



CITY OF SOUTH BEND VENUES PARKS & ARTS

**2021-2025**

*Master Plan Update*

CITY OF SOUTH BEND VENUES PARKS & ARTS

# 2021-2025

## *Master Plan Update*

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Accepted by the Board of Park  
Commissioners

*(Pending)*



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This report was prepared by the City of South Bend  
Venues Parks & Arts Department for the South Bend  
Board of Park Commissioners.

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# A

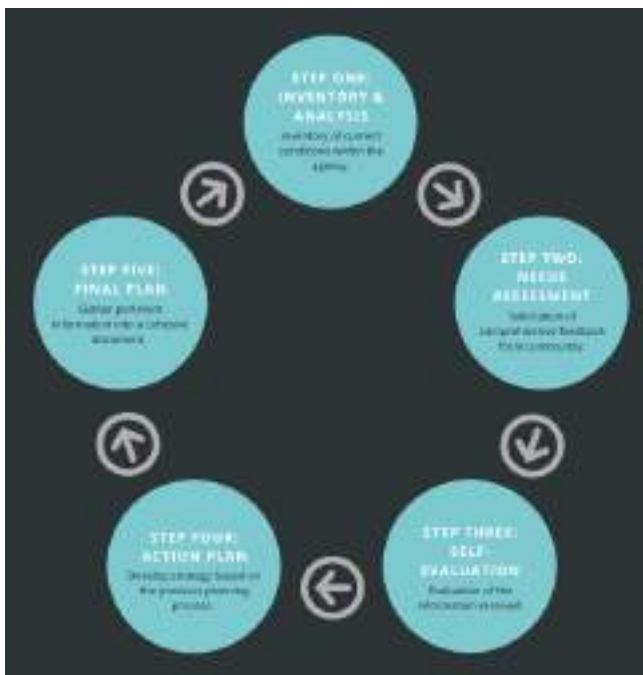
## *Introduction*

## A-1: Purpose of the Master Plan

The purpose of a strategic master plan is to create a comprehensive, proactive, long-term strategy in determining a vision for South Bend Venues Parks & Arts. The City of South Bend has experienced tremendous growth and transition in recent years, and it is vital we set out a vision that matches. It's evident that our green spaces and recreation facilities are a necessary resource for residents and are an essential part of the quality of life.

With this understanding, the plan provides strategies for partnership building, community involvement, feedback and capital improvements for ongoing operation and maintenance of these resources. It also provides detailed, yet adaptable guidelines to help the department implement a wide-range of projects to support our vision and goals.

While the document is a five-year update for South Bend Venues Parks & Arts, it is intended to be a "living document" that is regularly used as a tool for planning, decision-making and implementation with annual reviews to adapt to the changing needs of the community.



## A-2: Planning Process

### Planning Process

The planning process was structured in five chronological phases, each flowing into the next phase after its completion.

#### PHASE 1.0 INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The first was a complete inventory of current conditions within the agency, including operational systems, physical structures and offered services. This process carried over from the completion of the CAPRA accreditation process at the end of 2018 and through the beginning of 2020. Part of this process included updating the various manuals for the Department and an on-site inspection of each of the Department's properties and facilities.

#### PHASE 2.0 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The second phase was a solicitation of comprehensive feedback from the community. Surveys, focus groups, public meetings and both formal and informal pop-up workshops were utilized to obtain a snapshot of public opinion and desires. Extensive public feedback was gathered from community meetings, statistically valid surveying, stakeholder and issue-centric focus group discussions to ensure South Bend's particular needs and desires for their public system was captured. This was done at the neighborhood level, partner and organizational level and the city level. It was targeted at specific park, region and community sectors as well. We hosted over 60 neighborhood meetings and focus groups, 18 public open houses, and received 2,000 online comments and survey responses.

Three city-wide community forums were completed to test and verify our summaries of this feedback. During this time, comparisons with other park and recreation agencies were obtained to benchmark our service levels with other communities. This phase ran from the spring of 2017 until the fall of the following year, directly feeding our Riverside Parks & Trails project and larger My SB Parks & Trails capital improvement process.

## PHASE 3.0 SELF-EVALUATION

The third phase was evaluation of the information received and it involved all levels of the agency to include a complete capacity analysis in the project. This evaluation included identifying demographic concerns, national and local trends, the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts' own strengths and weakness (SWOT analysis) and applying the noted feedback obtained from the community. This was run through an Access and Equity study, partly in partnership with a specialized ParkScore analysis, the first for a City of our size, to determine access to programs and services by demographic and geographic data and target needed areas of development and focus.

## PHASE 4.0 ACTION PLAN

Through this planning process, we developed our departmental impact drivers— social equity, neighborhood and economic impact, health and wellness, and ecological stewardship. To help refine the strategic goals of VPA, the VPA Strategy Team, consisting of leaders in all department divisions, finalized a set of defined focus areas with objectives and strategies which became a strategic plan. These objectives were developed following several leadership team meetings, SB Stat evaluations, leadership development retreats, Drucker Institute training sessions, and facility experience audits. The Strategic Plan was reviewed by the VPA Strategic Team and presented to the Board of Park Commissioners for review and adoption as our Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

## PHASE 5.0 MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT

The final phase is underway- gathering all the pertinent information into a cohesive, publishable document. The final document contains the next five-years' identified capital projects, summaries of the previous completed initiatives, changes to the program and amenities, with preparations for dealing with anticipated changing conditions and budgeting targets with funding sources.

## A-3: Definition of the Planning Area

The planning area for the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department is the same as the service area. Although the department is an operational unit of the City of South Bend, the services, partnership opportunities and impact of its operations are not limited to the city limits. Several parks and programs administered have regional influence and many users of the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department are not residents.

## A-4: Master Plan Components

The final structure of the Master Plan has four components:

1. Profile (Sections E - G): details recent accomplishments, organizational structure, responsibilities, performance standards, previous budgets and a comprehensive description of the community.
2. Inventory (Section G): describes the physical system of parks, facilities, and programs.
3. Needs Assessment (Section H): evaluates the current conditions against public feedback, desired standards, trends and opportunities.
4. Action Plan (Section I - L): defines the strategic issues, coordination with other plans, priorities, possible funding sources, and the outlined Action Steps.



# B

## *Adoption Resolution*

## Resolution Adopting the Five-Year Masterplan 2021 Update

**WHEREAS,**

the South Bend Board of Park Commissioners is desirous of providing aesthetic and functional park and recreational facilities and programs to the residents of the City of South Bend to meet their needs, and

**WHEREAS,**

the South Bend Venues Board of Parks Commissioners realizes the importance of sound planning in order to meet the needs of its citizenry, and

**WHEREAS,**

the South Bend Board of Park Commissioners is continually aware of the value and importance of leisure opportunities and recreational programs and facilities to the future of the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department, its programs and services, and to the residents of the City of South Bend,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**

the South Bend Board of Park Commissioners, by unanimous declaration, does adopt the South Bend Venus Parks & Arts Master Plan Update 2021, dated July 2021, as its official plan for the growth and development of parks and recreation opportunities in South Bend, Indiana over the next five years. The South Bend Board of Park Commissioners is committed to an annual review and update of the goals and objectives of this Master Plan.

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*Mark Neal, President*

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*Consuella Hopkins, Vice President*

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*Aimee Buccellato, Member*

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*Dan Farrell, Member*

Attested,

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*Aaron Perri, Executive Director of South Bend Venues Parks & Arts*

Passed and signed the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, Two Thousand and Twenty-two (2022).



# *Community Description*

## C-1: Regional Setting

Source: [www.sjchamber.org/Community/Cities.htm](http://www.sjchamber.org/Community/Cities.htm)

With a population of 102,269, South Bend is the hub of multi-county, bi-state region. It is the fourth largest city in Indiana, the county seat and the largest city in St. Joseph County. The immediate eight-county region has 933,206 residents, while the Greater Michiana region boasts more than 1.8 million people within a 60-minute drive time of the city. It is a college town with a rich history that also boasts a strong and diversified economy, as well as plentiful arts and entertainment opportunities.

While perhaps most famous as the location of the University of Notre Dame, South Bend stands out in the economic world as a leader in education, health care and distribution. The city's centralized location between Chicago, Detroit and Indianapolis, as well as its easy access to the Indiana toll road has encouraged an ever-growing number of companies to settle their warehousing and distribution centers in South Bend. In the Blackthorn Economic Development Area (BEDA) alone, more than 5.5 million square feet of construction was erected between 1991 and 2000, creating 2,626 jobs. Tire Rack, SBC Ameritech, Tech Data and Pfizer are samplings of companies that have established distribution facilities in the BEDA.

South Bend sets itself apart with exemplary health care and education. Two major hospitals, a children's hospital component and a mental/behavioral health hospital lead the healthcare charge. In addition to the storied University of Notre Dame, many other colleges and universities call South Bend home, including Indiana University South Bend, Saint Mary's College, Holy Cross College, Ivy Tech Community College and Indiana Tech.

New to the city's south side is the Erskine Hills shopping district and Erskine Commons. Erskine Hills is comprised of 510,000 square feet of shopping options, including Target and Kohl's as well as Pet Smart, and Bed, Bath & Beyond. Erskine Commons, a \$50 million endeavor, will feature a WalMart and Lowe's among the

430,000 square feet of new commercial space.

Downtown South Bend is home to the Morris Performing Arts Center, the Studebaker National Museum and numerous other culturally significant spots. Much of downtown is pedestrian friendly, and the trail along the East Race Waterway, a man-made kayaking course, is perfect for evening walks.

South Bend has wonderful, architecturally diverse neighborhoods such as the charming bungalows of River Park, the Victorian and Prairie-style homes in neighborhoods near downtown, the elegant beauties along the river and the exceptional custom homes of Erskine Manor and Deer Run. These neighborhoods are a great compliment to the excellent features mentioned above, making South Bend a premier destination for travelers or people looking to relocate their family or business.

## C-2: Location

The City of South Bend is located in the north central portion of Indiana bordering on the State of Michigan commonly known as the "Michiana" area. Within St. Joseph County and within the St. Joseph river valley, it is approximately 90 miles east of Chicago and 140 miles north of Indianapolis.

## C-3: History

### EARLY HISTORY SOUTH BEND

Source: *Northern Indiana Center for History*

Before any European explorers had stepped foot upon the soil of the Old Northwest, the St. Joseph Valley was occupied by Native Americans. There have been several tribes and early native peoples located around the St. Joseph River. Some of the earliest groups to occupy what would later become northern Indiana and southern Michigan were the Miami tribe. Later, the Potawatomi would move into the St. Joseph River Valley region, utilizing the rich food and natural resources found along the river.

The first European footprint placed in the soil of

northern Indiana was that of Father James Marquette, who traversed the rivers in May of 1675. The main reason for the popularity of the South Bend area was the South Bend portage was the shortest overland route to the Kankakee River. Traveling along the St. Joseph River, exiting at South Bend and walking overland along the portage to the Kankakee allowed access into the Illinois River and then into the Mississippi. Once at the Mississippi, travel was possible north, south, or across the river to explore the West. This was the route used for centuries, first by Native Americans, then the French explorers and traders to travel from Detroit to New Orleans.

In addition to the portage, there were several other Native American trails that criss-crossed throughout the Michiana area. One trail was the Fort Wayne Trail that lead from Fort Wayne, Indiana to Chicago, Illinois. Another popular trail was the Great Sauk Trail that started in Detroit, Michigan, went through Chicago and split into two trails in Missouri, later becoming known as the Santa Fe Trail and the Oregon Trail.

St. Joseph County was formally created in 1830, with four original townships. Lathrop Taylor and Alexis Coquillard plotted the town of South Bend in 1831. Most of the inhabitants of the town were tavern owners, merchants, or fur traders who had settled in the area because of the rich wildlife that congregated along, and in, the St. Joseph River. The population of South Bend in 1831 was approximately 128 men, women, and children.

## C-4: Natural Characteristics

*Source: 2004-2008 Masterplan update, Lehman & Lehman*

### PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Physiographic studies have been undertaken in order to determine best how the land can most advantageously be put to use as it is necessary to have a thorough knowledge of what lies beneath the soil before certain kinds of construction can be undertaken on the surface. Without such precautions, sinking buildings, cracked foundations, flooded basements, etc. are possible negative consequences. In a study

of the physical characteristics of an area, the analysis of the topography, geology, soils, natural resources, and climate is essential in order to achieve optimum use of the land with a minimum of cost. As far as can be determined, there are no areas in the South Bend planning area upon which recreational development of any type is impossible. There are, however, areas in which certain types of construction would be difficult and, in some cases, impractical; these regions will be discussed later in this report. In general, it can be said that the South Bend area is very well suited to any urban development, including recreation.

### GEOLOGY

A study of the bedrock geology in the South Bend planning area is necessary in order to determine whether or not the bedrock is sufficiently stable to support large buildings without causing them to lean or otherwise become unsafe. The bedrock formations which underlie the planning area are considered to be sufficiently stable to support even the largest of buildings and are best described by the Indiana Department of Conservation in its bulletin of 1960:

The oldest known consolidated rocks underlying St. Joseph County are of Ordovician age. These rocks consist of dolomite, dolomitic limestone and shale, and dolomite of Silurian age. The rocks of Ordovician and Silurian age are not used as a source of water supply in the county because of their depth and the highly mineralized water which they contain.

The rocks of Silurian age are overlain by dolomite and dolomitic limestone of Middle Devonian age. These rocks underlie blue-black bituminous shale of Devonian age... The rock of Devonian and Mississippian age grade upward into the shale of the Mississippian age which is overlain locally by thin limestone in which they were laid down and can vary widely in character within short distances. However, it can be said that these materials are quite capable of supporting all types of urban development. (Indiana Department of Conservation, Groundwater Resources of Northern Indiana, 1960).

All of this bedrock is overlain by unconsolidated drift laid down by the Wisconsin Glacier of the Pleistocene age. This glacial drift ranges in depth from 50 to about 300 feet and consists mainly of sand and gravel, clayey till and some glaciolacustrine clay and silt. The glaciofluvial sand and gravel is locally more than 200 feet thick and is the chief source of groundwater for domestic stock, industrial and public supplies. The unconsolidated rocks of Pleistocene age are overlain by thin alluvium, eolian sand and organically rich sand, silt, and clay of the recent age.

## TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the area is, in general, typical of terrain which has been altered by the last continental glacier which moved through the area approximately 15,000 years ago. The last glacial advance, called the Wisconsin Glacier, streamlined the topography by rounding off the hills and filling in the valleys. As it moved by forward, the glacier scraped soil and weathered rock material from

the bedrock surface. These materials were carried along with and pushed in front of the glacier as it advanced until, ultimately, the glacier began to melt and recede. At this time, the material was carried away from the ice front by large streams of meltwaters and washed, sorted, and redeposited as stratified material. This accounts for the numerous sand and gravel beds in the South Bend area.

The glacial materials in the St. Joseph County area range in thickness from about 70 feet to nearly 300 feet. The formations along the St. Joseph River Valley are mainly sand and gravel having a relatively thin strata of clay interbedded with them. The clay, although it may only be a very thin layer, can greatly hinder the recharge of water to the water-bearing beds from precipitation, streams and lakes. This is very probably the cause of the formation of the large areas of muck located within the planning area.

The excessive breadth of the St. Joseph River Valley is due entirely to the fact that the river carried huge

volumes of glacial meltwaters from the receding Wisconsin Glacier and was at one time much larger than the Mississippi River is today. As the glacier withdrew, the meltwaters subsided, thus reducing the river to its present size. This explains why the valley appears to be so broad when compared to the relatively narrow river which flows through it.

## SOILS

For the purposes of this study, the soils of the South Bend planning area have been divided into four types according to their building limitations. These four categories are: none-to-slight, slight-to-moderate, moderate-to-severe, and severe restrictions.

Areas in the none-to-slight restriction category are well suited for urban development. However, these areas are not suited to residential development using septic tanks rather than a sanitary sewage system unless these areas are first drained utilizing tile or some other drainage system.

The second category, slight-to-moderate restrictions, includes soils which are nearly level, well to excessively drained and very well-suited for all types of development with the exception of septic tank sewage systems. These areas must first be drained before the septic tanks can be installed. The most common soil found in the second category is Willvare fine sandy loam.

The third category, moderate-to-severe restrictions, indicates areas suited to urban development. However, these regions have a water table which is very near the surface (1'-4') and so pose a problem for residential construction. It is quite difficult to drain this type of soil even with tile.

The last category poses severe limitations to any type of construction. Areas in this category consist of black muck, 12"-42" thick. Unless artificially drained, the water table is present most of the time. These soils are subject to surface bonding and the muck is unstable for building of any type unless the muck is removed

prior to construction.

Flood plain areas exist mainly along the St. Joseph River will be inundated if a flood were to occur. This possibility should be taken into consideration prior to the undertaking of any construction in these areas.

The above categories are not to be construed to show that any given area is completely prohibitive to construction but rather to show the extent of the difficulty of building in sections with poor drainage, high water table, etc. There is no section of the planning area in which construction is impossible.

## WATER RESOURCES

With the exception of one or two instances, nearly 100 percent of South Bend's water supply (both industrial and domestic) is derived from wells which have been drilled into the glacial drift covering the area. Water derived from this source has been termed excellent in both quantity and quality resulting in South Bend's water rates being among the lowest in Indiana. In addition to this source, it is believed that there are also vast quantities of potable water located in the bedrock formations which underlie the South Bend area. This resource has been unneeded to date and, as yet, remains untapped.

The St. Joseph River is also considered a major water resource as it furnishes some of the city's industries with the large amounts of water necessary for cooling purposes. In addition to this, the river is also utilized as a recreational resource providing the area with water sports and fishing.

All of the South Bend planning area is located within the St. Joseph River drainage basin. Consequently, all runoff from this region eventually flows into Lake Michigan.

## CLIMATE

The climate of the South Bend-South Bend area is significantly influenced by the presence of Lake Michigan, located approximately 20 miles to the

northwest. This lake greatly affects the temperature and snowfall during the winter months, giving the area warmer temperatures in the winter but also greater cloudiness and snowfall when there is a passage of northwest winds over the lake. In the summer time, northwesterly winds coming across the lake will bring somewhat lower temperatures.

Severe cold is experienced for short periods in the winter, although the mean temperatures during winter months are only a few degrees below the freezing point. Summertime temperatures average near 71 degrees with brief hot, humid periods. Although there are occasional droughts, precipitation is fairly evenly distributed with the greatest amounts occurring in April and October. The first occurrence of freezing temperatures is usually around mid-October, and the last occurrence, on the average, is around the first of May. Mean temperature is 49.5 degrees, mean precipitation is 35.3 inches, and the mean snowfall is 65.5 inches. Prevailing winds are from the south-southwest at 10.6 miles per hour.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that the South Bend planning area is quite conducive to all types of urban development, with the exception of those few problem areas mentioned earlier in this section. In general, it can be said that the geology, topography, and soils offer little resistance to most types of construction. The South Bend area has an abundant supply of sand and gravel which are most important resources for the construction of roads, buildings, railroads, etc.

## C-5: Urban Tree Canopy

*Source: Davey Resource Group, partnership project with IDNR, Division of Forestry*

Trees provide a host of benefits to the City of South Bend. They conserve energy, reduce carbon dioxide levels, improve air quality, and mitigate stormwater runoff. In addition, trees provide numerous economic, psychological, and social benefits.

Our tree canopy covers 6,896.66 acres or 26 percent

of the City of South Bend. The City’s canopy cover is average when compared to similar class communities within the northcentral region of Indiana.

Pervious areas cover 11,078.10 acres or 41.6 percent of the City. These areas include parks, open areas, agriculture, bare soils, or golf courses and are places with the most potential for increasing the City’s overall canopy. If only one half of these areas were planted with trees, South Bend’s Urban Tree Canopy would be 47 percent, over the recommended average of 40 percent.

Impervious areas cover 8,281.92 acres or 31.1 percent of the City. These areas are roads, buildings, parking lots, and other paved surfaces that would benefit the most from additional trees and canopy cover. If designed or retrofitted, some impervious areas could support more trees and add to the overall tree canopy.

Open water areas cover 384.11 acres or 1.4 percent of the City. Trees planted in the riparian areas help to increase water quality by partially protecting streams, wetlands, rivers, and lakes from the impact of adjacent land uses.

Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Comparisons	Percent UTC
South Bend’s Maximum Potential UTC	67.5%
South Bend’s Existing Average	26%
Second Class Community Average, Northcentral	25.53%
Statewide Average	24.58%
St. Joseph County Average	23.38%
Northcentral Indiana Average	20.61%

Source: [www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/files/fo-SoBendUTCFactSh.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/files/fo-SoBendUTCFactSh.pdf)

South Bend Venues Parks & Arts operates a Forestry Division which not only maintains the streetscapes and public lands, handles tree safety and storm damage but that also runs the canopy inventory.

## C-6: Government & Services

Source: [southbendin.gov](http://southbendin.gov)

South Bend government follows the mayor-council

representative model of municipal government and, along with the St. Joseph county government, occupies the County-City Building in downtown South Bend.

### CITY OF SOUTH BEND ADMINISTRATION

The government of South Bend is led by the office of the mayor, who is elected to a four-year term and acts as chief executive for the city government.

Mayor..... James Mueller

### CITY OF SOUTH BEND COMMON COUNCIL

The legislative branch of the South Bend government is the South Bend Common Council. The council is composed of nine members, each elected to a four-year term. South Bend is divided into six districts, with each district electing one council member. The final three members are elected at-large. Under Indiana law, the council may pass resolutions and ordinances. Resolutions relate to internal council procedures, while ordinances address municipal codes.

1st District .....Pastor Canneth Lee  
 2nd District..... Henry Davis, Jr  
 3rd District..... Sharon McBride  
 4th District ..... Troy Warner  
 5th District ..... Eli Wax  
 6th District ..... Sheila Niezgodski  
 At Large..... Karen White  
 At Large..... Rachel Tomas Morgan  
 At Large..... Lori K. Hamann

The final elected member of the South Bend government is the city clerk, who is responsible for maintaining official city records and providing general clerical assistance to the City Council.

City Clerk.....Dawn M. Jones, MPA

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

The South Bend Polic Department’s budgeted strength is 261 sworn officers and over 110 civilian employees who strive to meet the service demands of more than 107,000 citizens, a population that increases to over 150,000 people on any given day from a large out of city work force.

Chief of Police ..... Scott Ruskowski

## FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The South Bend Fire Department is comprised of 11 Fire Stations and provides staffing for several specialized areas. Other areas include NeoNatal Transport Unit with Memorial Hospital and Critical Care Transport with St. Joseph Hospital. The Department presently employees 248 full time Firefighters in four divisions. Each division provides specialized functions to the effectiveness of the Department.

- Station 1..... 222 S. Michigan St.
- Station 2..... 110 E. Marion St.
- Station 3..... 1805 McKinley Ave.
- Station 4..... 220 N. Olive St.
- Station 5..... 2221 Prairie Ave.
- Station 6..... 4302 W. Western Ave.
- Station 7..... 616 Portage Ave.
- Station 8..... 2402 Twyckenham Dr.
- Station 9..... 2520 Mishawaka Ave.
- Station 10 ..... 5303 York Rd.
- Station 11 ..... 3505 N. Bendix Dr.

## C-7: Economic Profile

Source: St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce

St. Joseph County, Indiana, branded the South Bend Region, is located in North Central Indiana, with a population of 270,434 people. The city of South Bend,

is the economic and cultural hub of a multi-county, bi-state greater region, population 937,203 (eight counties), with a labor force of 466,011. Neighboring Mishawaka is the second largest retail center in the state of Indiana, and the entire region boasts modest housing costs, more than a dozen institutions of higher learning, easy transportation access and convenient commute times that average 20 minutes. Target industries include IT/data, logistics/warehousing and advanced manufacturing.

## GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Location	MFG	TOTAL
South Bend/Mishawaka MSA	\$2.876B	\$14.225B
Indiana	\$13.966B	\$371.629B

Source: Hoosiers by the Numbers

## ANNUAL PER CAPITA INCOME

St. Joseph County	\$25,893
Indiana	\$28,323
United States	\$31,177

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

## INDIANA TAXES

Tax Types	%
Sales Tax	7.00%
Flat Indiana Personal Adjusted Gross Income Tax	3.23%
Corporate Adjusted Gross Income Tax (AGIT)	5.5%
County Income Tax - Resident	1.75%
County Income Tax - Non-resident	0.74%

Source: www.census.gov

## MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Company Name	Industry	# Employees
University of Notre Dame	Higher Education	3,500

Company Name	Industry	# Employees
Msm Holdco, LLC	Business Services LLC	3,100
Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center, Inc.	Health Care	1,900
Beacon Medical Group, Inc.	Health Care	1,900
Press Ganey Associates Inc.	Health Care	945
AM General LLC	Automotive manufacturer LLC	800
Air Wisconsin Airlines LLC	Regional Airline LLC	756
Honeywell International Inc.	Manufacturing	700
Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center- South Bend Campus Inc.	Health Care Med Center	680
Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana	Higher Education	654

Source: 2019, Company Provided & Hoovers

## C-8: Demographics

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

	South Bend	Indiana	U.S.
High School Diploma or Higher	84.1%	88.3%	87.3%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	25.7%	25.3	

Source: Census.gov

### INCOME AND POVERTY

	South Bend	St. Joseph	Indiana
Poverty	23.8%	15.7%	14.1%
Median Household Income	\$38,943	\$54,434	\$55,746

Source: Census.gov

### POPULATION AGE BREAKDOWN

Age Range	South Bend	St. Joseph	Indiana	U.S.
Pre-K, 0-4	7.3%	6.4%	6.88%	6.1%

Age Range	South Bend	St. Joseph	Indiana	U.S.
5-17	19.9%	18.67%	18.57%	16.7%
18-24	11.6%	8.8%	8.97%	9.4%
25-44	23.74%	25.59%	25.9%	30.2%
45-64	24.66%	25.14%	26.9%	22%
65 & Over	12.8%	15.4%	12.78%	15.6%

Source: Census.gov

### RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN

	SB	St. Joseph	IN	U.S.
White alone	61%	79.9%	84.8%	76.3%
Black or African American, alone	26.6%	13.8%	9.9%	13.4%
American Indian or Alaskan Native, alone	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	1.3%
Asian alone	1.5%	2.7%	2.6%	5.9%
Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander alone	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Two or More Races	4.2%	3.1%	2.2%	2.8%
Hispanic or Latino	15.7%	9.1%	7.3%	18.5%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	52.4%	71.8%	78.4%	60.1%

Source: Census.gov

In planning and delivering services, a few points are immediately apparent. South Bend has a dramatically higher level of racial and cultural diversity than the immediate nearby region and the state as whole. It also has a less affluent average household. The importance of low or zero-fee services and broad array of culturally diverse offerings is clear.

The colleges in the area provide a noticeable bump in the 18-24 year age range and those should be captured in the department's offerings.

## C-9: Manmade, Historical and Cultural Features

### Education

#### COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES/POST-SECONDARY

## INSTITUTIONS WITH ENROLLMENT (IF AVAILABLE)

American National University	60
Bethel College	2152
Holy Cross College	520
Indiana Tech Mishawaka	125
Indiana University School of Medicine at Notre Dame	352
Indiana University, South Bend	8073
Ivy Tech Community College, South Bend	1577
Purdue Polytechnic South Bend	160
Radiological Technologies University	78
Regency Beauty Institute	115
Ross Medical Education Center	-
Saint Mary's College	1576
Trine University School of Professional Studies	75
University of Notre Dame	12393
WGU Indiana, online public university	-

## PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS

- South Bend Community School Corp.

## CHARTER SCHOOLS

- Career Academy of South Bend
- Success Academy South Bend
- Veritas Academy

## PRIVATE/PAROCHIAL

- Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
- City of South Bend Education
- Resurrection Lutheran Academy
- The Stanley Clark School
- Trinity School at Greenlawn

## Transportation Links

South Bend is a multi-modal community offering numerous transportation options.

### AIR & RAIL TRANSPORTATION

The South Bend International Airport, location in

the northwest corner of the City, is one of the few multi-modal transportation facilities in America that provides international and regional flights, interstate bus transportation, and interstate rail service at one terminal. The South Shore Line, an inter-urban rail line providing service from South Bend to Chicago.

