staying in hotels, eating out, etc. in Rochelle).

4. Helms Field. A lot of space there that isn't used. Wipe flat and start over? Soccer complex? Maybe keep some items (few tennis courts, half the grand stand, football field, practice area) and then add in needed amenities.

5. Park spaces. Things are just pieced together and added as needed, now it's kind of a hodge/podge of elements with no overall vision.

6. Indoor facility. A central location, do we do a land swap? Indoor soccer, practice for baseball/softball, basketball game/practice space, track

7. Towns around FRPD. Include them and invite them into Rochelle to use facilities, programs, generate money, add more kids to activities.

# community needs assessment

## Public Hearings

Every planning effort should allow the community to attend a public meeting to voice concerns and express their vision for the future of the Park District. Four dates were scheduled to gather this type of feedback, however, only the last two were attended in any significant number. The following is a list of meeting dates and purpose of the meeting:

May 17th: Listening

May 21st: Listening

July 17th: Survey Results

July 29th: Park Improvements

These types of meetings are usually difficult to have the community attend unless a controversial issue is being debated or considered. From the last two meetings, it was clear that the audience was excited about the direction of the planning study and did not object to the information that was presented.

## Delphi Committee

In April of 2008, Flagg-Rochelle Park Director Steve Liezert invited a group of interested citizens to form a focus group to guide the Park Board as it developed a comprehensive plan. The focus group or the Delphi Committee was invited to prepare findings and to recommend goals and objectives relating to the Flagg-Rochelle Park District's current programs, future facility needs and financial capacity. The committee met bi-weekly through the summer completing our report in September. Parallel with the Delphi Committee's work, the consulting firms of Strategic Management Alliance and Design Perspectives

conducted phone and mail surveys to gather information about resident satisfaction, ideas for future development, and willingness to support future tax referendums.

The objective of the Delphi committee was to evaluate the Flagg-Rochelle Park District as a whole to determine what they do well and what the park district can do to improve the overall quality of life for citizens of the community and the surrounding area. This report presents findings, goals and objectives in three topical areas including: programming, facilities, and all areas relating to financing.

The Delphi Committee is made up of a well-rounded group of area residents that participate in different organizations such as the business community, city government, the Chamber of Commerce, the Rochelle Senior Center, GREDCO and the Rochelle Community Hospital. The members of the Delphi Committee are as follows;

Ken Alberts

Mayor Olson

Dave Eckhardt

Jamie Craven

Peg Thompson

Connie Dougherty

Jim Beardin

Bruce Peterson

Tim Hayden

The Delphi Committee would like to thank Steve Liezert for this opportunity and congratulate the Park Board on taking this first step to improving the Flagg-Rochelle Park District. The Committee also wishes to thank David Emanuelson of Strategic Management Alliance and Tod Stanton of Design Perspectives for their insights and suggestions.

# community needs assessment

## CHAPTER ONE: FINDINGS

On the basis of Park District documents (e.g. financial and budget reports, program literature, etc.), public information, citizen surveys and Delphi Committee member's knowledge, the Committee presents the following findings:

### A. Programming

This sub-topic concerns programs offered by the Park District to community residents, local businesses, and other users of Park District's facilities.

- There are many different organizations providing some form of recreation in the City of Rochelle include; Rochelle Jr. Tackle, AYSO, Rochelle Little League, RYBA (Rochelle Youth Basketball Association), etc. Many of these organizations have ties to the Park District including use of facilities but none are administrated by the Park District.
- After hearing input from a YMCA representative, it was proven that co-sponsorship of programs with other entities (e.g. the Kishwaukee College or the Kishwaukee YMCA) is a viable way to expand the level of services that are being provided.
  - o Partnerships with other organizations can also be a way to provide programming outside of the Park Districts expertise.
- 57% of survey respondents going outside of the park district for recreational services do so because the Park District does not offer the services they are seeking.
- 36% of respondents go outside of the Park District because other agencies provide services better.
  - o The last two statements indicate to the Delphi Committee that the current Park District does not have the necessary facility to provide what its citizens want and need.
- When compared to the Batavia Park District, the Flagg-Rochelle Park District survey respondents are less satisfied with the Park District's programming. The Delphi Committee feels that in general, programming is below average.
  - o This fact is troubling because suitable facilities and better programs are typically at least twenty miles away. In light of the recent focus on transportation costs, there should be an opportunity to regain these recreational users.
- Brand Recognition- Members of the Delphi Committee have experience using YMCA programs. Also, different members have heard presentations on the benefits of the "Y Brand". The YMCA association is a nationally known brand who has a long tradition for providing a high level of recreational services throughout the country. One option for improving programming or the Park District's image may be to partner with an organization like the YMCA marketing, human resource and financial assistance.



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- The current Park District is made up of two executives who provide all of the management for the park district. To properly oversee effective programming, the Delphi Committee feels that more staff will be needed in the future including marketing, human resource and financial assistance.
- The Delphi Committee feels that the Hickory Grove Civic Center and its exercise equipment are below average and limit the Park District's ability to provide good quality indoor programming for the community.
  - o At the time a new community facility is built, Hickory Grove should no longer be used to provide recreational services.

## B. Facilities

This sub-topic concerns the more identifiable facilities owned and maintained by the Park District. The comments for this section are separated by facility.

- The Delphi committee feels that the Park District's best skill is maintaining the outdoor parks that we have.
- The park district owns 890+ acres and has seventeen parks. The parks vary in size from a .6 acre neighborhood park to the 320 acre Skare Park facility.
- The Delphi Committee feels that having green space is an important aspect of maintaining the identity of the city. In the future, this green space should be maintained by encouraging the development of neighborhood parks to be incorporated in new subdivisions.
- The Strategic Management Alliance study indicates that only one in four people are in favor of adding new parks to the park system. The Delphi Committee agrees that adding new, large scale parks should not be a priority, but that the Park District should instead focus on improving the existing parks.
- The bike path is considered the Park District's best improvement in recent memory.
  - o Unfortunately, the climate in which we live in limits citizen's ability to walk twelve months a year. This is one reason that an indoor facility needs to be addressed.
  - o The Delphi Committee suggests plowing snow off of the path in the milder times of winter months to increase the number of days the path can be used.
- Skare Park was discussed and is considered one of the park districts biggest assets.
  - o In 2008 the Park District purchased a golf ball dispenser for the driving range. This purchase is considered a good move because it increases the number of hours the facility is open while limiting the amount of staff to run the facility. Suggestions for improving the driving range can be found in chapter two.

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- o The Delphi Committee feels that Skare Park is one of very few public places in the greater Rochelle area where citizen can experience wild life and the outdoors.

- o Skare Park is considered a very good facility for horseback riding.

- o A portion of the residential property increase and the commercial increase is from new growth. A large portion of the growth came from local multipliers that are added to tax assessments by the State of Illinois' sales ratio studies when real estate values are appreciating.

- o During this period industrial EAV decreased.

## C. Financing

In preparing these findings, the Delphi Committee reviewed the Park District's 2008 budget, its actual expenses from 2007 and information relating to the Park District's Equalized Assessed Valuation from 1996 to 2006.

- The Delphi Committee reviewed the budget in abstract, but concluded that it was not our duty to review and criticize each item line by line.

- Most of the time spent discussing financial information focused on the Park District's growing EAV.

- The Park District's EAV has grown an average of 6.5% each year, between 1996 to 2006.

- This increase is more pronounced in the years 2004 to 2007. In 2004 to 2007, the Park District's EAV increased by 39% or 9.75% per year.

- o According to the information provided by the Ogle County Assessment Office, this growth can be broken down as follows; 73% from residential property, 9% from commercial property, and 14% from railroad related property.

- Exact information in relation to EAV was not available. Since the date of the information, there has been new construction and tax abatements affect the data that was reviewed.

- It was noted by the Delphi Committee that some of the new industrial real estate is being built in the Creston-Dement Park District. The Flagg Rochelle Park District will not benefit from all of the industrial growth south of Interstate 88 and east of the Burlington Northern Railroad.

- o Two examples of this include the new 600,000 square foot Bay Valley Foods warehouse and the Illinois River Energy ethanol plant.

- Similarly, the new Rochelle Technology Park is also in the Creston-Dement Park District.

- During time spent with consultant Dave Emanuelson, it was communicated to the Delphi Committee that in recent years financing has not been the reason that capital improvements have not been made.

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- Dave Emanuelson also reported to the Delphi Committee that the current bonding capacity of the Park District without going to a referendum is \$7.5 million dollars. This dollar amount is insufficient to construct a state of the art recreation center based on estimates provided to the Delphi Committee.

## CHAPTER 2: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter presents goals and related objectives consistent with the findings detailed in chapter 1 of this report. The goals and objectives within each category are not listed in order of priority.

### A. Programming

#### Goal: Professional Administration of Current Programs

##### Objectives:

1. The Park District should seek ways to provide professional administration of such activities such as youth baseball, football and basketball. Professional administration will improve the quality of the programs.

#### Goal: Incorporate Technology to Expand Programming

##### Objectives:

1. The Delphi Committee recommends using online and video instructions to provide a wider range of services. This could be an effective way to provide programming that may not be otherwise cost effective.

#### Goal: Provide More Outdoor Activities At Skare Park

##### Objectives:

1. Skare Park has a wide variety of resources that are not readily available in most of eastern Ogle County. The Park District should consider new programming that can be offered at Skare Park that is not available in the region.

#### Goal: Partner with other Park Districts

##### Objectives:

1. Rochelle is well located with many neighboring park districts and education facilities within twenty miles of Rochelle. The Park District should seek to partner with other park districts and schools to find ways to provide programming options that otherwise might not drawn enough interest just in the park district.

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2. An example of this would be a programming like fly fishing. There may not be enough interested people in the Flagg Rochelle park district to have a fly fishing class, but if done in partnership with Kishwaukee College you may be able to have the class.

## B. Facilities

### **Specific Facility: Driving Range**

#### **Suggestions:**

1. The driving range should be given more priority in the future.
2. Various greens should be constructed between 100 and 250 yards for targets.
3. Better care should be taken of the natural tee boxes.
4. Consideration should be given to the construction of a driving range inside the city limits. The construction of an in-town driving range, on an existing park would raise the profile of the facility, therefore, making it more accessible. Potential sites include the grass field purchased west of Walgreens and Midway Park.

### **Specific Facility: Bike Path Extensions**

#### **Suggestions:**

1. Extend the bike path west to Flagg Center and eventually to Skare Park.
2. Encourage incorporation of paths in future residential subdivisions north and west of Rochelle, as well as through future rural residential subdivisions in the Flagg Center area.
3. Proceed with the consultant's suggestion to build more benches and workout stations along the bike path.
4. Proceed with the consultant's suggestion to build branches of the bike path within the existing parks. This will serve as a way to extend the overall length of the bike path and provide a neighborhood element to the bike path for citizens with access to parks, but not immediate access to the original bike path or the desire to use a four mile path.

### **Specific Facility: Community Center**

#### **Suggestions:**

1. Work with other governmental bodies in Rochelle to construct a new community center. See Narrative Addendum

### **Specific Facility: Skare Park**

#### **Suggestions:**

1. The number one goal for Skare Park should be preservation. In the future a tree maintenance program should be considered at Skare Park to remove dying trees so healthy trees can prosper.

# community needs assessment

2. Consider partnering with RHTS, Kishwaukee College or NIU Horticulture departments to investigate ways to continue to preserve the facility.

## **Specific Facility: Helms Field**

### **Suggestions:**

1. Helms Field should become the Park District's premier outdoor sports facility. The football field/track facility should continue to house Jr. Tackle, competition soccer, junior track and other exercise programming.
2. The Park District should conduct a study to determine if the baseball, softball and tennis courts are currently being used or if these areas should be redeveloped to maximize the use of the facility

## **C. Financial**

### **Goal: Maximizing the Tax Levy**

#### **Objectives:**

1. The staff should determine the most cost effective way of providing needed park services and should establish a tax levy consistent with those costs.

### **Goal: Financial Partnership with the Creston-Dement Park District**

#### **Objectives:**

1. In view of the expanding real estate tax base in the City of Rochelle, but outside of the Flagg-Rochelle park district, the park district should consider financial intergovernmental agreements for the benefit of all governmental bodies.

### **Goal: Develop A Plan for New Real Estate Tax Income**

#### **Objectives:**

1. The Delphi Committee recommends that the park district work with consultants to issue bonds to pay for future improvements. The park district should identify new revenue streams from the RC2 warehouse, Boise Cascade warehouse, the Prologis warehouse (occupied by Clark Steel/DelMonte to repay the bonds with these new revenue streams.
2. Issuing bonds will generate capital to pay for new improvements with future revenue streams.



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## Narrative Addendum

Over the past twenty years there have always been discussions throughout the Rochelle area about the need for some form of new recreation facility in Rochelle. These discussions have been had in part because citizens from the Rochelle area live close enough to other towns that have beautiful facilities like Oregon, Byron and DeKalb to name a few. Members of the community drive to these places to participate in activities such as basketball, swimming and many other activities that are not available in Rochelle because of the lack of a modern recreational facility. In Rochelle, the only indoor recreational facility is the Hickory Grove Aquatics & Fitness Center.

Hickory Grove was originally built by a real estate developer in the early 1980's. The facility is part of a mixed use development that includes a 4 story hotel, a 4 story condo project, a restaurant and a banquet

center. In the early 1990's a portion of Hickory Grove that houses the pool and the fitness center was acquired by the Ogle County Civic Center Authority. The Flagg Rochelle Park District uses part of the facility to provide a weight room, cardiovascular equipment and an indoor pool. There are also various rooms where fitness classes are conducted. Over the past twenty years Hickory Grove has been one of the few places in Rochelle for citizens to swim and work out. The Delphi Committee feels that Hickory Grove has weaknesses that limit the number of programs and

quality of programs that the park district can offer. Hickory Grove is also a liability for reasons such as its multi floor location and expensive operating costs. In comparison to other facilities in Northern Illinois, the facility is considered below average by the Delphi Committee.

Overall it was the consensus of the Delphi Committee that replacing Hickory Grove with a state of the art recreation center should be the community's number one priority. When attracting new citizens and providing a good quality of life for current citizens, a recreation center is a must.

The Delphi Committee feels that the construction of a recreation center can serve many groups in our community including school age children, adults, senior citizens and also cardiac rehab patients.

