

# **NORTH LIBERTY PARK PLAN**

Adopted February 23, 2016 by the North Liberty City Council



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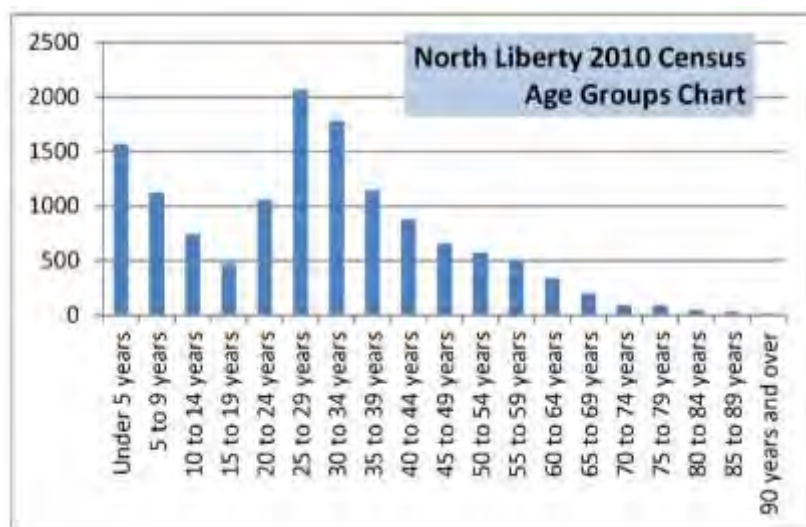
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## I. Research/General Park Planning

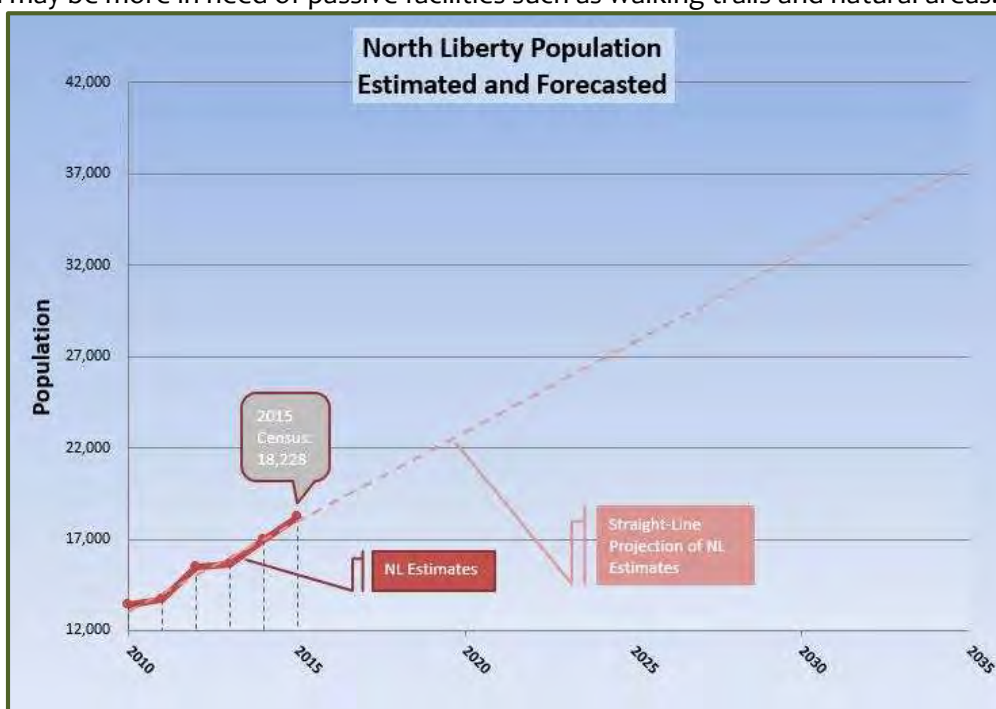
### Introduction and Background

North Liberty is a small but rapidly growing city located on Interstate 380 between the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City metro areas, roughly 7 miles from downtown Iowa City and 17 miles from downtown Cedar Rapids. The 2010 Census showed a population of 13,374, with a large population of young families, while current estimates are for a population over 17,000.



Along with growth comes a concern about providing public facilities and quality-of-life features to adequately serve long-time and new residents, including parks and open spaces. For the purpose of developing a Parks Plan, location and characteristics of growth are just as important as the growth numbers themselves. We might reasonably conclude that residents with large lots, or within condominium developments with open spaces set aside for recreation are less

likely to need some types of public recreation facilities than those with smaller lots or no set-asides. Also, developments likely to attract young families might reasonably require more active recreation facilities, such as skate parks and basketball courts, than developments aimed at more mature population, which may be more in need of passive facilities such as walking trails and natural areas. Of course, communities strive to provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities without targeting specific populations, but these distinctions can be of significant help when allocating scarce financial resources.