**Vehicular Transportation:** In the northern portion of the city, the I-80/90 Tollroad connects to Toledo, Ohio and Chicago. The US 20 Bypass, St. Joseph Valley Parkway, heads around the west and south sides of South Bend takes traffic from the east-west US 20 around the city. The US 20 Bypass connects to SR 2 (West to Michigan City), US 12 in Michigan (to Sturgis and Detroit to the East and Michigan City and Chicago to the West), SR 23 (a main artery through the city as well as St. Joseph County), the I-80/90 toll road, as well as all other major roads from Elkhart to South Bend and into Michigan.

## BIKE PATHS/ROUTES

The City of South Bend was recognized in 2010 as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists and is one of only 303 communities in the United States to be awarded this status for the City's commitment to bicycling and bicycling safety. Expansion of the City's bike and pedestrian trail system to connect to the neighboring communities have both taken place and are currently being planned. South Bend is a member of the 10-Minute to a Park initiative.

Due to the major roadways radial pattern from South Bend's downtown core there are several potential constraints related to pedestrian connections to various parts of the City. As part of the master plan process, this has been reviewed as it relates to the City's current and proposed Level of Service and several new trail and bikeway connections have been implemented with others under planning now.

## Cultural Features

### ART BEAT

One of the largest events held annually Art Beat is

a free one-day celebration, highlighting the works of local visual, performing and culinary artists in downtown South Bend.

## **CENTURY CENTER**

The Century Center is a full-service flexible event space in the heart of downtown South Bend just along the riverfront. The newly renovated Bendix eSports Arena is housed within, attracting gamers from across the region for competitions.

## **FOUR WINDS FIELD**

Home of the South Bend Cubs, a Minor League of the High-A affiliate of the Chicago Cubs, is a modern space designed to host special events including concerts, community events and private rentals.

## **EAST BANK TRAIL/RIVERWALK**

Located along the St. Joseph River, the Riverwalk extends for more than 5 miles of paved, lighted trails along the banks of the river.

## **EAST RACE WATERWAY**

This one-of-a-kind is a regional draw throughout the summer for kayak enthusiasts and those seeking an urban thrill ride. The man-made whitewater course is only one of six in the world and rivals rapids of the Colorado River. Novice to professionals are all welcome to try their hand at the popular attraction, open June through August.

## **HISTORY MUSEUM**

Preserving the region's heritage and educating the public through collections, exhibits and programs, the History Museum is the second oldest historical society in the state of Indiana.

## **HOWARD PARK**

This four-season park boasts an ice trail, stunning fountain feature, state-of-the-art playground, farm-to-table restaurant, and event center, which hosts community programming and special events throughout the year.

## **MILITARY HONOR PARK**

Recognizing and honoring all veterans from all five military branches, this museum has become a home for military artifacts including uniforms, weapons, vehicles and artifacts. Open to the public throughout the year.

## **MORRIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

This nationally top-ranking theater is the home of the South Bend Symphony Orchestra and Broadway touring performances and welcomes dance, comedians, and national touring acts to its historical stage every year. Built in 1922, the Morris is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## **PALAIS ROYALE**

As one of South Bend's finest event spaces, it's easy to become captivated by its historical elegance and grandeur. Stunning opulent architecture and details are just the beginning of the experience within this 8,800 square-foot building.

## **POTAWATOMI ZOO**

The Potawatomi Zoo is one of the oldest zoos in Indiana and features over 500 animals. It is the mission of the Potawatomi Zoo to inspire excellence in education, conservation and improved animal quality of life. The zoo maintains Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) accreditation.

## **POTAWATOMI CONSERVATORIES**

A haven of tranquility within Potawatomi Park, visitors are invited to wander paths of lush, tropical foliage, explore shapes and textures of succulent plants in the arid desert dome, or reflect in the peaceful surroundings.

## **RUM VILLAGE**

Boasting 160 acres of rolling woodland, Rum Village Park is home to a wide variety of reptiles, amphibians, birds and wildlife. The popular park hosts a dog park, nature center, disc golf, mountain bike and hiking trails, and Edge Adventure Aerial Park.

## SNITE MUSEUM OF ART

Housed within the University of Notre Dame, the Snite Museum of Art provides opportunities to enjoy, respond to, learn from and be inspired by original works of art. The 70,000 square-foot building boasts over 19,000 works representing periods of world art history.

## SOUTH BEND MUSEUM OF ART

Founded in 1947, this museum traces its heritage to a small group of artists and community leaders who dedicated their efforts to bringing fine art to the region. Accredited by the American Association of Museums, which recognizes that the Museum has achieved the highest level of professional standards.

## SOUTH BEND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Committed to bringing fine concerts to the South Bend Community, the South Bend Symphony Orchestra provides musical favorites ranging from classical to their popular “Pops” series.

## ST. JOSEPH COUNTY LIBRARY

The St. Joseph County Library has served in the community since 1889. Through 10 branches, the SJCPCL strive to reflect the diversity of the local population and meet the needs of all patrons with free and accessible information and education.

## STUDEBAKER MUSEUM

The Studebaker Museum is devoted to sharing the story of the automotive and industrial history of South Bend and greater region through the display and interpretation of Studebaker vehicles and related industrial artifacts.

## C-9: Recreational Opportunities

### GOLF COURSES

- Blackthorn Golf Course
- Elbel Golf Course
- Erskine Golf Course
- Juday Creek Golf Course

- Studebaker Golf Course
- South Bend Country Club
- Warren Golf Course

### HEALTH AND FITNESS CLUBS

Health and fitness clubs in the South Bend area include: Beacon Health and Fitness, Memorial Health and Lifestyle, and O’Brien Fitness Center. Activities and programs range from weight-lifting and general fitness to specialized activities such as racquetball, pickleball, fitness classes and martial arts.

### FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

Fraternal organizations in South Bend include the American Legion, AmVets, Army/Navy, the Calvert Rod and Gun Club, D.A.V.G, F.O.P., Knights of Columbus, Eagles, M.R. Falcons, Moose, P.N.A., Rotary Club, Z.B. Falcons, Shriners, Lions Club and V.F.W.

### OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

- Two (2) movie theaters
- Notre Dame Compton Ice Arena
- Four Winds Field and Stadium
- YMCA of Michiana, Inc. at O’Brien Center
- Four (4) bowling alleys

There are also several other movie theaters, billiard facilities, and miniature golf courses in the nearby vicinities of the Mishawaka, Granger and Niles areas.

### St. Joseph County Parks:

#### BENDIX WOODS COUNTY PARK

Located approximately 10 miles away in western St. Joseph County, this 195-acre park is very popular and is utilized year-round. Facilities include innertubing runs, 3.6 miles of cross-country ski trails, several high-quality shelters, an exerhike trail, two fishing ponds, numerous picnic areas, 3.6 miles of hiking trails, two playground areas, and a softball field. The Nature Center and “The Rookery” Bookstore are located in the old Studebaker clubhouse. This structure is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

A variety of nature interpretive services and supervised recreational programs are available at the park. A portion of Bendix Woods comprises one of the first 10 nature preserves dedicated by the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves.

### **ST. PATRICK’S COUNTY PARK**

Located on the east bank of the St. Joseph River at the Indiana-Michigan state line, St. Patrick’s consists of 105 accessible acres of parkland. The park’s 365-day-a-year operation includes a variety of programs and special events ranging from winter activities including cross- country skiing, innertubing and hiking; and warm weather activities such as canoeing on the St. Joseph River, fishing, picnicking, swimming and summer concerts held at the Fischgrund Performing Arts Center. Interpretive programs offered at St. Patrick’s include Nature Bound (a summer, environmental education day camp), a bat program, many public walks, etc. Other special events include the Firefly Festival and the Potawatomi Indian Nation’s Kee-Boon-Me-Kaa Festival.

### **FERRETTIE/BAUGO CREEK COUNTY PARK**

Located on the eastern county line near the town of Osceola, the park consists of 210 acres along Baugo Creek and Baugo Bay and encompasses high-quality wetlands, scenic bluffs and woodlands. Warm weather activities include swimming at Lake Osceola (a three-acre pond), canoeing on Baugo Creek, hiking and picnicking. Winter activities include inner tubing, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Interpretive programs offered include pioneer spinning and weaving for children and a variety of other public programs offered throughout the year.

### **SPICER LAKE COUNTY PARK**

Located in the northwest corner of St. Joseph County, this park surrounds a pristine kettle-hole lake. A boardwalk, approximately 1200 feet in length, enables the park visitor to approach the lake while viewing the flora and fauna unique to this habitat. Nature interpretive services and environmental education

services are available.

## **Other Facilities:**

### **POTATO CREEK STATE PARK**

Potato Creek State Park is located in north central Indiana about 13 miles south west of South Bend. The park features a wide array of activities and facilities for year-round enjoyment. A variety of natural habitats await the visitor to this park including the 300-acre Lake Worster, old fields, mature woodlands, restored prairies and diverse wetlands. Each of these offer their own unique opportunities for plant and wildlife observations.

Facilities and activities include: bike/hike trails, boat launch ramps, bridle trails, camping, cross- country skiing, cultural arts programs, fishing/ice fishing, nature center/naturalist services, picnicking, bicycle/canoe/paddleboat rental, saddle barn, swimming beach and youth tent areas.

### **MISHAWAKA PARKS & RECREATION**

The Mishawaka Parks and Recreation Department consists of 28 public parks ranging in size from 0.2 acres to 90 acres. The Parks Department provides full service recreation programs, facilities and areas including a well-developed riverwalk.

# D

## *ADA Compliancy*

## D-1: ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (as amended) dictates comprehensive civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities. In particular, it prohibits the discrimination of individuals with disabilities in relation to programs, services, or activities offered by local and state governments.

The park system's buildings, facilities, and sites are continuously being evaluated to determine what currently meets ADA requirements and those that need to be brought up to ADA and Universal Design Standards. When new construction or renovation work takes place, ADA and Universal Design guidelines are to be incorporated into the project.

The City of South Bend's ADA Transition Plan was approved by South Bend's Board of Works January 8, 2013 and adopted by South Bend's Common Council on January 28, 2013. This Plan addresses the removal of barriers for the disabled as to sidewalks, crosswalks and curbs.

The updated Plan was approved by the City's Board of Public Works at its meeting January 10, 2019, and by the South Bend Common Council on January 14, 2019.

Citizens having any concern about accessibility of City owned facilities, sidewalks, crosswalks, curbs or City programs, services, or any other inquiries about the City's policies for persons with disabilities should contact South Bend's ADA Coordinator:

*Aladean M. DeRose  
1200 County City Bldg.  
227 W. Jefferson Blvd.  
South Bend, IN 46601  
(574) 235-9241*

### **ADA COMPLIANCY GOAL:**

South Bend is a city committed to making its public buildings, programs and services accessible to

the disabled under the ADA. It is a city where full employment opportunities exist for those with disabilities. It is further committed to meeting this goal at all times.

E

*Agency Profile*

## E-1: Progress Evaluation

The South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department has long been established as a key component to the quality of life in South Bend and has a rich and storied history. Howard Park, the first in the system, was developed in 1879 and set the standard for parks in the area.

With the adoption by the South Bend Common Council of an ordinance in 1929, the South Bend Department of Public Parks was first formed, its powers and duties were defined, and a taxing district for park purposes under the first class cities legislation was established.

Today's park system now includes Potawatomi Zoo, first established in 1902 and Indiana's oldest zoo, and Leeper Park and George Kessler Boulevard, both designated as national treasures by the federal Historic Preservation Committee.

Located on the historic east race site of the St. Joseph River is North America's first man made white water rapids course and the Byers Softball Complex on the city's south side continues to host the finest calibre annual tournaments in the region.

The inventory of park facilities includes a state of the art fitness center, a competition-designed concrete poured skate park, and South Bend Cubs Four Winds Field Stadium which houses South Bend's own minor league baseball team.

## E-2: Chronological History of the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department

- 1879 - Ordinance passed to establish Howard Park as South Bend's first park.
- 1891 - City Council creates first Board of Park Commissioners.
- 1901 - South Bend Board of Park Commissioners abolished by special legislature, put under of Board of Public Works.
- 1902 - Leeper Park is established as South Bend's

- second park.
- 1905 - Potawatomi Park is established.
- 1910 - Legislature changes, changing authority of parks to the Board of Park Commissioners.
- 1910 - Herman Byer, appointed as first Park Superintendent.
- 1912 - George Kessler develops boulevard system to connect city parks.
- 1912 - A.E. Perly appointed Park Superintendent.
- 1916 - Rum Village Park was acquired for \$45,000.00.
- 1918 - South Bend Board of Park Commissioners acquired Pinhook property from County Commissioners.
- 1920 Potawatomi Park used as a zoo. 1920 Studebaker golf course opens as South Bend's first municipal golf course.
- 1922 - South Bend's first pool, the Harry Engman Natatorium opened in July.
- 1924 - Ordinance passes to build South Bend's first and only Greenhouse.
- 1925 - The Albert Erskine golf course opens.
- 1937 - Richard Elbel retired after serving 28 years on the South Bend Board of Park Commissioners.
- 1938 - Paul Hayes appointed Park Superintendent.
- 1939 - Howard Park administrative building is completed as part to the W.P.A. program.
- 1941 - Pierre Navarre Park opens at the location of the present day O'Brien Park.
- 1944 - Lysly McNabb appointed Park Superintendent.
- 1950 - Kelly Park established.
- 1951 - Veterans Memorial Park established.
- 1954 - Keller Park established.
- 1954 - Bendix baseball park completed, it is now called Kennedy Park.
- 1954 - Sorin park established.
- 1954 - First comprehensive park master plan developed.
- 1955 - South Bend Community School Corp. and the Park Department Recreation Commission.
- 1955 - Paul Boehm named first Recreation Director.

- 1963 - Park employees join union.
- 1956 - Potawatomi Pool built for \$153,000.00
- 1963 - Ella Morris donates funds for the and Bendix Pool built for \$190,000.00 and opened in June.
- 1956 - Potawatomi Band Shell built for \$23,000 and Studebaker Proshop for \$42,000.
- 1957 - Rum Village shelter house completed.
- 1957 - Storyland Zoo opens at Rum Village. The children train begins operation in Rum Village park.
- 1958 - City's first recreation center opens, donated by Federal Housing Authority.
- 1959 - Park Department signs a 99 year lease with Izaak Walton to establish park.
- 1959 - Beck's Lake and subsequently LaSalle Park was purchased by the Park Department.
- 1959 - Pierre Navarre cabin renovated at Leeper.
- 1959 - Navarre Park is named O'Brien Park, Lombardy Park is now named Navarre Park. 1960 Howard Park Maintenance Building is completed.
- 1960 - Park Department signs lease with S.B.C.S.C. to build Studebaker on existing park.
- 1960 - Voorde Park established, park fully developed in 1963.
- 1961 - LaSalle Park established.
- 1961 - Dutch Elm disease ruins thousands of city trees.
- 1961 - Elbel Park purchased for \$35,000, later to become Elbel Golf Course.
- 1963 - Park Department sells \$800,000 in bonds to develop Pinhook, Elbel and Voorde Parks.
- 1963 - Park employees join union.
- 1963 - Ella Morris donates funds for the Morris Conservatory. The Conservatory opens in 1964.
- 1963 - George Wheelock Park donated to Park Department. Wheelock Park leased to Izaak Walton.
- 1964 - Pinhook beach opens.
- 1965 - Elbel Golf Course opens at the cost of \$550,000.
- 1966 - National Guard Armory leased to the Park Department, later named the New-man Center.
- 1966 - Riverside Manor Park established.
- 1967 - Ralph Newman retires after 19 years as Superintendent.
- 1967 - Charles Van Deive named Park Superintendent.
- 1967 - J.D. Oliver Park established.
- 1968 - Muessel Ellison Trust Foundation donated funds for Tropical Garden Facility.
- 1968 - Lasalle Recreation Center Opens.
- 1968 - Leeper Park Tennis clubhouse is completed.
- 1968 - Park Department begins the de-velopment of South Bend's first "mini parks."
- 1969 - Teamster local #364 recognized as the bargaining agent for hourly employees.
- 1969 - Fremont Park established.
- 1970 - New county park system is being developed.
- 1971 - Friends of the Zoo organized, later became the Potawatomi Zoological Society.
- 1971 - Jim Seitz appointed as Park Superintendent.
- 1972 - Bendix Recreation Center opened.
- 1972 - Bendix Park and Pool changed to Kennedy Park and Pool.
- 1972 - Boland Park established.
- 1973 - For the first time, Park rules are now ordinances passed by the City Council.
- 1973 - Paul Boehm retires after 18 years as Recreation Director. He is succeeded by Bob Goodrich.
- 1973 - Martin Luther King Recreation Center opens.
- 1973 - First Ethnic Festival.
- 1974 - Rum Village Nature Center opens.
- 1974 - Arizona Desert House opens at the Conservatory.
- 1975 - Bi-Centennial Park completed.
- 1975 - Island Park completed.
- 1976 - Pier Park completed.
- 1976 - Boehm Park established in honor of Paul Boehm.
- 1976 - Dean Johnson Park established.
- 1976 - Belleville's "Sheridan Field" is complet-ed with lighting, dugouts and fencing.
- 1978 - The 56 year old Engman Natatorium closes permanently.
- 1978 - Park Department takes over "Ice Box" ice rink and develops partnerships with other agencies.

- 1979 - First Major Zoo renovation in 52 years at Potawatomi Zoo. Cost is \$1.5 million.
- 1981 - Storyland Zoo closes after 24 years of operations.
- 1981 - Park Department hosts first annual Winter Fest.
- 1982 - Five Year master plan completed.
- 1982 - Arthur Fredrickson donated money for establishment of a park.
- 1982 - First Zool Tide at Potawatomi Zoo.
- 1984 - East Race Waterway opens at the cost of \$4.5 million.
- 1984 - Fredrickson Park is established.
- 1985 - Seitz Park is established.
- 1985 - Coveleski Stadium bond and funding process begins for the \$5.7 million project.
- 1987 - Coveleski Stadium completed at the cost of \$8 million.
- 1987 - Fish ladder on East Race completed.
- 1987 - Five year master plan completed.
- 1988 - South Bend White Sox begin to play at Coveleski.
- 1988 - Jim Seitz retires as Park Superintendent after 18 years. Karl Stevens named his successor.
- 1989 - Pinhook Park beach closed permanently after 25 years of operation.
- 1989 - St. Joseph County Vietnam Veterans Memorial established in Howard Park.
- 1991 - Bob Goodrich retires, Tom Shaloliol named successor.
- 1992 - Kids Kingdom is built at Potawatomi Park.
- 1992 - Phil St. Clair is appointed Park Superintendent.
- 1993 - Non reverting funds are established for the first time to create dollars for capitol improvements.
- 1993 - Study completed on possible merger of City-County parks, and establishments of park districts.
- 1994 - Leeper Park duck pond is renovated.
- 1994 - Blackthorn Golf Course is opened. It is South Bend's fourth municipal golf course.
- 1994 - The "Moving Wall" came to Howard Park to honor Vietnam Veterans.
- 1994 - Park Department restructured to include budgeted divisions within Park Department.
- 1994 - City's first disc golf course opens at Rum Village.
- 1995 - City's first mountain bike trail and course opens at Rum Village.
- 1995 - S.B.C.S.C. and Recreation Commission dissolves 40 year partnership with Park Department.
- 1995 - Recreation Division is entirely funded by the City Park budget.
- 1995 - Park Department receives \$900,000 grant to extend riverwalk.
- 1995 - Park Department established "in house" Concessions Division.
- 1996 - Irrigation system installed Studebaker and Elbel golf courses at the cost of \$750,000.00.
- 1996 - Dean Johnson and Studebaker Parks are permanently closed due to construction of schools.
- 1996 - Boehm Park baseball facility is completed.
- 1996 - Kaukema's Courtyard playground is completed at Rum Village park.
- 1996 - Gwen Stiver retires from South Bend Board of Park Commissioners after 17 years of service.
- 1997 - Karl Stevens Memorial Nursery established at Elbel.
- 1997 - Park Department takes over city's special events operation.
- 1997 - Riverwalk completed at a cost of \$1.2 million.
- 1997 - The new \$1.6 million Belleville Softball Complex opened in June.
- 1997 - Leeper Park is designated a historic landmark by the Historic Preservation Commission.
- 1998 - Five Year Parks & Recreation Master Plan completed.
- 1998 - \$500,000 Buddy Bonds Community Center constructed at LaSalle Center.
- 1998 - Recreation Programs TRU Soldiers, B.L.A.S.T., River City Basketball & "Kid's World" were established.
- 1998 - Park & Recreation Department hosted the 25th annual Ethnic Festival.
- 1998 - Park & Recreation Department and City of

South Bend designated “Tree City USA” by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

- 1999 - Belleville Softball Complex hosts its first amateur Softball Association National Championship tournament.
- 1999 - Karl Stevens Tree Nursery dedicated and opened April 6th.
- 1999 - Potawatomi Zoo opens new alligator exhibit.
- 2000 - O'Brien Administration and Recreation Center opened to the public.
- 2000 - Kennedy Family Water Playground facility opened to the public.
- 2000 - Belleville Softball Complex hosts the 2000 Women's Olympic Softball team on July 18th.
- 2000 - Potawatomi Zoo opens new zebra exhibit and greenhouse.
- 2000 - Potawatomi Zoo obtains American Zoo and Aquarium Association National Accreditation.
- 2000 - Erskine Golf Course celebrates its 75th anniversary.
- 2000 - Parks and Recreation Department creates a new marketing division.
- 2001 - Potawatomi Zoo opens new veterinary hospital.
- 2001 - O'Brien Center awarded “Best New Park Facility” by Indiana Parks and Recreation Association.
- 2001 - Parks and Recreation Department creates first “Kid's Triathlon” with 438 entries.
- 2002 - O'Brien Skate Park opens in July.
- 2002 - Belleville hosts an unprecedented two A.S.A. National Championship Tourneys.
- 2002 - Indiana Parks and Recreation Association awarded City Parks Department with Best Recreation Program for B.L.A.S.T., and best new facility for the O'Brien Skate Park.
- 2002 - Parks and Recreation Department implements “Hearts 'n Parks” program.
- 2003 - Parks and Recreation Department website recognized by the National Recreation and Parks Association as “Best of all Class III Cities in the United States”.
- 2003 - South East Neighborhood Park opens, replacing former Johnson Park.
- 2003 - IPRA awards Park and Recreation Department “Best New Park Development” for Southeast Park.
- 2004 - Great Lakes Region/NRPA Partnership Award for relationship between Potawatomi Zoo and the Potawatomi Zoological Society.
- 2004 - IPRA Award for Outstanding Park Development for Southeast Park.
- 2004 - Women's Olympic Softball Team returns to Belleville for a 2nd time.
- 2004 - Child Magazine ranked Potawatomi Zoo as one of the 20 Best Zoos for Kids.
- 2004 - Parks renovate the 32 year old Martin Luther King Recreation Center.
- 2004 - IPRA Essential Services award to Hearts N Parks program.
- 2005 - New O'Brien 7,500 sq. ft. Fitness Center opened at the O'Brien Center.
- 2005 - The South Bend Parks and Recreation and the South Bend Rotary partnership create the Friendship Station Playground.
- 2005 - “Friendship Station” is dedicated and officially opens to the public in Belleville Park.
- 2005 - IPRA Essential Services Award for Promoting health & fitness through Parks & Recreation.
- 2005 - IPRA Outstanding Facility Award for the Martin Luther King Jr. Center renovation.
- 2005 - Child Magazine names Potawatomi Zoo as one of the top 20 zoos in the U.S. for kids.
- 2005 - Potawatomi Zoological Society provides the C.B. Hunting passenger train as a permanent zoo structure.
- 2005 - The 80 year old Potawatomi Park Pavilion was completely rehabilitated to serve as South Bend's largest outdoor rental facility.
- 2006 - South Bend Swim Club implemented.
- 2006 - South Bend Parks & Recreation Dept. receives Award of Excellence from the National Institute of Health and the Department of Health & Human Services for the WeCan Program, and is named one of the first “We Can!” cities in the U.S.
- 2006 - New Maintenance Facility located at 1020 High St. is opened. The old maintenance

facility built in 1960 and located at Howard Park is demolished.

- 2006 - Department of Natural Resources recognizes South Bend as Tree City USA for the 10th consecutive year.
- 2006 - Renovation of Pinhook Pavilion Hall completed.
- 2006 - New lion exhibit is completed at Potawatomi Zoo.
- 2007 - Completion of the 1.75 mile river walk along Riverside Drive.
- 2007 - South Bend Botanical Society is formed to create a partnership with the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department.
- 2007 - South Bend Parks & Recreation Dept receives accreditation from C.A.P.R.A.
- 2007 - IPRA Outstanding Service Award for Dedicated Service to I.P.R.A.
- 2007 - Renovation of Leeper Park Tennis Courts completed and Grand Re-Opening.
- 2008 - Potawatomi Park Universally Accessible Playground is built and opens to the public.
- 2008 - Women's Olympic Softball Team returns to Belleville for an unprecedented 3rd time.
- 2008 - Community Gardening group, in partnership, begins to use park property at Potawatomi Park for growing of local food.
- 2008 - South Bend Venues Parks & Arts install their 5th water splash pad in the city parks. Locations include LaSalle Park, Coquillard Park, King Park, O'Brien Park, and Southeast Community Park.
- 2008 - Belleville Softball Complex host 10th and 11th A.S.A. National Championship Softball Tournament and receives it's 10th and 11th James Farrell Award for Excellence as one of the best organized softball tournaments in the U.S.
- 2008 - IPRA Awards for Essential Service for Health & Fitness; Outdoor Awareness - Wildwood Studio Nature Program; Outstanding Park Developmen - Potawatomi Park Universally AccessiblePlayground; Outstanding Service Work - Susan O'Connor.
- 2011 - Opening of the City Wellness program.
- 2011 - Renovation (Phase 1) to Coveleski Stadium begins.
- 2011 - New synthetic turf and field drainage installed at Coveleski stadium.
- 2011 - IPRA – The Indiana Outstanding Parks and Recreation Agency of Year – South Bend Parks and Recreation Department.
- 2011 - South Bend Common Council – Resolution 4111-11, Honoring Phil St. Clair for dedicated service as the longest serving Park Superintendent in the cities' history.
- 2012 - Substantial renovation of the Potawatomi Conservatories. The South Bend Botanical Society manages daily programming, educational opportunities and awareness campaigns.
- 2012 - Friendship Station at Belleville Park replaced.
- 2012 - First ADA designed splash pad installed at Potawatomi Park in partnership with the St. Joseph Community Foundation and a local private investor.
- 2012 - CAPRA five-year reaccreditation process completed.
- 2012 - Digitizing of cemetery records begun with the Historic Preservation Society and Notre Dame.
- 2012 - Creation of the Active Youth Initiative (AYI) to further the impact of the Healthy Communities Research Group's work with South Bend.
- 2012 - Renovation (Phase 2) to Coveleski Stadium begins.
- 2013 - Entered into a Public/Private Partnership with the Zoological Society to manage the operations at Potawatomi Zoo.
- 2013 - The Graffiti Abatement Program created and operated by the Parks and Recreation Department, receiving reports and resolving over six hundred sites in 2013.
- 2013 - Central mowing handles code citations, city-owned lots and Community Investment properties
- 2013 - Coveleski Stadium playing field renamed as Four Winds Field.
- 2014 - Completion of the Five-year Master Plan Update. (2014-2018)
- The City of South Bend's Wellness Program receives a 3-Star Achieve WELL Award from the

Wellness Council of Indiana

- 2014 - IPRA – Innovation Award – City Voice Partnership – Senior Fit.
- 2015 - 5 million dollar Park Bond secured for park updates and improvements.
- 2015 - The City of South Bend celebrates its sesquicentennial with SB150.
- 2015 - Five-Year Master Plan for the City Cemetery is completed.
- 2016 - Aaron Perri named Executive Director at Phil St. Clair's retirement.
- 2016 - IPRA – Creative Event Award – SB 150
- 2016 - Newman Center transferred from the system and undergoes private renovation.
- 2017 - South Bend Parks and Recreation restructured as South Bend Venues Parks & Arts.
- The Ice Rink and Howard Park and the
- 2017 - Howard Park Recreation Center demolished for the Howard Park improvement.
- 2017 - The Charles Black, Sr. Recreation Center closed for renovation.
- 2017 - The Lodge building at Howard Park renovated and re-occupied.
- 2017 - Two additional bonds secured, 5-million and 12-million dollars.
- 2017 - My SB Parks & Trails system-wide improvement and development plan launched. A \$62 million parks investment, largest in city history.
- 2017 - IPRA – Creative Event Award – Best. Week. Ever.; Inclusion Program of Excellence – VPA Equity Analysis.
- 2018 - Park Foundation merged and reconstructed. VPA Foundation begun.
- 2018 - Completion and re-opening of Charles Black, Sr. Community Center.
- 2019 - Leeper Park renovated including removal of the duck pond and the return to South Bend of the renovated historical Studebaker Electric Fountain.
- 2019 - Grand Re-opening of renovated, remodeled Howard Park including Event Center and Ice pond and Trail.
- 2020 - Re-Opened Pulaski Park after \$1m renovation
- 2020 - Implemented NEA Our Town grant for the

River Lights Trail.