The mail survey conducted by the consultants indicates that 48% of respondents go outside of the district to meet their

recreational needs. This evidence helps illustrate that the park district is not meeting the needs of its citizens. The Delphi Committee feels that a big reason that this is true is because of the lack of facilities that the district has to offer the kind of services that citizens are looking for.

Based on the financial information provided by the consultants, the Flagg Rochelle park district can bond for \$7.5 million dollars.



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# community needs assessment

The rough estimate of the construction of a new recreation facility exceeds the park districts bonding ability by at least \$5 million dollars. The Delphi Committee feels that the construction of a new recreational facility should be the community's number one priority. A recreation facility is an important quality of life benefit that has been missing from Rochelle for a long time. Over the past fifteen years the voters of the Rochelle have voted down different referendums relating to the construction of a new high school and different additions at Kishwaukee College. In order for the park district to construct a new recreation center the park district will have to ask the voters via a referendum. The Delphi Committee does not feel that the community can afford to wait for the park district to pass a referendum to fund the construction of a new community center. The Delphi Committee feels that the building should be built through an intergovernmental agreement involving some combination of the park district, the city, school districts, the hospital and the senior center.

In 2002 the park board hired Barclay & Associates out of Oak Lawn to conduct a feasibility study of the Hickory Grove Facility. Barclay & Associates is a firm who provides Architecture, Engineering and also Planning services. The feasibility study that was completed was supposed to serve as a guide to lead the park district in all matters relating to the facility. One component of the study was a survey. Some of the questions in this survey were similar to the questions asked in the recent survey completed by Strategic Management Alliance and Design Perspective, Inc. For example one question that was asked by both surveys involved

the option of building a new facility versus continuing to utilize the Hickory Grove facility. In the 2002 study, 73% of people asked were in favor of building a new facility instead of renovating Hickory Grove. In the most recent survey 46% of people were in favor of building a new facility while 36% of responders were in favor of continuing to use the Hickory Grove facility.

One question that was asked in the 2002 survey that was not asked in the 2008 report relating to whether or not the park district should consider a joint venture when building a new facility. In 2002 the citizens surveyed by Barclay & Associates stated; "A significant 85% of the survey respondents expressed that there should be a major cooperation between the local High School District (when they develop and build a new school) and the Park District in joint facility construction." At the time that the survey was produced the high school was in the planning stages of building a new school. This school has now been built without any cooperative construction between the park district and the high school. The Delphi Committee feels that this line of thinking by 85% of respondents should be investigated further in the near future. There are many different organizations who are in need of space for some form of recreation or another. While the group cannot speak for any organization in particular, the general feeling in the group is that some form of joint venture is the ultimate answer for constructing a community center in Rochelle. With proper planning and cooperation from different entities, the joint construction of a recreational/activities facility in Rochelle is a way to provide the needs that the citizens of the

# community needs assessment

Flagg-Rochelle park district are looking for.

In 2002 the Barclay & Associates study asked respondents what they felt a new facility should consist of. The results of the survey said that, "80% of respondents selected a gymnasium and walking track as their two (2) main preferences for added facilities to the Hickory Grove Civic Center, if major additions and renovations were to take place. In 2008 the Strategic Management Alliance asked respondents what they most want to see in a new community center. Noteworthy answers included; an Indoor Aquatic Center (65%), Fitness center (61%), Walking/jogging track (53%), Gymnasiums (43%) and Senior citizen facilities (39%).

## Conclusion

The Delphi Committee has reviewed the Flagg-Rochelle Park District as a whole and has presented its observations and suggestions and divided them into three topics; programming, facilities and financial related information. While the report has been divided into three categories, the central theme of the report is facilities. The most important facility that needs to be addressed is a new indoor recreation facility. Whether the topic is programming, facilities or financing the Delphi Committee continually came back to a new community center.

The Delphi Committee feels that the construction of a community center should be a high priority for all governmental bodies in Rochelle. The Delphi

Committee feels that the Flagg-Rochelle Park District does a good job maintaining the existing parks and outside facilities that they have, but that Hickory Grove is a poor indoor facility. Until all fitness and wellness activities are relocated to a new facility, the Delphi Committee feels that the programming offered in Rochelle will not be successful.

Based on the current bonding ability of the Park District, the construction of a community center cannot be feasibly accomplished by the Park District without the passing of a referendum. The

Delphi Committee does not feel that Rochelle can wait for a referendum to construct a new facility. A community center that provides a wide range of indoor programming and a community activities has been missing from Rochelle for many years and needs to be addressed immediately by whatever entity can build this facility sooner rather than



In the goal of having an open and transparent planning process, the comprehensive plan has reviewed input provided by a number of sources in the community. Public workshops have been conducted, user groups have been consulted, a group of community leaders dubbed the Delphi Committee have offered their suggestions, a mail and telephone survey of 336 household returns have been analyzed, and the staff and board have provided their input and shared ideas.

All of these sources need to be taken into consideration to determine the overall needs of the community as well as the needs of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District itself. For this reason, goals and objectives of this plan will be categorized as administrative, recreation programming, land acquisition and development, park maintenance and facility goals.

Administrative goals have emerged based on input from the board and staff, input from interest groups, and the work of the Delphi committee.

Recreation programming goals have emerged from the telephone and mail surveys, input from the staff and the work of the Delphi committee.

Land acquisition and park development goals resulted from mail and telephone survey analysis, input from interest groups, input from the board and staff, the work of the Delphi committee and the consultant's expertise.

Park maintenance goals were largely a result of input from the staff, but with some input from interest groups and the mail and telephone

surveys.

Facility goals originated from all sources, particularly the mail and telephone surveys, although, some ideas were provided by the Delphi committee and interest groups.

## **Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Administrative & Programming Goals**

Administrative goals are the foundation of any comprehensive plan. Without the increased ability of the agency to administer to the needs of the community, those needs cannot be met.

Inevitably, administrative goals begin with the agency getting its financial house in order. That includes the development of a financial reporting system that is transparent and allows the board and senior administration to identify its resources and distribute them in an equitable manner.

Equitability is determined by need. For this reason, the telephone and mail surveys provide the best information about what the community needs, with other sources important as well. The other avenues usually validate the survey findings.

In political science and public administration, one important source of information about how well an agency is performing administratively is comparing itself to surrounding agencies. In this regard, the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District has some important challenges.

One such challenge is the organizational structure of the park district. As presented in the Appendix, the organizational chart shows the executive director with a span of control of five positions;

the superintendent of recreation, superintendent of finance, superintendent of parks, Spring Lake Aquatic Center and Hickory Grove Fitness Center and Aquatic Center manager.

Many agencies create an organizational chart that reflects the budget and accounting system. For example, assuming that a golf course is one fund unto itself, then the following goals and objectives would need to be a precursor to financial modifications.

## **Goal 1: Revise the Organizational Chart to Reflect the Informal Structure of the Park District**

There are formal and informal lines of authority within any organization. No matter how the formal lines of authority exist, there will always be the interaction of staff members on an informal basis.

The intent of this goal is that the organizational chart reflect the current informal lines of authority as best it can, allowing formal lines of authority to get out of the way of the organization achieving success. Specific objectives need to be achieved to support this goal.

### **Objectives:**

- Create an organizational chart that shows the lines of authority between the board, executive director, the superintendent of recreation, superintendent of finance, superintendent of parks, Spring Lake Aquatic Center and Hickory Grove Fitness Center and Aquatic Center manager.
- Develop new job descriptions for all of these

management positions that reflects the work they are currently doing and any changes in responsibilities that the district might require.

- Develop a new performance appraisal system where job description duties and responsibilities are directly linked to measurable performance standards individually tailored for each position.

These relatively simple changes in job descriptions will place all responsibility for Hickory Grove on the Hickory Grove manager, allowing the manager a better opportunity to succeed. This will also change the responsibilities of the superintendent of recreation, creating financial accountability.

Achieving these objectives will also require changes in the financial structure and reporting system, so that the financial reporting system showing accountability directly in line with the organizational chart.

## **Goal 2: Revise the Budget and Financial Reporting Structure, following generally accepted accounting principles**

This goal focuses on the reorganization of the budget report, sorting revenues and expenditures into a structure that will provide a clear picture of the financial condition of the enterprises that the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District currently operates. There are several specific objectives that need to support that goal.

### **Objectives:**

- Establish separate fund reports for the different operations of the district, including a capital



## goals & objectives

projects fund.

- Include all revenues and expenditures attributable to operations, including concessions, in the outdoor swimming pool and Hickory Grove fund reports.

- Create a valuation of the fix assets of the park district

- Create a fixed asset fund for government-type fixed assets and assign the government-type fixed assets to the new fund.

- Discontinue the practice of expensing the executive director, superintendent of finance, superintendent of parks and other non-recreation related salaries to the recreation fund.

- Prepare for and present to the Park Board monthly reports that clearly represent the financial position of the governmental funds of the park district.

- Based on historical data, prepare for and present to the Park Board the annual budget by February of each fiscal year.

- For the sake of transparency, hold budget hearings that allow the public time to review and comment on the annual budget.

Some of these changes are simpler and less expensive than others, but would help provide a better level of understanding about which operations are making money and which are not.

For instance, by creating separate financial report pages for Hickory Grove operations and including attributable revenues and expenditures, the district will have a better idea of how to put the fitness center on a pay as you go basis. It will also have a better reporting system to determine if depreciation can be expensed.

This can also be a model for recreation programs, which not only need to support their direct expenses, but need to contribute toward the rent and utilities of the fitness center on the short-term, but toward the superintendent of recreation and other supervisory salaries

on the long-term and ultimately, post a modest profit.

Ultimately, shifting the administrative overhead out of the recreation department and into the corporate fund will create financial challenges for that fund. These issues will be considered shortly.

### **Goal 3: Reorganize the Recreation Department**

This goal is intended to substantially increase the level of recreation services that are currently being provided by the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District. It will require financial support and



additional facilities. Specific objectives are related to this goal.

## Objectives:

- Make better use of the Hickory Grove Fitness Center as a site for recreation programs.
- Perform a market analysis of what recreation services are needed and which are currently being provided by competing governmental units, nonprofits and businesses.
- Develop a strategic plan for competing with these agencies to regain market share in such program areas as the operation of athletic leagues, day camp programs and the potential for pre-school and before/after school programs.
- Expand the use of contractual employees where it would be in conformance with FICA guidelines.
- Divide the recreation department into two divisions; athletic programs and recreation programs.
- Develop new recreation programs that reflect an emphasis on young children including pre-school, family programming, teens and seniors. Within this goal would be to develop 5 new programs a year and track performance to evaluate success or failure.

This re-organization involves the refocusing of responsibilities of the superintendent of recreation, so that individual can oversee additional programs that prior rationale has shown the community wants and that other agencies are providing.

Other departments need similar attention.

## Goal 4: Reorganize the Hickory Grove Department

This goal involves restructuring the formal lines of authority that already exist informally, clarifying the financial position of the department and making the manager more accountable for the department's performance.

There are several specific goals that will be required to achieve this goal.

## Objectives:

- Provide the fitness center manager with a greater level of authority over the fitness center, including oversight of maintenance, concessions and staffing.
- Make better use of part-time and seasonal staff in an attempt to eliminate full time salaries and benefits.
- Eliminate the practice of the executive director making capital improvements without regard for the financial impact on the department.
- Substantially increase season pass rates in order that frequent users of the fitness center bear a greater responsibility in its financial stability.
- Provide the fitness center with additional revenue sources, including a charge backs to the recreation department when it makes use of space there.

# goals & objectives

## Goal 5: Reorganize the Outdoor Swimming Pool Department

This goal suggests that the swimming pool should be considered a stand alone operation, not part of the responsibility of the recreation department.

The facility manager would be more autonomous, with revenues and expenses attributable to the operation to be administered through that fund.

Specific objectives would be required to fulfill this goal.

### Objectives:

- In accordance with organizational restructuring, change the title of the pool manager to swimming pool operations director.

- Provide the swimming pool operations director with a greater level of authority over the pool, including maintenance and concessions.

- Eliminate the practice of purchasing maintenance equipment and making small capital improvements using general fund revenues replacing it with the practice of internal financing.

- Substantially increase season pass rates in order that frequent users of the swimming pool bear a greater responsibility in its financial stability.

- In the short-term, provide the swimming pool with additional revenue sources, including a new water slide, a small splash pad and other attributes that would draw more people.

- In the long-term, make plans to substantially improve the conditions at the facility to attract more usage.

- Expand the days of operation to open during Memorial Day weekend and close at the end of Labor Day weekend.



The short-term goal is to make the swimming pool more competitive for Flagg-Rochelle resident attendances, without having to make major improvements, considering that the facility is built in a restrictive setting and is good working order.

The long-term goal is that, while the district makes other major capital improvements, it will maintain swimming pool services to its residents with the understanding that someday the facility will need to be replaced or relocated.

## Goal 6: Build Relationships with Other Local Agencies and Groups that Provide Recreation Services

This goal suggests that it would be an advantage for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District to coordinate its efforts with other agencies with

## goals & objectives

which it is not in direct competition. By doing so, the park district could maximize its current resources by maximizing service levels.

### Objectives:

- Develop written agreements with athletic program user groups with which the district provides facilities, specifically defining the relationships.
- Develop a written agreement with both school districts for use of park district facilities in exchange for use of the high school and grade school gymnasiums.
- Develop a written agreement with the City of Rochelle creating an integrated bike path system, defining which parts the city provides and which parts the park district provides.
- Develop exchange of services agreements with the Kishwaukee Family YMCA, Kishwaukee College and surrounding park districts for joint usage of their facilities and programs.

By having written relationships with different user groups and governmental service providers, the park district will be in a position to clearly define its relationships as well as provide the opportunity to access other facilities.

At the board level, there are also goals that emerged from the community input phase of this plan.

### Goal 7: Develop an On-Going Planning Process at the Board Level

This goal suggests there are ways of developing

an on-going planning process with which the community can be permanently engaged. The planning process will maintain the park district's connection to its comprehensive plan as well as engage public discussion for future facility or program initiatives. There are several specific objectives for this goal.