This plan is intended to document a realistic analysis of existing parks, undeveloped areas planned for park development, the need for additional space, and potential means of acquisition and development. Its intended use is to guide continuing park development in the city, and it is assumed that it may need to be updated on relatively short time frames if the pace of development continues.

### **Organization of the Plan**

This plan consists of three major phases:

#### **I. Research/General Park Planning**

The first four chapters of this document represent the general park planning component of the plan, including the introduction, public input, inventory analysis, and discussion of need in new development areas.

#### **II. Master Planning**

Based on the Research/General Park Planning work of Component I, this chapter creates specific facility master plans for each component of the North Liberty's Parks and Open Space systems.

#### **III. Implementation**

The final component of the plan builds upon the previous components and identifies implementation policies, recommends park system improvement priorities, and suggests appropriate funding sources.

### **Public Input to the Plan**

The park planning process included a review of existing planning documents as well as extensive consultation with the North Liberty Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council and numerous open public meetings. Additionally, it is critically important for this plan to be informed by existing adopted planning documents such as City budgets and the Comprehensive Plan, so that recommendations are realistic, consistent with City goals, and are not existing in a vacuum.

### **North Liberty Comprehensive Plan – Relationship to Parks**

The North Liberty Comprehensive Plan was adopted in June of 2005 and is updated on a regular basis, most recently in 2014. Its extensive list of Goals and Policies to help guide the City as it grows need to be considered as guides for the City in preparing the Parks Plan. They are:

#### **Comprehensive Plan Goals**

Goals are generalized end products that will ultimately result in achieving the quality of life desired. Goals are often described using the terms “maintain,” “encourage,” “ensure,” “develop,” and “establish.”

Ongoing park operations and planning occur within the environment of overall community growth, so established overall community growth goals greatly impact park planning. The overall community goals established by the Comprehensive Plan that most directly impact park planning include:

- Encourage continued but orderly growth in North Liberty.
- Enhance and improve North Liberty's sense of community and self-identity.
- Provide a diversity of land use opportunities within the City, to ensure a wide range of employment and consumer options, as well as housing choices.

- Maintain desirable community character, public health and safety, and economic vitality by ensuring that development that takes place in North Liberty is of premium quality and blends well with the natural, rural, and urban atmosphere of the community.
- Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan, including long term and interim policies, promotes a responsible fiscal balance (revenue versus service costs) on an ongoing basis.
- Plan and design public systems such as storm drainage, water supply, and sanitary sewer along with their private extensions, as well as parks, community centers, and the like, in a comprehensive manner to utilize existing natural environmental conditions to the fullest extent so as to minimize the cost of developing public systems.

### **Comprehensive Plan Policies**

Policies are the definite courses of action that lead toward goal achievement. Additionally, policies are guides for helping to make present and future decisions consistent with stated goals. Policies are described by using the phrase “shall be.” This gives policy statements a definitive meaning rather than one that is implied.

The Comprehensive Plan includes an extensive list of policies regarding Park and Open Space Recreation, including the following:

- Adequate neighborhood and community recreational facilities shall be provided and maintained for the enjoyment and use of North Liberty residents.
- Within each recreation system classification, capital improvements to individual facilities (i.e., neighborhood parks) should be gauged on the basis of relative need for developed park facilities.
- Recreation open space improvements shall be planned and updated annually in accordance with capital improvement programming and location.
- The establishment of a Comprehensive Park System Plan shall be considered to facilitate park management and coordinate future park development.
- All parks should be designed and maintained with proper lighting, landscaping, shelter design, etc., to ensure a high degree of personal and property safety.
- Continual citizen participation shall be encouraged in the planning, development and operation of recreational open space.
- The provision of an appropriate balance between active, passive and cultural recreational areas and activities, tailored to the needs of the total population throughout the community, should be maintained and further encouraged.
- Usable open space suitable for recreational activities or connected to existing or proposed City or regional facilities should be provided by all types of residential developments.
- Surveys or studies may be undertaken on a periodic basis to analyze the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the community recreation program.
- Adequate pedestrian facilities, such as lighting and benches, shall be provided in parks and open space areas for both the convenience and safety of the user.
- A trail system shall be created which provides for separation of motorized and non-motorized recreational activities.
- Recreational facilities shall be provided which offer a year round program of activities suited to the varied recreational needs of all age groups within the community.
- Parks and open space shall be developed and improved to take advantage of natural community features.
- Where necessary, park and open space areas shall be screened, fenced, or buffered for the safety and protection of the user.