- 2020 - Reorganized the Recreation division.
- 2020 - Reimagined Gov. Joe Kernan Trail.
- 2020 - Potawatomi Zoo remodel completed.
- 2021 - Grand re-opening of Pinhook Park and Community Center.

## E-3: Board of Park Commissioners

The South Bend Board of Parks Commissioners, by ordinance, operates under the Indiana Park and Recreation Law (36-10-3) which establishes the exclusive government, management and control of all parks and recreation areas within the City/Town subject only to the laws of the state.

The Board of Park Commissioners is composed of four (4) members, not more than two of them shall be of the same political party, appointed by the Mayor to four-year terms. The Board has authority under statute for:

1. Operation of the Department of Parks. (i.e. user fees, special events, Master Plans, etc.)
2. Adopting rules and regulations.
3. Acquiring and selling park lands.
4. Adopting capitol improvement programs.
5. Approving annual operating expenses.
6. Selling bonds for capital improvement.

### PAST PARK COMMISSIONERS & TERMS IN OFFICE

On June 8, 1891, the South Bend Common Council Elected a Board of Park Commissioners. This Board served until the a new city charter was enacted in 1901, when the Park Board was dissolved and the Board of Public Works took over the administration of city parks.

- *Frank Mayr*..... 1891-1894
- *Corwin B. Vanpelt*..... 1891-1898
- *Samuel S Perley*..... 1891-1893
- *Joseph E. Robert* ..... 1893-1894

- *Martin J. Roach* ..... 1894-1901
- *Orin G. Huff* ..... 1894-1901
- *Irving A. Sibley*..... 1898-1901

In 1910, a new Board of Park Commissioners was formed under state law, and this is the continuing institution that is responsible for the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts to the present.

- *Richard Elbel*..... 1910-1937
- *F.O Winkler*.....1910 (Deceased)
- *Simon Greenbaum*..... 1910-1913
- *George M. Studebaker* ..... 1910-1911
- *Dr. Edwin J. Lent* ..... 1910-1918
- *Horace L. Greene*..... 1911-1915
- *Irwin Jackson*..... 1913-1920
- *W.W. Ridenour*..... 1912-1923
- *Carl D. Britton* ..... 1918-1920
- *George Olatner*..... 1920-1927
- *Otis S. Romine*..... 1920-1930
- *Ward L. Mack*..... 1923-1929
- *George H. Wheelock*..... 1927-1938
- *David Fishgrund* ..... 1929-1943
- *Wilson E. Freeman* ..... 1930-1934
- *John B. Sniadecki*..... 1930-1939
- *William A. Freeman*..... 1937-1941
- *Dr. James L. Wilso* ..... 1939-1947
- *Larry J. Bojewicz*..... 1939-1945
- *Carl Gintz*..... 1941-1948
- *Hugh L. Woolverton*..... 1943-1949
- *Frank B. Klimek*..... 1946-1949
- *Russell W. Koehler*..... 1947-1948
- *Dr. James M. Wilson* ..... 1948-1949
- *George T. Koch* ..... 1949-1952
- *Maurice Tucker* ..... 1949-1951
- *Dr. Lorenze A. Rausch*..... 1949-1954

- *Ben H. Drollinger* ..... 1949-1953
- *Alex J. Dlugosz*..... 1951-1953
- *Charles A. VanDe Veire*..... 1952-1967
- *Paul D. Gilbert* ..... 1953-1959
- *Stanley F. Kromkowski*..... 1954-1957
- *Edwin S. Ehlers*..... 1955-1967
- *Richard S. Kromkowski*..... 1957-1969
- *Herbert R. Solbrig*..... 1960-1963
- *James E. Beaudway*..... 1964-1975
- *Richard J. Feil*..... 1967-1977
- *Thomas F. Broden*..... 1970-1977
- *Reginald R. Howard*..... 1973-1976
- *James P. Considine*..... 1976-1979
- *N. Jerry Hubner*..... 1977-1980
- *Melvin L. Holmes* ..... 1980-1993
- *John L. Horvath*..... 1981-1987 (Deceased)
- *Phillip G. Long* ..... 1988-1994
- *Fred S. Kahn* ..... 1988-1994
- *Jerome Perkins* ..... 1993-1997
- *Tom Kelly*..... 1994-2015
- *Robert Henry* ..... 1994-2014
- *Bob Goodrich* ..... 1997-2015
- *Garrett Mullins*..... 1997-2013
- *Amy Hill*..... 2013-2015

## CURRENT PARK COMMISSIONERS

- President ..... Mark Neal, Democrat  
mneal@southbendin.gov  
Term Expires - 12.31.2024
- Vice President..... Consuella Hopkins, Democrat  
chopkins@southbendin.gov  
Term Expires - 12.31.2022
- Member..... Aimee Buccellato, Republican  
abuccellato@southbendin.gov  
Term Expires - 12.31.2024
- Member..... Dan Farrell, Republican  
dfarrell@southbendin.gov  
Term Expires - 12.31.2024

## E-4: Department Leadership

### VENUES PARKS & ARTS DIRECTORS

Executive Director ..... Aaron Perri  
Executive Director of Venues.....Jeff Jarnecke  
Chief Development Officer..... Annie Smith  
Director of Community Programming ..... Cynthia Taylor  
Director of Facilities & Grounds ..... John Martinez  
Director of Financial Services .....Erich Haley  
Director of Golf Operations ..... Tony Stearns  
Dir. of Recreational Experiences ..... Jonathon Jones

## E-5: Mission

Inspire a more livable South Bend for all, connecting us to emotional engaging experiences and to one another.

## E-6: Vision

Every resident of South Bend is positively engaged at least once every year.

## E-7: Impact Drivers

In order to best meet the needs of the community, the Department strives to align all operations under the following impact drivers:

- **SOCIAL EQUITY:** Erasing societal divides and ensuring the ability to thrive for all, regardless of income level, race, gender, ability, orientation or age.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD & ECONOMIC IMPACT:** Creating strong and safe neighborhoods providing significant return on investment.
- **HEALTH & WELLNESS:** Enhancing the physical and emotional well-being of individuals.
- **ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP:** Responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainability practices.

## E-8: Experience Framework

We create positive impact through our Experience Framework. This framework focuses on the intersection of Physical, Promotional, and Programmatic experiences (the three P's). Each form of experience is dynamic and full of nuances capable of triggering a range of emotional responses. By offering high-level service in each of these areas, an experience reaches its optimal impact on the consumer. If one of the P's is lacking, the entire experience can miss the mark.

### THE THREE P'S

- **PHYSICAL** - The physical elements of an experience including cleanliness, landscaping, art, building condition, signage layout and more.
- **PROGRAMMATIC** - The plan of action for an experience including the schedule, activities, sights and sounds, food and beverage, entertainment, etc.
- **PROMOTIONAL** - The elements leading up to an experience to garner interest and excitement as well as providing necessary communication allowing guests to feel fully informed.

## E-9: Department Structure

The South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department is a organizational component of the City of South Bend. The Executive Director of the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department is a member of the Mayor of South Bend's Division managers.

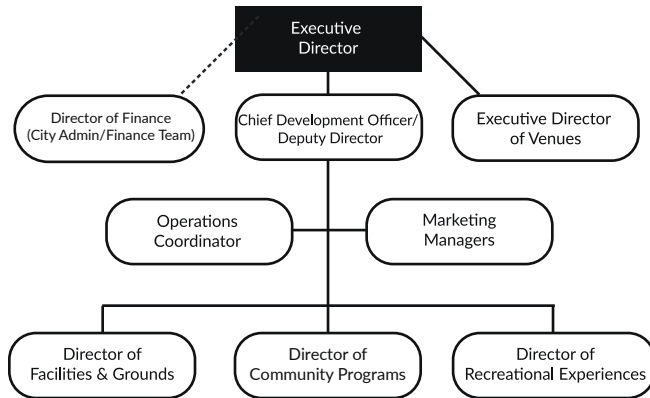
The South Bend Common Council oversees and approves annual budgetary appropriations for the functioning of the Department although it is the Board of Park Commissioners who decide how funding will be utilized and who approve all Department expenditures under their guidelines.

The South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department, operating under the Indiana State Statues (IC 36- 10-3)

commonly known as “Park Law” remains a member of the City of South Bend’s administration under its elected officials.

Venues Parks & Arts oversees the public spaces and quality of life assets of the City of South Bend including parks, community centers, convention center, performing arts center, recreational experiences including special events, and oversight of several operational partnerships such as the baseball stadium, zoo, and conservatory. A member of the city’s administration and finance team is designated to VPA to oversee the finances and budget of the department. This employee directly reports to the central administration and finance team but is specifically assigned to help with VPA.

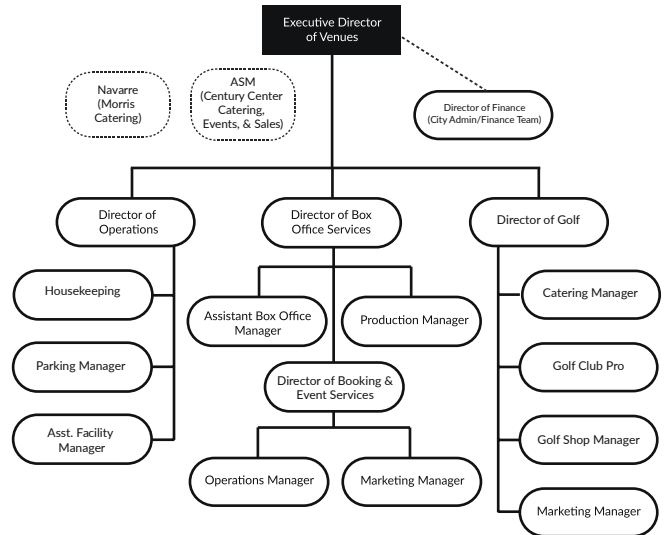
**Direct Reports:**



**VENUES**

The Venues Division oversees the Morris Performing Arts Center, Palais Royale Ballroom, Century Center, golf courses, and parking garages. The Civic Center Board of Managers is the governing board over these entities. The Venues Division contracts with Navarre Hospitality to provide catering at the Morris Performing Arts Center & Palais Royale Ballroom and ASM to provide catering, event services and sales and marketing at the Century Center. The Venues Division also has an assigned Director of Finance from the City’s central administration and finance team.

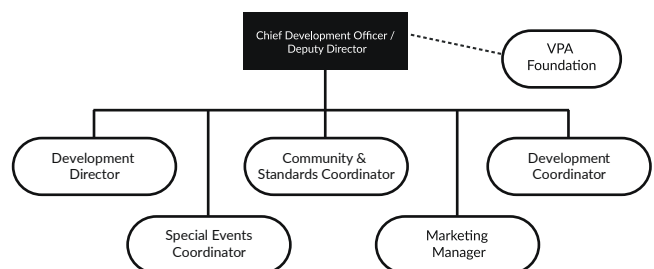
**Direct Reports:**



**DEVELOPMENT**

The Development Division manages the philanthropic and community relations arm of South Bend Venues Parks & Arts. This includes the oversight of the Venues Parks & Arts Foundation, the 501c3 affiliate of VPA which raises funds for the sole purpose of supporting VPA initiatives. Other areas under the charge of the Development Division include grants and awards, donations and fundraising, department-wide data tracking and reporting, volunteers and interns, community-sponsored events, and other community relations efforts.

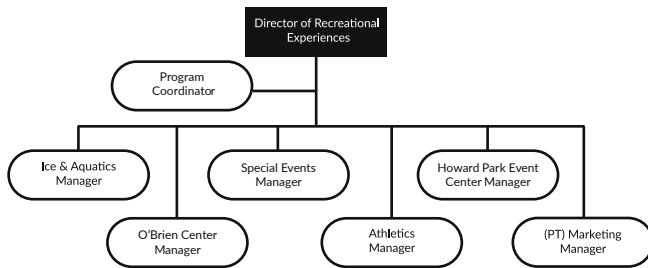
**Direct Reports:**



## RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES

The Recreational Experience Division oversees recreational programming for the department. This includes the aquatic assets (Potawatomi Pool, Kennedy Water Playground and East Race), ice skating, Howard Park Event Center, various special events, camps, athletic rentals and leagues, youth athletic programs including youth basketball and tennis camps, Boomer Recreational Vehicle and the O'Brien Fitness Center.

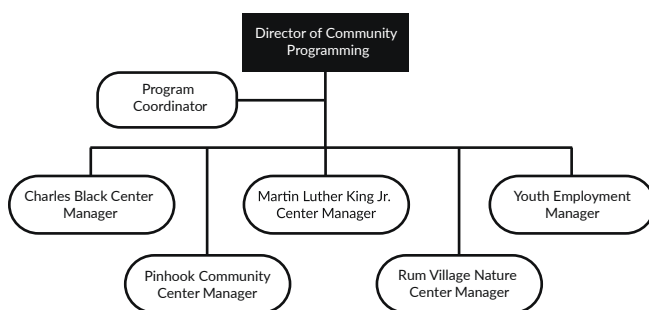
### Direct Reports:



## COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

The Community Programming Division oversees the community centers and programming that happens within them including partner programming. The division is also home to the youth employment program that provides job opportunities, training and mentoring to youth in the community.

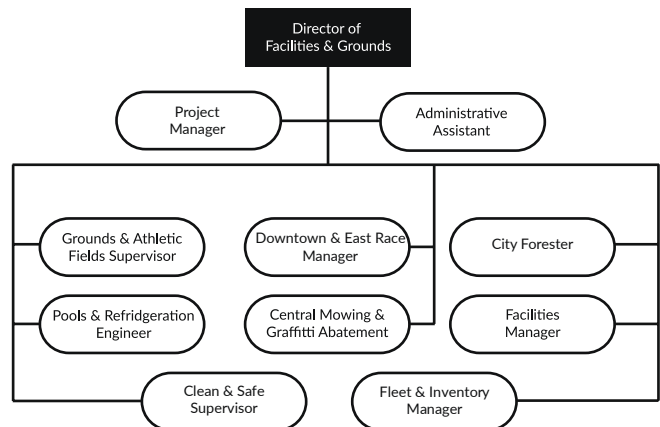
### Direct Reports:



## FACILITIES & GROUNDS

The Facilities & Grounds Division manages the physical assets of our public spaces and facilities. The team maintains parks with mowing, landscaping, tree trimming and planting, garbage pick-up, cleaning and general maintenance. Additionally, they are responsible for the safety and cleaning initiatives for the entire division, maintaining all the mechanicals for ice and water features in the city, delivering materials for special events, and removing graffiti around the city.

### Direct Reports:



## E-10: Budget Analysis

A 2% debt limit is established by the Constitution of the State of Indiana. This limitation does not include revenue bonds payable from the Governmental funds shown in the general long-term debt account group applicable to the debt limits of the Redevelopment Commission, Redevelopment Authority or Civic Center Building Authority.

## EXPENDITURES

The following chart displays actual expenses for all Park and Recreation Funds for the years 2015 through 2020, and the lower half provides a revenue and expense projection for the years 2021 through 2025, over the life of this plan.

### 2017 – 2020 SBVPA: Expenses (Actual)

Expenditures	2017	2018	2019	2020
Facilities & Grounds	6,337,335	6,521,085	6,997,279	6,797,500
Recreation	4,333,180	3,546,782	3,034,640	2,773,309
Capital Reserves	2,179,306	1,587,809	9,308,715	909,379
Admin	1,404,091	1,125,910	1,723,159	1,499,024
Zoo	805,715	756,352	743,325	743,923
Marketing & Events	806,133	948,583	965,580	882,516
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>15,903,472</b>	<b>22,025,002</b>	<b>30,854,162</b>	<b>18,926,314</b>

### 2017 – 2020 SBVPA: Revenues

Revenues	2017	2018	2019	2020
Property taxes	9,033,730	9,591,899	10,048,047	9,566,806
Charges for Services	3,421,831	2,721,482	2,583,508	2,288,364
Other Taxes	791,777	842,315	890,592	904,581
Interest Earned	33,238	102,650	156,134	11,508
Donations	131,200	111,122	269,670	1,061,421
Interfund Transfer In	1,415,007	2,345,846	410,867	800,000
Misc. Revenue	17,517	25,248	41,909	92,821
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>15,903,472</b>	<b>22,005,959</b>	<b>25,764,830</b>	<b>17,863,806</b>

## Subsidy Allocation and Cost Recovery Philosophy

A philosophy that guides decisions relative to resource allocation is invaluable for making financial management decisions such as allocating subsidy and determining fair and equitable pricing of services.

South Bend Venues Parks & Arts has participated

in discussions over the years regarding the City’s philosophy related to desired cost recovery for these services.

## COST RECOVERY

There is no standard national target for cost recovery (calculated as the amount of revenue collected vs. the expense) for Parks and Recreation services, but this is a growing area for management attention. Based on national numbers from various reports, the average cost recovery for PROST (Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails) agencies across the country is 34 percent. The target in each individual community should be based on the expectation of that community, and their willingness to pay for these types of services.

Typically, parks, open space, and trails, have much lower cost recovery, and recreation departments have higher cost recovery (they usually charge fees for programs and facilities). Ranges are extreme, from zero for parks and trails to about five percent for large urban departments that have small community centers and many free programs, up to about 85 percent for some special districts that have large multi-purpose regional recreation facilities.

The City has created policies regarding fee structures within the Department in 2007 and updated in 2018. As noted below, the policy’s purpose is as stated:

“Fees and charges for recreation services are charged for four (4) primary reasons. First, the need to provide services without increasing taxes is self-evident and generally supported City-wide. Second, the charging of fees promotes equity in that those who benefit from a recreation service pay for the service and users from outside the community pay more for the same services. Third, the charging of fees increases accountability in government units creating entrepreneurial incentives and ensuring only needed services are offered. Fourth and finally, the charging of fees generally provides for a positive attitude on the part of users due to enhanced respect and esteem for the usefulness of the service.”

## SOUTH BEND'S FEE STRUCTURE

VPA recognizes in their policies for cost recovery that while certain community services shouldn't be fee-based, there are distinctions for different types of users within South Bend, including non-residents, or families in need of financial assistance, and incentives for new programs or services, and tailor their fees accordingly. VPA also understands that by providing more social services to the community at no cost there will be an impact in the ability to provide a high-level of cost recovery.

## SOUTH BEND'S COST RECOVERY/SUBSIDIZATION RATE IN THE GENERAL FUND

VPA has defined strategies for evaluating the cost recovery for programs and services, and outlined recovery rates that correspond to the following service types below in their Fee Structures policy:

“The Parks Board shall annually review the City’s recreation offerings and determine which of the following general cost recovery rate categories each group of programs falls under. The Parks Board shall make this determination after consultation with, and recommendation by the parks and recreation staff.”

Special Services - High demand service where fees are easily charged for highly-individualized and specialized activities. These services largely benefit individuals and have limited enrollment in order to provide a high-quality experience. Those who do not participate generally derive no direct benefit as members of the general public. Examples include adult sport leagues, art classes, trips and excursions, golf courses, etc. A sense of accomplishment and recognition are provided. Cost Recovery Range: up to 100% of all direct and indirect expenses; capital depreciation costs and overhead may be included, and these services may be used to generate income to subsidize other Park and Recreation operations. A heavy factor for determining cost will be market forces and comparative fees of competition for similar or identical services.

## MERIT SERVICES

Generally programs that are educational, promote personal development and/or health of area youth and adults. These programs particularly benefit the public in general through diversion, education and learning objectives provide a sense of belonging to the community and benefit the community as a whole. Examples include social and education programs, childcare, swim and skate lessons, youth sports and selected youth programs, etc. Cost Recovery Range: 50 to 100% of direct and indirect expenses only, but often less as the ability of the target users will be weighed heavily in the final fees.

## BASIC SERVICES

Determined as an essential service to the community which meet basic needs and are difficult to establish as individual costs, these services increase the attractiveness of the City as a place to live, bring the community together for an event or activity, establish a sense of community, serve as outreach programs for older adults, the disabled, at-risk clients or provide a basis for tourism or community promotion. Cost Recovery Range: 0 to 100% of direct and indirect expenses only. Almost all maintenance operations and most special outreach projects fall into this category.”

## THE PYRAMID METHODOLOGY – A VPA MANAGEMENT TOOL



Refining the subsidy and cost recovery philosophy is important as the City works to sustain services in both the short and long term. The Pyramid Methodology is an effective management tool currently being utilized by agencies across the country to develop and articulate a subsidy and cost recovery philosophy.

	Levels	Financial Recovery	Programs/Facilities/ Services
SPREAD LEVEL 3	Level 5: Mostly Individual Benefit	Revenue Positive Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concessions</li> <li>• Specialty Classes</li> <li>• Fitness Center</li> </ul>
	Level 4: Considerable Individual Benefit	Full Recovery/ No Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation Classes</li> <li>• Golf</li> </ul>
SPREAD LEVEL 2	Level 3: Individual/ Community Benefit	Little Recovery/ Little to no Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports Leagues</li> <li>• Howard Park Ice Skating</li> <li>• Special Events</li> </ul>
	Level 2: Considerable Community Benefit	Small Recovery/ Majority Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After school programs</li> <li>• Mentoring programs</li> <li>• Summer Teen Jobs</li> <li>• Aquatics</li> </ul>
SPREAD LEVEL 1	Level 1: Mostly Community Benefit	No Recovery/ Full Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park Maintenance</li> <li>• Open Space &amp; Trails</li> <li>• Open Gym/ Recreation</li> <li>• Aternoon Tutoring</li> <li>• Youth Scholarship Fund</li> <li>• Adult Recreation at Howard Park</li> </ul>

## E-11: Community Engagement

### VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

South Bend Venues Parks & Arts is always looking for new and interested parties to volunteer and support programs, venues, events, and facilities. There are three key areas listed below from which volunteers could choose.

#### SPECIAL EVENTS VOLUNTEER

Interested in fun, energetic activities where one

can interact with all spectrums of the community. Special Events volunteers could assist with crafts, taking pictures, handing out information, handing out giveaways, taking tickets, or answering questions.

#### MORRIS USHER VOLUNTEER

Interest lies in being a helping hand inside the historic Morris Performing Arts Center while broadening your scope of theatrical knowledge, you will want to take advantage of this opportunity. Morris Usher Volunteers could help stuff programs, seat people, and answer questions about the venue, area restaurants, and performances.

- Must be 18 years of age
- There is training that every usher needs to attend
- An usher needs to commit to at least twelve events per year

#### PARK MAINTENANCE VOLUNTEER

Helping maintain and beautify the 1,300+ acres of parks in the City of South Bend. From trails at Rum Village, windows along the St. Joseph river, playgrounds, and new landscaping, there are opportunities to be outside while serving the community. These volunteers will be physically active while participating.

#### SPARK VOLUNTEER REWARDS PROGRAM

We have created a brand-new volunteer recognition program as a way to say thank you for all the time you give. One of the key features is a tiered reward system that lets you “cash-in” on the hours you have volunteered.

#### VENUES PARKS & ARTS FOUNDATION

The Venues Parks & Arts Foundation, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that provides resources in support of the City of South Bend Venues Parks & Arts’ (VPA) mission of creating exceptional experiences and opportunities in the City of South Bend. From health, wellness, and ecological stewardship to social equity, public safety and

economic impact, our collective efforts reach every neighborhood and span every demographic. VPA manages and provides programming for three venues, three community centers, and 53 parks covering 1,340 acres. Programming includes fitness and recreation classes, sports leagues, community events, art and culture programs, concerts, kid's camps, nature and health educational programs, senior programming, and the summer free lunch program.

F

*Accreditation*

## F-1: Accreditation

Accreditation by national organizations are vital to the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department. Independent bodies outlining best practices for the industry and further providing guarantees of compliance with such standards assures a more professional, responsive, transparent and effective organization for its citizens.

The South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department holds two such national level certifications: National Accreditation for Park and Recreation Agencies by C.A.P.R.A, administered by the National Recreation and Park Association and A.Z.A accreditation for the Potawatomi Zoo by the American Zoological and Aquarium Association.

The Potawatomi Zoo Master Plan will deal with the AZA accreditation, the CAPRA certification is handled below.

### CAPRA

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Standards for National Accreditation provide an authoritative assessment tool for park and recreation agencies. Through compliance with these national standards of excellence, CAPRA accreditation assures policy makers, department staff, the general public and tax payers that an accredited park and recreation agency has been independently evaluated against established benchmarks as delivering a high level of quality.

Every park and recreation agency, whatever its focus or field of operation, is rightfully concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. With the importance of park and recreation programs and services to the quality of life, each agency has an essential role in the lives of the people it serves. CAPRA accreditation is a quality assurance and quality improvement process demonstrating an agency's commitment to its employees, volunteers, patrons and community.

### ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with the 144 standards for national accreditation. To achieve accreditation, an agency must comply with all 36 Fundamental Standards, which are indicated by the \* icon in this publication, and at least 85% of the remaining 108 standards (92).

CAPRA accreditation is a five-year cycle that includes three phases, development of the agency self-assessment report, the on site visitation, and the Commission's review and decision. The on site visitation follows the agency's development of its self-assessment report. If accreditation is granted by the Commission at its meeting following the on site visit, the agency will develop a new self assessment report and be revisited every five years. Within each of the four years between on site visits, the agency will submit an annual report that addresses its continued compliance with the accreditation standards.

### UNDERSTANDING STANDARDS

A standard is a statement of desirable practice as set forth by experienced professionals. In evaluating an agency for accreditation, the standards are a measure of effectiveness using the cause and effect ("if... then") approach. If one acts in a certain way, then it is expected that there will be a certain outcome. In practice, if an agency complies with a given standard, then it is expected that the agency's operations related to that standard will be positively affected. Viewed holistically, if an agency complies with the vast majority of the standards (i.e., all fundamental standards and at least 85% of the remaining), then it is understood that the agency is performing a quality operation. Standards enable evaluation by comparing what is found within an agency operation to what is accepted by professionals as desirable practices.

These standards are not a quantitative measure of the local availability of funds, lands, personnel, etc. and should be distinguished from other types of standards which address specific elements, such as open space standards, which are population-based, and

playground equipment standards, which are product-based. These qualitative standards for accreditation are comprehensive, dealing with all aspects of agency operations.

The standards provide an effective and credible means of evaluating a park and recreation agency's overall system. The standards apply to all park and recreation systems, inasmuch as they are considered to be the elements for effective and efficient operations. Most agencies administer both park and recreation functions; however, some agencies only administer recreation programs and services, not park systems, and others only administer park systems, not recreation programs and services.

Additionally, the jurisdictional structure of agencies differs throughout the country, with many agencies operating under municipal authority, while others operate under county, park district, or other structures. Further, the standards apply to agencies of all sizes in terms of personnel, budget, and population served. It is recognized that each community is unique and may meet the standards in differing ways.

## **HISTORY OF CAPRA STANDARDS FOR NATIONAL ACCREDITATION**

A forerunner of the CAPRA standards was a document titled, *Evaluation and Self-Study of Public Recreation and Park Agencies*, first issued in 1965. The standards in the document were initially determined by leading professionals in the Great Lakes District of the then National Recreation Association. Eight years later, in 1972, a statewide study in Pennsylvania encompassing thirty municipal park and recreation departments resulted in the document being updated and revised; and, after twenty years, it was replaced by the CAPRA standards.

The CAPRA standards were developed by a special committee initiated in 1989 by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The standards and accreditation process

were field tested at park and recreation agencies of varying characteristics. In 1993, the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies was established to implement and administer the accreditation program. Since then, the CAPRA standards have been reviewed and revised several times, notably in 1996, 2001, 2009, and 2016

In 1998 work was begun to adapt the accreditation program to military recreation. An Army version of the standards, developed by the Army, was approved in 1999 and a representative of military services was added to the Commission board. In 2007, the Department of Defense proposed a revised set of military standards that applies to all military services; and was approved by the Commission in 2008 for use by all military services. The military accreditation standards are available as a separate document.