### Objectives:

- Develop "friends of the park" committees in neighborhoods that have no parks at all or are in the process of developing parks.
- Provide the local park committees opportunities to participate in the design process for the park in their neighborhoods.
- Appoint a community wide citizens advisory committee to advise the park board on the implementation of the comprehensive plan and to develop an annual strategic plan for implementing the various goals and objectives.
- Include a report from the citizens advisory committee as a regular agenda item on the park board regular monthly meeting.
- On an annual basis, update the mission statement for the Flagg-Rochelle Park District, identifying its philosophy in providing recreation services.
- Retain an outside consulting group to make revisions to the goals and objectives of the

comprehensive plan reflecting the changes in the environment on a yearly basis and provide consultation to the Executive Director for continued implementation of the plan.

These objectives create a broad-based community level of input, helping the board and staff meet the recreational needs of the community and maintains the comprehensive plan as a relevant document that charts a course for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District and keeps the district on that course.

## **Goal 8: Modestly Increase the Corporate Tax and Other Tax Levies**

This goal is to improve the park service of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District by asking for a corporate property tax increase. It results from the re-organization of the financial structure of the park district, which should provide the opportunity for substantial increases in recreation services and capital plan development.

A tax increase has been shown to be necessary because the park system is increasing in the number of parks and total acreage due to the land acquisition with development of new subdivisions with neighborhood parks in each. Also, the park district has not been levying an appropriate amount to provide adequate re-development capital monies to renovate existing parks and facilities. In order to maintain the new

parks as well as renovate the existing ones, an increase in property tax is necessary.

The mail and telephone surveys have shown willingness on the part of the public to consider such an increase. In order to achieve the goal of

modestly increasing the corporate tax levy to maintain and administrative park services, several objectives must be achieved.

### **Objectives:**

- Complete the reorganization of the financial structure of the park district, developing an operating budget for the general fund, and all other funds on a pay-as-you-go basis.
- Based on the comprehensive plan recommendations, have the park board adopt an ordinance increasing the corporate tax and other taxes

to the rates that allow the park district to provide its services.

- Create a district wide advisory committee and seek additional input from them for implementation recommendations.

Achieving these objectives would allow the taxpayers to support the maintenance of the park system, just like reorganization of other departments allow the users to support recreation programs, the Hickory Grove Fitness Center and





the Spring Lake Aquatic Center.

The financial and organizational restructuring positions the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District to pursue the construction of additional facilities, with the public assured who pays for what.

## **Goal 9: Develop a Brand Identity for the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District**

An overhaul of the identity of the Park District is needed to demonstrate a new direction.

### **Objectives:**

- Develop a logo that is simple and recognizable.
- Incorporate the new logo onto all stationery, the district website and staff attire.
- Replace all park signage with modern displays that include the new logo.
- Remodel the recreation program brochures that get mailed to all residents.

## **Goal 10: Incorporate Technology to Expand Programming**

The Park District should be open to different methods of technology to increase programming opportunities.

### **Objectives:**

- The park district should use online and video instructions to register program participants.

- Revamp the park district website to provide more information about the park system.

## **Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District Land Acquisition, Development, Park Maintenance and Facility Goals**

Facility goals are those goals related to the renovation and construction of all facilities in order that the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District be in a position to meet the needs of the community. The initiatives to make general improvements will be considered in this section of this plan.

Sources of rationale for the renovation of existing facilities, creating new facilities and other needed improvements originate from the afore mentioned input provided by user groups, public workshops, the Delphi Committee, the telephone survey, and the mail survey.

Within the action plan section of this comprehensive plan will be the specific steps necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives to make these improvements happen. In this section will be the ideas themselves and some of the objectives required before they can be fully considered.

## **Goal 1: Expand the Community Wide Pathway System**

This goal is that the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District, in conjunction with the City of Rochelle, expand the existing pathway system throughout the parks connected by a community bike path network.

## Objectives:

- Meet with the city and develop a bikeway plan for Rochelle.
- Within that plan, develop a written agreement with the city, identifying the sections each would build and the financial responsibilities of each party.
- Identify funding sources for the park district's portion of the pathway system.
- Where possible, apply for grants and assemble the matching resources to fund construction of specific paths.
- When initial portions of the system are complete, develop a map of the paths, including it on the district's website and program brochure information.
- Negotiate with developers to construct pathways through new subdivisions and donate the easements to the park district.

Creation of a community wide pathway system would be a major capital improvement for the park district, but one which would be used by a substantial percentage of the community and where there is external funding available. It is also an initiative which can begin quickly without much need for citizen participation, unlike more ambitious projects.

## Goal 2: Investigate Plans for a New Recreation/Community Center

This goal suggests that, based on recreation

program needs identified in survey research, from public workshops, the Delphi committee and user groups, the current fitness and community center is not sufficient to meet those needs. The form the new community center should take is not clear at this point. To clarify its form, a number of objectives need to be achieved.

## Objectives:

- A market analysis needs to be performed, convening a citizen's advisory committee specifically to oversee that process.
- Alternative sources of capital funding for a community center should be explored, including total fee support, donations or a sales tax that would be levied by the city and applied toward debt service.
- The park district should contract with an outside consultant to do a building feasibility study showcasing a preliminary building design and site plan and the probability of how the building will succeed on a financial and programmatic basis.
- If the park district decides to fund the construction of the facility with general obligation bonds funded through a park district property tax increase, before pursuing a referendum the district should do an inexpensive study of the possibility a referendum will succeed.

The order of the objectives is important to the success of developing plans to build a new community center. Making plans to pursue the construction of a new community center without creating a citizens advisory committee that

would determine the need for the facility lacks credibility.

Without developing a preliminary design, the advisory committee does not know what the staff thinks is needed. Without exploring alternative sources of financing the debt to build the facility, the public might not be convinced that property tax support is needed. And without a study affirming that the facility can meet its goals, the public may wonder if more property taxes will be needed later.

Similar objectives would be appropriate for the construction of the other new major facility identified as a need of the community, a new community swimming pool or water park.

### **Goal 3: Develop Plans for Improving the Spring Lake Aquatic Center**

This goal suggests that, based on recreation program needs identified in survey research, from public workshop, the Delphi committee and user groups, the current swimming pool is not sufficient to meet those needs. The form the new swimming pool or water park should take is not clear at this point. To clarify its form, a process similar to the community center should be followed.

#### **Objectives:**

- A market analysis needs to be performed, convening a citizen's advisory

committee specifically to oversee that process.

- Alternative sources of capital funding for an aquatic center should be explored, including total fee support, donations or a sales tax that would be levied by the city and applied toward debt service.

- The park district should contract with an outside consultant to do a pool feasibility study showcasing a preliminary swimming pool design and site plan and the probability of how the pool

will succeed on a financial and programmatic basis. An alternative location should be considered due to current site expansion/renovation constraints.

- If the park district decides to fund the construction of the facility with general obligation bonds funded through a park district property tax increase, before pursuing a referendum

the district should do an inexpensive study of the possibility a referendum will succeed.

These goals and objectives are specific enough to get these major capital improvement projects started within the next five years But for this plan to consider more than two would not be realistic within such a short time frame. And since these are the projects which the community indicated it wanted through surveys, public hearing, interest group meetings and the Delphi committee's analysis, the plans to build a new community



center and water park are supported by the appropriate rationale.

## **Goal 4: Invest Into Park Development**

This goal suggests that the Park District needs to prioritize capital monies in its financial strategies into the development of its park lands. This would cover both new park development and re-development of the existing sites.

### **Objectives:**

- Implement the Capital Development Plan as described in this master plan. This would include re-developing many of the older park sites.

- Retain a park design firm to provide professional project management services for yearly capital projects through bond financing. The firm will prepare project designs, construction documents and bidding documents and also coordinate sub-consultants

- Seek OSLAD funding as a priority for each fiscal year for larger capital park projects. Re-invest or roll-over OSLAD reimbursement monies into the next grant application as a vehicle to continually fund within the grant cycles.

- Explore additional grant possibilities to off-set capital improvement costs as the project takes shape.

- Prepare an overall district park and facilities location map.

- Secure adequate capital funding of approximately \$1,000,000 per fiscal year.

- Identify quick hitter capital projects in the first year of the plan to showcase the commitment to implement the master plan.

These goals and objectives are specific enough to get a series of capital improvement projects started within the next five years.

## **Goal 5: Secure Additional Park Land through Property Acquisition**

This goal suggests that the Park District needs to secure additional park land within Flagg Township.

### **Objectives:**

- Identify that parkland outside the City of Rochelle is limited to service the township residents and that these residents are underserved.

- Secure 2 parcels of appropriately 20 to 50 acres each. One would be in the southwest portion of the township and the other in the northeast.

## **Goal 6: Expand Park Maintenance Standards**

This goal suggests that the park district should continue to expand its maintenance standards and systems.

### **Objectives:**

- Hold quality circles with recreation staff to discuss specific maintenance needs for programs/ events for each upcoming season to increase communication among departments.

- Look into streamlining maintenance requests with a paperless log system.

- Track hours per task and report hours accrued in monthly report. This will give a basis of time to complete tasks in the future and potential charge user groups' appropriate costs if provided.





## **Plan Implementation**

A plan is only as good as its ability to be implemented. The previous chapter outlined specific goals and objectives that have the ability to make the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District a stronger and more successful agency. This chapter is organized into a series of action plans that should be implemented to meet the goals and objectives outlined in this plan. All of the work involved in this plan is represented in the following pages. It is the culmination of all the research, meetings, responses and discussions that has transpired during the planning process. The end goal of this plan is to set priorities for the Park District to follow with the support of the public each year that will positively impact the quality of life for its residents.

are only preliminary numbers and will need to be finalized each budget year.

The following sequence of action items should be viewed as an agreement between the Park District and the public. It is specific in nature to make significant improvements to the agency in a short amount of time. One of the key items that will allow for continued improvements and implementation are frequent internal staff discussions regarding project costs and direction as well as the timeframe that will be necessary to accomplish the project. This is encouraged to match the Park District's financial position with capital project funding. This is a key step to ensure project success. It is important to have a clear funding picture for the projects of this master plan to get the necessary buy-in at all levels within the organization. This will ensure the financial monies are in place during the upcoming budget years to move forward with each component of the implementation action plan. The costs that follow

# plan implementation

## 2009-2010 Action Plan

The previous master plan has expired and this year will be year one of the new plan with specific action plan steps to bridge the gap between the new direction of the agency and the old ways of conducting business. The planning process has allowed the park district to make administrative changes to set up future improvements in internal operations, external development and community wide support.

Priority Ranking	Action Item
1	Establish separate fund reports for the different operations of the district, including a capital projects fund
2	Include all revenues and expenditures attributable to operations, including concessions, in the outdoor swimming pool and Hickory Grove fund reports
3	Complete the reorganization of the financial structure of the park district, developing an operating budget for the general fund, and all other funds on a pay-as-you-go basis
4	Based on the comprehensive plan recommendations, have the park board adopt an ordinance increasing the corporate tax and other taxes to the rates that allow the park district to provide its services
5	Appoint a community wide citizens advisory committee to advise the park board on the implementation of the comprehensive plan and to develop an annual strategic plan for implementing the various goals and objectives
6	Include a report from the citizens advisory committee as a regular agenda item on the park board regular monthly meeting
7	Retain a park design firm to provide professional project management services for yearly capital projects through bond financing. The firm will prepare project designs, construction documents and bidding documents and also coordinate sub-consultants
8	Seek OSLAD funding as a priority for each fiscal year for larger capital park projects. Re-invest or roll-over OSLAD reimbursement monies into the next grant application as a vehicle to continually fund within the grant cycles
9	Explore additional grant possibilities to off-set capital improvement costs as the project takes shape
10	Prepare an overall district park and facilities location map
11	Secure adequate capital funding of approximately \$1,000,000 per fiscal year
12	Identify quick hitter capital projects in the first year of the plan to showcase the commitment to implement the master plan
13	Cooper Park Re-Development
14	Helms Park South Development
15	Atwood Park Re-Development

# plan implementation

## 2009-2010 Action Plan

Priority Ranking	Action Item
17	A market analysis needs to be performed, convening a citizen's advisory committee specifically to oversee that process
18	Alternative sources of capital funding for a community center should be explored, including total fee support, donations or a sales tax that would be levied by the city and applied toward debt service
19	The park district should contract with an outside consultant to do a building feasibility study showcasing a preliminary building design and site plan and the probability of how the building will succeed on a financial and programmatic basis
20	If the park district decides to fund the construction of the facility with general obligation bonds funded through a park district property tax increase, before pursuing a referendum the district should do a study of the possibility a referendum will succeed
21	Develop "friends of the park" committees in neighborhoods that have no parks at all or are in the process of developing parks
22	Provide the local park committees opportunities to participate in the design process for the park in their neighborhoods
23	Negotiate with developers to construct pathways through new subdivisions and donate the easements to the park district
24	Create an organizational chart that shows the lines of authority between the board, executive director, the superintendent of recreation, superintendent of finance, superintendent of parks, Spring Lake Aquatic Center and Hickory Grove Fitness Center and Aquatic Center manager
25	Develop new job descriptions for all of these management positions that reflects the work they are currently doing and any changes in responsibilities that the district might require
26	Develop written agreements with athletic program user groups with which the district provides facilities, specifically defining the relationships
27	Make better use of the Hickory Grove Fitness Center as a site for recreation programs
28	Provide the fitness center manager with a greater level of authority over the fitness center, including oversight of maintenance, concessions and staffing
29	Make better use of part-time and seasonal staff in an attempt to eliminate full time salaries and benefits at Hickory Grove
30	Eliminate the practice of the executive director making capital improvements without regard for the financial impact on the different departments
31	Substantially increase season pass rates for Hickory Grove in order that frequent users of the fitness center bear a greater responsibility in its financial stability

## 2009-2010 Action Plan

Priority Ranking	Action Item
32	Provide the fitness center with additional revenue sources, including a charge backs to the recreation department when it makes use of space there Discontinue the practice of expensing the executive director, superintendent of finance, superintendent of parks and other non-recreation related salaries to the recreation fund
33	In accordance with organizational restructuring, change the title of the pool manager to swimming pool operations director
34	Prepare for and present to the Park Board monthly reports that clearly represent the financial position of the governmental funds of the park district
35	Based on historical data, prepare for and present to the Park Board the annual budget by February of each fiscal year
36	<p>For the sake of transparency, hold budget hearings that allow the public time to review and comment on the annual budget.</p> <p>Develop new job descriptions for all of these management positions that reflects the work they are currently doing and any changes in responsibilities that the district might require.</p> <p>Develop a logo that is simple and recognizable. Incorporate the new logo onto all stationery, the district website and staff attire</p>

# plan implementation

## 2010-2011 Action Plan

The plan continues with an aggressive year to set the stage for long term future benefits. The major focus of this year is to start the construction of the new Community Recreation Center.