- Neighborhood and community scale recreational facilities shall be located to provide safe and easy access to users.
- Adequate parking shall be provided to serve major park and recreation facilities.
- Maintain cooperative agreements with the School District for provisions of recreational open space areas and services.
- Park and open space facilities are to be planned and developed in coordination with similar services of the surrounding region and the Johnson County area as a whole.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists should be afforded rights-of-way separated from motorized traffic along arterial and higher classified streets. When physically and/or economically feasible, pedestrian and bicycle traffic will be separated.
- Adequate lighting, outdoor furniture, and other necessary pedestrian appurtenances should be provided in all urbanized areas of heavy pedestrian movement.
- Continue to promote and enhance the City sidewalk system through sidewalk programs and requirements.
- Give trail development priority to the following areas:
  - Along major streets that have the most direct access to trail destinations.
  - Where they will serve the most intensely used commuter designations.
  - Within existing and proposed parks and playfields.
  - Within appropriate new park development.
  - Where they will link together separate portions of North Liberty's sidewalk and trail system and North Liberty's trail system to other communities.
- Streets designated as secondary arterials shall be designed to prevent unregulated pedestrian and bicycle crossings and protect pedestrian and bicycle movement paralleling traffic.
- When financially feasible, facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists shall be provided in conjunction with street improvement projects.
- New development shall be encouraged to respect the pedestrian/bicycle system and where possible to contribute to the rights-of-way and development costs.
- Cooperate with state, regional, and county agencies in the formulation of a comprehensive trails system and to eliminate duplication of facilities.

These, then, are the Goals and Policies that govern the preparation of a Parks Plan for North Liberty. Because many of these statements are general in nature, it is important for the Parks and Recreation Commission and Council to help further define local priorities, and of course City Parks Department staff is critical in identifying needs, opportunities, shortcomings, and day-to-day operational considerations.

### **North Liberty Park and Recreation Survey Results**

In April of 2011 a special survey of public opinion was conducted for the City by Dan Wiese Marketing Research, addressing a variety of City issues including park system characteristics. This is our most recent survey of public opinion to include recreational interests. The survey questions and responses follow:

Table 1: 2011 Resident Survey					
How would you rate existing North Liberty parks?			How do you rate current North Liberty park facilities?		
Excellent	13.5%		Excellent	9.3%	
Good	58.7%		Good	56.3%	
Fair	20.1%		Fair	22.8%	
Poor	2.1%		Poor	3.6%	
Haven't used	0.3%		Haven't used	0.3%	
Don't know	0.0%		Don't know	0.3%	
No answer	5.4%		No answer	7.5%	
Sample Size	334		Sample Size	334	
How do you rate existing recreational programs?			How do you rate existing recreational facilities?		
Excellent	16.2%		Excellent	24.3%	
Good	60.2%		Good	56.9%	
Fair	12.0%		Fair	9.9%	
Poor	1.2%		Poor	1.2%	
Don't know	0.9%		Don't know	0.3%	
Not sure	0.3%		Haven't used	0.3%	
Haven't used	0.3%		Not sure	0.3%	
No interest	0.3%		No answer	6.9%	
No answer	8.7%		Sample Size	334	
Sample Size	334				
For each of the items below please check your level of interest.					
Trails			Shelters		
High interest	63.8%		High interest	43.1%	
Some interest	24.0%		Some interest	40.1%	
No interest	8.4%		No interest	12.3%	
No answer	3.9%		No answer	4.5%	
Sample Size	334		Sample Size	334	
Playground Equipment			Outdoor Sport Courts		
High interest	45.8%		High interest	39.2%	
Some interest	28.7%		Some interest	35.0%	
No interest	20.4%		No interest	19.5%	
No answer	5.1%		No answer	6.3%	
Sample Size	334		Sample Size	334	
Open Grass Areas			Band Shell/Stage		
High interest	37.7%		High interest	17.7%	
Some interest	44.0%		Some interest	38.6%	
No interest	13.2%		No interest	37.1%	
No answer	5.1%		No answer	6.6%	
Sample Size	334		Sample Size	334	
Indoor Multi-purpose Facility			Park Shelters Restrooms		
High interest	33.8%		High interest	66.2%	
Some interest	44.6%		Some interest	23.4%	
No interest	16.5%		No interest	5.7%	
No answer	5.1%		No answer	4.8%	
Sample Size	334		Sample Size	334	
Dog Park			Covered, open air shelters with tables		
High interest	32.3%		High interest	55.1%	
Some interest	20.7%		Some interest	31.1%	
No interest	41.9%		No interest	8.4%	
No answer	5.1%		No answer	5.4%	
Sample Size	334		Sample Size	334	



## **Existing Parks and Analysis of Adequacy**

This chapter summarizes North Liberty's existing park and open space system, including all City-owned and operated recreation areas. The adequacy of park facilities is evaluated in several ways:

- Park Land Area. The land area of parks in different categories is compared to suggested standards of land area compared to resident population.
- Park Service Areas. The service radius of each park is analyzed to identify geographical gaps in service.
- Park Features. National standards for the provision of park and recreation features such as playground equipment are reviewed.
- Parks Comparison to Similar Communities. North Liberty's existing park and open space is compared to similar Midwest communities.
- Summary.