## **ABOUT THE COMMISSION**

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies is a thirteen-member board composed of representatives from:

- American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (4 representatives)
- National Recreation and Park Association (4 representatives)
- International City/Council Management Association (1 representative)
- Council of State Executive Directors (1 representative)
- American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (1 representative)
- National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (1 representative)
- Armed Forces Recreation Society (1 representative)

The Commission is administratively sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association, but acts with independence and under its own authority in determining accreditation standards and conferring accreditation of applicant agencies.

## The Standards

### 1.0 - AGENCY AUTHORITY, ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

- 1.1\* - Source of Authority: The source of authority of, and powers for, the public recreation and park managing authority shall be clearly set forth by legal document.
- 1.1.1 - Public Authority/Policy Board: The organizational authority structure should provide for one public authority responsible for policy-making decisions.
- 1.1.2 - Citizen Advisory Boards/Committees: There should be citizen advisory boards and/or committees.
- 1.1.3 - Responsibilities of the Approving Authority, Chief Administrator and Staff: There should be established guidelines defining the delineation of responsibilities for the policy-making functions of the approving authority and the administrative functions of the chief administrator and staff.
- 1.2 - Jurisdiction: The specific geographical boundaries of the agency's jurisdiction should be set forth by geographical description and map.
- 1.3\* - Mission: There shall be an established mission statement, which defines the direction and purpose of the Agency.
- 1.3.1\* - Agency Goals and Objectives: There shall be established, measurable goals and objectives for the agency and for each organizational component within the agency. Such goals and objectives shall be directed toward accomplish the agency mission, be reviewed annually, and be distributed to all appropriate personnel.
- 1.3.2 - Personnel Involvement: There should be a process for acquiring and considering input from the various personnel levels within the agency in the development of agency goals and objectives.
- 1.4 - Policies, Rules and Regulations and Operational Procedures: A distinction should be made among policies, rules and regulations, and operational procedures and how each is developed and implemented within the agency.
- 1.4.1\* - Policy Manual: There shall be a manual

setting forth the agency policies, which is kept up-to-date, reviewed systematically, at least once every five years, by the administration and made available to pertinent administrative and supervisory personnel.

- 1.5\* - Agency Relations: There shall be an understanding of the roles of counterpart and complementary organizations through liaisons roles with nearby park and recreational agencies, public and social service organizations, and other local government agencies.
- 1.5.1 - Operational Coordination and Cooperation Agreements: There should be established policies on cooperative use and maintenance of facilities and program operation, facility design, land development, finances, etc., with other agencies or organizations or individuals.

### 2.0 - PLANNING

- 2.1 - Overall Planning Function with the Agency: The agency should have planning functions with established responsibilities, including at least one staff member or consultant with planning ability.
- 2.2\* - Involvement in Local Planning: The park and recreation agency shall be regularly involved in the local planning (community, comprehensive planning, strategic planning, capital improvement planning) that shall impact parks and recreation services within their jurisdiction.
- 2.3 - Planning with Regional, State, Federal and Non-government Agencies: The public park and recreation agency should have a working relationship with regional, state and federal agencies as well as non-governmental service providers that impact the services within their jurisdiction.
- 2.4\* - Comprehensive Plan: There shall be a comprehensive park and recreation system plan, which is basically an inventory of existing conditions and recommendations for future programs and services, acquisition and development of areas and facilities, and administration. There shall be officially adopted by the appropriate governing body, updated regularly,

be linked with a capital improvement budget and a phased development.

- 2.4.1 - Trends Analysis: There shall be a system in place to assess the societal and local trends over time.
- 2.4.2 - Community Assessment: A comprehensive community study based on population shifts and changing societal and economic conditions shall be conducted regularly.
- 2.4.3 - Community Inventory: There should be a compiled, complete and current inventory of all areas, facilities, programs and services that are used and/or managed by the agency.
- 2.4.4 - Needs Assessment: A needs index for determining priorities for development of services within the community should be established within the comprehensive plan.
- 2.5 - Feasibility Studies: Feasibility studies shall be conducted to determine the feasibility of proposed facilities.
- 2.6\* - Strategic Plan: An agency shall have a strategic plan, approved by the appropriate authority, stating how the agency will achieve its mission, goals, and objectives. The strategic plan shall be reviewed annually.
- 2.7 - Site Plans: There should be site plans to guide the use of existing and the development of future areas and facilities.
- 2.8 - Historical, Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan: A historical, cultural and natural resource management plan(s) should address all resource-based areas.
- 2.9 - Community Involvement: The agency should include community involvement in the planning process.

### 3.0 - ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 3.1\* - Organizational Structure: The agency shall establish a staff organizational structure, specifying interrelationships within the agency.
- 3.1.1 - Statement of Purpose for Each Organizational Component: The agency should have an established purpose statement for each organizational component that is available to all

employees.

- 3.2\* - Administrative Policies and Procedures: There shall be policies and procedures, encompassing administrative aspects of the organization.
- 3.2.1 - Administration Offices: There should be allocated administrative space and equipment to perform the agency's actions and responsibilities.
- 3.2.2 - Support Services: Support staff and services should be provided to enable the professional staff to perform their appropriate functions.
- 3.3\* - Communication Systems: A communication system shall be established to insure the accurate and timely transfer of information, both internal and external.
- 3.4\* - Process for Public Information, Community Relations, Marketing: There shall be an established process regarding the integrated role of public information, community relations and marketing functions of the agency including periodic reporting and evaluation.
- 3.4.1 - Public Information Statement: A written statement states that the agency is committed to informing the community and the news media of events within the public domain that are handled by or involved the agency and sets forth policies that govern what information should be released, when it should be released, and by whom it should be released.
- 3.4.1.1 - Public Information and Community Relations Responsibility: A specific position in the agency should be designated to direct the public information and community relations functions.
- 3.4.2 - Community Relations Plan: The agency should establish a community relations plan.
- 3.4.3 - Marketing Plan: The agency should have an established marketing plan, based on market research that includes annual evaluation.
- 3.4.3.1 - Marketing Position Responsibility: A specific position should be designated to direct the marketing function.
- 3.5 - Management Information Systems\*: The agency shall have a management information system, including statistical and data summaries

of agency activities, such as daily, monthly and annual reports.

- 3.5.1 - Application of Technology: The application and use of technology should enable the agency to operate effectively.
- 3.6 - Records Management Policy and Procedure: The agency should have established policy and procedures for control, maintenance and retention of records.
- 3.6.1 - Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery: There should be an established Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery plan and procedures.

#### 4.0 - HUMAN RESOURCES

- 4.1\* - Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual: There shall be established policies, which govern the administration of personnel procedures for both professional and nonprofessional employees that are reviewed annually.
- 4.1.\* - Code of Ethics: There must be an established statement of ethical principals for agency personnel.
- 4.1.2 - Recruitment Process: There should be a comprehensive recruitment process to attract qualified personnel.
- 4.1.3\* - Equal Employment Opportunity and Workforce Diversity: There shall be an established policy regarding diversity for all employment practices and evidence that it is being implemented.
- 4.1.4 - Selection Process: There should be comprehensive procedures for the process of hiring personnel.
- 4.1.5 - Background Investigation: Personnel hiring should include procedures for background investigation prior to appointment, including verification of a candidate's qualifying credentials, review of a candidate's civil and criminal record, particular attention to drug and child/ adult-abuse records, and driving record for employees assigned to operate motor vehicles.
- 4.1.6 - Employee Benefits: There should be an established employee benefits plan.
- 4.1.7 - Supervision: There should be constructive

and effective supervision of all personnel to help them grown professionally and improve programs and services.

- 4.1.8 - Compensation: There should be an established compensation plan that is reviewed annually that establishes equity of compensation among units within the agency.
- 4.1.9 - Performance Evaluation: There should be a fair and systematic procedure for annual appraisal of job performance.
- 4.1.10 - Promotion: There should be an established statement available to all employees defining the promotion process and the agency's role.
- 4.1.11 - Disciplinary System: There should be a disciplinary system based on the code of conduct and performance.
- 4.1.12 - Grievance Procedures: A grievance procedure, available to all employees, should be established.
- 4.1.13 - Termination and End of Employment: There should be established policies and procedures for termination and end of employment.
- 4.2\* - Staff Qualifications: The agency shall employ professional staff qualified to develop and operate programs and services.
- 4.3\* - Job Analysis and Job Descriptions: Established job descriptions for all positions shall be based on the job analysis and include, at a minimum: duties, responsibilities, and tasks of each position; and a minimum level of proficiency necessary in the job-related skills, knowledge, abilities, and behaviors.
- 4.4\* - Chief Administrator: There shall be a professionally-qualified administer who is responsible to the approving authority for the management, direction, and control of the operations and administration of the agency, and who shall have authority to perform such responsibilities.
- 4.5 - Physical Examination: There should be established policy governing the provision of physical examinations for employees.
- 4.5.1 - Workforce Health and Wellness: There should be an employee health and wellness

program(s) within the agency.

- 4.6 - Orientation Program: There should be an orientation program for all personnel employed by the agency.
- 4.6.1 - In-Service Training Function: There shall be an in-service training function within the agency that is evaluated, updated, and reviewed annually.
- 4.6.2 - Employee Development: There should be a program of employee development, available for employees through the agency, based on needs of individual employees and future organizational needs.
- 4.6.3 - Succession Planning: Agencies should formulate a succession plan to ensure the continued effective performance of the organization by making provisions for the development and replacement of key people over time.
- 4.6.4 - Professional Organization Membership: Professional personnel should be active members of their professional organization(s).
- 4.7 - Volunteer Management: There should be a volunteer management function within the agency, including a comprehensive Volunteer Management Manual.
- 4.7.1 - Utilization of Volunteers: Volunteers should be utilized by the agency in a variety of positions.
- 4.7.2 - Recruitment, Selection, Orientation, Training and Retention: There should be an on-going function within the agency for the recruitment, selection, orientation, training and retention of volunteers, including procedures on background screening.
- 4.7.3 - Supervision and Evaluation: Agency volunteers should be monitored, should receive supervisory visits and conferences, and be evaluated regarding performance.
- 4.7.4 - Recognition: There should be a function within the agency for the recognition of volunteers.
- 4.7.5 - Liability Coverage: Agency volunteers should be covered for negligence liability by the agency.
- 4.8 - Consultants and Contract Employees: The agency should have policies and procedures

regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

## 5.0 - FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 5.1\* - Fiscal Policy: Fiscal policies setting guidelines for management and control of revenues, expenditures, and investment of funds shall be set forth clearly in writing, and the legal authority must be clearly established.
- 5.1.1\* - Fees and Charges: There shall be an established policy on the type of services for what fees and charges may be instituted and the basis for establishing the amount of such fees and charges.
- 5.1.2 - Acceptance of Gifts and Donations: The agency should have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and donations.
- 5.1.3 - Governmental Grants: Where feasible and appropriate, regional, state and federal grants should be used to supplement agency funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement grants.
- 5.1.4 - Private, Corporate, and Non-Profit Support: Where feasible and appropriate, private, corporate, and non-profit support should be used to supplement agency funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement alternative funding.
- 5.2\* - Fiscal Management Procedures: There shall be established procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.
  - 5.2.1 - Authority and Responsibility for Financial Management: The agency's chief administrator should be designated as having the authority and responsibility for the fiscal management of the agency.
  - 5.2.2 - Purchasing Procedures: Agencies should have established procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies and services.
    - 5.2.2.1 - Emergency Purchase Procedures: There should be established procedures for emergency purchases within the agency.
- 5.3\* - Accounting System: The agency shall have a

comprehensive accounting system.

- 5.3.1 - Financial Status Reports: The agency should utilize monthly financial status reports.
- 5.3.2 - Position Authorization: There should be established procedures for maintaining control over approved positions in relation to budget authorization.
- 5.3.3 - Fiscal Control and Monitoring: There should be established procedures used for collecting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds.
- 5.3.4\* - Independent Audit: There shall be an independent audit of the agency's fiscal activities conducted annually.
- 5.4\* - Annual Budget: There shall be an annual operating and capital improvements budget(s), including both revenues and expenditures.
- 5.4.1 - Budget Development Participation: The heads of major agency components within the agency should participate in the development of the agency's budget.
- 5.4.2 - Budget Recommendations: Agency components should provide recommendations, based on operational and activity analysis, for use in the development of the agency's budget.
- 5.5 - Budget Control: There should be procedures for budget control within the agency, including an allotment system, accounting system, frequent reporting of revenues and expenditures, and continuous management review.
- 5.5.1 - Supplemental/Emergency Appropriations: There should be established procedures for requesting supplemental or emergency appropriations and fund transfers.
- 5.5.2 - Inventory and Fixed Assets Control: There should be established procedures for inventory control of agency property, equipment, and other assets.

## 6.0 - PROGRAMS AND SERVICES MANAGEMENT

- 6.1\* - Recreation Programming Plan: The agency shall utilize a recreation programming plan that includes both a long-range plan covering 3-5 years or more that is periodically reviewed and a current-year implementation plan.
- 6.1.1 - Program and Service Determinants: The programs and services provided by the agency shall be based on the conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure; constituent interests and needs; community opportunities; agency philosophy and goals; and experiences desirable for clientele.
- 6.1.2 - Participant Involvement: The agency's development of programs and services should involve participants.
- 6.1.3 - Self-Directed Programs and Services: The agency should offer self-directed recreation opportunities.
- 6.1.4 - Leader-Directed Programs and Services: The agency should offer facilitated recreation opportunities.
- 6.1.5 - Facilitated Programs and Services: The agency should offer facilitated recreation opportunities.
- 6.1.6 - Fee-Based Programs and Services: The agency should offer programs and services for a fee.
- 6.1.7 - Cooperative Programming: There should be cooperative programming among the public, commercial, and nonprofit entities.
- 6.2\* - Objectives: There shall be specific objectives established for programs and services.
- 6.3 - Program Evaluation: Programs shall be evaluated regularly and systematically based on stated program objectives.
- 6.4\* - Outreach to Underserved Populations: The agency shall proactively extend programs and services to residents who may be underserved in the community.
- 6.5 - Scope of Program Opportunities: The agency's programs shall provide opportunities in all program fields for various proficiency levels, ability, socio-economic levels, racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages, and gender in accordance with the agency's statement of mission.
- 6.6 - Selection of Program Content: The selection of program content, specific activities and opportunities shall be based upon an understanding of individual differences and the

culture of the community.

- 6.7 - Community Education for Leisure: The agency should have a function to educate the community on the benefits, values and impacts of leisure services.
- 6.8 - Program and Service Statistics: The agency should collect statistics on its programs and services for evaluation and future program and service development.

## 7.0 - FACILITY AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 - Acquisition of Park and Recreation Lands: The agency should have established policies and procedures for the acquisition of lands for park, recreation, conservation and historical-cultural purposes.
- 7.2 - Development of Areas and Facilities: The agency should have established policies and procedures for the development of park and recreation lands and facilities.
- 7.3 - Defense against Encroachment: The agency should have procedures for protecting park and recreation lands and facilities from encroachment.
- 7.4 - Disposal of Lands: The agency should have established procedures regarding the disposal of park and recreation lands.
- 7.5\* - Maintenance and Operations Management Plan: There shall be an established maintenance and operations plan for management of the agency's park and recreation areas, facilities, and equipment.
  - 7.5.1 - Facility Legal Requirements: There should be a regular review of the legal requirements related to facilities, such as licenses, sanitary regulations, fire laws, and safety measures, and inspections for adherence thereto.
  - 7.5.2 - Preventative Maintenance Plan: There should be a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan, which incorporates a preventative program for each facility that includes regularly scheduled systematic inspections and detailed safety checks.
  - 7.5.3 - Recycling: There should be a recycling program for park and recreation facilities as well as

the agency's administrative offices.

- 7.6 - Fleet Management Plan: The agency should have an established fleet management plan comprised of an inventory and maintenance schedule of all vehicles and other major equipment, annual inspections, and a replacement schedule.
- 7.7 - Agency-Owned Equipment and Property: There should be policies and procedures for the management of and accountability for agency-owned equipment and property.
- 7.8\* - Natural Resource Management and Environmental Stewardship: There shall be environmentally sound policies and procedures that are integral to all operations.
- 7.9 - Environmental Sustainability: The agency should have an established environmental sustainability policy that addresses energy conservation, environmentally preferable purchasing, water conservation/quality protection and sustainable design/construction of buildings and facilities.
- 7.10 - Maintenance Personnel Assignment: The agency should have procedures for the assignment of competent personnel with clearly defined duties for routine maintenance, repairs and minor improvements, general cleanliness and overall attractiveness of areas, facilities, and equipment.
- 7.11 - Capital Asset Depreciation and Replacement: The agency should have an established depreciation and replacement schedule for all park and recreation capital assets.

## 8.0 - PUBLIC SAFETY, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY

- 8.1\* - Laws and Ordinances - Public safety and law enforcement within parks and recreation areas and facilities shall be governed by laws and ordinances, some of which may be enacted specifically for the control and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities.
- 8.2\* - Authority to Enforce Laws by Law Enforcement Officers: The authority of Law

Enforcement Officers to enforce laws and ordinances pertaining specifically to activity within parks and recreation areas and facilities shall be clearly established to ensure that enforcement actions are upheld.

- 8.3 - Law Enforcement Officer Training: Law enforcement officers with the authority to enforce laws within the areas and facilities under the jurisdiction of the agency must have proper training in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities.
- 8.4\* - Public Safety and Law Enforcement Role of Agency Staff: Agency staff has a role in educating and informing patrons of laws, ordinances, rules and regulations that apply to parks and recreation areas and facilities. This role and level of authority shall be established through policy directive.
- 8.4.1 - Staff Liaison to Law Enforcement Officers: There should be formalized liaison assignments for agency staff to the official law enforcement officers providing public safety and law enforcement services to the agency.
- 8.4.2 - Public Safety and Law Enforcement In-Service Training for Staff: Agency staff should understand their role in public safety and law enforcement and relationships with law enforcement officers having jurisdiction within parks and recreation areas and facilities.
- 8.4.3 - Handling of Disruptive Behavior: There should be established procedures prescribed by agency staff for response to disruptive behavior at agency areas and facilities.
- 8.4.4 - Traffic Control, Parking Plans and Crowd Control: Large scale events hosted or facilitated by the agency that require planning and coordination of traffic, parking and crowd control should be coordinated with the official law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the affected areas.
- 8.4.5 - Handling of Evidentiary Items: Procedures should be established that guide agency staff in preservation and handling of evidentiary items from discovery until transferred to appropriate law enforcement authority.

- 8.5\* - General Security Plan: The agency shall have a comprehensive general security plan addressing all major areas, buildings and facilities under its jurisdiction.
- 8.6 - Emergency Management Plan: Park and recreation agencies, having roles in emergency management systems within local jurisdiction, should be aware of the applicable operations plan.
- 8.6.1 - In-Service Training for Agency Staff: Through the use of in-service training, agency personnel should understand their role in ongoing security and emergency management.

## 9.0 - RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1\* - Risk Management Plan: There shall be a risk management plan reviewed on a regular basis which encompasses analysis of risk exposure, control approaches and financial impact for the agency.
- 9.1.1 - Statement of Policy: The agency should have a policy for risk management that is approved by the proper authority.
- 9.1.2 - Risk Management Operations Manual: There should be a manual(s) of operating procedures for carrying out the risk management plan, accessible to all agency personnel.
- 9.1.2.1 - Accident and Incident Reports: There should be established procedures for accident and incident reporting and analysis of accident and incident reports.
- 9.1.3 - Personnel Involvement and Training: The risk management function within the agency should involve active interaction among personnel at all levels.
- 9.2 - Risk Manager: There should be an individual with risk management responsibility and authority to carry out the policies established for risk management of the park and recreation agency.

## 10.0 - EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

- 10.1\* - Evaluation Analysis: There shall be a process for evaluation to assess the outcomes of park and recreation programs, services, areas and

- facilities, completed annually at a minimum and linked to the agency's planning process.
- 10.1.1 - Position Responsible for Evaluation: There should be specific personnel within the agency responsible for managing the evaluation analysis.
- 10.2 - Experimental and Demonstration Projects: There should be at least one experimental or demonstration project or involvement in some aspect of research, as related to any part of the park and recreation operations, each year.
- 10.3 Staff Training for the Evaluation of Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities: There should be ongoing training opportunities for all personnel of the agency involved in the evaluation of programs, services, areas and/or facilities.
- 10.4 - Quality Assurance: The agency should monitor and evaluate the quality of its programs, services, areas and facilities from the user's perspective.

G

*Inventory*

## G-1: Existing Recreation Facilities

Most of the City’s parks are fairly well equipped to provide adequate active recreational facilities for South Bend residents of all ages. South Bend parks contain attractive areas for walking and picnicking and nearly all have playground equipment and playfield areas such as baseball fields, softball fields and/or tennis courts.

Included in this section are maps delineating the districts and the overall city of South Bend and a matrix, which summarizes the parks and recreation facilities available to South Bend residents. There are 58 public parks, playgrounds and properties encompassing approximately 1,296.28 acres in the City of South Bend ranging in size from 0.30 acres (Seitz Park) to 313.25 acres (Elbel Golf Course). The types of facilities available in each park also vary widely. As can be seen in the matrix, the activities or facilities are broken down by active outdoor or passive outdoor facilities. There are (11) community parks, (21) neighborhood parks, (17) block parks, in addition to several special park settings including three (3) golf courses.

The following review summarizes the most important aspects of each park:

Aquatic Activities (pool, splashpad, etc.)	10
Baseball Diamonds	7
Softball Fields	18
Soccer Fields	18
Football Fields	1
Rugby Field	1
Other Multi-Recreation Fields	11
Tennis/Pickleball Courts	41
Basketball Courts	27
Volleyball Pit	1
Skate/Bike Park (Neighborhood)	1
Playgrounds (Neighborhood)	56
Ice Skating Pond/Trail	1

9-hole Golf Course	1
18-hole Golf Course	2
Driving Range	1
Disc Golf	1
Maintenance Facilities (Hub)	1
Conservatory	1
Zoo	1
Community & Recreation Center	6
Multi-Use & Nature Trail	31.14
Open Space & Park Acres	1296.28
Dog Parks - 2	2
Exterior Restrooms	16

In addition to the properties listed in the Inventory Matrix, the City maintains several other properties. In 1953, the Common Council adopted a resolution enabling the Park Department to provide funds in the annual budget for the care and maintenance of all cul-de-sac islands, intersection islands and street centers not previously listed as park properties. The Park Department set up this service in 1954 and will continue in ensuing years. The properties termed “traffic islands” are at the following locations:

- Garway Common at Harrow Drive
- Hampshire Drive at Harrow Drive
- Sutton Place & Hampshire
- Gotham at Norwich
- Croydon Court off Gotham
- Stanmore Court off York road
- Northhold Court off York Road
- Chaucer Court off Riding Mall Drive
- Regent Court off Riding Mall Drive
- Winslow Court off Riding Mall Drive
- Crown Court off Riding Mall Drive
- Exeter Court off Riding Mall Drive
- Oldham Court off Riding Mall Drive
- Riding Mall & Harrow Drive
- Fairfax & Kindig
- Fairfax Estates from Miami to Kindig
- Robinhood Lane
- Woodside & Twyckenham Drive
- Garland Circle off York Road

- Twyckenham Drive, Altgeld & York Road
- Ash Lane off Southeast Drive
- Fairview & St. Joseph
- Farneman & St. Joseph
- Wayne Street East of Eddy Street
- Wayne Street at Jacob
- Devon Circle & Esther
- Longfellow & South Street
- Wall, Emerson & Chester
- Belmont & Sunnyside
- Mishawaka Avenue, Louise Street to 20th Street
- Bronson & Edgewater
- Lincolnway East, Monroe & Fellows
- Rockne Drive & Cedar – Northside
- Rockne Drive & Twyckenham Drive & Cedar
- Rockne Drive & Cedar – Left Side & South Side
- Rockne Drive & Cedar – Right Side & Jacob Street
- Rockne Drive, Madison & Jacob Street
- Rockne Drive & Sunnyside
- Sunnyside & McKinley
- Campeau & Twyckenham
- Campeau & Frances to Twyckenham Drive
- Congress & Union Avenue
- Congress & Solomon Avenue
- Wakewa & Michigan Street
- Iroquois & Marquette Avenue
- Lagoon Court off Hollywood
- Inglewood Court off Lathrop
- Oakwood & Beverly Place
- Kessler Place at Kessler Boulevard
- Portage Avenue & Vassar
- Diamond & Humboldt
- Riverside Drive from Boland to Darden
- Marion Street & Michigan Street
- Marion & Leland
- Cottage grove at Grandview
- Lincolnway West & William Street
- Siebert Place
- Chapin Street – Five Islands
- Vermont Place & Kentucky
- Revere Place & Kentucky
- Belle Vista East & Wellington
- Belle Vista West & Wellington
- Lombardy North from Sample Street

- Lombardy South
- Lombardy & West Parkway Place
- Ridgeway & Lombardy
- Garden Place & Albert
- North Chicago & Western Avenue
- North Lake Street & Western Avenue
- North Kentucky & Western Avenue
- North Camden & Western Avenue
- North Bendix & Webster Avenue
- Three Islands – Bonds Avenue
- Bonds Avenue at Eclipse Place
- Bonds Avenue at Elliott Place

Along with all of the specific recommendations made for improvements to the existing parks, the City feels that renovating and updating the existing parks facilities to minimize maintenance is a high-priority now and in the future.

The renovating and updating of existing facilities should also include a concerted effort to increase accessibility to the elderly and disabled. This effort should apply to any new construction, with accessibility considered at the design stage of the proposed project. Federal and state regulations apply for what must be accessible.

*Complete Recreation Facilities Matrix on the following page.*

**G-1 Table A: South Bend Parks Acreage**

	SBVPA Location	District	Park Type	Acres	Total	Street Address
1	Gwen Stiver Park	1	Block	0.38		103 E Colfax Ave
2	Brownfield Park	1	Block	2.7		1041 W Angela Blvd.
3	Fremont Park	1	Block	2.4		1800 Fremont St.
4	Kelly Park	4	Block	1.1		726 Howard St.
5	LaSalle Memorial Landing	1	Block	1.56		2300 Portage Ave.
6	Lincoln Plaza Playground	1	Block	1.1		1616 N Kenmore St.
7	McKinley Playground	4	Block	1.1		223 N Coquillard Dr.
8	Jon Hunt Plaza	4	Block	0.7		211 N. Michigan St.
9	Nakomis Park	4	Block	1.54		341 Marquette Ave.
10	Portage Triangle (Park A )	1	Block	0.4		1001 Vassar Ave.
11	Parkovash	4	Block	1.65		277 Parkovash Ave.
12	Pier Park	2	Block	0.5		106 Dr. M.L.K. Dr.
13	Ravina Park	3	Block	0.4		1543 Dale Avenue
14	Seitz Park (formerly Belleville)	4	Block	0.3		St. Joseph River at Washington St.
	Fish and Hydro Ladder (included Seitz)					
15	Shetterly Park	4	Block	2.66		1000-1150 Riverside Dr.
16	Sorin Playground	4	Block	0.55		3366 Sorin St.
17	Westhaven	2	Block	5.68	24.72	1220 Sussex Dr.
18	St. Clair Park	6	Community	43.65		1300 S Mayflower Rd.
19	Boehm Park	4	Community	30		1600-1698 Edison Rd.
20	Boland Park	1	Community	21.03		2800 Corpus Christi Dr.
21	Kennedy Park	2	Community	38.55		2700 Westmoor St
22	LaSalle Park	2	Community	39.8		3419 W Washington St.
23	Leeper Park	1	Community	25.72		907 Riverside Dr.
24	Pinhook Park	1	Community	42.69		2801 Riverside Dr.
25	Potawatomi Park and Zoo	3	Community	62.18		500 S. Greenlawn
26	Rum Village Park	6	Community	160		2626 S Gertrude St.
27	Rum Village Annex	6	Community	32.51		2631 S Gertrude St.
28	Wheelock Park	1	Community	72	568.13	1002 Darden Rd.
29	Coquillard Park	4	Neighborhood	12.84		1235 Chalfant St.
30	Fredrickson Prairie	4	Neighborhood	14.24		1300 South Bend Ave
31	Howard Park	4	Neighborhood	11.49		219 S. St. Louis Blvd.
32	Keller Park	1	Neighborhood	16.91		1858 Riverside Drive,
33	Marshall Park	5	Neighborhood	9		1507 Byron Drive
34	Martin Luther King, Jr	2	Neighborhood	6		1522 West Linden Ave
35	Muessel Grove Park	2	Neighborhood	17.25		1222 Wilber St.
36	Niles Ave Dog Park (added)	4	Neighborhood	4.9		900 N Niles Avenue
37	O'Brien Park	5	Neighborhood	17.02		321 East Walter St.
38	Ponader Park	*	Neighborhood	18.88		17772 Douglas Rd.