Priority Ranking	Action Item
1	Community Recreation Center Construction
2	Perform a market analysis of what recreation services are needed and which are currently being provided by competing governmental units, nonprofits and businesses
3	Develop a strategic plan for competing with these agencies to regain market share in such program areas as the operation of athletic leagues, day camp programs and the potential for pre-school and before/after school programs
4	Divide the recreation department into two divisions; athletic programs and recreation programs
5	Develop new recreation programs that reflect an emphasis on young children including pre-school, family programming, teens and seniors. Within this goal would be to develop 5 new programs a year and track performance to evaluate success or failure
6	Develop a new performance appraisal system where job description duties and responsibilities are directly linked to measurable performance standards individually tailored for each position
7	Replace all park signage with modern displays that include the new logo
8	Remodel the recreation program brochures that get mailed to all residents
9	Develop a written agreement with both school districts for use of park district facilities in exchange for use of the high school and grade school gymnasiums
10	In accordance with organizational restructuring, change the title of the pool manager to swimming pool operations director
11	Provide the swimming pool operations director with a greater level of authority over the pool, including maintenance and concessions
12	Eliminate the practice of purchasing maintenance equipment and making small capital improvements using general fund revenues replacing it with the practice of internal financing
13	Substantially increase season pass rates in order that frequent users of the swimming pool bear a greater responsibility in its financial stability
14	In the short-term, provide the swimming pool with additional revenue sources, including a new water slide, a small splash pad and other attributes that would draw more people
15	Expand the days of operation to open during Memorial Day weekend and close at the end of Labor Day weekend



## 2010-2011 Action Plan

Priority Ranking	Action Item
16	Apply for an OSLAD Grant for Lake Sule Park Development & Finish Construction
17	Helms Sports Complex Re-Development
18	Spring Lake Aquatic Center Renovation
19	Memorial Park Re-Development
20	Midwest Park Re-Development
21	On an annual basis, update the mission statement for the Flagg-Rochelle Park District, identifying its philosophy in providing recreation services.
22	Retain an outside consulting group to make revisions to the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan reflecting the changes in the environment on a yearly basis and provide consultation to the Executive Director for continued implementation of the plan
23	Hold quality circles with recreation staff to discuss specific maintenance needs for programs/events for each upcoming season to increase communication among departments

## 2011-2012 Action Plan

The agency has seen two years of changes and improvements to its finances, recreational programming, operations and park spaces. This year will allow the agency to take stock in all of the progress and improvements it has made and finish the construction of the Community Center, and start the construction of the improved trail system and the improvements to Helm Sports Complex.

Priority Ranking	Action Item
1	Expand the use of contractual employees where it would be in conformance with FICA guidelines
2	The park district should use online and video instructions to register program participants
3	Revamp the park district website to provide more information about the park system
4	Apply for an OSLAD Grant for Skare Park Development & Finish Construction
5	Powers Park Development
6	V.F.W. Park Re-Development
7	Spring Lake Marina Re-Development
8	Memorial Park Re-Development
9	Develop Bike Trail Network Master Plan with a written agreement with the City of Rochelle creating the integrated bike path system, defining which parts the city provides and which parts the park district provides
10	When initial portions of the system are complete, develop a map of the paths, including it on the district's website and program brochure information
11	Negotiate with developers to construct pathways through new subdivisions and donate the easements to the park district

## 2012-2013 Action Plan

The master plan is nearing completion with the goal of assessing the success of this current plan and setting up the next planning study. As the Community Center is reaching its full potential, the primary focus for this year is to start the planning process for a new aquatic park. This could be a phased expansion to include an outdoor water park adjacent to the new Community Center.

Priority Ranking	Action Item
1	Create a valuation of the fixed assets of the park district
2	Create a fixed asset fund for government-type fixed assets and assign the government-type fixed assets to the new fund
3	In the long-term, make plans to substantially improve the conditions at the facility to attract more usage at the Spring Lake Aquatic Center
4	Flannigan Park Re-Development
5	Tilton Memorial Park Re-Development
6	Hillcrest Park Re-Development

## 2013-2014 Action Plan

The master plan has been implemented to its capacity and the community has a renewed sense of trust in the Park District. Major parks have been developed and new buildings have been opened for the resident's to enjoy for many years to come.

Priority Ranking	Action Item
1	Identify that parkland outside the City of Rochelle is limited to service the township residents and that these residents are underserved
2	Secure 2 parcels of appropriately 20 to 50 acres each. One would be in the southwest portion of the township and the other in the northeast
3	A market analysis needs to be performed, convening a citizen's advisory committee specifically to oversee that process
4	Alternative sources of capital funding for an aquatic center should be explored, including total fee support, donations or a sales tax that would be levied by the city and applied toward debt service
5	The park district should contract with an outside consultant to do a pool feasibility study showcasing a preliminary swimming pool design and site plan and the probability of how the pool will succeed on a financial and programmatic basis. An alternative location should be considered due to current site expansion/renovation constraints
6	If the park district decides to fund the construction of the facility with general obligation bonds funded through a park district property tax increase, before pursuing a referendum the district should do an inexpensive study of the possibility a referendum will succeed
7	Connolly Park Re-Development
8	Kelley Park Re-Development
9	Sweeney Park Re-Development
10	Look into streamlining maintenance requests with a paperless log system
11	Track hours per task and report hours accrued in monthly report. This will give a basis of time to complete tasks in the future and potential charge user groups' appropriate costs if provided
12	Start the master planning process for next update

## Capital Improvement Plan Recommendations

This section of the master plan is intended to be a “how-to” guide to be used by staff, board members and all persons responsible for the planning, detail, design, and maintenance of the park improvements. All future improvement projects should be guided by these recommendations to insure that the park can achieve its full potential. We have reviewed the recommendations from the previous master plan and have updated the listings with improved budgets. It is the desire of the Executive Director to incorporate green engineering and design principles in as many of the capital projects as possible, subject to budget considerations. As noted in our inventory and analysis phase of Chapter Three, many of the elements within the parks are beyond their expected life cycle. We have included information from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources that have documented the expected life span of many of the common park elements found throughout the state.

The list of potential projects is long, short on funding and varied in degrees of complexity. To provide a systematic way of developing the priority list for spending, a Quality of Service (QOS) standard was developed to provide a unique direction and make sense of competing interest. The final decision is subject to an Executive Director and Park Board decision, however, it is critical to start building quality, long lasting capital projects to raise the bar.







## FLAGG-ROCHELLE PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

ROCHELLE, IL



### QOS Score for Project Priority:

Park	Facility Use*	Cost	Level of Service	Impact	Score
Hickory Grove Aquatics & Fitness Center	3	3	3	3	12
Lake Sule	3	3	3	3	12
Skare Park	3	3	3	3	12
Cooper Park	3	3	2	3	11
Helms Sports Complex	2	3	3	3	11
Atwood Park	3	2	2	3	10
Spring Lake Aquatic Park	3	1	3	3	10
Teentown/Recreation Center	2	2	3	3	10
V.F.W. Park	3	2	2	3	10
Spring Lake Marina	2	2	3	2	9
Memorial Park	2	2	2	2	8
Flannigan Park	1	2	2	2	7
Midwest Park	1	2	2	2	7
Tilton Memorial Park	1	2	2	2	7
Hillcrest Park	2	1	1	2	6
Powers Park	1	2	2	1	6
Connolly Park	1	1	1	1	4
Kelly Park	1	1	1	1	4
Sweeney Park	1	1	1	1	4
Red are Studies	* From Survey				
Blue are Capital Projects	1 - Low (13-20)	1 - Low (\$100,000 & Under)	1 - Low (Pocket Park)	1 - Low	
	2 - Medium (8-12)	2 - Medium (\$100,000-\$500,000)	2 - Medium (Neighborhood Park)	2 - Medium	
	3 - High (1-7)	3 - High (\$500,000 & Up)	3 - High (Community Park/Special Use)	3 - High	

## A. Regional Parks

Description:

A regional park is generally larger than 50 acres and serves a system wide service area and a total population. They should have a blend of active and passive recreational opportunities and can house buildings and athletic complexes.

Regional Parks within the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District System:

1. Lake Sule
2. Skare Park

### Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Lake Sule Park

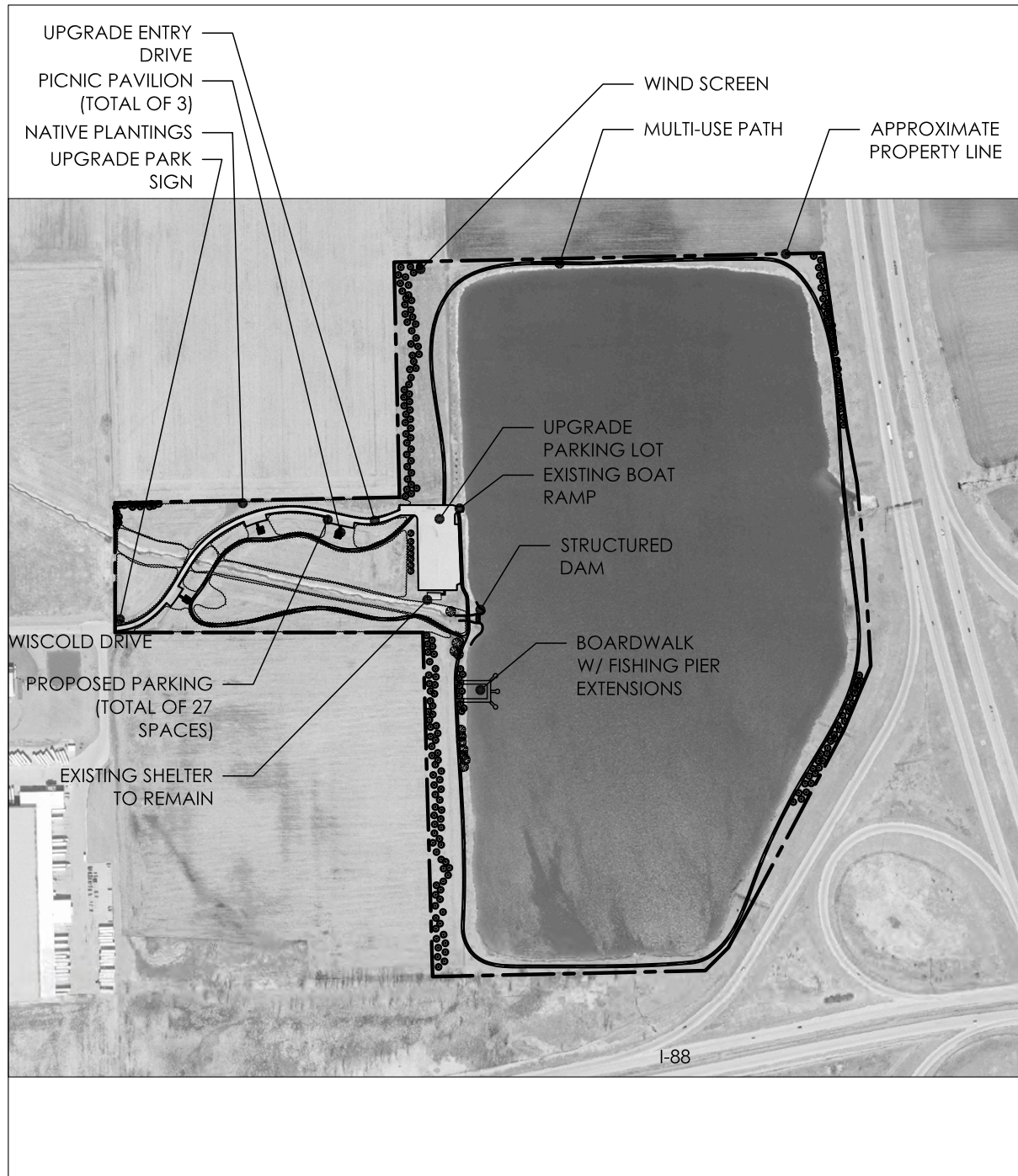
Item	Cost
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$25,000.00
Shelter Installation	\$175,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$100,000.00
Parking Lot Improvements	\$50,000.00
Boat Launch Improvements	\$10,000.00
Boardwalk with Fishing Pier Extensions	\$150,000.00
Native Landscape Seeding	\$125,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$35,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Structured Dam	\$25,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$698,000.00
Professional Fees	\$69,800.00
<b>Lake Sule Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$767,800.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Skare Park

Item	Cost
Bridge for Trail Connection	\$350,000.00
Trail Network	\$500,000.00
Playground Accessibility Improvement (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Parking Lot Development	\$100,000.00
Asphalt Access Road	\$125,000.00
Native Landscape Seeding	\$150,000.00
Park Signs	\$15,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$1,265,000.00
Professional Fees	\$126,500.00
Master Plan Study	\$30,000.00
<b>Skare Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$1,421,500.00</b>

## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Lake Sule Site Development Plan