## **Parks by Classification**

Most park plans benchmark existing parks and identify gaps in availability for residents. Since the size, configuration, intended usage, and level of development varies widely, parks are typically grouped into a number of classes recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), from small and informal to large and multi-purpose. These standards provide a good "first level," or overview to benchmark, but should be used with caution and a thorough understanding of the facilities beyond a simple classification. For North Liberty, recreation and open space areas are classified in this plan as

- Mini parks,
- Neighborhood parks and school grounds,
- Community parks, and
- Special use facilities.

Trails, particularly separated trails, present a difficult case for classification. While not "parks" by standard definitions, trails provide an outdoor recreational activity opportunity much the same as parks. However, because most trails are single-use, they are more likely to fit into the "special use" category of facilities. In this plan, we acknowledge the importance of trails, not as a park facility, but as a community asset that should be used to tie neighborhoods and parks together; and note that the City has a separate adopted Trails Plan. All park and school properties are identified on Map A.

### **Mini-Parks**

Mini-parks are generally developed to remedy a specific recreation or open space need, or are sometimes taken over by cities as left-over or undesirable pieces of a larger development. These parks typically cover less than 1 acre and attract users from a very small area, no more than ¼ mile. Because of maintenance difficulties with multiple smaller sites and their small service area, most cities discourage the development of mini-parks, and North Liberty should do the same. Parkview is the only North Liberty facility that is considered a mini-park. It serves a very small area immediately around it. Old Town Park could be considered a mini-park based on size alone (0.6 acres); however, due to its function as a community landmark and its proximity to Penn Meadows Park it is included in the Penn Meadows complex.

**Table 2: Mini Park**

Park Name	Size in Acres	Features
Parkview	.2	Small playground, adjacent to trail, creek

### Neighborhood Parks and School Grounds

Neighborhood parks are considered the basic unit of North Liberty's park system, providing a recreational and social focus for residential areas. These parks provide accommodations for active activities such as playgrounds, basketball courts, soccer fields; and passive activities such as bird watching, hiking, and picnicking. The key feature distinguishing neighborhood parks from other facilities is the availability of play equipment of various types.

Neighborhood parks adequate in size to accommodate the requisite facilities often contain at least 5 acres; between 5 and 10 acres is considered optimal.

**Table 3: Neighborhood Parks and Schools**

Park Name	Size in Acres	Features
Beaver Kreek	4.0	Playgrounds, open space, creek, sidewalk
Creekside Commons	18.4	Playground, open space, hard-surface trail, timber, creek, pond of approximately .8 acres
Deerfield	3.9	Playground, open space, shelter
Fox Run	1.1	Playground, open space, basketball
Quail Ridge	12.5	Playground, open space, shelter, ball field, basketball, parking
School Name	Size in Acres	Features
Buford Garner Elementary	11.0	Ball field, playground, open space
North Bend Elementary	15.7	Playground, open space, trail access
Penn Elementary	10.0	Playground, open space
Van Allen Elementary & North Central Jr. High	59.8	Ball field, playground, open space, football practice field

Elementary and junior high school facilities can help to meet neighborhood park needs, particularly when located in areas not served by a neighborhood park. The grounds of North Liberty’s elementary schools often function as neighborhood parks, and are considered in the parkland area analysis.

### Community Parks

Community Parks typically include larger areas with diverse use subareas. They meet community-based recreation needs, may preserve significant natural areas, and often include areas suited for intense recreation facilities. Typical criteria for community parks include:

- Adequate size to accommodate activities associated with neighborhood parks, but with space for additional activity, attracting users of all ages.
- A special attraction that draws people from a larger area, such as a pond or lake, ice skating rink, trails, special environmental or cultural features, or specialized sports complexes.

Community parks generally contain between 30 and 50 acres and serve a variety of needs.

Table 4: Community Parks		
Park Name	Size in Acres	Features
Centennial	40.2	Existing: Pond, parking, open space Planned: playgrounds, shelter & events center, trails, restrooms, prairie
Penn Meadows/ Old Town/ Meade	40.7	9 ball fields, concession stand, 2 playgrounds, open space, 4 shelters, restrooms, 4 tennis courts, rock and paved trails, parking, community gardens

### Special Use Facilities

The special use category includes a broad range of facilities that are either oriented toward recreational usage or are very limited in focus. They are listed here because they are or could be important features for the City, but are not assigned service areas or target acreages in the “Park Service Area Analysis” section. The City has accepted many retention areas for ongoing maintenance, and some could be reclassified as neighborhood parks with playground equipment and perhaps additional open space, depending on the site.