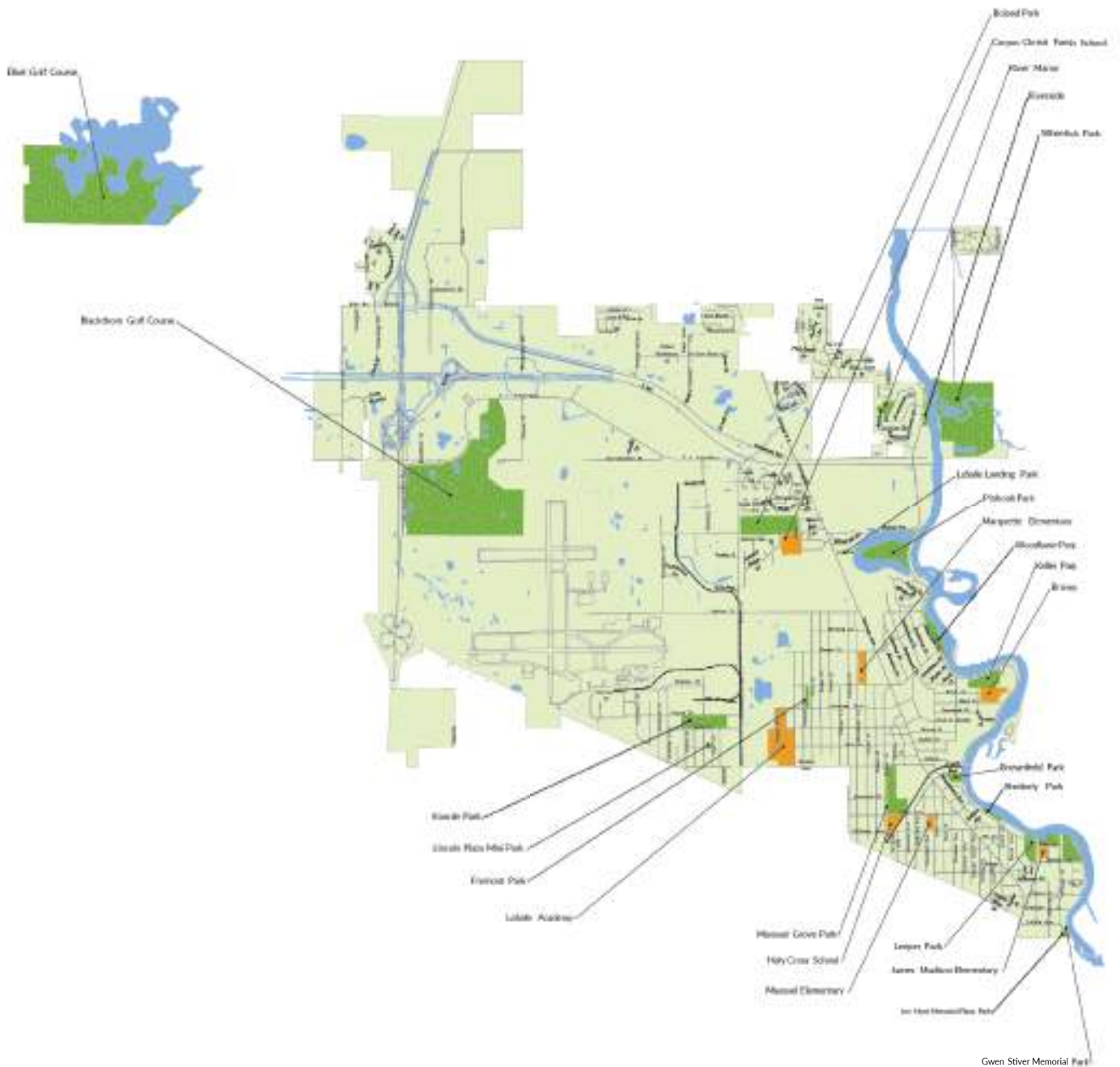
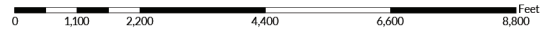
**G-1 Table A: South Bend Parks Acreage (continued)**

	<b>SBVPA Location</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Park Type</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Street Address</b>
39	Pulaski Park	2	Neighborhood	6.32		1308 Huron Street
40	River Manor	1	Neighborhood	5.48		3811 Glenview Dr
41	Riverside Park	1	Neighborhood			3840 Riverside Dr
42	South East Neighborhood Park	3	Neighborhood	12.8		1620 Wenger Street
43	Booth Tarkington Park	4	Neighborhood	12.8		1655 N. Hickory Rd
44	Veteran's Memorial Park	3	Neighborhood	10.96		1621 Northside Blvd.
45	Governor Joe Kernan Park (formerly Viewing)	4	Neighborhood	4		Northside Blvd. at S Notre Dame Ave
46	Voorde Park	1	Neighborhood	14		3620 Voorde Dr
47	Walker Field Park	6	Neighborhood			2198 S Walnut St
48	Woodlawn Park	1	Neighborhood	16.56	214.76	2166 Riverside Dr
49	East Bank Waterway	4	Neighborhood	6.2		126 S Niles Ave
50	Elbel Golf Course and Nature Park	*	Special	313.25		26595 Auten Rd
51	Erskine Golf Course	5	Special	120		4200 Miami St
52	Four Winds Field (formerly Coveleski)	2	Special	6.12	445.57	501 W South St
53	Bowman Cemetery	5	Cemetery	26.4		1630 Miami St
54	Historic City Cemetery	2	Cemetery	34	60.4	214 Elm St

\* - outside of district boundaries.

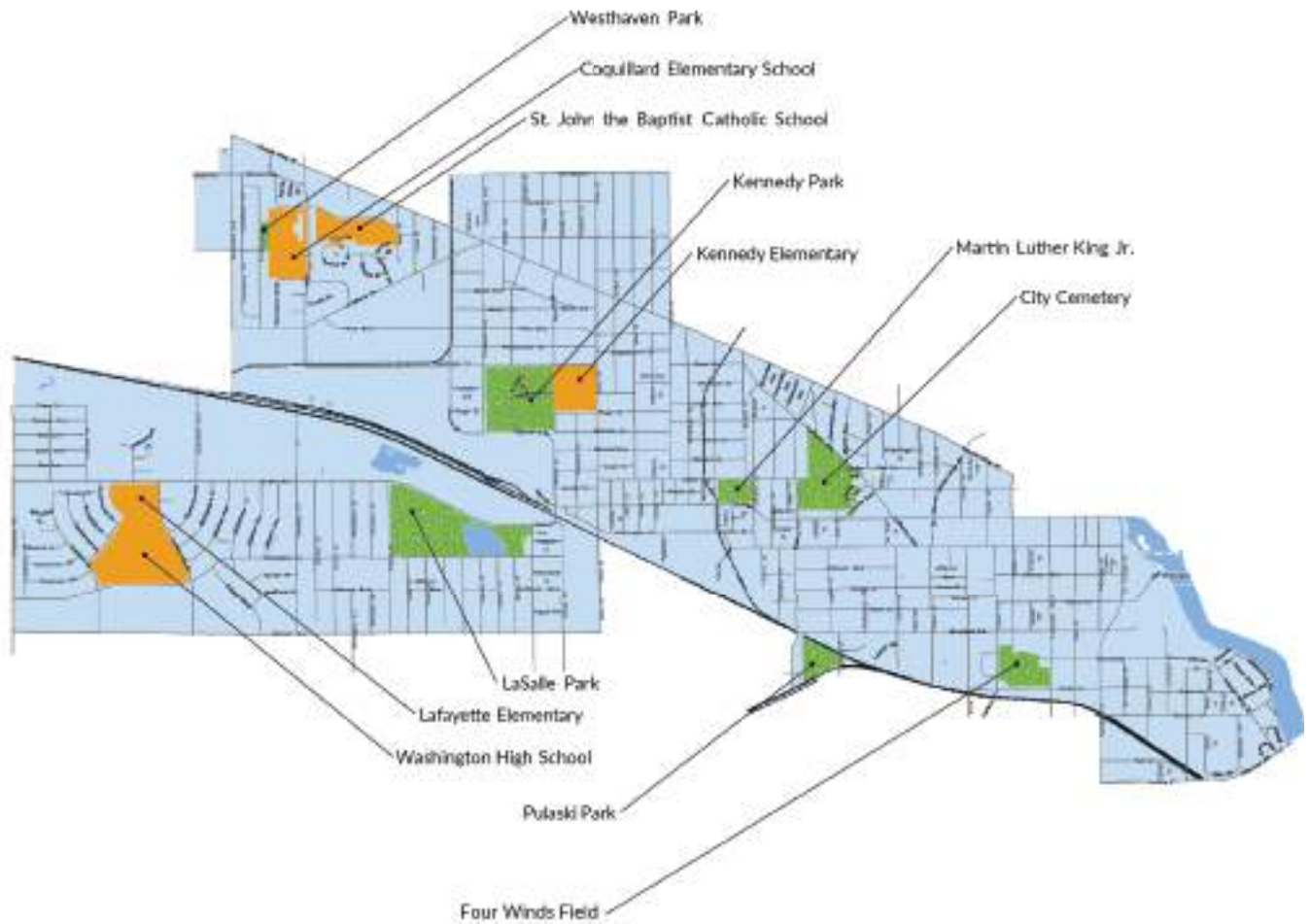
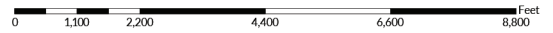
## G-1: District 1 Map

- Green - Park Properties
- Orange - School Properties



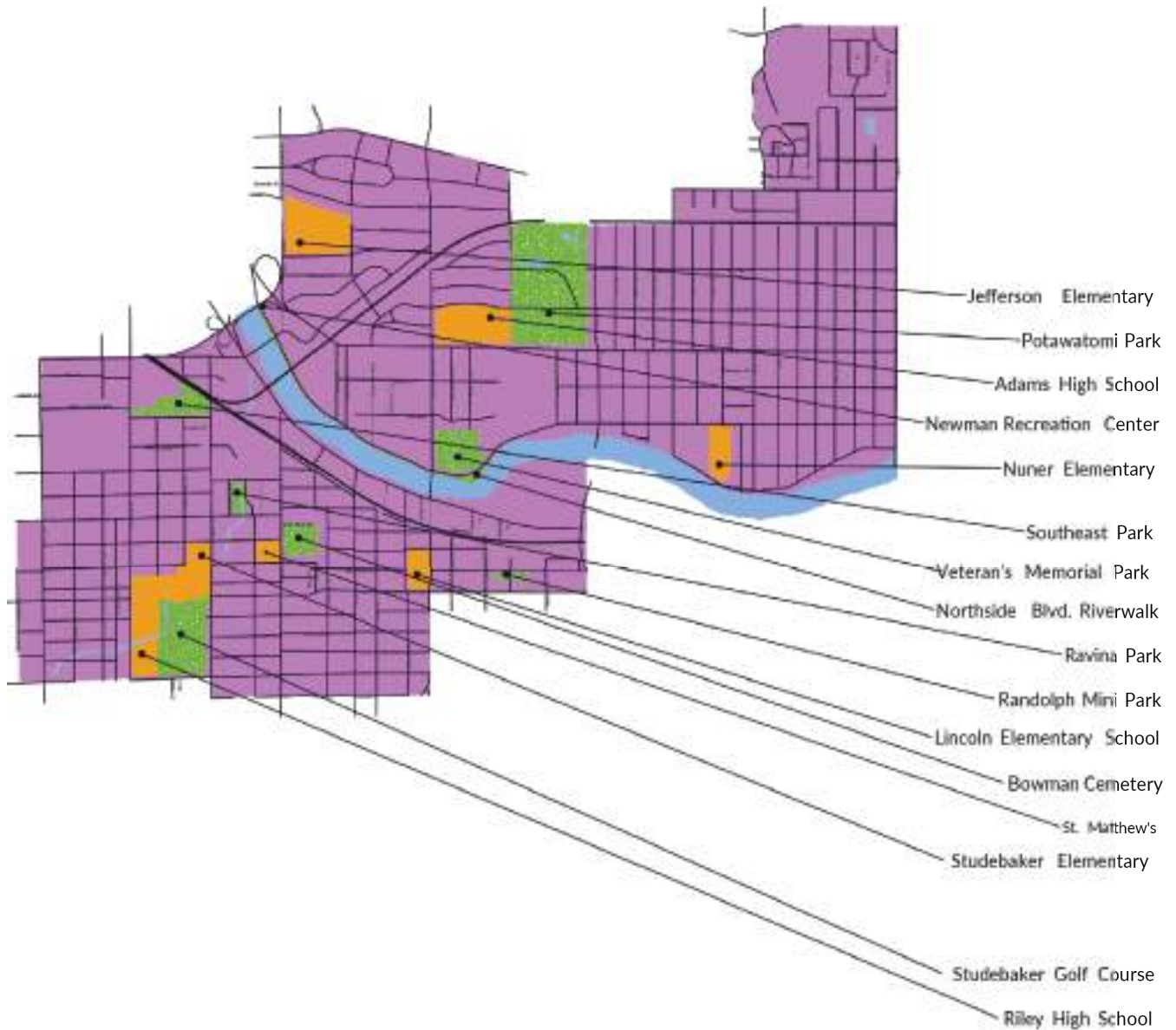
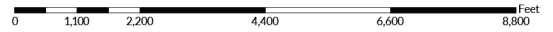
## G-1: District 2 Map

- Green - Park Properties
- Orange - School Properties



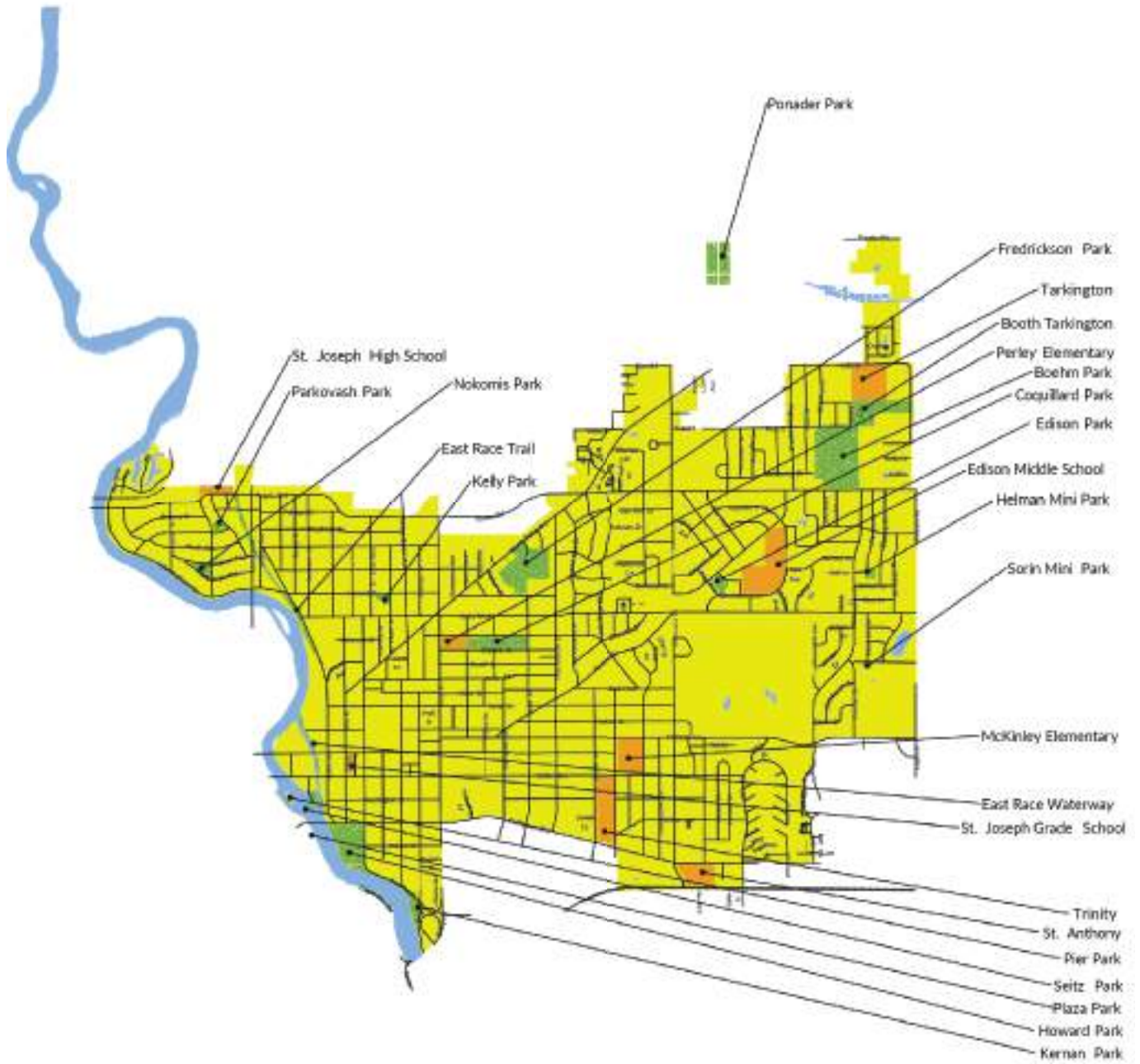
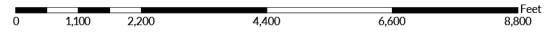
## G-1: District 3 Map

- Green - Park Properties
- Orange - School Properties



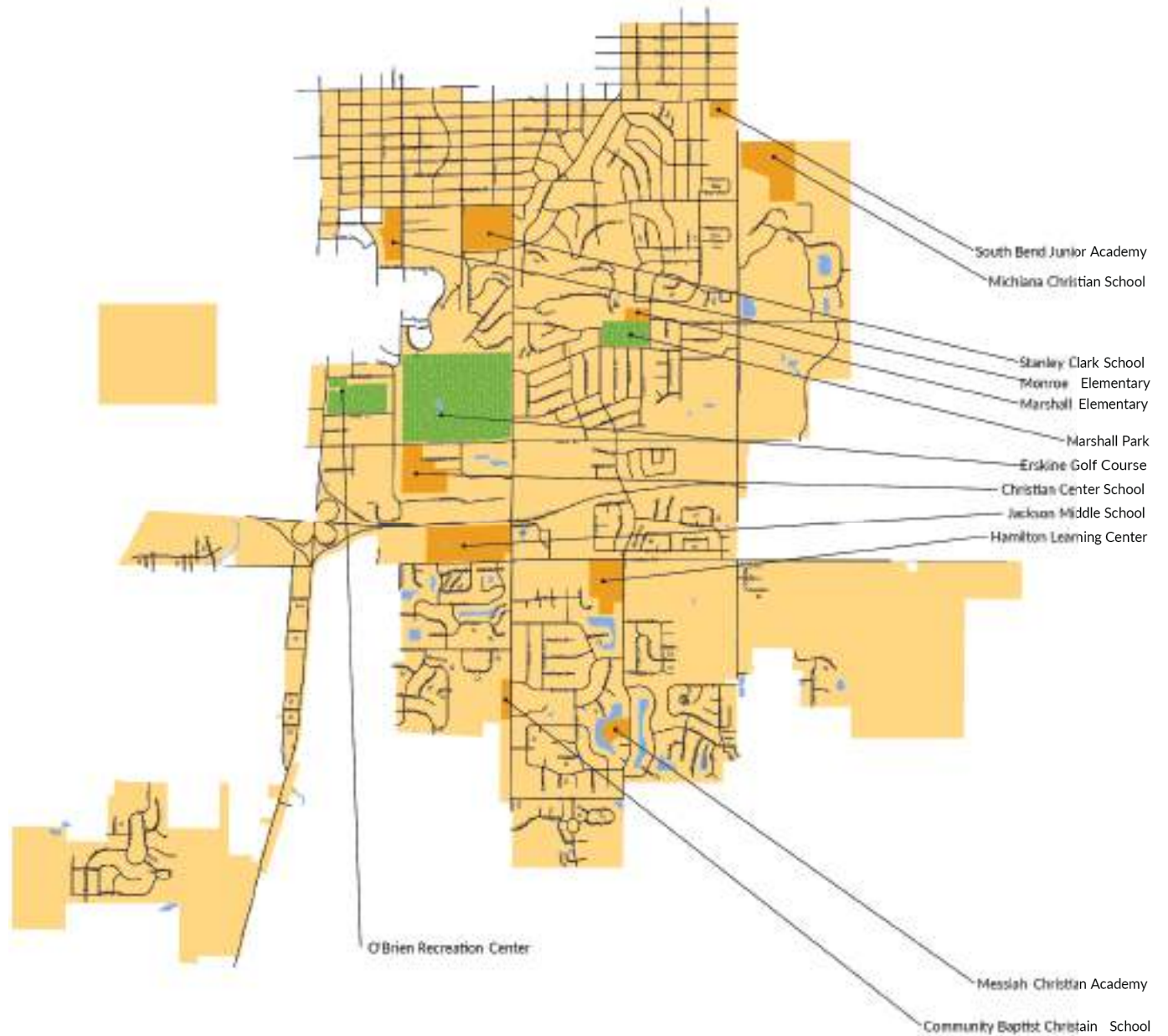
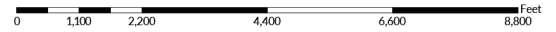
## G-1: District 4 Map

- Green - Park Properties
- Orange - School Properties

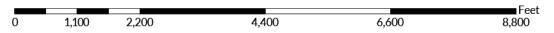


## G-1: District 5 Map

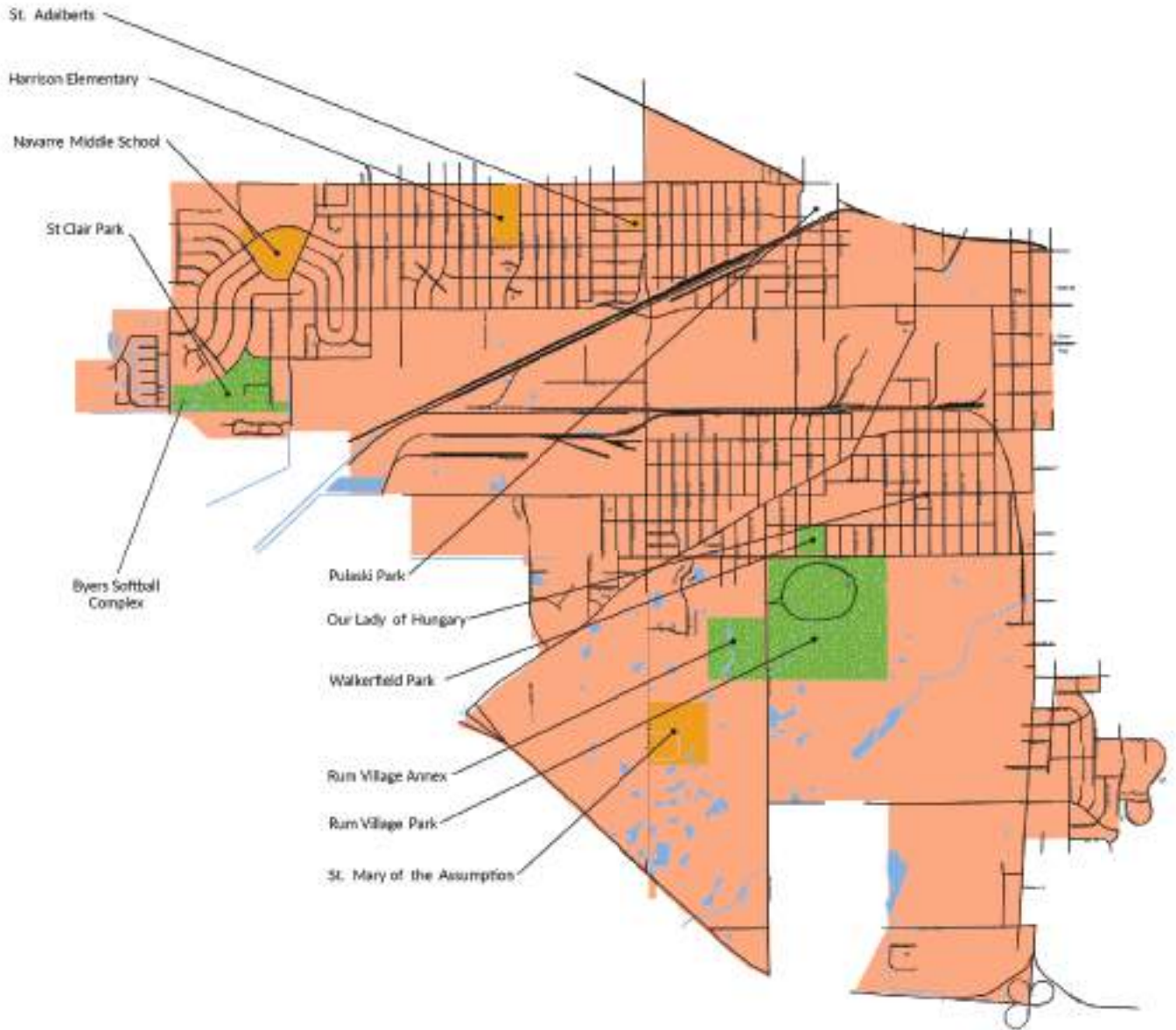
- Green - Park Properties
- Orange - School Properties