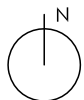


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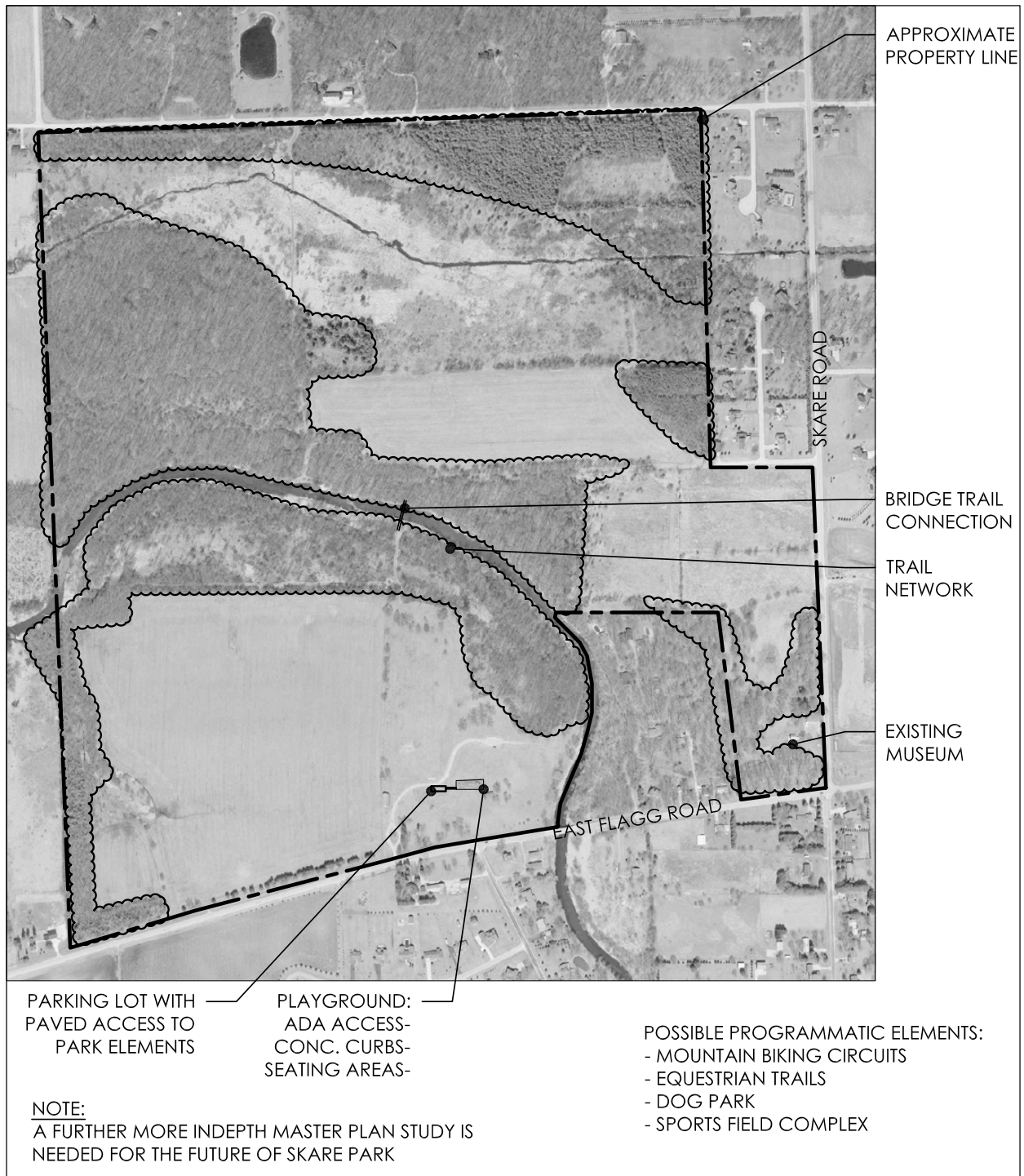
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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Skare Park Site Development Plan





## B. Community Parks

### Description:

A community park is generally between 10 and 50 acres and serves up to a 15 mile service area. In our planning study, we defined that service area as a two mile area. The community park provides recreational facilities for a large segment of the town's population. These parks are usually developed to support intensive recreational opportunities for both active and passive uses. These parks are typically located on or near major roads, bike paths or multi-use trails to allow for accessibility to several neighborhoods.

Community Parks within the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District System:

1. **Cooper Park**
2. **Helms Sports Complex (Includes Helms Park South)**
3. **Atwood Park**
4. **V.F.W. Park**

### Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Cooper Park

Item	Cost
Upgrade Parking Lot (NE)	\$60,000.00
Upgrade Parking Lot (SW)	\$30,000.00
Shelter Removal	\$10,000.00
Shelter Replacement	\$50,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$75,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$20,000.00
Full Court Basketball Court Construction	\$20,000.00
Playground Replacement Project (OSLAD Project)	\$175,000.00
Sand Volleyball Court Construction	\$20,000.00
Dog Park Construction	\$35,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$10,000.00
Native Landscape Seeding	\$20,000.00
Upgrade Park Signs	\$6,500.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$531,500.00
Professional Fees	\$53,150.00
<b>Cooper Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$584,650.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Helms Sports Complex

Item	Cost
Remove Track & Field Components	\$25,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$150,000.00
Parking Lot Development (SW)	\$125,000.00
Parking Lot Development (SW)	\$100,000.00
Plaza Development	\$75,000.00
Premier Athletic Field Improvements	\$150,000.00
Native Landscape Seeding	\$50,000.00
Recreation Community Center	\$TBD
Shelter	\$75,000.00
Concrete Walks	\$35,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$15,000.00
Splash Pad	\$250,000.00
Park Signs (LED)	\$75,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$1,125,000.00
Professional Fees	\$112,500.00
<b>Helms Sports Complex Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$1,282,500.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Atwood Park

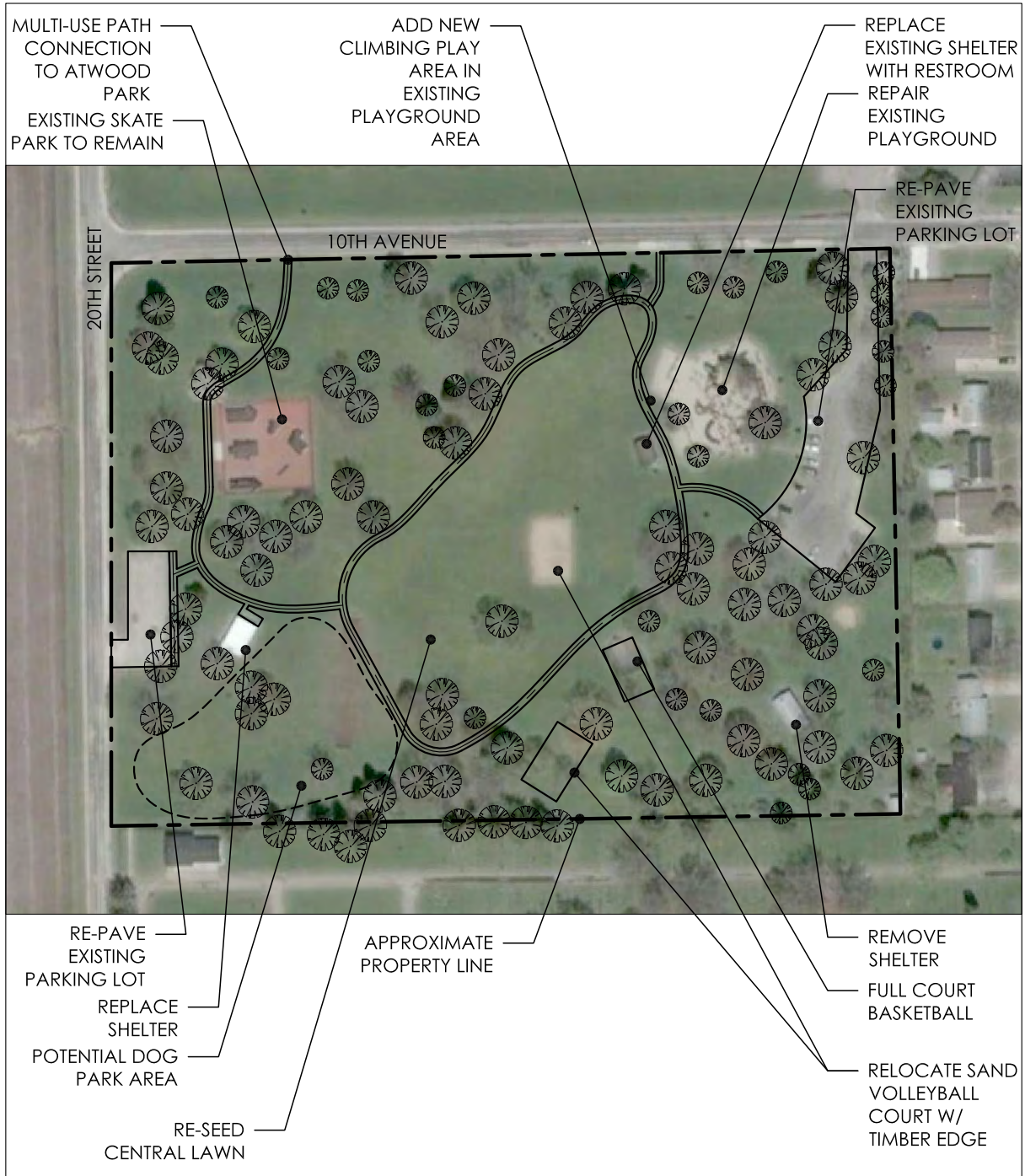
Item	Cost
Landscape Plantings (Band Shell)	\$10,000.00
Band Shell Seating	\$30,000.00
Memorial Area Paving	\$20,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$75,000.00
Parking Lot	\$50,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Upgrade Parking Lot	\$15,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$203,000.00
Professional Fees	\$20,300.00
<b>Atwood Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$223,300.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for V.F.W. Park

Item	Cost
Upgrade Parking Lot	\$5,000.00
Asphalt Entry Drives	\$15,000.00
Shelter Renovation	\$15,000.00
Backstop Replacement	\$8,500.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$75,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Full Court Basketball Construction	\$20,000.00
Playground Accessibility Improvement (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Baseball Field Improvements (Backstops, Player Benches, Bleachers, Concession Stand, Sports Lighting, Fences, Concrete Plaza)	\$250,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$5,000.00
Native Landscape Seeding	\$7,500.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$439,000.00
Professional Fees	\$43,900.00
<b>V.F.W. Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$482,900.00</b>

## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Cooper Park Site Development Plan

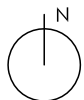


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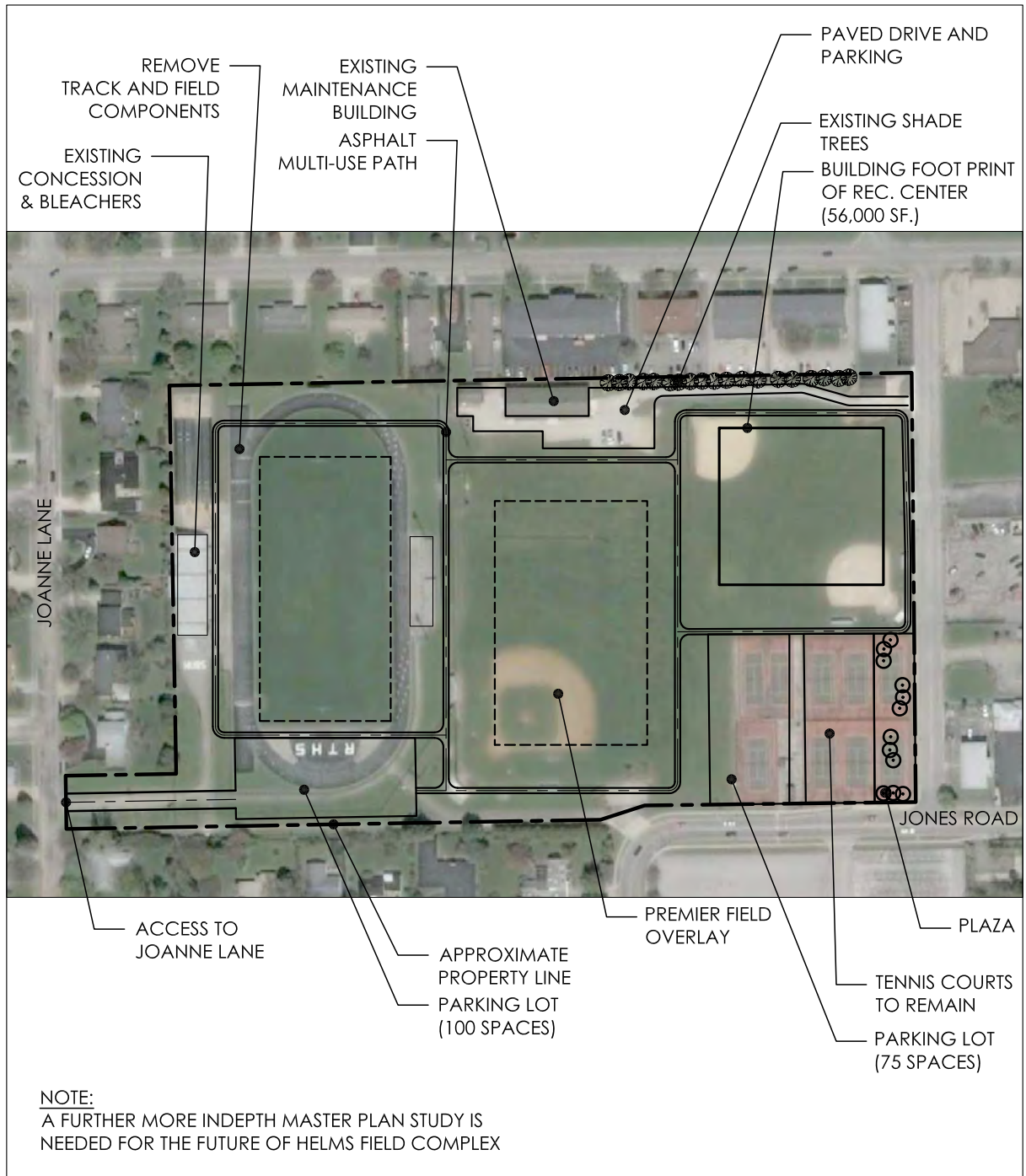
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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

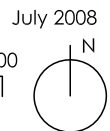
### Helms Field Complex North Site Development Plan