Table 5: Special Use Facilities			
Special Use Facility Name	Size in Acres	Pond Acres	Features
Broadmoor Estates	6.9	2.4	Pond, open space
Community Center/Ranshaw House	11.2	-	Pools, recreation center, meeting space, library, small playground, historic residence
Cornerstone	2.5	-	Trail, open space, prairie restoration
Fox Run Pond	8.0	2.6	Pond, open space
Fox Valley	13.4		Pond, open space, paved trail
Freedom	7.1	2.3	Pond, open space
Goose Lake	33.1	14.8	Pond, open space, wetlands
Joy's	2.0	-	Undeveloped, mostly timber
Koser	2.1	-	Small ball field, basketball
Liberty Center	6.9	3.9	Pond, hard-surface trail, shelter
Mar Lee	2.1	-	Open space with surfaced trail
West Lake (3 parcels)	32.5	15.9	Ponds, open space, wetlands, hard-surface trail

### **Parkland Land Area Analysis**

#### **Neighborhood Parks and School Grounds**

NRPA standards call for between 1 and 2 acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents. Applying that ratio to estimated current and future populations yields the following:

18,228 estimated 2015 population, 1-2 acres per 1,000 residents = 18-36 acres.

22,000 estimated 2020 population, 1-2 acres per 1,000 residents = 22-44 acres.

North Liberty currently has about 40 acres of neighborhood park land, not including school facilities.

#### **Community Parks**

Traditional NRPA guidelines for community park areas call for 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents. Applying that ratio to estimated current and future populations yields the following:

18,228 estimated 2015 population, 5-8 acres per 1,000 residents = 91-146 acres.

22,000 estimated 2020 population, 5-8 acres per 1,000 residents = 110-176 acres.

North Liberty currently has about 81 acres of community park land.

### Overall Park Space

Total park and open space land in the North Liberty planning area, as identified in the preceding paragraphs and tables, covers about 234 acres, much of that dedicated to large storm water retention ponds and associated wetlands.

Traditional NRPS standards suggest 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, and applying that ratio to estimated current and future populations yields the following:

18,228 estimated 2015 population, 10 acres per 1,000 residents = 182 acres.

22,000 estimated 2020 population, 10 acres per 1,000 residents = 220 acres.

Table 6: Acreage Needs for Current and Future Population					
Park Type	Developed and Planned Acreage	Acres Needed for 2015 Est. Pop	2015 Acres Deficit	Acres Needed for 2020 Pop	2020 Acres Deficit
Total Community Parks	80.9	91-146	10-65	110-176	29-95
Total Neighborhood Parks	39.9	18-36	0	22-44	0-4
Total Special Use Facilities	113.1	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total Park and Recreation Area (does not include mini-parks or trails)	233.9	182	0	220	0
Total Park and Recreation Area Without Pond Areas (does not include mini-parks or trails)	189.4	170	0	220	30

### Park Service Area Analysis

The area of service, or expected area from which the various park types are expected to attract residents, can be evaluated using NRPA standards and local knowledge of neighborhood characteristics. The park service area analysis, shown on Map B, identifies service gaps for developed parkland, allowing conclusions to be drawn regarding existing and longer-term gaps in park availability.

### Neighborhood Parks

The typical service area for neighborhood parks is between 1/4 and 1/2 mile, or about a 15 minute walk. This is illustrated in the map showing those service areas for developed neighborhood parks and schools, as well as those areas identified for existing and future residential development in the City's Land Use Plan. When preparing a service area analysis such as this, it is important to consider physical limitations such as high volume street crossings and other access restrictions that may decrease the likelihood of use, and that is the reason some of the service areas on the map are irregular.

Immediately apparent on the map is the cluster of existing parks on the central and near-east and southeast parts of North Liberty, and the decreasing density of opportunities toward the outer growth areas, as might be expected. Some major areas of North Liberty that stand out in lacking access to neighborhood and school parkland include:

- Most of the Cedar Springs development area in the northeast part of North Liberty. No park land was set aside for this large development by the developer. This neighborhood will be difficult to service because of its remoteness.
- The area generally bounded by Interstate 380, Jones Boulevard, Penn Street, and the future Zeller Street extension. Neighborhood park opportunities for this developing part of the city will need to be addressed before new construction seriously limits new potential park locations. In an area of this size, planned for residential development, at least one neighborhood park is warranted.
- The two manufactured housing developments south of Zeller Street, between Highway 965 and the CRANDIC railroad.
- The growing Aspen Ridge and Fox Valley areas.
- Outlying future growth areas.

### **Community Parks**

The typical service radius of a community park is approximately 1/2 mile to 3 miles, in addition to an associated neighborhood park service area. The two community parks in North Liberty, the Penn Meadows complex and Centennial Park, together satisfy the general need for the City.

### **Special Use Facilities**

While special use facilities as detailed in preceding paragraphs are an important part of the City's overall recreational picture, they are not analyzed for service areas because their attractiveness is limited.

### **Park Features Analysis**

An evaluation of North Liberty's recreational facilities based on quantitative national standards and the City's existing standards are summarized in Table 8. Projections for future demand are also presented, based on a 2020 population of 22,000. Future demand for each type of facility is shown as a range that is based on present levels of service in North Liberty and the NRPA standard.