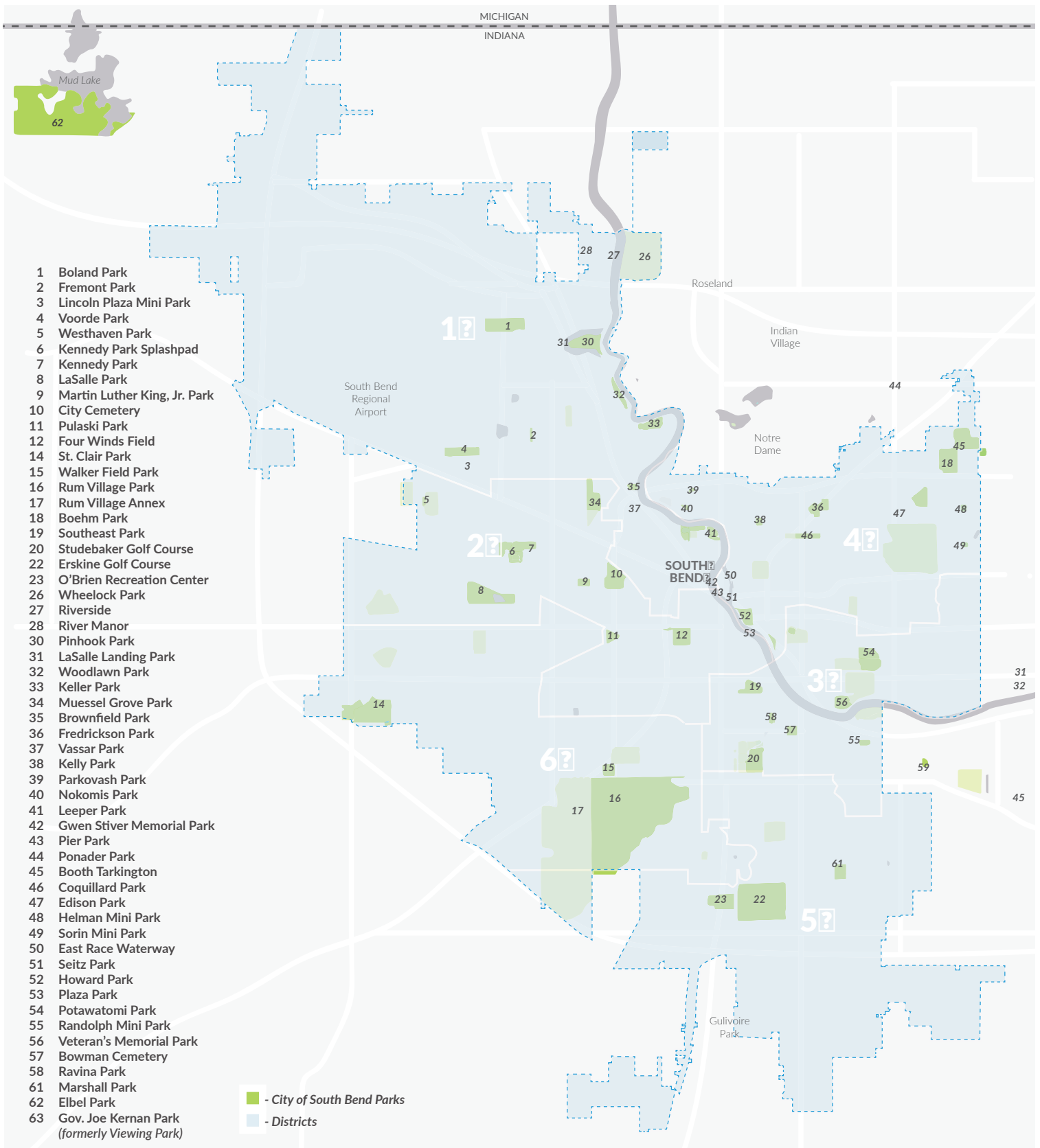
## G-1: District 6 Map



- Green - Park Properties
- Orange - School Properties



G-1: City-Wide Parks Map of South Bend



## G-2: Comprehensive Asset Inventory Matrix by District

Assets	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Total
Baseball Diamonds	1	1		1	2	2	7
Softball Diamonds	4	1	2	2		2	11
Softball Complexs						1	1
Dugouts		4	2			6	12
Press Boxes	1	1		1		4	7
Backstops	5	3	1	4	2	1	16
Bleachers	9	10	6	14	5	17	61
Sheltered/Player Benches	4		2	2	2	8	18
Drinking Fountains	7	5	5	2	1	3	23
Scoreboards	0	1	1	1		5	8
Buildings	3	5	6	4	1	2	21
Exterior Restrooms	7	2	2	2	1	2	16
Basketball Courts (Full and Half)	6	8	2	2	2	2	22
Multipurpose Playgrounds	10	5	5	8	3	3	34
Multipurpose Fields	6	1	1	1	2		11
Tennis Courts	10	6		21	2	2	41
Zip Line	1					1	2
Soccer Fields	2	5	2	5	1	2	17
Dog Parks				1		1	2
Water features (pools-splashpads)	1	4	3	2	1	2	13
Ponds/Open Water area	2	1	1	1	1		6
Picnic Tables	8	10	37	9	8	7	76
Book Drops	2	1	1				4
Walking trails	2	4	3	12	1	4	26
Flag Poles	2	3	5	7	1	1	19
Outdoor Fitness Equipment Areas	3			1			4
Disc Golf courses						1	1
Historial Cabins				1			1
Ice Skating Facilities/ Skate Parks				2	1		3
Fountain	1	1		2	1		5
Artist Pieces/Monuments	5	4	2	12	1	1	25
Parks Gardens	1		1		1		3
Pavilions	10	3	7	3	2	4	29
<b>Total Asset Per District:</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>519</b>

## G-3: Program & Services Inventory

Venues Parks & Arts													
Program	Age	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
<b>TODDLER 2-3 years old</b>													
Adaptive Tennis Players	Toddler					Leeper							
Click Lab	Toddler												
Kids Spark in the Park	Toddler						Potawatomi						
<b>PRESCHOOL 3-4 years old</b>													
Five Wee Tennis	Preschool					Leeper		Leeper					
Daddy Daughter Dance	Preschool												
Boomin Parks Tour	Preschool						Various Parks						
Kids Spark in the Park	Preschool						Potawatomi						
<b>YOUTH 5-12 years old</b>													
Camp Awareness	Youth						Whebeck Park						
My Little & Me Skate	Youth												
Mom & Son Dance	Youth												
Daddy Daughter Dance	Youth						MILK						
Summer Fun Camp	Youth												
Little Spots Tennis	Youth						Leeper						
Boomin Parks Tour	Youth						Various Parks						
Beginner Tennis	Youth						Leeper						
Youth Tennis Camps & Lessons	Youth						Leeper						
Allstars Summer Enrichment Camp	Youth						CBC						
Kids Trillibon	Youth						Potawatomi						
National Kids to Parks Day	Youth						Leeper						
Learn to Swim	Youth						Riley						
PJ Fashionista	Youth						CBC						
Youth Basketball Program	Youth						O'Brien/CBC						
Full Fun Fair	Youth						CBC						
Culinary Arts	Youth						CBC						
Arts in the Park	Youth						Potawatomi						
Family Swim	Youth						Clay HS						
YMCA Day Camp	Youth						O'Brien						
Live Strong at the YSK	Youth						O'Brien						
Movie Night	Youth						O'Brien						
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL 13-15</b>													
Friday Night Life	Middle School						CBC						
Boomin Parks Tour	Middle School						Various Parks						
Treats on the trail	Middle School						Leeper						
Intermediate Tennis	Middle School						Leeper						
Advanced Camp Tennis	Middle School						Leeper						
<b>HIGH SCHOOL 15-18</b>													
Friday Night Life	High School						CBC						
Weekend Celebration	High School						MILK						
DI Skate Night	High School						Studebaker						
Junior Mixer	High School						O'Brien						
YMCA/O'Brien Fitness Center	High School						O'Brien						
Treats on the trail	High School						O'Brien						
<b>ADULTS 18+</b>													
55+ Aerobics	Adults						Howard						
55+ Chair Class	Adults						CBC						
Senior Fitness	Adults						Howard						
Metrol Golf	Adults						CBC						
Aqua Aerobics	Adults						Ebel/Erskine						
Summer Vibes Festival	Adults						Potawatomi Pool/Clay						
Art Classes	Adults						Howard Park						
How with Erick Yoga	Adults						Studebaker						
How with Erick Yoga	Adults						Howard						
Zumba Toning	Adults						Howard						
YMCA/O'Brien Fitness Center	Adults						Howard						
Body Pump, Core Yoga, Low Impact, Les Mills Grit	Adults						Studebaker						
Zumba	Adults						CBC						
Phileas	Adults						Howard/O'Brien						
Pier Bar	Adults						Howard						
Step Class	Adults						CBC						
Rise Yoga	Adults						CBC						
Cycling - Any level	Adults						Potawatomi						
Credit Mix	Adults						Studebaker						
Body Toning	Adults						Studebaker						
Dumate Yoga	Adults						Howard						
Adult Open Gym	Adults						CBC						
Latin Dance Monday's	Adults						Howard						
Who U (Dating Meetup single)	Adults						Howard						
Howard Park Summer Concert Series	Adults						Howard						
Potawatomi Summer Concert Series	Adults						Potawatomi						
DI Skate Night	Adults						Howard						
Yoga on the Ice	Adults						Howard						
Art Exhibit	Adults						Howard						
Senior Pastel Painting Class	Adults						Howard						
Senior Programming	Adults						Howard						
Adultme's support series	Adults						Howard						
Crab Cake	Adults						Howard						
Prayer Club	Adults						MILK						



*Needs Assessment*

## H-1: Community Input

Solicitation of comprehensive feedback from the community was a key component of the needs assessment portion of the Master Planning process. Surveys, focus groups, public meetings and workshops were utilized to obtain a snapshot of public opinion and desires. During this time, comparisons with other park and recreation agencies were obtained to contrast our service levels with other communities. This ran from the spring of 2017 until the fall of the same year and closed with the completion of the staff workshops and the finalization of the identified strategic issues.

### STATISTICALLY VALID COMMUNITY SURVEY FINDINGS INTRODUCTION

In February and March 2014, on behalf of the City of South Bend and Jones Petrie Rafinski, Public Research Group (PRG) conducted email, telephone and mail surveys in an attempt to identify South Bend’s park and recreational behaviors, wants and needs. A total of 506 randomly generated email, telephone and mail responses were obtained. Email responses were generated from desktop computers, smart phones and tablets. The goal of the survey was to produce findings that could be generalized over the entire population of the community.

In addition, a non-random self-selecting online survey was created and placed on the VPA department’s website in both English and Spanish language formats. This second sample was not combined with the primary random sample, but rather was compared to the statistically valid results for additional insight into the survey findings.

It should be noted that the 506 households responding to the random sample survey is representative of the responses of all 42,900 total households in the City of South Bend within a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5%, and a confidence level of 95%.

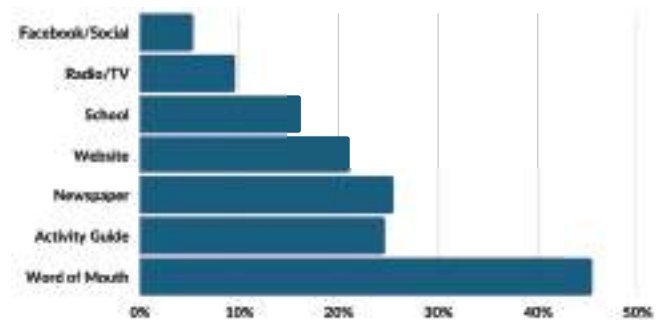
This survey is intended to be completed every 10 years

with the next cycle due at the beginning of 2024.

### MAJOR SURVEY FINDINGS

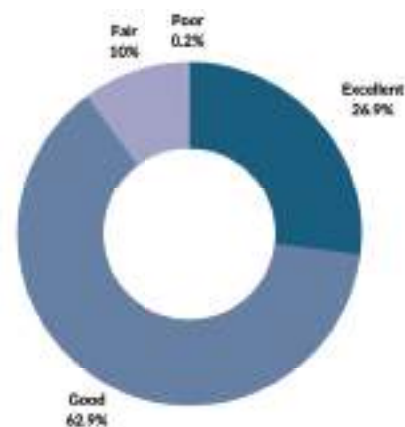
The survey contained a series of questions that were designed to measure behavior as well as perceptions by residents of South Bend regarding parks, public lands and services. There were several opportunities for participants to provide specific comments from “open end” questions.

### COMMUNICATION/MEDIA AWARENESS



The data in the graph shows that word of mouth had the highest response rate, with 45.5% saying that word of mouth was how they heard about the parks and recreation department. The second highest was the activity guide at 34.6%, with 25.5% saying newspaper articles, 21.1% the website and 16.2% school announcements. Facebook had the lowest response rate at 5.3%.

### QUALITY OF PROGRAMS



The graph shows that 27.0% said the programs were excellent, 62.4% said they were good, 10.3% said they were fair and only .2% said they were poor. The data suggests a relatively high percentage of residents who appear to be satisfied with the programs offered by the parks and recreation department. The national average for overall satisfaction with quality of programs based on very satisfied with the value is 27%. This is very similar to the results found for South Bend.

### BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

The survey listed the top three reasons as:

- Not aware of the program (33.2%)
- Inconvenient times (32.4%)
- Fees too high (14.2%)

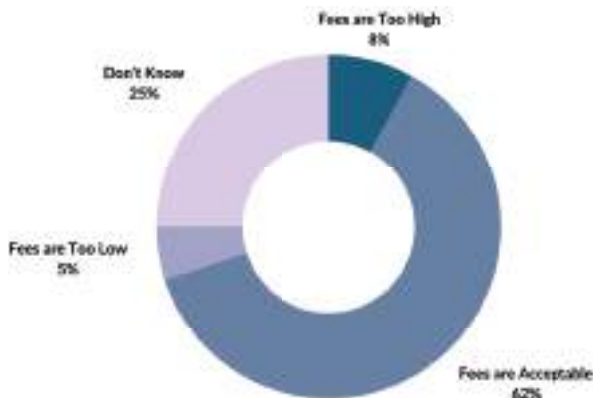
In terms of a national average comparison, inconvenient times is at 16% and fees too high is at 18%.

### PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The survey listed the top five programs as:

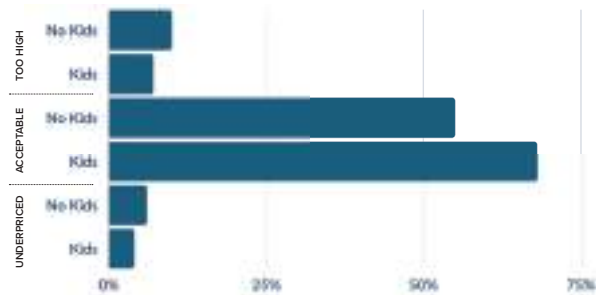
- Community special events (42.7%)
- Music festivals & concerts (37.0%)
- East West Raceway (31.6%)
- Winter activities, skating & sled hills (26.7%)
- Fitness center (24.7%)

### CURRENT FEES CHARGED

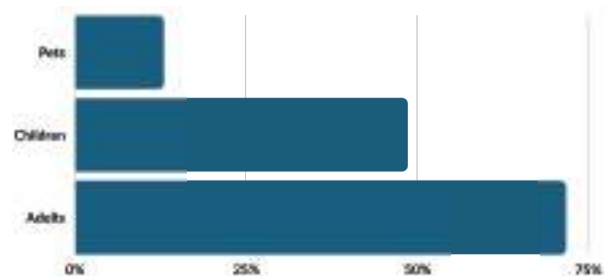


As you can see, fees are generally acceptable. The previous graph shows that households with children are more likely to rate current South Bend Parks and Recreation Department fees as acceptable compared to households without children. Households with kids were slightly more likely to rate fees as underpriced and slightly less likely to rate them as too high. The differences may be due to the fact that households without children are less likely to have an opinion about fees.

### FEES BY COMPARISON - KIDS

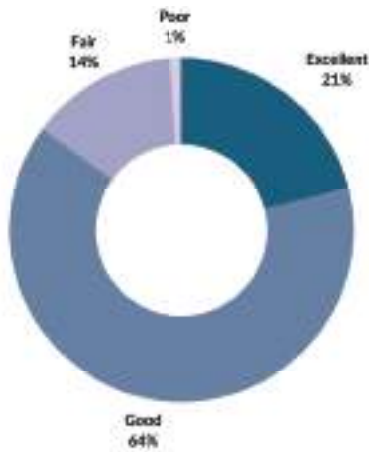


### USAGE OF PARKS & FACILITIES



The random sample findings presented in the graph show that 12.8% of all households said they had pets that used the parks and facilities, 71.7% said adults and 48.6% said children. The findings suggest that parks are not just for kids; they are for adults in a big way. The finding that 71.7% of households have adult park and facility users is significant, suggesting that park and facility amenities should be tailored to them as well as children.

## PARK RATINGS



The chart shows that 64.5% of random sample respondents rated the parks as being in good condition, 20.8% in excellent condition, 13.7% in fair condition, and 1.1% in poor condition. The nation average for ratings of excellent regarding the conditions of parks that were visited is 34%. The findings suggest that the parks are generally good but there is room to improve.

## PARK USAGE:

The survey listed the top five most visited parks as:

- Potawatomi Park (54.3%)
- Howard Park (35.4%)
- Rum Village Park (29.6%)
- Leeper Park (25.5%)
- O'Brien Park (23.1%)

## MOST DESIRED PARK AMENITIES

The survey listed the top five amenities that should be added to the parks as:

- Restrooms (26.3%)
- Drinking Fountains (23.3%)
- Benches (22.5%)
- Paved Pathways (22.3%)
- Playground Equipment (19.6%)

## FACILITY USAGE

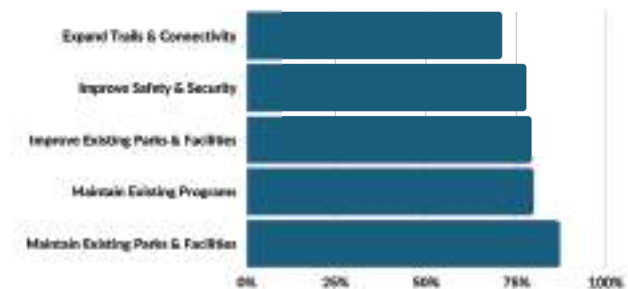
The survey listed the top five most visited facilities as:

- Potawatomi Zoo (47.8%)
- South Bend Riverwalk (45.7%)
- Four Winds Field (37.7%)
- East West Race Waterway (29.2%)
- O'Brien Fitness Center (25.9%)

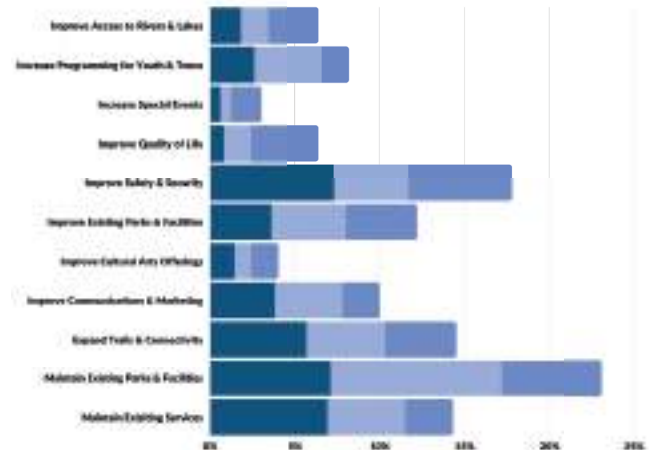
## PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The top five priorities are maintaining existing parks and facilities, improving existing parks and facilities, maintaining existing recreation services, improving safety and security, and expanding trails and connectivity. Increasing programming to families, youth and teens, as mentioned, had 70%. All other priorities were in the 60 percentiles or lower.

### Top 5 Priorities:



### Priority Ranking:



## SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

The executive summary is meant to abbreviate the extensive survey findings into a short, concise format. Conclusions can be made from this large data set to aid in the general understanding of the importance of the agency and the establishment of priorities for the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts. These include:

1. Parks and recreation are an important part of the South Bend community.
2. Investments made for park and leisure activities in the downtown area have paid off with high use and satisfaction.
3. Traditional park amenities are desired by the community.
4. Maintaining existing facilities is slightly more important than improving them but there is a need to build new facilities that are past simply maintaining them.
5. Improving safety is listed as a top priority.
6. Programs are general well regarded for quality but there is room for improvement.
7. Youth programs could be expanded.
8. Community special events as well as fitness related programs are highly used.
9. Large community parks and facilities garner the most use in the park and recreation system.
10. While many neighborhood park improvements have been made over the last five years, the need for ongoing maintenance continues.
11. The top ranked priorities have very similar percentages suggesting that all the priorities are an important consideration in future planning initiatives.

## Riverfront Parks & Trails

Starting 2016 and running through 2017, South Bend hired SmithGroup JJR to create a strategic plan for the City of South Bend's riverfront park and trail

system; with special focus upon the connectivity. It was determined that the strategic plan should:

- Reinforce trail and park system as a network of facilities.
- Ensure multifunctional and distinctive public open space to serve current and future needs.
- Embrace ecological values associated with the corridor.
- Embrace South Bend's cultural diversity in the planning process.
- Reinforce neighborhood connectivity with the river parks.
- Support economic development opportunities.
- Establish design standards for the entire system.
- Establish designs for key priority locations.

The Riverfront Parks & Trails conceptual framework hosted pop-ups sessions at local parks, gathering input on what users of the parks wanted to see in their future development. This input occurred at Seitz, Howard, Leeper, during an East Race Waterway event, at a Park Board public meeting and during a First Friday's event in downtown. Rough concept designs were displayed and ideas were tested by public response. This feedback was incorporated into the development of more complete park layouts.

Over the course of the project, over 500 people attended 3 bi-lingual public Community Forums held at the Century Center in South Bend, over 200 sticky note comments were recorded and more than 1,000 on-line comments were gathered by Smithgroup JJR.

At the three Community Meetings, after the presentations, there were six break-out stations set-up for:

- Howard Park (redesign)
- Seitz Park (redesign)
- Parks/Trails: North
- Parks/Trails: Central
- Parks/Trails: East
- General Parks

Each of the break-out stations had a large display board of the selected area with the evolving design options and previous suggestions incorporated. The following questions were asked of the participants to be recorded as sticky-notes on the boards to be integrated in VPA future designs and system considerations:

1. What do you like about the options?
  - Options are not exclusive.
  - Consider individual elements and how to combine them.
2. What is missing? What else would you like to see?
3. How do you use/access these parks and trails?
  - What route?
  - By car, bike or walk?
4. Where are the special spots?

### COMMUNITY MEETING #1

- Date: Thursday September 8th, 2016
- Time: 5:30 pm
- Attendance: approx. 16

#### Summary of Comments:

Facilities	Safety	Connectivity	Character	Programming
Bathroom/ Benches/ Drinking Fountains	Police Bike Patrols/ Security Stations	Loops of Varying Distance	Keep WPA Structures	More activities (i.e. Kids activities/Adult exercise)
Improve River Access (Ped+Canoe/ kayak)	More Lighting	Improve signage/ Wayfinding	Lookouts on the river	Christmas Market
Multi-seasonal skate/water	Railing along River Path	Enhance West Bank Trail	Open views to the River ("Windows" to the River)	Year-round active use East Race
Better bike facilities/ Maintain in Winter	Safe connection between E/W to Leeper Park	Open access to Island Park	Maintain/ create natural areas	Programming/ awareness in all parks
ADA/ Universal access				

### COMMUNITY MEETING #2

- Date: Wednesday November 2nd, 2016
- Time: 5:30 pm
- Attendance: approx. 180

#### Summary of Comments:

Facilities	Safety	Connectivity	Character	Programs
Basic Amenities all parks	Inter-connection with police operations	Mile-measured pathways, loops	Bank amenities, "Riverside nooks"	Open public lands for partner programs
Fishing Access and features	Lighting, but w/ Dark Sky awareness	Wayfinding integrated with bike trails	Individual parks, individual character approach	Activate boathouse, support river sports
Insure equitable distribution across entire system	Expand narrow pathways	Improved road crossing over bridges	Arts along river, public lands for public arts	Community Center expansion – Howard, Pinhook, Southeast Park?
More bicycle parking and support	Uniform signage w/ park ordinances	Allow for neighborhood "feeders" to trail system	More attention to ecology/ sustainability and natural parks	

### COMMUNITY MEETING #3

- Date: Tuesday June 27th, 2017
- Time: 5:30 pm
- Attendance: approx. 185

#### Summary of Comments:

Facilities	Safety	Connectivity	Character	Programs
Mountain Biking expansion	Bike Patrols, more activity in parks/trails	Improve gaps to regional trail networks	Central parks should reinforce downtown development	Outdoor Yoga/ Fitness
Improvements should not push out familiar users (gentrification)	Access to an easy "report line". Who to call.	Eastern portion of Northside trail needs better marking	Natural spaces for "quiet parks"	Outdoor performing spaces/ venues for community
Leeper as "Historical Park", Studebaker Fountain	Cameras, park locking possibilities	Circular loops, remove creepy under-crossings	Design should feel inclusive. "This is your space"	Activate pocket-parks, mobile services

Facilities	Safety	Connectivity	Character	Programs
Better bike facilities/ Maintain in Winter	Safe connection between E/W to Leeper Park	Rails to Trails conversions for linkage	Highlight natural river aesthetics	River races, kayak pub crawl, etc. Adventure River
Restroom facilities and support building Seitz				

## 2018 City of South Bend Community Survey

### PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

ETC Institute administered a survey to residents of the City of South Bend during the summer of 2018. The purpose of the survey was to help the City of South Bend ensure that the city’s priorities continue to match the needs and desires of residents. The information provided will be used to improve existing services and help the City better understand the evolving needs of residents of South Bend.

The seven-page survey, cover letter and postage paid return envelope were mailed to a random sample of households in the City of South Bend. The cover letter explained the purpose of the survey and encouraged residents to either return their survey by mail or complete the survey online. At the end of the online survey, residents were asked to enter their home address, this was done to ensure that only responses from residents who were part of the random sample were included in the final survey database.

Ten days after the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute sent emails and placed phone calls to the households that received the survey to encourage participation. The emails contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. To prevent people who were not residents of South Bend from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered

on line with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the on line survey was not counted.

The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 600 residents. The goal was exceeded with a total of 810 residents completing the survey. The overall results for the sample of 810 households have a precision of at least +/-3.4% at the 95% level of confidence.

The percentage of “don’t know” responses has been excluded from many of the graphs shown in this report to facilitate valid comparisons of the results from South Bend with the results from other communities in ETC Institute’s DirectionFinder® database. Since the number of “don’t know” responses often reflect the utilization and awareness of city services, the percentage of “don’t know” responses have been provided in the tabular data section of this report. When the “don’t know” responses have been excluded, the text of this report will indicate that the responses have been excluded with the phrase “who had an opinion.”

### SATISFACTION WITH PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES

Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents have visited a city recreation facility or park in the past year. The highest levels of satisfaction with parks and recreation services, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses among residents who had an opinion, were: the maintenance of City parks (62%), the number of walking and biking trails (61%), and access to parks in neighborhoods (60%). The top four parks and recreation services respondents indicated should receive the most emphasis over the next two years were: the condition of restrooms in public parks, the overall maintenance of City parks, availability of recreation programming in neighborhoods, and the number of walking and biking trails.

## 2022 Community Check-In

“South Bend Venues Parks & Arts administered a final community feedback session with the purpose of testing the assumptions and strategic goals of this proposed Masterplan Update. Significant focus was invested in making this process as assessable as possible, especially during the time of current COVID-19 status in our region.

### PREPARATION

Outreach efforts for the Community Check-In began six weeks before the meeting date. Tools for alerting and engaging the community used in this preparation phase included:

- 16 yard signs placed at high-visibility, high-traffic locations distributed throughout the six council districts of the city. We created and placed four 8 ft banners along our highest use portions of our trail system. Based on projected traffic counts we estimated over 35,000 individual contacts with this method.
- A single bi-lingual feedback webpage that hosted the current draft version of this Masterplan, an electronic feedback tool for leaving comments and questions and the summary listing of all the meeting data, both in-person and with the distance tools.
- 30 full color posters (made in Spanish and English versions) that were displayed at VPA point-of-public contact locations, the County-City Building elevators and among a dozen partner agencies' locations.
- Two separate paid public announcements with the South Bend Tribute, one a month before the community event, the other ten days before the scheduled presentation date highlighting the distance and in-person options.
- Paid promotions on Facebook to expand the reach of our on-line social media engagement tools.
- A social media engagement strategy that included four different platforms with a minimum of one new post every week until two weeks before the event, then three a week in that final build-up.



- A press release to all the local news, radio and public press agencies including links to the website, feedback tools and meeting information.
- An email campaign to our partner agencies, community partner providers, park supporters, neighborhood organizations and Foundation supporters.
- Pop-up booths at South Bend's Best. Week. Ever. events which occurred August 1-7th, 2021. The pop-up booths distributed rack cards with all the meeting data, in-person and virtual, and included feed-back cards and knowledgeable staff to answer questions about the Community Check-in, the proposed Masterplan Update and the feedback process.
- Invitations to Participate emails were set out three weeks before the event to 82 community organizations, stakeholders, partnership agencies and neighborhood groups with a follow-up notice distributed the week of the presentation.

### ENGAGEMENT

The Community Check-In Event occurred Thursday August 19, from 4:00 – 7:00 pm at the Pinhook Community Center. This building was selected because of the ample parking, universal single level access and ADA amenities.



The Executive Director of the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts did a 45 minute live presentation covering the past five years of accomplishments for the Department, the guiding principles of our selection of priority projects based upon VPA's Four Impact Drivers, our projected projects over the next five years and invited participants, live and virtual, for comments, additional suggestions and to test VPA's assumptions.

Engagement tools used during the live event or offered virtually:

- Monitored FaceBook live broadcast to capture comments and feedback
- On-line feedback tool hosted during the event and available for 10 days after the event to capture comments
- A 16'x10' graphic board of the parks system highlighting completed and future proposed projects with push-pins for comments and suggestions.
- Six break-out stations for each of the key Departments of VPA with their respective Directors for questions or more detailed inquiries regarding their specific operations.
- Live Spanish translation was provided for any individuals on-site or remotely who requested the service.

Participation was tallied and the comments and critiques were used to adjust the five-year projection of priority projects. This feedback will be used in the construction of the VPA's next five-year Strategic Plan due at the end of 2022.

## PARTICIPATION

Live attendance was 70, representing interested citizens and 34 community organizations including the St. Joseph County Health Department, South Bend Community School Corporation and nine different neighborhood groups.