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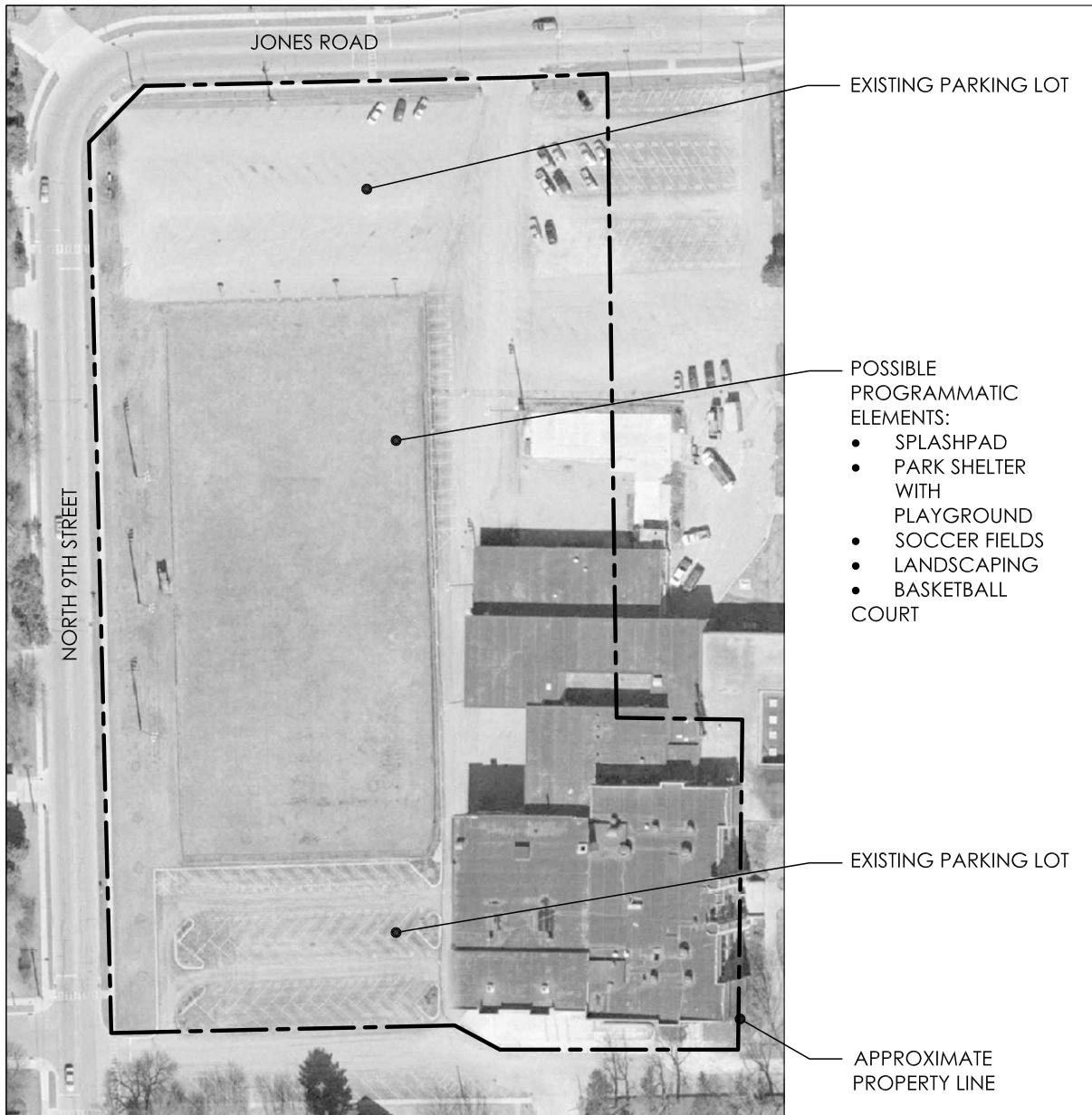
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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Helms Field Complex South Site Development Plan



**NOTE:**  
A FURTHER MORE INDEPTH MASTER PLAN STUDY IS  
NEEDED FOR THE FUTURE OF HELMS FIELD COMPLEX

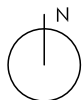


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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

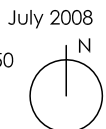
### Atwood Park Site Development Plan



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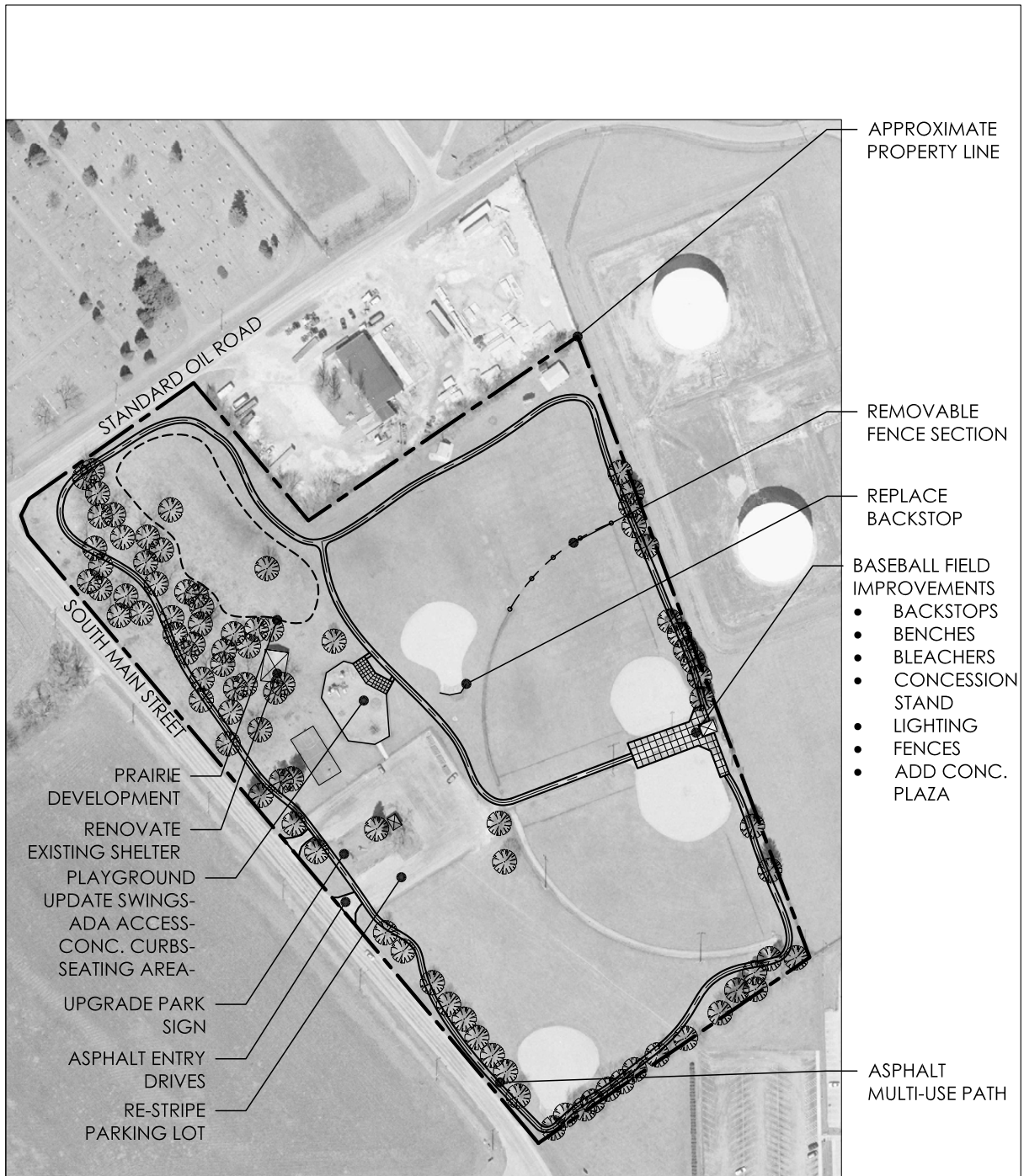
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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### VFW Park Site Development Plan



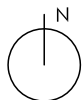
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## C. Neighborhood Parks

Description:

A neighborhood park is generally between 1 to 10 acres serves a ¼ mile service area. Typical facilities are within walking distance of the service area. The neighborhood park provides for localized needs in both active and passive play spaces mostly for children.

Neighborhood Parks within the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District System:

1. **Spring Lake Marina**
2. **Memorial Park**
3. **Flannigan Park**
4. **Midwest Park**
5. **Tilton Memorial Park**
6. **Powers Park**

### Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Spring Lake Marina

Item	Cost
Pond Aerators	\$17,500.00
Fishing Pier	\$50,000.00
Shelter Construction	\$75,000.00
Asphalt Path Connections	\$25,000.00
Native Landscape Seeding	\$20,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$190,500.00
Professional Fees	\$19,050.00
Master Plan Study	\$25,000.00
<b>Spring Lake Marina Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$234,550.00</b>



## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Memorial Park

Item	Cost
Upgrade Parking Lot	\$5,000.00
Shelter Renovation	\$15,000.00
Sand Volleyball Court Construction	\$12,500.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$75,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Full Court Basketball Construction	\$20,000.00
Playground Accessibility Improvement (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Replace Swings	\$5,000.00
Formal Garden Development	\$55,000.00
Replace Spring Riders	\$2,000.00
Horse Shoe Pits Construction	\$5,000.00
Stage Removal	\$15,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Upgrade Restroom Facility	\$20,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$267,500.00
Professional Fees	\$26,750.00
<b>Memorial Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$294,250.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Flannigan Park

Item	Cost
Parking Lot Improvements (Striping)	\$10,000.00
Shelter Renovation	\$15,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$50,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Full Court Basketball Construction	\$20,000.00
Playground Accessibility Improvement (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Replace Swings	\$5,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$7,500.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$145,000.00
Professional Fees	\$14,550.00
<b>Flannigan Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$160,050.00</b>



## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Midwest Park

Item	Cost
Street Parking	\$80,000.00
Concrete Pads	\$30,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$75,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bleachers, Bike Rack)	\$25,000.00
Field Improvements	\$50,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$20,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$283,000.00
Professional Fees	\$28,300.00
<b>Midwest Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$311,300.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Tilton Memorial Park

Item	Cost
Upgrade Parking Lot	\$50,000.00
Sports Lighting Replacement	\$140,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$50,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Replace Swings	\$5,000.00
Playground Accessibility (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$5,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Trailhead Development	\$10,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$298,000.00
Professional Fees	\$29,800.00
<b>Tilton Memorial Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$327,800.00</b>

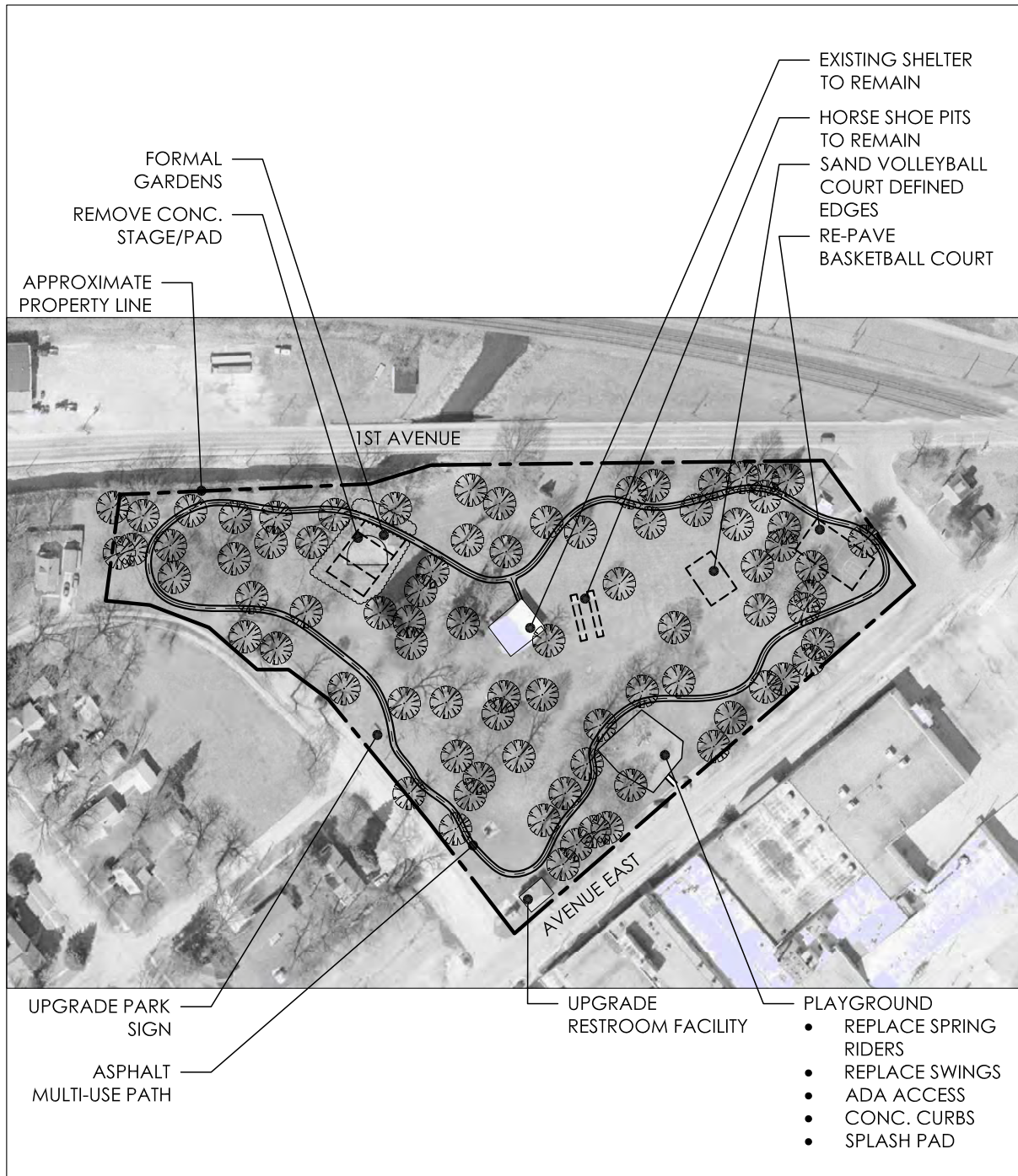
## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Powers Park

Item	Cost
Tee Ball Backstop Installations	\$5,000.00
Multi-Use Asphalt Path	\$60,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Playground Development	\$125,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$5,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$208,000.00
Professional Fees	\$20,800.00
<b>Powers Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$228,800.00</b>



## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Memorial Park Site Development Plan



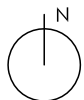
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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Flannigan Park Site Development Plan