Often the City's existing level of service is a more realistic standard for a community, reflecting the current demand for facilities, but providing a range allows a community to better determine how it wants to address current and future needs.

**Table 7: Current and Future Park Features Needs**

Facility Type	NRPA Standard	Existing Quantity	2015 Need	Present Surplus or (Deficit)	2020 Need	2020 Surplus or (Deficit)
Baseball Fields	1 per 3,000	11	6	5	8	3
Basketball Courts	1 per 5,000	3	4	(1)	6	(2)
Golf Courses	1 18-hole standard per 50,000	.5	0	0	0	0
Picnic Shelter	1 per 2,000	8	9	(1)	11	(3)
Playgrounds	1 per 2,000	10	9	2	12	(1)
Soccer Fields	1 per 10,000	1	2	(1)	2	(1)
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	4	9	(5)	11	(7)

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Comments regarding this analysis include the following:

- North Liberty's supply of tennis courts currently does not meet NRPA standards, but demand varies substantially over time.
- While North Liberty provides one informal soccer field at Penn Meadows, Coralville maintains a large number of fields in its facility directly adjacent to North Liberty south of Forevergreen Road.
- Picnic shelters and playgrounds are standard neighborhood park facilities and should be included in all additional neighborhood and community parks, which should address future demands for these facilities.
- North Liberty's Penn Meadows baseball fields serve the entire region, and the existing number of fields more than doubles the NRPA standards for the 2020 estimated population.
- The greatest need now and into the future appears, based on this particular metric, appears to be for additional tennis courts.

#### **Comparison to Similar Communities**

In addition to using the NRPA standards to evaluate levels of service in a community, current park planning literature suggests conducting a comparison between the study community (North Liberty) and similar communities. Because this technique is intended for general comparison purposes, communities were chosen based solely on population, rather than other factors such as employment base, income, or housing cost. Iowa City was included in the analysis because of the close proximity to North Liberty. For methodological consistency 2010 Census tables were used for population figures. In regard to level of service per 1,000 residents, North Liberty's level of service is about mid-range.

<b>TABLE 8: Parkland Comparison, Similar Communities</b>				
<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Total Parkland (Acres)</b>	<b>2010 Population</b>	<b>Acres Per 1,000 Residents</b>
Mendota Heights	Minnesota	290	11,078	26.2
Festus	Missouri	218	11,602	18.8
Iowa City	Iowa	1,281	67,993	18.8
Pella	Iowa	160	10,334	15.5
North Liberty	Iowa	234	13,519	17.3
Waukee	Iowa	71.5	13,790	19.3
Waseca	Minnesota	200	9,737	20.5
Arden Hills	Minnesota	111	9,560	11.6
Republic	Missouri	100	10,637	9.4
Marion	Iowa	600	14,005	42.8
<i>Source: City Web Sites and Census.</i>				

## **Summary of Adequacy Analyses**

### **Parkland Area Summary**

North Liberty's current neighborhood and total park areas exceed the maximum NRPA benchmark of 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 residents for the estimated 2015 population; however, as indicated in Table 9, 10 to 95 additional acres of community park land would be desirable to satisfy community park standards for the current and forecasted populations. This information points to the importance of prioritizing development of Centennial Park to bring it up to community park standards. It is important to note that Lake McBride, a 2,180 acre State Park, is less than 5 miles East of North Liberty and can serve many of the recreational needs of North Liberty that community parks would normally provide.

### **Service Area Summary:**

**Neighborhood Parks.** Analysis shows good neighborhood park coverage for most existing residential development, especially assuming a ½ mile walk to be an appropriate measure of accessibility. New development that is expected to occur generally west of Jones Boulevard and generally east of Arlington Ridge will fall outside of current service areas, and additional parks should be considered.

**Community Parks.** While Centennial Park is not yet developed, service area analysis shows decent community park coverage with good distribution across the city. The very large 29-95 acreage needs



identified in the area summary seen in Table 9 would be very difficult to achieve, a reasonably-sized area should be pursued in the eastern development area of the City.

#### **Level of Service Summary:**

This analysis reinforces the adequacy of current neighborhood parks for current development, and the need to plan for additional park land as the population continues to grow.

#### **Facilities per Capita Summary:**

This analysis illustrates the need to be proactive and plan for additional park acquisition and development as the population grows. Specific anticipated needs such as picnic facilities, shelters, and tennis courts are the sorts of facilities commonly found in expansive community parks.

#### **Parks Comparison Summary:**

There are many variables in comparing raw data between cities, so this section should be treated as informational rather than aspirational. In total acreage, North Liberty compares well with its contemporaries in population.