Live virtual attendance was estimated at approximately 100 individuals with more than double that amount viewing the material in the two weeks following the presentation.

On-line feedback tools produced 28 actionable comments/suggestions that have been evaluated and incorporated.

In-person session produced 23 actionable comments/suggestions from the comment cards, interactive Board and from the Break-out Division tables' discussions.



## H-2: Identified Issues

Although generally, satisfaction shown by the survey tools is good for VPA facilities, basic amenities were still called out for many parks. In particular, restrooms appeared as an area for improvement. Over the past three years, a system-wide restroom improvement and accessibility program has just finished, bringing all the neighborhood restroom facilities into ADA compliance, improving functionality and appearance. Additional restrooms were added into the renovated Howard Park Community Center, the Pulaski Park improvement and a new comfort station is to be installed in the rebuilt Seitz Park.

VPA has restructured its marketing and outreach efforts to address the noted issue of outreach and public awareness of services but the feedback and surveying is lagging.

Health concerns and limited public interaction over the past year have restricted VPA's ability to do many more current public feedback efforts. As several new facilities and restructured programs are just in their first year or two of activation, it will be good opportunity to start new direct feedback and satisfaction to measure their effectiveness.

Many of the connectivity issues with the river parks and the neighborhoods and the parks and trail systems are being addressed by the trail expansions including the Coal Line Trail, bicycle network planned growth and other park adaptations included in the five-year capital update.

In the upcoming years, to address several of the other concerns, VPA intends to return to a "Back to the Basics" approach.

## H-3: Demographics

*Source: Current Conditions Report, City Plan, Appendix C, Indiana Business Research Center*

Using good projections to understand and prepare for anticipated changes to the conditions and needs of the community, demographic studies are often the first

step.

### DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS

	2020	2025	2030
St. Joseph County	283,885	290,946	298,321
South Bend (Share of Growth Method)	102,4246	103,158	130,945

Over the planning horizon, overall population is projected to change very little (showing a slight growth), but two key trends are noted in studies:

1. An increasingly diverse ethnicity to the City of South Bend.
2. And a gradually aging population and increase in the median age.

The following table shows both the decreasing number of the projected population in the "prime workforce" age as the population median moves towards the elderly and also the increasing diversity of the ethnic and racial make-up of our community.

### PROJECTED POPULATION, AGE 25 TO 54 YEARS

	2020	2025	2030
White Alone	26,079	24,430	23,512
Black African American Alone	10,418	10,187	9,979
or			
All Other Races Alone	3,433	3,726	3,814
Two or More Races	1,058	1,445	1,493
or			
Hispanic or Latino	4,613	4,991	5,020
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,988</b>	<b>39,798</b>	<b>39,231</b>

Of course, projections do not take into account unforeseen changes in the economy or in the community due to new or unanticipated developments, but the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Department will need to be aware of these anticipated trends.

## H-4: Trends

Trying to look further ahead to prepare for as-of-yet

unidentified trends just over the horizon is the work of futurists. Taking an identified direction and projecting it forward over time to examine its possible effects on a community is one way of predicting future conditions.

During the planning process, and as part of the VIP Project described in Section M of this document, we evaluate our plan and action steps against the best attempt at a rationally imagined future.

## RELEVANT TRENDS

The following summary looks at national, regional, and local trends have been determined to be most relevant to the VPA Master Plan.

## NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PATTERNS FOR PARK AND RECREATION

Certain larger trends can be identified affecting the entire profession. Generally these are results of cultural shifts or changes of perceptions and expectations at the national level, although some demographic issues, such as the aging of the baby-boomer population or the rise of obesity among the American population may also affect the entire profession.

Planning for such trends and working in partnership with other agencies who are successfully managing such trends is a necessary strategy for preparing for future conditions.

Below is a list of key trends identified by the National Recreation and Parks and Association:

1. The need to develop effective relationships with the private sector for the acquisition and management of parks and public lands.
2. In facing growing demand, positioning public parks and recreation within the top tier of essential services.
3. Increasing demand on park and recreation agencies to function as social service providers, addressing issues such as homelessness, health and wellness, and senior care.

4. The need to reach out to minority communities in serving increasingly diverse populations.
5. The growing crisis of a generation of children who have lost touch with nature and the desire to simply play outside.
6. The call for parks and recreation to “go green” and serve as community leaders in creating sustainable landscapes, reducing energy consumption, and stimulating environmental stewardship.

*Source: “Trending Positive”, Richard J. Dolesh, Senior Director, NRPA Public Policy, March 2008, Parks and Recreation, Official Publication of the National Recreation and Park Association.*

## MULTICULTURALISM

Our country is becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. South Bend shows this trend over the last several decades also.

As the recreation field continues to function within a more diverse society, race and ethnicity will become increasingly important in every aspect of the profession. More than ever, recreation professionals will be expected to work with, and have significant knowledge and understanding of, individuals from many cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

Partnering with culturally self-identifying organizations has been successful for VPA, assisting communities to represent themselves with assistance from our services and facilities instead of trying to represent them ourselves.

South Bend VPA's cultural events and programs, especially at its various Community Centers, are intentionally designed with partner organizations from neighborhoods and self-identifying minority groups to create the most inclusive offerings and experiences possible.

## ECONOMIC DEMOGRAPHICS

Because South Bend has a significantly lower average household income than the county and surrounding region with a corresponding greater percentage of

poverty, South Bend Venues Parks & Arts always needs to be cognizant of the importance of free or low-cost services, balancing this within any cost recovery models. Free access to the Community Centers, splash pads, open gyms, and free or low-fee programming across the system.

## AGE DEMOGRAPHICS

Aging adults will reinvent what being a 65-year-old means. Parks and recreation agencies that do not plan for “boomers” carrying on in retirement with the same hectic pace they have lived during their years in employment will be left behind. Things to consider when planning for the demographic shift:

- Passive and Active Fitness and Wellness Opportunities
- Cultural Arts and Entertainment
- Outdoor Recreation/Adventure Programs
- Travel Programs

South Bend offers numerous facilities, activities and events that appeal to Adults, including the following:

- Ella Morris and Muessel-Ellison Botanical Conservatories and Potawatomi Greenhouse
- Rum Village Nature Center
- East Bank Trail/Riverwalk
- South Bend Museum of Art
- South Bend Symphony
- Art Beat
- Arts Everywhere
- Leeper Art Fair
- Leeper Studebaker Fountain

One of the demographic trends identified nationwide that also affects South Bend is the smaller proportion of youth than in the past, but still essential to our future. As of the 2020 Census, the age group under age 18 forms about a quarter of the U.S. population, and this percentage is at an all-time low. This population group is especially ethnically diverse compared to previous census measurements.

South Bend has many activities and amenities that

appeal to youth, including the following:

- Youth Mentoring and Job services
- Activities at the Community Centers, Including camps
- Howard Park Ice Trail and modified park
- Partnerships with YMCA for youth programming at the O’Brien Center
- Potawatomi Zoo
- O’Brien Skatepark and open-use general trails

South Bend, as home to several large universities, has a disproportionately high percentage of young adults. This provides unique opportunities for seasonal specialty programs and events. Active programming, team competitions and city-wide cultural events all support this demographic.

## PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Demand for fitness and wellness offerings continue to increase with strong support from national initiatives and funding to help increase physical activity and reduce the growing obesity epidemic. While private sector health provision is strong, less than a quarter of the population nationwide uses private fitness clubs. Public sector agencies are increasing their offerings to assist a more active lifestyle for its residents. While having trails available for walking continues to be the most desired amenity, instructional programs and indoor facilities are also very popular. VPA will continue to position itself as a Health and Wellness provider and already is a founding member of the St. Joseph County Health Improvement Alliance and will continue to support trail development and active lifestyle opportunities both in public lands design and in programming selection.

## FACILITIES

National trends continue to show an increased user-base desire for recreation facilities (private and public). To meet that growing need, a majority of the survey respondents (64%) to the NRPA ParkMetrics reported that they have plans to build new facilities or make additions or renovations to their existing facilities over

the next five years. The average age of respondents' main facilities is 24 years, which puts the vast majority of South Bend facilities well over that average. Continued maintenance is an issue for our system's facilities that will have to be diligently overseen.

The five most commonly planned facility additions nation-wide include: dog parks, splash play areas, trails, park structures (shelters/restrooms), and playgrounds. The current national trend is toward "one-stop" indoor recreation facilities to serve all ages. Larger, multi-purpose recreation centers that serve large portions of the community help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use.

Agencies across the U.S. are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Multi-use facilities offer broader programming opportunities as well as free-play opportunities. These facilities models attract young families, teens, and adults of all ages and inter-general programming helps address the changing age demographics and build cultural unity.

## INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUNDS

Stepping away from the traditional playground equipment which often leaves youth with special needs unable to participate, the parks and recreation field has seen an increased demand for inclusive playgrounds that provide sensory play and accessibility for ability levels. This does not just include making playgrounds wheelchair-friendly, but also means playground designs should consider how children with social and emotional disabilities can interact with a variety of sensations and textures that stimulate all of their senses. Technology also plays an important role in enhancing the accessibility of playground equipment as well. Adaptive switch technologies used to activate sounds can help users with limited fine motor skills be able to engage with the playgrounds in ways they couldn't before.

In its \$60 million parks overhaul, Venues Parks & Arts prioritized accessibility when making choices about improvements and redesigns that needed to take

place in over 40 parks throughout the city. South Bend's marquee park, Howard Park, was completely reconstructed in 2019 to include hundreds of feet of ADA accessible walking paths and a completely accessible playground that includes unitary surfacing, immersion swings, and other free-standing, multi-ability playground pieces. At other parks, residents specifically called for accessible play options at their local neighborhood park, which led to the installation of brand-new, inclusive park and playground features at Boehm, Kelly, Potawatomi, Keller, Howard and Leeper Parks.

Part of designing inclusive playgrounds includes making other park amenities accessible including restrooms, walking paths, and drinking fountains. In 2019, VPA upgraded every park restroom in the system to be ADA accessible.

*Source: [www.gametime.com/inclusive-playground](http://www.gametime.com/inclusive-playground)  
Source: [recmanagement.com/feature/201704su02](http://recmanagement.com/feature/201704su02)*

## OUTDOOR FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Health risks associated with obesity have become an increasing concern for communities throughout the US. One way that parks and recreation associations are actively working to address these concerns is through the installation of outdoor fitness equipment. Outdoor fitness equipment provides a free and easily accessible workout opportunity for an entire community, as opposed to a paid, exclusive gym membership

where workout equipment typically is found. Additionally, people who exercise outdoors are more likely to repeat the behavior and more likely to engage in activity for longer. A study conducted by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga demonstrated that there were twice as many park users at parks where outdoor fitness equipment was located and that park users engaged in moderate to vigorous activity there at least 63% of the time. Not only does creating more spaces for people to get active helpful for encouraging fitness, it also gets people to spend more time outdoors which has shown to play an important

role in improving mental and emotional health.

In addition to children’s playground equipment, Venues Parks & Arts has installed outdoor fitness nodes in two areas throughout the city. VPA installed several fitness equipment pieces along a riverfront trail to allow users to walk or jog between each piece. Additionally, Gov. Kernan Park is home to a pod of fitness equipment that overlooks the riverfront and is connected to the entire riverfront trail system.

Source: [www.gametime.com/outdoor-fitness-equipment](http://www.gametime.com/outdoor-fitness-equipment)

Source: [www.gametime.com/uploads/media/Outdoor\\_Adult\\_Fitness\\_Parks\\_ES.pdf](http://www.gametime.com/uploads/media/Outdoor_Adult_Fitness_Parks_ES.pdf)

## IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Parks departments are uniquely situated to address issues of climate change with their decisions on how to use and protect public green spaces. Climate change will continue to impact the degradation of natural resources, water levels, weather patterns, and loss of wildlife and ecosystems. Parks are an important part of preventing the worst damages of climate change, especially when designed with the changing environment as a top priority. National Parks and Recreation Agency predicts that in the near future, parks will be increasingly seen as multi-benefit landscapes that protect against flooding, clean and filter stormwater, produce shade and prevent heat island effects.

VPA has taken several steps to consider the future ecological health of the city in both new projects and in decisions regarding existing parks. Located adjacent to the riverfront, Howard Park was continually flooded whenever river levels increased and overwhelmingly so during the 500-year flood that impacted the city in 2018. It was vital to consider this growing issue when the park was completely redesigned in 2019. The new park ground level was raised several feet towards the street, playground, and building, and graded downward towards newly implemented bioswales that could contain water overflows. VPA has also established an Ecological Advocacy

Committee of volunteer experts in the ecology field who advice on topics pertaining to climate change and environmental impacts on park lands. This committee recently developed a 79-page comprehensive Natural Resource Management Plan that analyzes and advises the department on the management and maintenance of our most important ecological resources. This has led to changes in how often sensitive properties are mowed, protection and development of wetlands, removal of invasive species, and specific recommendations for each park, among other things.

Source: [www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2021/january/top-trends-in-parks-and-recreation-2021/](http://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2021/january/top-trends-in-parks-and-recreation-2021/)

## ESPORTS

Esports is a growing trend around the world, and parks and recreation agencies have sought to keep up. In 2019, global eSports was a \$1 billion industry. Recreation programming targeted to the esports genre takes advantage of the popularity to promote the goals of recreation. Some of the hardest to reach audiences for parks and recreation agencies are those that are most attracted to esports – teens and young adults. As esports evolves to become a more multi-player, immersive experience, esports programs have help create a social experience in a safe, structured environment. Additionally, esports programs help agencies fill their facilities during normally unused or underutilized times. Young people who attend these programs can be cross-promoted to and brought into other recreation programs at those facilities.

South Bend’s convention center, which operated under the umbrella of VPA, transformed an under-utilized conference space and auditorium to create an esports arena and gaming center in early 2021. The gaming center is now home to both a local university esports team and a local professional soccer league esports team. Although not fully operational due to COVID, the arena will eventually host large events bringing in hundreds young gamers both regionally and locally. Discussions have started about how to integrate programming at the city’s two community centers into

the esports gaming center to create opportunities for underserved youth to experience the technology and environment of esports on a large scale.

*Esports: [www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2019/september/esports-the-next-big-thing-for-parks-and-rec/](http://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2019/september/esports-the-next-big-thing-for-parks-and-rec/)*

## H-5: Parks Standards & Needs

### INTRODUCTION

South Bend Venues Parks & Arts formed a cooperative analysis partnership with the Trust for Public Lands to create an access study based upon their ParkScore methodology. VPA was the first agency not listed in their top 100 cities in the U.S. to undergo this process. The goal was to identify how to put every household in South Bend within a ½ mile walking distance to a park or public recreation facility.

Barriers such as high-traffic roadways, park entrance locations, bridge and trail connections were all used in calculating walking distance. In order to evaluate the existing and to forecast the future park and recreation needs of a community, “standards” should be used as guidelines. These standards are to be considered minimums in assessing the recreational needs of the community. The standards typically relate to acreage and populations being served (not necessarily the ages of the population or the level of incomes, etc.). These standards form a base line from which need-analysis can be performed. While these standards are national standards they do not always relate to the reality of the local community’s situation. The analysis of this study will utilize the national standards but will relate the analysis with the local community situations in mind.

### Methodology and Analysis



**PARKSCORE® INDEX FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH BEND, INDIANA**  
**PREPARED BY THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND - MAY 2017**

ParkScore® Index for the City of South Bend, Indiana

Prepared by The Trust for Public Land May 2017

As the leading U.S. organization that works to analyze and determine the value of urban parks, The Trust for Public Land has created a methodology to give a general rating of every major U.S. city’s park system through its proprietary program called ParkScore®.

### OVERVIEW

Cities can earn a maximum ParkScore of 100. For easy comparison and at-a-glance assessment, each city is also given a rating of one to five park benches. One bench means the park system needs major improvement, while five benches means the park system is outstanding. In evaluating park systems, we consider land owned by regional, state, and federal agencies within the 100 most populous U.S. cities—including schoolyards formally open to the public and greenways that function as parks.

The analysis is based on three important characteristics of an effective park system: acreage, facilities and investment, and access.

### ACREAGE

ParkScore awards each city points for acreage based on two equally weighted measures: median park size and parkland as a percentage of city area. Factoring park acreage into each city’s ParkScore helps account for the importance of larger “destination parks” that serve many users who live farther than ten minutes’ walking distance.

### INVESTMENT AND AMENITIES

ParkScore awards each city points for investment and amenities based on two equally weighted measures: total spending per resident and an average of per-capita provision of four key park amenities - basketball hoops, dog parks, playgrounds, and recreation and senior centers.

- Spending per resident is calculated from a three-year average (FY 2013/2014, FY 2014/2015, and FY 2015/2016, depending on a city’s fiscal calendar)

to minimize the effect of annual fluctuations. Spending figures include capital and operational spending by all agencies that own parkland within the city limits, including federal, state, and county agencies.

- Amenities were chosen because of the breadth of users served, the ubiquity of these amenity types, and the ease of accurate counting of these measures.

## ACCESS

ParkScore awards each city points for access based on the percentage of the population living within a ten-minute (half-mile) walk of a public park. The half-mile is defined as entirely within the public road network and uninterrupted by physical barriers such as highways, train tracks, and rivers.

## SCORING

The scoring system recognizes the accomplishments of cities that have made significant investments in their parks without holding dissimilar cities to an unrealistic standard. It enables detailed analysis and allows cities to increase their ParkScore through incremental improvements to different aspects of their park systems.

To determine a city's ParkScore, we assigned points in three categories: acreage, investment and amenities, and access.

- Acreage: 20 points for median park size, and 20 points for park acres as a percentage of city area
- Investment and Amenities: 20 points for spending per resident and 20 points for the average of the four key amenity scores (basketball hoops, dog parks, playgrounds, and recreation and senior centers).
- Access: 40 points for percentage of the population living within a walkable half-mile, ten-minute walk of a public park.

Points for each statistic are assigned by breaking the data range established by our national sample into 20

brackets, with the lowest bracket receiving the least points and the highest bracket receiving the most points. Each city's total points—out of a maximum of 120—are then normalized to a ParkScore of up to 100.

## OUTLIERS

To prevent outliers from skewing the results, the top bracket for each measure includes all values equal to more than double the median of the data range. For example, spending per resident in our 100-city national sample ranges from \$15 to \$287, with a median of \$82. To control distortion from local anomalies, all cities that spend more than double the median value (i.e., \$163 per resident) are assigned to the highest bracket and receive 20 points.

With the top bracket thus defined, the parameters for the remaining brackets are established so that each bracket comprises an equal portion of the remaining data range. This protocol applies to all categories except access, which has no outliers.

## MAPPING

To map access to parks and open space, ParkScore first identifies gaps in park availability, and then determines which gaps represent the most urgent need for parkland.

Access gaps are based on a service area representing a ten-minute walk. To map park need, we combined three differently weighted demographic profiles:

- Population density – weighted at 50%
- Density of children age 19 and younger – weighted at 25%
- Density of individuals in households with income less than 75% of city median income – weighted at 25%

Each city's park need is mapped from data collected in the 2016 Forecast Census block groups provided by Esri. The total population of South Bend according to this data source is 97,161.

## ANALYSIS OF THE PARKSCORE FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH BEND

South Bend has identified seven cities for benchmarking comparison, which provides an instructive way to consider the scores against peer and aspirational cities. These cities are: Lexington, Wichita, Madison, Toledo, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, and Cincinnati. All of these cities are currently included in the ParkScore Index because they rank among the 100 most populous US cities. While South Bend is much smaller than all of these cities, there are similarities that make them useful comparisons when considering how the park system of South Bend serves its citizens.

The cities were selected based on the following criteria: similar geographic region and proximity to South Bend, cities with a positive growth rate, cities with similar industry and labor mix, and cities that are home to the main campus of a research university (i.e., a university that grants doctoral degrees) to simulate the impact of Notre Dame, IUSB and the other many higher education institutions on South Bend. It is worth noting that the South Bend Department of Venues, Parks, and Arts is the only agency that owns and manages parkland within the city limits of South Bend (excluding the joint-use school facilities). This is also the case for Wichita and Fort Wayne, but all other comparison cities have other agencies operating parkland within their city, such as White River State Park in Indianapolis and Metroparks in Toledo.

South Bend scores above the national median of 51.5 overall, with a total score of 64 out of 100 possible points. They score above the median in park size, with fairly large parks at a median of 8.7 acres. These parks are also reasonably well distributed, serving 73% of the population (the national median is 67.7% population served within a city). South Bend's parkland only makes up 5% of the city, however, which is fairly low compared to the national median of 9%.

In comparison to the benchmarking cities, Cincinnati and Madison both score above South Bend with total overall scores of 72.5 (these two cities tie). Most

significantly, these cities outpace South Bend in terms of Parkland as Percent of City Area. While South Bend has large parks, the city would benefit from adding more parkland overall. In this way South Bend is comparable to Lexington, Wichita, and Indianapolis, all of which have large parks but score fairly low in the Parkland as Percent of City Area component.

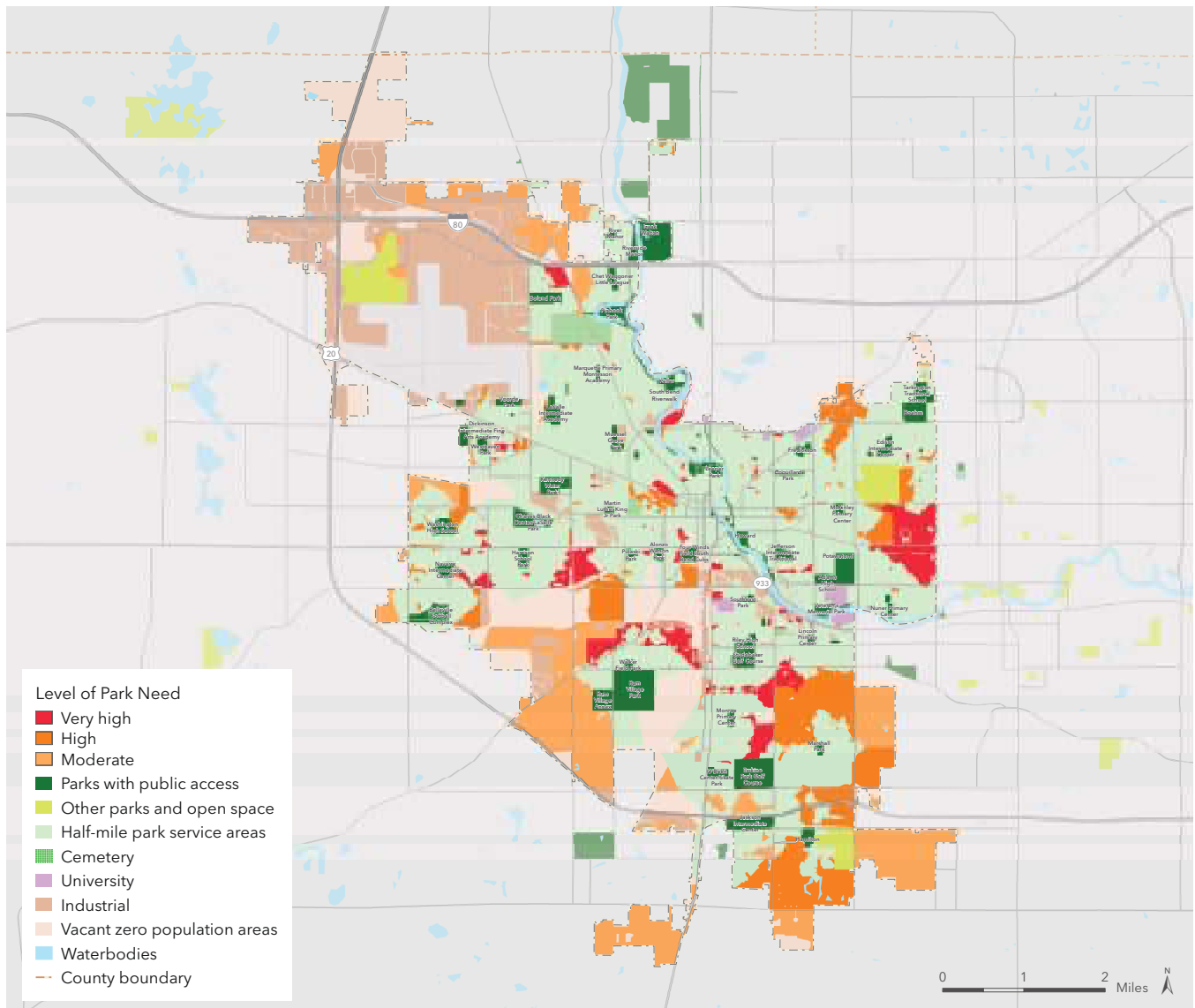
South Bend spends \$116 per resident on parkland. While this is above the national median of \$82, there are many cities that score higher including comparison cities Cincinnati (at \$181) and Madison (at \$122), with the national maximum being \$282. Coming in at 14 out of 20 possible points, the Spending per Resident metric offers another category in which South Bend could improve.

South Bend scores fairly well in amenities, with the lowest score being in recreation and senior centers. They fall right at the median in this category, with 0.8 centers per 20,000 residents. The next lowest portion of the amenities is off-leash dog parks (there is only one dog park, though with a relatively small population this gives the city 11 points out of 20). Comparison cities Cincinnati, Madison, and Lexington all offer more off-leash dog areas to residents (even on a per capita basis) than South Bend does. This indicates a possible area of improvement, especially if the desire for dog parks is present. Recreation centers and dog parks are just two pieces of the amenity section, however, and recreational wants and needs can vary widely by city. The city's residents are very well-served in playgrounds and in basketball hoops. South Bend has 20 schools with joint-use agreements that allow these facilities to be open to the public outside of school hours, and this partially accounts for the high scores in these two amenities as well as in the Access category.

## IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES

Using this access analysis, additional park and public lands will be prioritized, placed and developed. Some high-impact developments are identified in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan to address currently underserved portions of the city and assist VPA in

H-5 Figure A:



## The Trust for Public Land 2017 *ParkScore*® index

### SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

The Trust for Public Land *ParkScore*® index analyzes public access to existing parks and open space. The analysis incorporates a two-step approach: 1) determines where there are gaps in park availability, and 2) constructs a demographic profile to identify gaps with the most urgent need for parkland. Park gaps are based on a dynamic 1/2 mile service area (10 minute walking distance) for all parks. In this analysis, service areas use the street network to determine walkable distance - streets such as highways, freeways, and interstates are considered barriers.

Demographic profiles are based on 2016 Forecast block groups provided by Esri to determine park need for density of youth, density of individuals in

households with income less than 75% of city median income (South Bend less than \$25,000), and population density (people per acre).