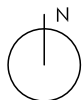


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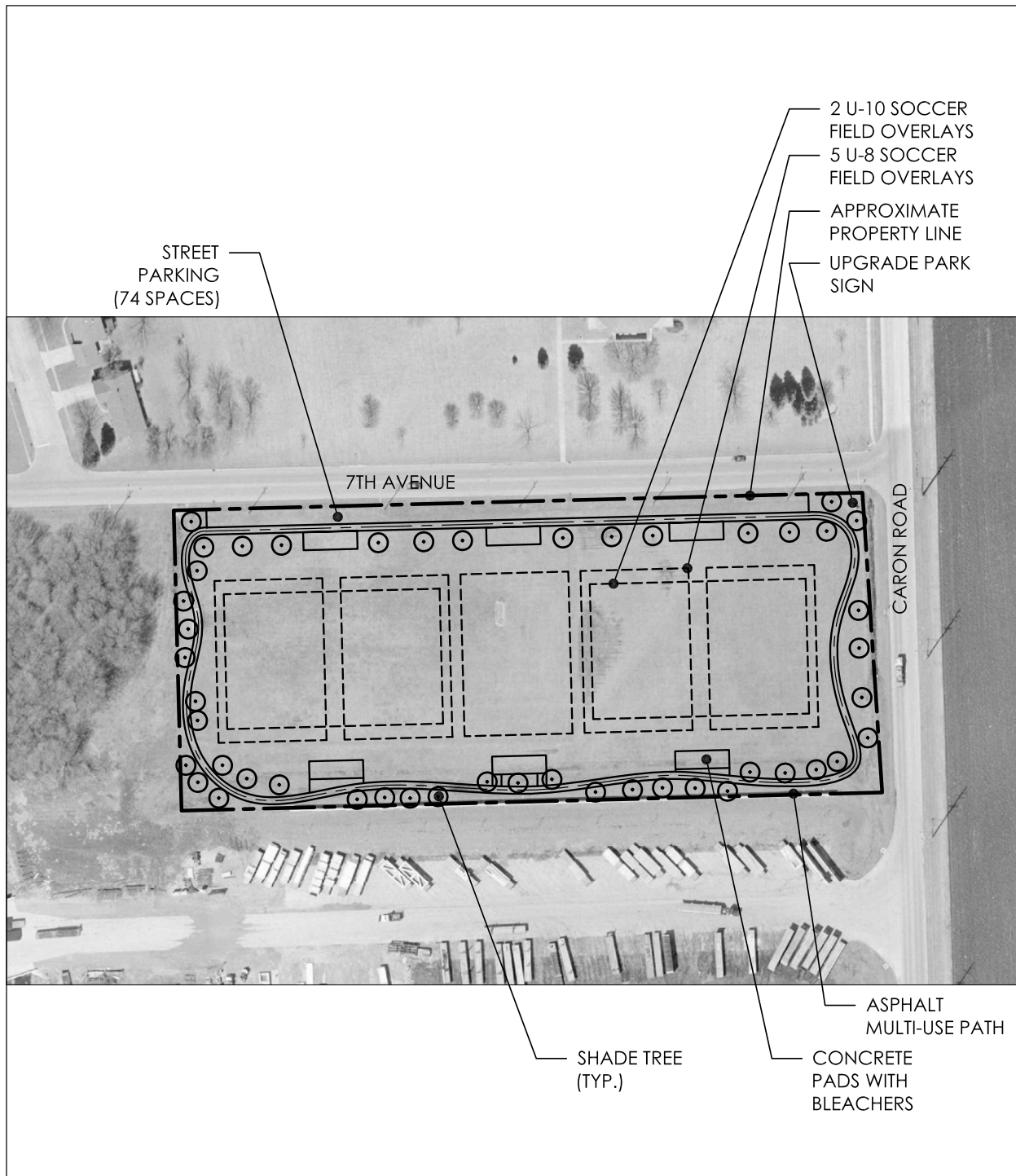
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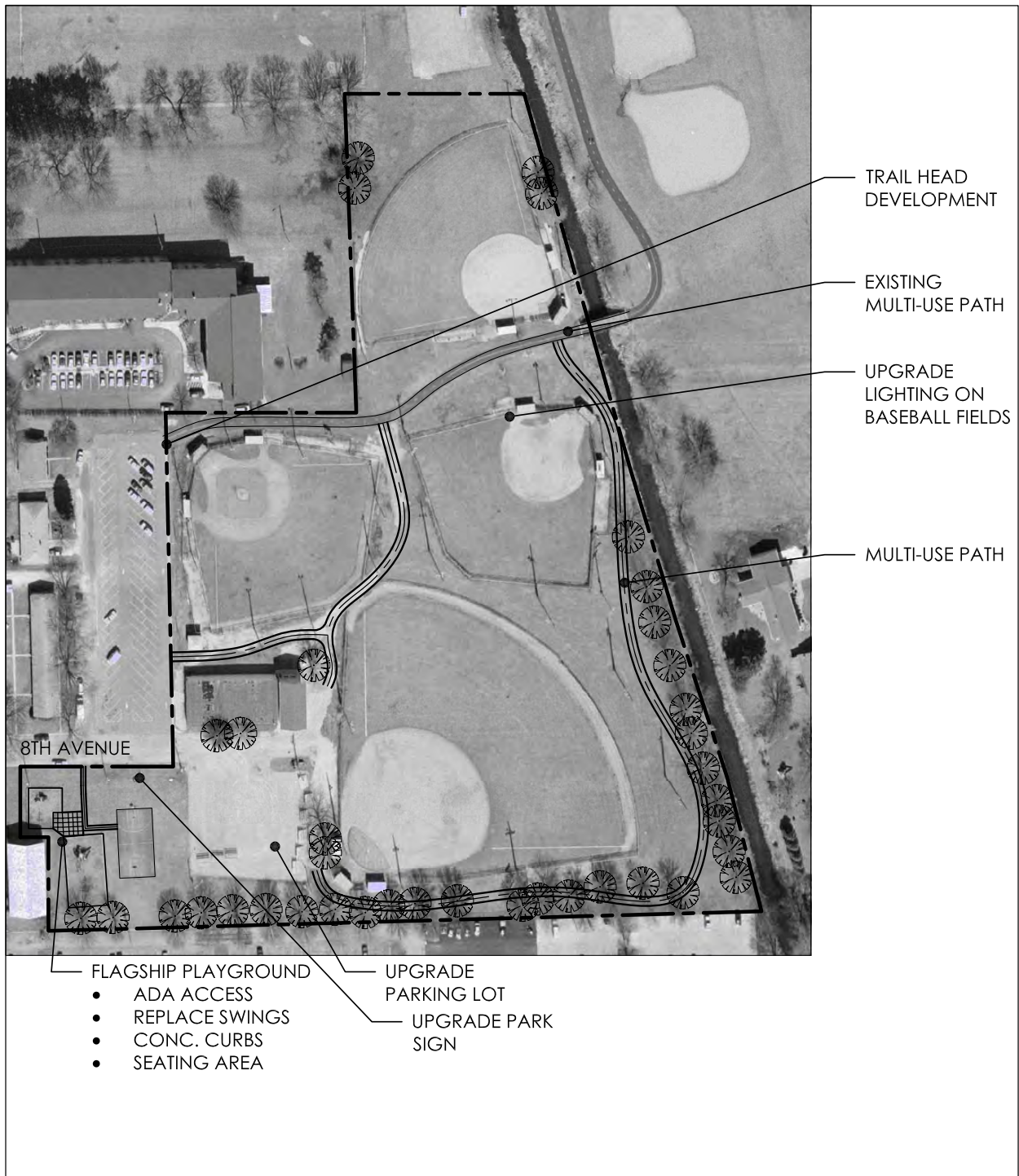
## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Midwest Park Site Development Plan



## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Tilton Memorial Park Site Development Plan



## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Powers Park Site Development Plan

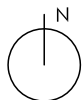


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## D. Pocket Park

### Description:

A pocket park is a small neighborhood park less than an acre and serves an area less than ¼ service areas. It can usually only accommodate a playground for active uses or remain as open space for passive uses. Even though these parks are small, they can serve a useful purpose by providing drop in recreation opportunities within neighborhoods.

Pocket Parks within the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District System:

1. Hillcrest Park
2. Connolly Park
3. Kelley Park
4. Sweeney Park

### Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Hillcrest Park

Item	Cost
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Concrete Walk	\$5,000.00
Playground Accessibility Improvement (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Landscape Improvements	\$7,500.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$50,500.00
Professional Fees	\$5,050.00
<b>Hillcrest Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$55,550.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Connolly Park

Item	Cost
Basketball Re-Surface, Stripe & Standards	\$16,500.00
Asphalt Path Connection	\$5,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Playground Accessibility Improvement (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$59,500.00
Professional Fees	\$5,950.00
<b>Connolly Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$65,450.00</b>

## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Kelley Park

Item	Cost
Fence Removal	\$5,000.00
Playground Development	\$45,000.00
Shelter Installation	\$50,000.00
Concrete Walk	\$5,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Half Court Basketball Court Construction	\$15,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$133,000.00
Professional Fees	\$13,300.00
<b>Kelley Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$146,300.00</b>

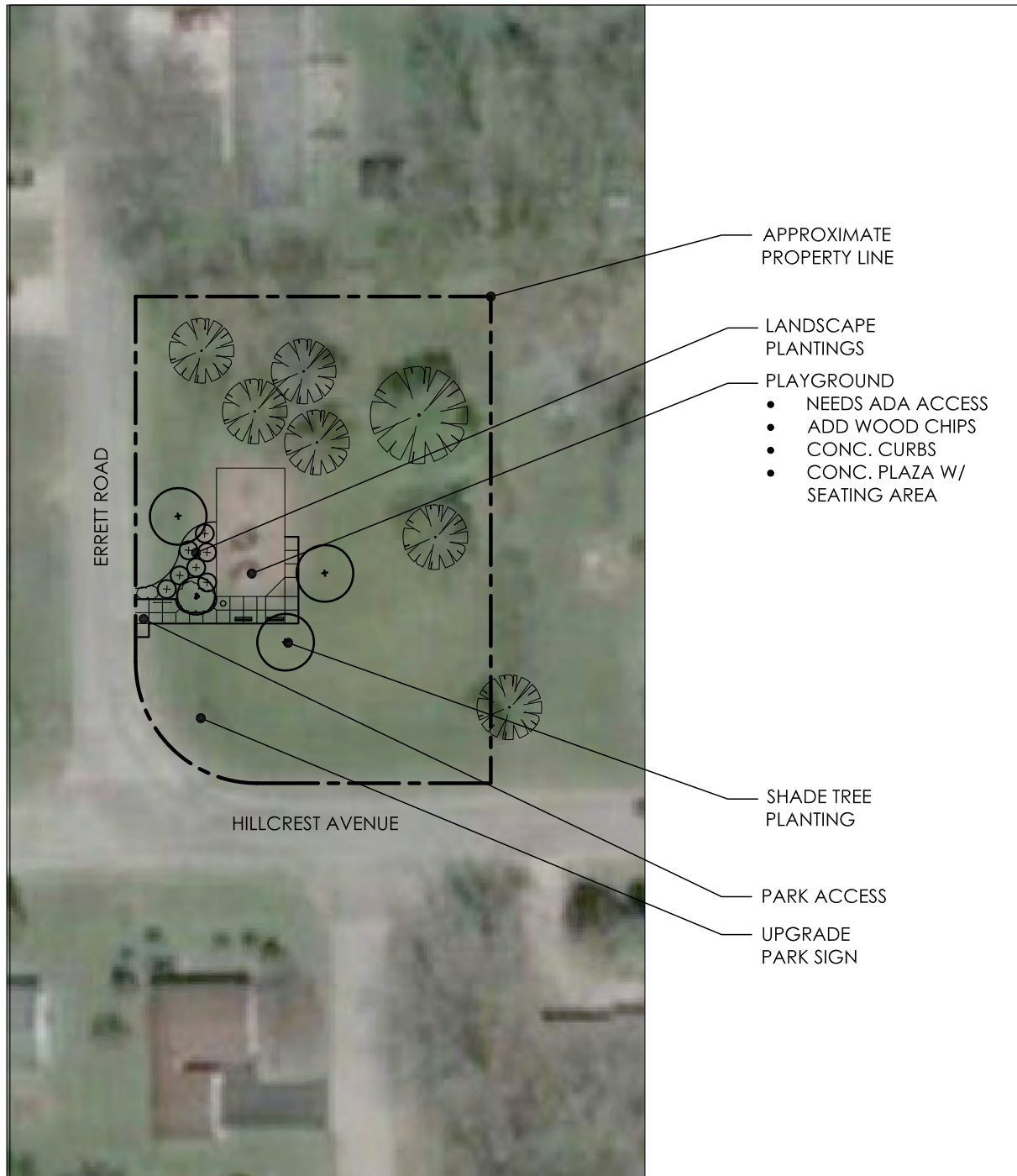


## Capital Improvements Cost Estimate for Sweeney Park

Item	Cost
Basketball Court Improvements	\$3,000.00
Asphalt Path Connection	\$5,000.00
Site Furnishings (Benches, Litter Can, Bike Rack)	\$10,000.00
Playground Accessibility Improvement (Concrete Curbing, Flatwork, Ramp)	\$25,000.00
Upgrade Park Sign	\$3,000.00
Construction Sub-Total	\$46,000.00
Professional Fees	\$4,600.00
<b>Sweeney Park Project Total</b>	<b>\$50,600.00</b>

## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Hillcrest Park Site Development Plan



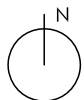
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## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Connolly Park Site Development Plan