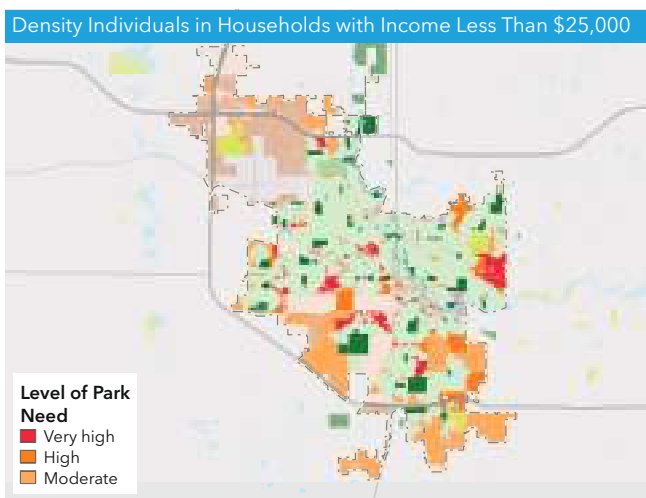
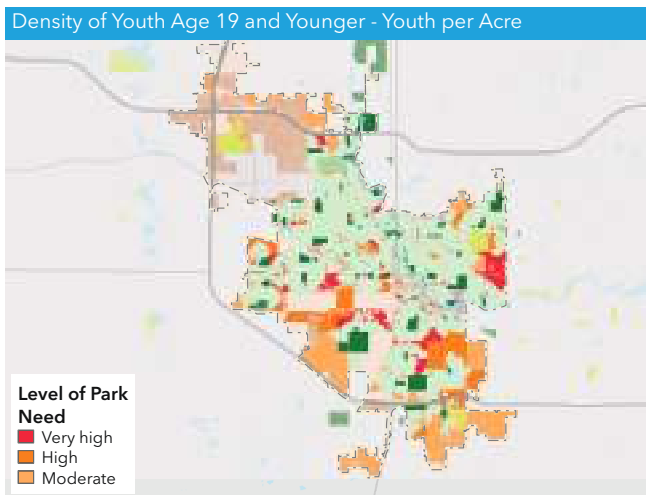
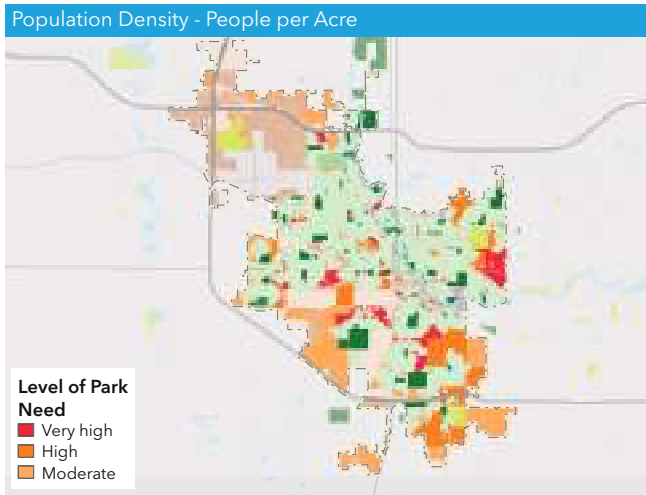
The combined level of park need result shown on the large map combines the three demographic profile results and assigns the following weights:

- 50% = population density (people per acre)
- 25% = density of youth age 19 and younger
- 25% = density of individuals in households with income less than \$25,000

Areas in dark red show a very high need for parks.


*Continued on the following page.*

H-5 Figure A (continued):



Special thanks to the following data providers: South Bend, Esri.  
Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only.  
Map created by The Trust for Public Land on February 13, 2017. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land.  
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H-5 Figure B:



### South Bend, Indiana ParkScore® Index

Rank	City	Acreage				Access				Investment & Amenities													
		Median Park Size		Parkland as Percent of City Area		Percent of Residents within 1/2 Mile of Park		Spending per Resident		Basketball Hoops per 10,000 Residents		Dog Parks per 100,000 Residents		Playgrounds per 10,000 Residents		Recreation and Senior Centers per 20,000 Residents		Total Points/100	Park Benches	City	South Bend		
		Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20	Data	Points/40	Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20	Data	Points/20					Total Points/20	
	South Bend	8.7	17	5%	5	73%	26	\$116	14	4.4	18	1.0	11	5.3	20	0.8	10	15	77	64.0	3.5		
10	Cincinnati	4.3	8	14%	15	71%	25	\$181	20	5.2	20	1.3	15	5.1	20	2.3	20	19	87	72.5	4.0	Cincinnati	
10	Madison	4.7	9	13%	14	90%	35	\$122	14	10.8	20	4.2	20	7.3	20	0.1	1	15	87	72.5	4.0	Madison	
60	Lexington	11.1	20	2%	2	51%	14	\$92	9	4.0	16	1.3	14	2.1	8	0.3	4	11	56	46.5	2.5	Lexington	
69	Toledo	5.3	10	6%	6	76%	28	\$45	4	1.9	6	0.4	3	2.8	11	0.1	1	5	53	44.0	2.0	Toledo	
78	Wichita	11.3	20	5%	4	50%	14	\$47	5	1.0	2	0.8	8	2.1	8	0.5	5	6	49	41.0	2.0	Wichita	
95	Indianapolis	9.9	19	5%	5	32%	4	\$26	2	2.3	8	0.5	5	1.5	5	0.5	7	6	36	30.0	1.0	Indianapolis	
98	Fort Wayne	3.9	7	3%	3	42%	9	\$70	8	1.7	5	0.8	8	2.2	8	0.4	5	7	34	28.5	1.0	Fort Wayne	
	National Median	5.1	10	9%	9	67%	23	\$82	9	2.4	9	0.8	9	2.4	9	0.8	10	10	62	51.5	2.5	National Median	
	National Maximum	15.9		84%		98.7%		\$287		10.8		5.4		7.3		2.9		19	104	86.5	5.0	National Maximum	
	National Minimum	0.6		1%		27.2%		\$15		0.7		0.0		0.5		0.1		3	34	28.5	1.0	National Minimum	

Scores are calculated based on the Trust for Public Land's 2016 ParkScore® Index.

H-5 Figure C:



trying to provide every resident a 10-minute walk from their front door to a park.

## H-6: Parks Acreage Needs Analysis

### PARK SYSTEM NEEDS ANALYSIS

Just as there are standards for Park Acreage, there are also Standards for Recreation Facilities based on the population. The Standards adopted by the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts Board of Commissioners have been used to produce this chart. It should be noted that the number of existing facilities do not include those of the South Bend Schools, as these figures were unavailable. (See table H-8 on the next page.)

H-6 Table: South Bend Park Acreage Level of Service

SB Standard	2020 Population	Current Acres	Acres/ Standard	Surplus/ (Deficiency)	Actual Acres/ 1000 Persons
SB- 10.5/ 1000	102,302	1296	12.5	.19	12.69

Total park land in South Bend is just over 12.69 acres/1000 persons, which is slightly higher than

the median range for a city of its size in this region. Population growth projections over the next five years do not forecast a need for substantial land purchases. Additional land purchase or park expansions will likely be for system improvements, connectivity opportunities, preservation issues or to increase access to under-served neighborhoods currently without a park with a 10-minute walking distance to their homes.

### SUMMARY OF FACILITIES

Over the next five (5) years, based on demographic and park system standards, the South Bend Venues Parks & Arts system should strive toward making adjustments in the number of park facilities.

## H-7: Special Focus Issues

### ACCESSIBILITY

2015 U.S. Census data tells us there are nearly 40 million Americans living with a disability of some kind. Its important for VPA to consider these numbers when planning for future park upgrades, programming, marketing, and signage. Public spaces and programs should be accessible to the entire community, no matter someone’s ability status.

H-7 Table: City Wide Analysis - Facilities, Standards and Growth Projections

Facility	SB Standards	Facilities Current	# of Persons/ Current Inventory	2025 Needs (per pop)	2025 Surplus or (Deficit)	Projected 2025 Surplus or (Deficit)
Baseball Diamonds	1 / 12K	7	14,714	8.7	-1.7	- 1.9
Softball Diamonds	1 / 10K	11	9,367	10.38	0.62	0.54
Soccer Fields	1 / 6K	16	6,438	17.3	-1.7	-1.72
Football Fields	1 / 50K	2	51,903	2.07	-1.19	-1.21
Other Multi-use Fields	1 / 12K	9	114,444	8.65	-0.35	-0.34
Tennis Courts	1 / 5K	41	2,512	20.76	20.24	20.2
Basketball courts (full and half)	1 / 5K	23	4,478	20.76	2.24	2.2
Zip Line	1 / 150K	1	103,807	0.69	0.31	0.31
Skate/Bike Park (Neighborhood)	1 / 150K	1	103,807	0.69	0.31	0.31
Playgrounds	1 / 2.5K	42	1,874	41.52	-0.48	- 0.5
Ice Skating Pond/Trail	1 / 100K	2	103,807	1.04	-0.04	- 0.04
Aquatic Activities*	1 / 10K	11	10,380	10.38	-0.38	-0.4
Golf course, 9-hole	1 / 150K	1	103,807	0.69	0.31	0.31
Golf course, 18-hole	1 / 60K	2	103,807	1.73	0.27	0.26
Driving Range	1 / 100K	1	103,807	2.08	-0.08	- 0.08
Disc Golf	1 / 100K	1	103,807	1.04	-0.04	- 0.04
Maintenance Facility (hub)	1 / 100K	1	103,807	1.04	-0.04	- 0.04
Conservatory	1 / 200K	1	103,807	0.52	0.48	0.48
Zoo	1 / 200K	1	103,807	0.52	0.48	0.48
Community and Rec Centers	1 / 20K	6	17,301	5.19	- 0.81	- 0.77
Multi-use and Nature Trails	1 mile / 2.5K	34.12	3042	41.52	-7.4	- 7.51

\* Aquatic activities include one tank pool, a waterspray park and seven splash pad components.

Accommodations that need to be considered go beyond providing adequate handicapped spaces. Creating wide, properly graded pathways, accessible restrooms and playgrounds, and appropriate handrails and grab bars all play a part in making public spaces available to all. Beyond mobility disabilities, considerations for visual and hearing impairment and sensory sensitivity should be addressed in park design and programming.

Venues Parks & Arts has worked towards creating more accessible public spaces and programs in a number of ways. In 2019, we upgraded every restroom in our system to be ADA accessible and installed

several accessible playgrounds in areas throughout the city. At our popular ice skating trail, we offer low sensory hours where people can visit with lower crowds, no music and toned down lighting. We continue to partner with agencies who serve people with disabilities to offer programs like adaptive tennis and wheelchair basketball.

### ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP

Threats to our shared public spaces have exponentially increased in recent years due to the impact of climate change and a major uptick in city-wide development. In response to back-to-back 1,000-year flood events, we have begun to create new natural

flood control areas along our riverfront. To assist with urban heat impacts, carbon sequestration and storm water management, we have re-graded at least 100 acres of park property, doubled the number of trees planted annually in the city, have introduced recycling into park properties, and have initiated an energy conservation study. Additionally, we moved to permanently protect more than 50 acres of property in two locations by transferring control to the Board of Park Commissioners. Through education and advocacy, we have protected four park properties from proposed construction projects and worked collaboratively to include green space, connectivity, and recreational amenities as part of private development projects.

To put more direct and specialized attention on the ecological issues facing the department, VPA created an Ecological Advocacy Committee, a citizen group of environmental experts appointed by the Park Board of Commissioners. A vital accomplishment of the EAC was the development of the city's first Natural Resource Management Plan, one of the most comprehensive of its kind in the country. The plan sets policies on specific ecological issues and identifies sensitive properties. The document has already informed swift and effective navigation of issues related to rising river levels, native plantings, property protections, invasive plants and nuisance wildlife, and land acquisition.

Additional efforts VPA has undertaken include signing on to NRPA's Monarch Pledge, developing a nature preserve golf course combo, upgrading our nature education center, and recently building one of the first LEED v4 Gold park buildings in the country.

## **COST RECOVERY**

The introduction of a cost-recovery strategy was designed to identify operational opportunities while balancing equity in access. To cover departmental expenses, there are varying levels of subsidy that each program needs to operate. Those programs and assets with the most public benefits should receive the most subsidy.

With a goal of reaching 40% cost recovery by 2025, VPA has developed a rating system to identify how much each programs and assets should be subsidized with public dollars. For example, a private yoga instruction course receives a rating of 5, meaning that that expenses for the private yoga class should be entirely covered through fees.

Our golf division demonstrates how this unfolded across the department well. Through study, we understood that course pricing was undervalued, access was limited, and subsidies were high. While refining the business model, we also transformed the properties to include multi-uses: one added open nature trails, one clubhouse was renovated to include community event space, and the last became home to a "kids golf free" initiative in conjunction with the First Tee program. As a result, we decreased public subsidy while increasing public access. Usage has increased 30% with nearly 100% cost recovery.



# *Planning*

## I-1: Strategic Plan 2017-2022

### Planning Process:

#### CURRENT CONDITIONS & ASSET ANALYSIS

The first step in setting the bold strategy for transformation of the system involved a complete study of the current conditions of the system's parks and services. A comprehensive inventory of the facilities, public lands and services was then informed by benchmarking with comparative communities. Establishing the baseline of our current level of service prepared us to begin future planning. A study of changing trends and shifting user preferences was used to create an understanding of the gaps and likely needed changes to the current inventory for the future.

#### STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Extensive public feedback was gathered from community meetings, statistically valid surveying, stakeholder, and issue-centric focus group discussions to ensure South Bend's particular needs and desires for their public system was captured. This was done at the neighborhood level, the city level and was also targeted at specific park, region and program improvement requirements.

#### PRIORITIES & PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

Using both the analysis of current conditions and assets in addition to community feedback, VPA identified priorities that best captured the future needs of our parks system, venues, and public spaces. Previous planning efforts, including the Parks Master Plan, Reginal Cities Economic Plan, City Comprehensive Plan and other neighborhood specific plans, also informed the priorities. The goals of these planning efforts are identified in the strategic plan as supporting documents.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

To help refine the strategic goals of VPA, the VPA Strategy Team, consisting of leaders in all department divisions, finalized a set of defined focus areas with objectives and strategies. These objectives

were developed following several leadership team meetings, SB Stat evaluations, leadership development retreats, Drucker Institute training sessions, and facility experience audits.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

The Strategic Plan was reviewed by the VPA Strategic Team and presented to the Board of Park Commissioners for review and adoption. Each of the targeted strategies has an assigned owner to lead the issue towards completion. Each strategy will be further broken down into actionable steps, led by the owner, with a particular focus on the key considerations. Review of the overall Strategic Plan will be on at least an annual basis.

#### AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS:

- Major Capital Investments
- Asset Management
- Event & Program Optimization
- Customer Engagement
- Employee Development

#### MAJOR CAPITAL INVESTMENTS – MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Project Identification – In 2017 we identified a suite of targets for capital projects that would meet the communities defined needs.
2. Project Scope, Impacts & Costs – Based off of our capital project identification list, we were able to define conceptual scope, impacts and preliminary estimates for total cost.

#### MAJOR CAPITAL INVESTMENTS – ONGOING PROJECTS & GOALS

1. Public Communication – We continue to execute an ongoing, comprehensive communication strategy designed to educate and engage with our residents as well as inspire civic pride.
2. Project Financing – We have instituted a fiscally responsible funding strategy that leverages outside investment without raising taxes. We

continue to seek private funding to support many of our capital improvements and so far have captured millions of dollars and plan to continue seeking these funds for the foreseeable future.

3. Project Implementation – Aggressive but realistic timelines have been set to complete a host of capital projects over the next several years which are currently scheduled throughout 2025.

## **ASSET MANAGEMENT – MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. Facility Management Software – In 2019 we fully institutionalized software solutions to increase the effectiveness of our public communication channels, interactions with customers and routine maintenance.
2. Standards of Care – Specifications were defined in 2020 regarding the level of service each facility or property would receive.
3. Volunteer Program – In 2018 VPA established a sustainable volunteer program aimed at increasing civic engagement and levels of service throughout South Bend.

## **ASSET MANAGEMENT – ONGOING PROJECTS & GOALS**

1. Standard Operation Procedure – In 2018, VPA did a complete overhaul of written policies and procedures to maximize department-wide efficiencies. These procedures are routinely reassessed on an ongoing basis and with the creation of new public places and programs.
2. Capital Fund – We continue to create a dedicated, self-sustaining capital fund with consistent cash flows available for capital projects.
3. “Friends of...” Groups – VPA aims to build additional healthy partnerships with neighborhood and other civic groups to positively influence the direction of projects as well as gather resources within our parks system.
4. Safety & Security – VPA established updated security and safety protocols in 2018, but our

department routinely seeks out modernized systems for better safekeeping of our residents and public spaces.

5. Public Arts – VPA is always looking to integrate more public art into our park system. We are currently executing an art strategy for our spaces that empowers artists and respects public assets.

## **EVENT & PROGRAM OPTIMIZATION – MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. Realign Offerings – In 2019 we fully optimized resources and personnel in order to provide the most value to South Bend residents via altering or adding programs and events.
2. Marketing Allocations – We developed an understanding of positions within the marketplace and budgeted for an annual promotional schedule for each of our programs and events.
3. City-wide Signature Event – In 2017 we began celebrating “Best. Week. Ever.” an annual umbrella event celebrated city-wide. Largely based off local partnerships, this week-long festival has become an annual favorite.
4. Business Development Fund – In 2019, VPA established a consistently funded account through our department venues that is available to increase overall economic impact.

## **EVENT & PROGRAM MANAGEMENT - ONGOING PROJECTS AND GOALS**

1. Cost Recovery – On an ongoing basis, VPA executes a cost recovery model set in 2017 in order to balance public resources and user fees to allow sustainable and accessible programming.
2. Mobile Recreation Program – In 2018 we built “Boomer”, our department’s travel recreation program. We continue to develop new strategies to increase geographic levels of local service and build relevancy in the park system.

## **CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT – MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. Website – In 2019 we created a new department website that is consistent with the VPA brand identify and optimized for accessing programs and events.
2. Brand Management – In 2019 we finished a full brand management project that developed consistent visual branding throughout VPA.

## **CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT – ONGOING PROJECTS & GOALS**

1. Registration Software – We are set to fully overhaul our online and in-person registration process by 2022. Our focus will be to ensure ease of use to our residents.
2. Customer Service Training – Since VPA's inception we have attempted to create a culture of understanding around customer expectations and care. At present our team is working to complete a customer service handbook rooted in our values by the end of 2022.
3. Experience Audits – Every year VPA completes a full audit of divisional programs and events to ensure brand representation and customer experience. We expect to complete these fully in 2023.
4. Storytelling – We have an ongoing goal of being engaging storytellers in order to better engage our residents beyond simply promotional marketing.

## **EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT – MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. City Policy Training – In 2019 we formalized a written and definitive training for all manager-level staff and above to increase productivity, empower workforce and reduce ambiguity.
2. Continuing Education – We currently offer all levels of staff formal opportunities to improve professional skills.

## **EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT – ONGOING PROJECTS & GOALS**

1. Hiring Process – We continue to reinforce and evolve organizational mission and culture throughout the search, hiring and orientation stages of employment.
2. Communication & Engagement – We seek to cultivate a culture that reinforces a clear, consistent exchange of information and ideas while working ot ensure all team members feel connected to their work product. To this end, we continue to develop communication pieces internally and externally from newsletters to all-hands meetings to achieve this goal.
3. Internship Program – We are developing a meaningful internship program in every division, adding mutual value to the participant and the City of South Bend. We plan to have a formalized program in place in by 2023.
4. Youth Job Development Program – we are in the final stages of formalizing an entry-level youth employment program designed to teach work and life skills and decrease community violence.

# J

## *Action Matrix*

## J-1: Action Matrix

The following table includes the capital projects and additional items identified by the level of service analysis, strategic planning, community feedback for needs assessment and identified potential funding sources. The items are not listed in precise priority order and are intended to be implemented as resources allow with the understanding that immediate needs and priorities may have to be adjusted from year to year with changing conditions. All cost estimates are in 2021 figures. Funding sources are suggested or pre-identified sources and may be enhanced with additional sources.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Over the last five years, South Bend has invested more in our public facilities than in any other five-year span in the city's history. Major steps have been taken to increase basic services across the entire system, including updates and renovations at more than twenty-five neighborhood parks throughout the community (new playgrounds, benches, picnic shelters, walking paths, improved roadways, etc.).

The following projects have been selected to fill the identified needs, respond to trends, leverage partnerships, leverage pending opportunities. Three new park projects have been specifically identified to increase access to neighborhoods that do not currently have a quality park within a 10-minute walk (Access/Equity). Trail upgrades and several existing park improvements were identified by the Riverfront Park & Trail initiative and still remain to be completed (RFP and Connectivity). The remaining projects were identified by community feedback (Community) or are required because of the end of a facilities' life cycle (Lifecycle).

J-1 Table A: Action Matrix

Identified Capital Priorities	Focus	Timeline	Funding Estimate	Funding source	Notes
<b>Park Capital Improvements</b>					
Creation - 35th Street Wetlands	Access/Equity	Mid-late 2021	\$ 300,000.00	Park Bond	Native Wetland Eco Lab and Trail
Creation - District 6 Park	Access/Equity	2021-22	\$ 350,000.00	Park Bond	Young Adult Park, Outdoor DJ Booth, concrete table tennis, partnership w/ STEM High School
Creation - "York Road" Park	Access/Equity	2022 (est.)	\$ 1,000,000.00	TBD	Pocket Park tied to the construction of new housing development
Seitz Park Phase 1	RFP	2021-spring 2022	\$ 7,000,000.00	Various	Stage, Plaza, Restrooms, East Race Rafting Operations
Seitz Park Phase 2	RFP	Spring 2022-2023	\$ 2,000,000.00	Various	Riverwalk connection from Seitz to Howard and Jefferson Bridge
East Bank Trail	Connectivity	Spring 2022-2024	\$ 3,000,000.00	Various	Upgrades to Riverwalk and portages
Randolph Park Renovations Pier	RFP	Mid-late 2021	\$ 40,000.00	Park Bond	Last phase of Randolph Park improvements, street vacating and connectivity
Park Renovation	RFP	2023	\$ 800,000.00	TBD	Upgrading trail and associated placemaking along the river
West Bank Trail	Connectivity	2023-2024	\$ 3,000,000.00	TBD	Upgrading trail and associated placemaking along the river
Coal Line Trail	Connectivity	Phased over 2021-2024	\$ 4,000,000.00	INDOT, DCI	Multi-use rail to trail project to connect various parts of the city and trails
LaSalle Park Improvements	Access/Equity	Late 2021	\$ 300,000.00	Capital	Upgrades to amenities and accessibility in the park to replace aging infrastructure
Village Trail Improvements	Community	2024-2025	\$ 400,000.00	TBD	Expanded biking, hiking, walking trails. Pavilion.
Leeper Riverwalk Expansion	RFP	2024-2025	\$ 1,600,000.00	TBD	Additional riverwalk trail and trail access
<b>Facility Capital Improvements</b>					
Pinhook Pavilion Kitchen Renovation	RFP	Winter-spring 2021	\$ 400,000.00	Park Bond	Upgrading 1950's kitchen w/ easy accessibility
Walker Field Project	Lifecycle	2021-2022	\$ 900,000.00	Various	Renovating WPA era pavilion & restrooms
O'Brien Renovation	Community	Winter-spring 2021	\$ 550,000.00	SS TIF	Moving Saunas, locker rooms, restroom improvements, associated MEP
MLK Improvements	Community	Summer 2021	\$ 100,000.00	Capital	Upgrades to lighting, signage, and other placemaking improvements
Muessel Grove Restroom Remodel	Accessibility	Spring 2021	\$ 150,000.00	Various	Renovating 19050's restroom to modern standards and sidewalk accessibility
Potawatomi Pool	Lifecycle	2025	\$ 5,000,000.00	TBD	Full size pool and diving pool reaching end of life and needing replacement
Kennedy Pool	Lifecycle	2024	\$ 1,200,000.00	TBD	Wading pool and splash playground reaching end of life and needing replacement
Recreation Center Improvements (5 Year)	Community	2020-2025	\$ 350,000.00	Various	(\$70k per year over five years at six facilities)
MLK, Jr. Center and Park	Community	2025	\$ 6,000,000.00	Various	Re-envisioning and rebuilding
<b>Misc. Capital Improvements</b>					
Asphalt Court Repair /Conversion (5 Year)	Lifecycle	Phased over 2021-2025	\$ 1,400,000.00	Various	Basket Ball, Tennis, Pickle Ball, \$100k+ per year, five years
Western Placemaking	Community	Mid-late 2021	\$ 40,000.00	Park Bond	Urban placemaking w/ public private business partnerships
River Lights Improvements	RFP	2020-2022	\$ 1,300,000.00	Various	Trestle Bridge, Pier Park, Plaza Park, Bridges
Signage & Branding Upgrades	Community	2020-2022	\$ 200,000.00	Various	Final branding from Parks to Rec to VPA throughout entire park system

# K

## *Measuring Effectiveness*

## K-1: Defining and Measuring Our Success

Performance measures are quantitative statistics or qualitative findings that provide information on the department's success. Once strategies and actions are identified, VPA develops measurements to assess the department's effectiveness in these areas.

VPA uses performance measures that are quantitative (e.g. number of strategic partnerships developed) or qualitative (e.g. quality of strategic partnerships developed). We also measure outcomes that benefit the community or customers who are served by our agency (community outcomes). These performance measures can be tied back to VPA's strategic goals and impact drivers.

Listed below are the measurement tools VPA uses regularly.

### PARK HEALTH DASHBOARD

The Parks Health Dashboard is designed for staff and South Bend residents to track the health of all of our city parks at a moment's notice. This dashboard is updated daily as the Facilities and Grounds division of the Venues, Parks, & Arts department complete their daily work orders. The dashboard was developed through the SB Stat process, in collaboration with the Mayor's Office.

The dashboard summarizes the city's overall parks health score on a scale of 0-100 and breaks down scores for every single park. Park health score is determined based on numerous data points including mowing frequency, maintenance request, tree trimming, trash collection and snow removal.

### ATTENDANCE & DEMOGRAPHICS

Attendance is tracked and recorded at every VPA program and event. These numbers are reviewed against previous years' numbers to show change over time and to help guide programming and marketing decisions. When possible, demographics are also

tracked and recorded. For programs requiring advanced registration, VPA requires information including zip codes that provide data about where residents are being served by program type.

### EXPERIENCE AUDITS

An experience audit brings staff members from all sectors of department together to gather diverse perspectives on a specific experience within the department – events, facilities, parks, or programs. During these audits, staff members review an experience with prompts directing them to consider different elements such as the entrance, signage, cleanliness, etc. These comments are collected and summarized for the program or facility manager to review and implement. VPA performs regular experience audits of its facilities and programs, especially before and after updates and renovations at those locations.

### COST RECOVERY

VPA works to balance public resources and user fees to allow sustainable and accessible programming to South Bend residents. VPA has the goal of reaching 40% cost recovery and measures its progress towards this goal annually by reviewing expenses against revenues. VPA also evaluates each program to determine what level of subsidy it should be receiving from public funds. Using this information, VPA adjusts its program fees, promotional efforts, and fundraising goals to help reach its target.

### ECONOMIC IMPACT

VPA works with several partners to gather information about economic impact in relation to its events and assets. Using data from IMPLAN, South Bend's Chamber of Commerce provides economic impact analysis from local business surrounding specific park assets. Additionally, VPA works with the City's Department of Innovation and MasterCard to evaluate credit card activity against certain events and trends over time. This information helps VPA share with the community how its efforts are connected to a larger picture of the city's health.

## **NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS**

To reach the most residents with the resources available, VPA leverages dozens of partnerships to provide support to other community groups working towards our mission. We regularly track not only the number of partnerships we are currently facilitating, but also get attendance and demographic data from our partner groups to help show the full picture of our impact.

# L

## *Appendix*

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2021 - 2025 MASTER PLAN UPDATE

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## L. APPENDIX

- L-1: Compliance Form.....
- L-2: INDR Approval Letter .....

## L-1: Compliance Form

**ASSURANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE WITH: ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT OF 1968 (AS AMENDED); SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (AS AMENDED); AND TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (AS AMENDED)**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Applicant) has read the guidelines for compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (As Amended); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (As Amended); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (As Amended) and will comply with the applicable requirements of these Acts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant President Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Secretary's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

## L-2: Compliance Form



March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

Greg Beilfuss - Chief Planner  
IDNR – State Parks  
402 W. Washington St., W298  
Indianapolis, IN 42204-2782  
(317) 232-4071

Mark Neal  
South Bend Board of Park Commissioners  
Venues, Parks, and Arts Dept.  
301 S. St. Louis Blvd  
South Bend, IN 46601

Dear Mark,

The DNR Division of State Parks planning staff has reviewed the final draft of the 2022-2026 South Bend Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The plan meets the Department of Natural Resources' minimum requirements for local parks and recreation master plans. This letter certifies that your community **is eligible to apply for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants through this office in the 2021 grant year**. A new plan will be due on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2028 at which time your current LWCF grant application eligibility will expire.

If you haven't already, we strongly recommend that you contact Mr. Bob Bronson, our grant section chief, as soon as possible about future grant applications. Bob and his staff can assist in your grant application process. He can be reached by phone at: (317) 232-4075 or by e-mail at: [bbronson@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:bbronson@dnr.IN.gov).

We support your planning efforts and encourage your participation in the grant programs administered by the Division of State Parks. If you require further information regarding planning, do not hesitate to call me at: (317) 232-4071 or by e-mail at: [gbeilfuss@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:gbeilfuss@dnr.IN.gov).

Sincerely,

Greg Beilfuss  
Chief Planner - IDNR Division of Outdoor Recreation

ECC – Matthew Moyers, South Bend Parks and Recreation

*The DNR mission: Protect, enhance, preserve and wisely use natural, cultural and recreational resources for the benefit of Indiana's citizens through professional leadership, management and education.*

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