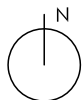
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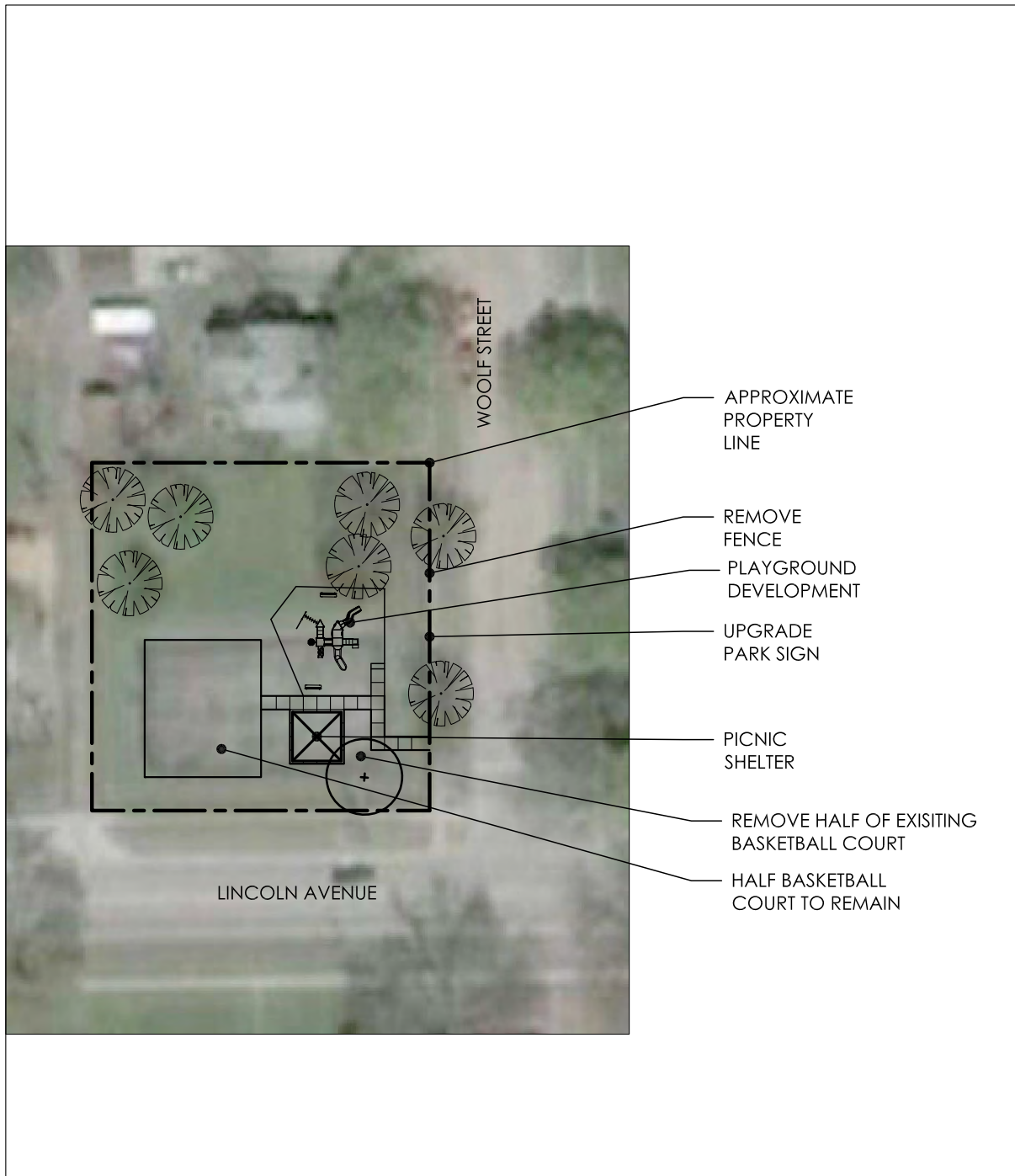
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SCALE: 1" = 50'

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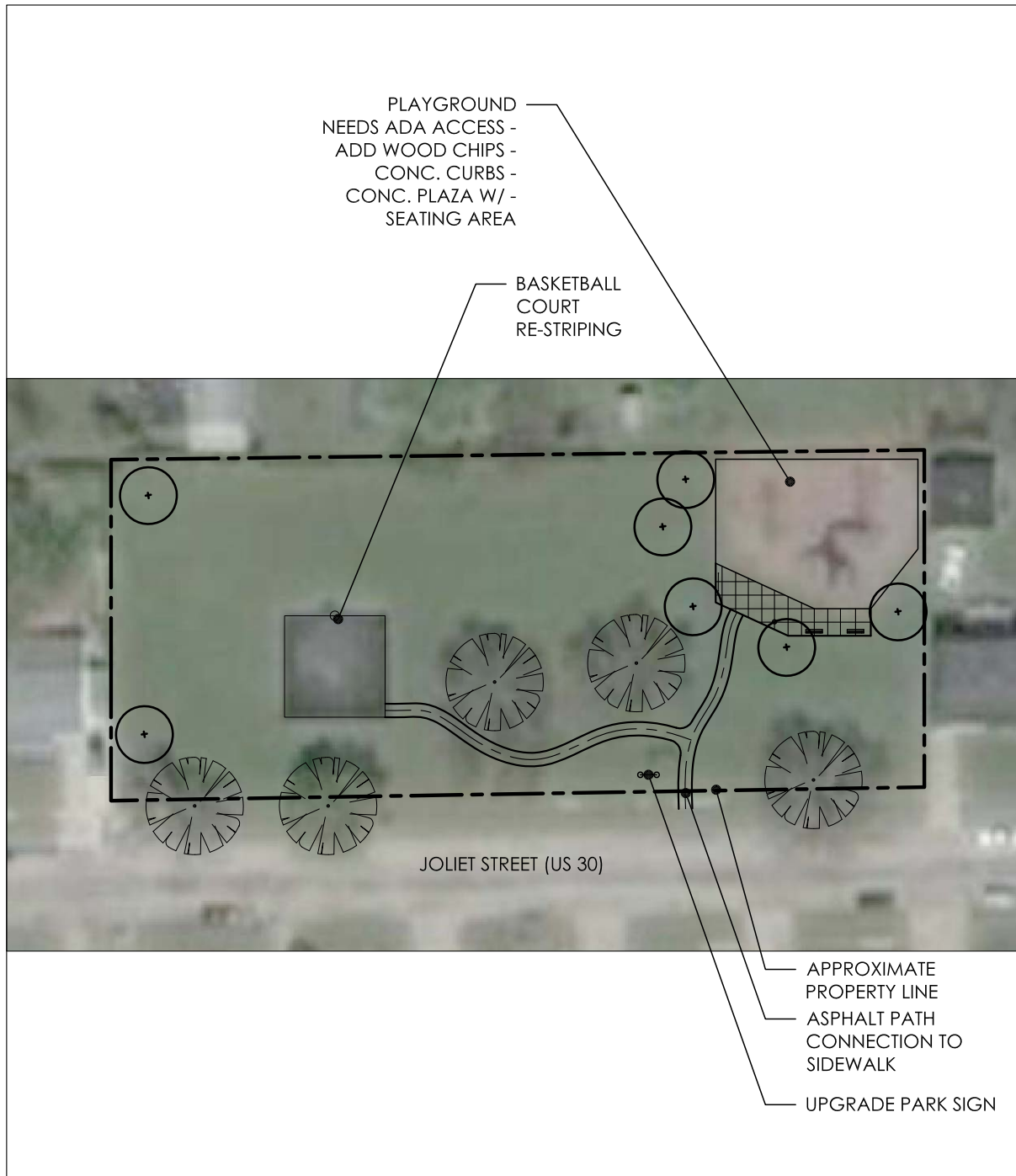
## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Kelley Park Site Development Plan



## Flagg-Rochelle Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

### Sweeny Park Site Development Plan

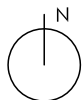


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DRAFT

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SCALE: 1" = 50'

July 2008





IDNR Recommendations 7/21/97  
Useful Life Criteria

## IDNR Grant Administration P.N.R.M.S. Recommendations 7/21/97

### USEFUL LIFE CRITERIA

FACILITY	Expected useful life	Evaluation Criteria - Factor
BB/Softball Fields	8-10 Years	# Games Weekly # Practices weekly Grass Infields? Maintenance Procedure/standards Is site used for multiple uses soccer football Is space used for organized or programmed events? Spectator considerations bleachers Concession stands
BB/Softball Field Lighting	20 years	Pole Type wood, steel, concrete Wiring type aluminum copper HID or incandescent fixtures Existing FC vs. new standards Accepted grounding systems? Panel Capabilities /Technology Electrical Code compliance
Soccer Fields	8-10 Years	Usage rating A/B/C/D # games per week, # weeks per year, time of year, age of user
Irrigation system	20 Years	Irrigated Y/N Usage # Games per week Drainage considerations Maintenance standards/levels Is site used for organized or programmed events? To what extent Is site used for multiple uses Softball, BB or football

IDNR Recommendations 7/21/97  
Useful Life Criteria

## Tennis Courts

Resurface

12-15 Years

Total Renovation

20-25 Years

Lighted Y/N (Use BB criteria)

Surface Clay asphalt other

Color coat /overlay /rebuild

Frequency of colorcoating

Location - High water table?

Fencing material/posts

Preventive maintenance record

Location: Water table concerns

Is site used for organized or  
programmed events? To what extent

Are courts used for making ice?

## Basket Ball Courts

Resurface

12-15 Years

Total Renovation

20-25 Years

Same as tennis courts

## Volleyball Courts

Sand / Grass

Lighted Y/N

Borders

Bleachers/spectator area

## Shuffleboard

Resurface

12-15 Years

Total Renovation

20-25 Years

Same as tennis courts

## Picnic Shelters

25 years

Support structures masonry steel wood

Roof type metal, asphalt shingle, slate, cedar shake

Construction type post & beam, frame

Historical value and consideration

Preventive maintenance record

Is site used for organized or  
programmed events? To what extent

## Playgrounds

15 years metal

10 years plastic

8-12 years wood

Meets Standards? ASTM, CPSC, ADA

Daily usage by intended user group

Location school or neighborhood park

Surfacing Material

Preventive maintenance record

Border construction material

Location: retention area/water ?

# plan implementation

		Location IE Lake Michigan Annual Usage Is facility fee generating? Region
Fishing Piers & Docks	15-20 years	Original Construction materials plastic, wood, aluminum Location IE Lake Michigan Annual volume/usage Winter removal and storage? Preventive maintenance record
Swimming Pools Bathhouse Boathouse	25 years 25 years 10-15 Years	Stand alone site? Heated for winter ? Attached to Community Center Y/N Mechanical room connected ? ADA Compliance Y/N Local Code compliance Preventive maintenance record Location: IE Lake Michigan
Restrooms	Same as Pools	Same as Pools
Parking Lots Resurface Total Renovation	10-12 Years 20-25 Years	Gravel, Asphalt or concrete Monthly volume and load use IE delivery trucks or garbage Spring use heavy, moderate, light Sealcoating frequency Preventive maintenance record Original construction design loads Location: flooding/water concerns Snow removal or salt use? Curbed or sheet drainage to edges?
Bike Paths	Same as Parking lots	Same as Parking lots
Interpretive Center	Same as Bathhouse	Same as Bathhouse

7/21/97

## E. Special Use Park/Facilities

### Description:

These types of parks and facilities usually do not have a specified service radius and include developments such as a multi-use trails. This category also involves the buildings for indoor use. The existing structures of the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District are in need of capital improvements. Any new buildings would also fall under this heading. The Appendix includes a Power Point presentation from the 2006 NRPA Conference that was presented by Brandstetter Carroll Inc. that is very informative on the topic of Developing a Community Recreation Center.

Special Use Parks within the Flagg-Rochelle Community Park District System:

1. Hickory Grove Aquatics & Fitness Center
2. Spring Lake Aquatic Park
3. Teentown/Recreation Center
4. Bike Trail System

For the purpose of this plan, specific capital improvements are not listed due to the requirement to develop specific studies to address the unique nature of each of these special use parks.

For the purpose of this plan, specific capital improvements are not listed due to the requirement to develop specific studies to address the unique nature of each of these buildings. However, a budget number for a square feet allowance is as follows:

Recreation/Community Center	\$250.00/SF
Indoor Aquatic Facility	\$500.00/SF
Outdoor Pool Bath House	\$300.00/SF
Outdoor Aquatic Swimming Pool	\$200.00/SF
Re-Habilitation of Existing Structures	\$150.00/SF
Multi-Use Path System	\$65.00/SF

## Bonding Recommendations

The length of a bond term and its associated financial impact to the taxpayer is a key issue at the heart of every tax increase. The total amount of capital projects identified during the inventory and analysis, surveys and public feedback is in excess of \$14,000,000 which includes an allowance of \$8,000,000 for a new Community/Recreation Center. This is due to two factors. First, is the sheer amount of projects, including a Community Center that are being considered. Second, the lack of a capital budget in the past to develop the park sites in relation to a lifecycle replacement schedule. For example,

# plan implementation

today's playground has a lifecycle replacement standard of 15 years. This means that every 15 years, existing play structures should be replaced with new equipment. In addition, the site will also need to be addressed for pavement replacement, drainage issues, etc.

It is important that the Park District leadership understand that significant access to capital dollars needed. The return on investment with the dramatic rise of the quality of life in association to these major investments will be a success for the public but also the Park District by meeting both the indoor and outdoor recreation needs and designing and programming smart projects that should generate revenue into the Park District operations.

Quite simply put, time has worked against the Sycamore Park District by not planning for the needs of the immediate present and the proposed future. It is the plan's recommendation to re-bond the non-referendum issued bonds when the bond balance falls below \$2,000,000. This will allow for additional monies when the next master plan in 2011 is being completed.

## Grant Recommendations

The search for free money is never easy. It is competitive, time consuming and a bit of luck. With this being said, several projects would be candidates for potential grant dollars. Additional research will be needed to identify opportunities

such as CDBG grants, C2000 conservation grants, urban tree and forestry grants, watershed grants as well as OSLAD funding. We have identified several projects with multiple phases that would be candidates for matching grants. The recommendation would be to recycle the reimbursement money into the next grant. This would allow for a continuous line item in a year budget for potential grant cycles.

The potential projects for grant money includes:

1. Community Recreation Center
2. Lake Sule
3. Helms Sports Complex
4. Memorial Park
5. Cooper Park

## Organizational Structure Recommendations

An organization structure is the engine that drives an agency. The plan's goal is to create opportunities for the Executive

Director to continuously implement the master plan, initiate strategic thinking and strengthening the agency's position with other governmental agencies. The plan has made recommendations for organization changes in most departments but does not generate a specific organization chart for the future. This is best handled internally by discussions and assessments of the personnel.

## Conclusion

There is an old saying that goes people do not plan to fail, they fail to plan. As the Flagstaff-Rochelle Community Park District continues to plan for





its future, it is sure to make significant strides to becoming a noticed agency. For this to happen, ownership of this master plan and the leadership to implement it must occur and occur quickly. The master plan and subsequent follow up studies need to be first and foremost in decision making. It is all too often that the momentum is lost due to a lack of action early after the plan adoption. Once this happens, the agency cannot recover from it. Progress must be visible to the residents. We must not be naïve in thinking we will get to “it” next week, next month, next time. There is too much that needs to be accomplished in the finances, organization structure, recreational programming and capital development. This master plan does not provide every answer because we do not know all the potential questions. It does however give detailed recommendations based on layers of analysis. Improvement needs to be charted regularly, and the plan used frequently in the next five years.

The plan has the mission to re-connect the community with the Park District. It is a worthwhile goal and with teamwork, communication and a bit of luck, it can be accomplished.