#### **Park Needs for New Development Areas**

While previous sections of this plan have outlined park needs and recommended actions to address those needs, large questions remain regarding funding for and timing of acquisition, development, and ongoing maintenance – or, put more simply – when and where is development appropriate and how should it be paid for? Growth of the city will be influenced by many rapidly-changing factors, including land availability, price, and suitability; utility availability; and developer interest. Many cities establish requirements for parkland dedication during development, or payment of an offsetting fee, but fail to fully appreciate and plan for the impact of developing and maintaining new park facilities. For example, neighborhood park-scale playground equipment set can cost at least \$60,000, and while existing maintenance staff may be stretched to mow and care for some additional land, at some point that incremental addition drives the need for additional staff. Considerations for park land acquisition and development during new development should include the following:

- Finding the best location to provide accessible service to as many residents as possible.
- Establishing the correct proportion of cost between new residents and businesses resulting from the subdivision, and current residents. Then, identifying the budget means to fund the city portion.
- Planning for the funding of park development, including possibly grading, planting, and purchase and installation of equipment and furnishings.
- Analyzing current and anticipated city Parks Department staff time, possibly measured in units such as acres, and the impact any additional land or units will have on that time.

## **II. Master Planning**

### **Planning Specific Parks**

This section provides a very detailed examination of potentials for each park property in the City's system. A tabular summary of facilities at each site is presented, followed by recent activities, challenges, specific proposals for improvements and an aerial photo for reference. This information should be a useful tool in the annual determination of park improvement priorities. These proposals also represent a "starting point" for discussions with neighborhood residents on improvements to their neighborhood parks and other facilities. For example, while the design of neighborhood parks represents an application of the park "facility standards" determined through the planning process to be the highest priority for inclusion in improved parks, modifications should be made to meet more specific neighborhood priorities.

## Beaver Kreek Park, Established 1972

Beaver Kreek Park is unique within the North Liberty park system, as it is located generally in a drainageway area and surrounded by residential development. Limited in size and street frontage, Beaver Kreek provides playground and greenspace amenities to the surrounding neighborhood.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	4	2	x		x	x	x														
<b>Future</b>	4	2	x		x	x	x														

Recent Parks Department activities at Beaver Kreek include:

- Many decaying trees removed summer of 2015
- General park maintenance.

Challenges: Isolated location, creek maintenance, low visibility

Recommendations:

- Remove deteriorating basketball court to make room to add new playground.
- Remove old outdated playground structure.
- Install new playground age 5 to 12 playground.
- Replace rip rap rock along culvert under concrete trail that goes over creek.
- Replace section of concrete trail over culvert.
- Add new picnic tables.
- Add new trash receptacles.
- Add new park benches.
- Install concrete trail to playground area.
- Install trail lighting.
- Continue to remove old decaying trees and replace with new trees.
- Install stone monument park signage.



## Broadmoor Estates Pond Area, Established 2002

This property, while not large enough to be considered a neighborhood park, is a very valuable park property providing trail, shelter and urban fishery development opportunities, in addition to providing storm water management infrastructure for the Broadmoor neighborhood.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
Current	6.9		x									2.4A									
Future	6.9	x	x									2.4A									

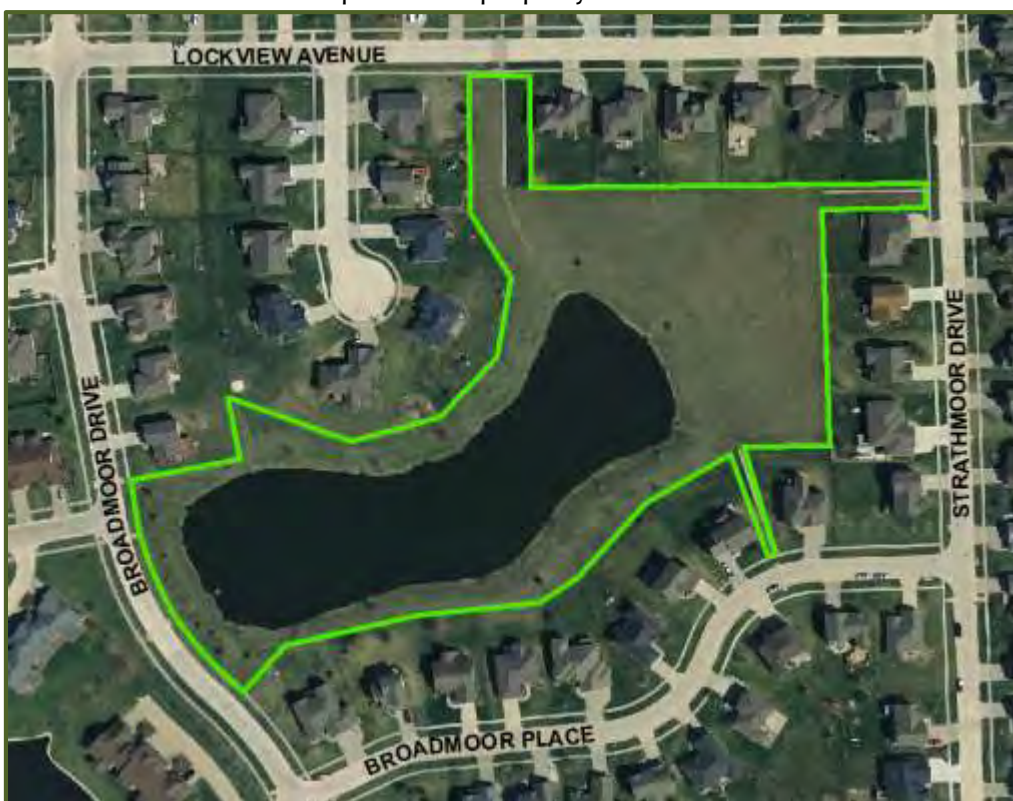
Recent Parks Department activities at Broadmoor Estates Pond include:

- Restocking of fish.
- General mowing and maintenance.

Challenges: Small open space

Recommendations:

- Install stone monument park signage.
- Add trail development around pond and flattened bank areas for fishing.
- Add benches and trash receptacles.
- Add playground area in the northeast part of the property.



## Centennial Park, Established 2011

The forty acres for Centennial Park were purchased in FY2011, and development has proceeded since then. A master plan for the park has been under development for some time, and is presented in this section.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Splash Pad	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	40.2		x									.9A									
<b>Future</b>	40.2	x	x	x	x						x	.9A		x	x	x		x		x	

Recent Parks Department activities at Centennial Park include:

- Concrete parking lot and entrance road.
- Tree planting.
- Established turf grass.
- Developed pond.
- Stocked with fish.
- Water service.

Challenges: High costs for development.

Recommendations:

- Add concrete trail at border and interior of park.
- Build park road, parking lot, utilities, lighting.
- Install splash pad.
- Add rain garden and bio swales, erosion control, survey, mobilization.
- Erect playground structures ages 5 to 12 and ages 2 to 5.
- Install climbing rocks, tubes and swings.
- Construct "Tom Salm" climate controlled shelter and performance stage.
- Construct smaller park shelters.
- Install gazebo.
- Add park entry treatment and internal signage.
- Create landscaping enhancements.
- Add sculpture and flower gardens.
- Add honorarium for service men and women.
- Install site furnishings.





Centennial Park Master Plan

## Community Center/Ranshaw House Historic Site, Established 1996

The community center is an excellent city-owned amenity that will help bring residents to North Liberty. The site is well-developed with very limited opportunities for changes or new features; however, the Ranshaw House historic site is in need of restoration, estimated to cost over \$200,000, if it is to survive and serve as a welcome center or some other community function. The North Liberty main paved trail extends along the eastern edge of the property, providing excellent connectivity for recreational trail users.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	13	x	x	x	x		x				x			x	2	x		x			
<b>Future</b>	13	x	x	x	x		x				x			x	2	x		x			

Recent Parks Department activities at the Community Center and Ranshaw House include:

- New asphalt overlay on trail 2015.
- Improved landscaping 2015.
- New playground safety surface summer of 2015.
- Improved irrigation system at pool 2015.
- Tree planting 2012.

Challenges: Cost to restore Ranshaw House, demand for recreation center

Opportunities: Future expansion of recreation center

Recommendations:

- Improve or replace playground structure.
- Relocate east trail shelter.





## Cornerstone Nature Area and Wetlands, Established 2008

In 2008 the city accepted a gift of this property, consisting mainly of a large wetland with some additional upland previously-tilled areas, and prepared a development plan that stressed prairie and wetland preservation and restoration. Also included is a system of walking trails that ties in to existing trails and sidewalks in surrounding properties. This park is a good resource for elementary students, an amenity for surrounding neighbors, and a welcoming landmark for residents and others using Dubuque Street.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
Current	2.5		x		x	x	x										x				
Future	2.5		x		x	x	x										x				

Recent Parks Department activities at Cornerstone Nature Area include:

- Pedestrian bridge, lighting, pervious concrete trail 2009.
- Establishment of prairie 2010.
- Stone monument park signage 2010.
- Removal of brush & garlic mustard 2010-2015.
- Planted trees 2010.

Challenges: Small size, existing wetland

Recommendations:

- Add park benches.
- Continue removing brush & garlic mustard.
- Install new trash receptacles.
- Add bike rest area.



## Creekside Commons Park, Established 2004

Creekside Commons Park, much like Beaver Creek Park, is a facility associated with a natural drainage way. This park, however, provides much more opportunity for development and provides the City with a great variety of amenities. The creek that runs through this park provides scenic, wildlife and natural habitat for bird enthusiasts and community educators alike. Trails have been developed on the east and west side of the creek, and continued trail development of both paved and unpaved trails and paths would well serve this park and community.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	18.4	1	x		x	x	x					.8A									
<b>Future</b>	18.4	1	x	x	x	x	x					.8A									

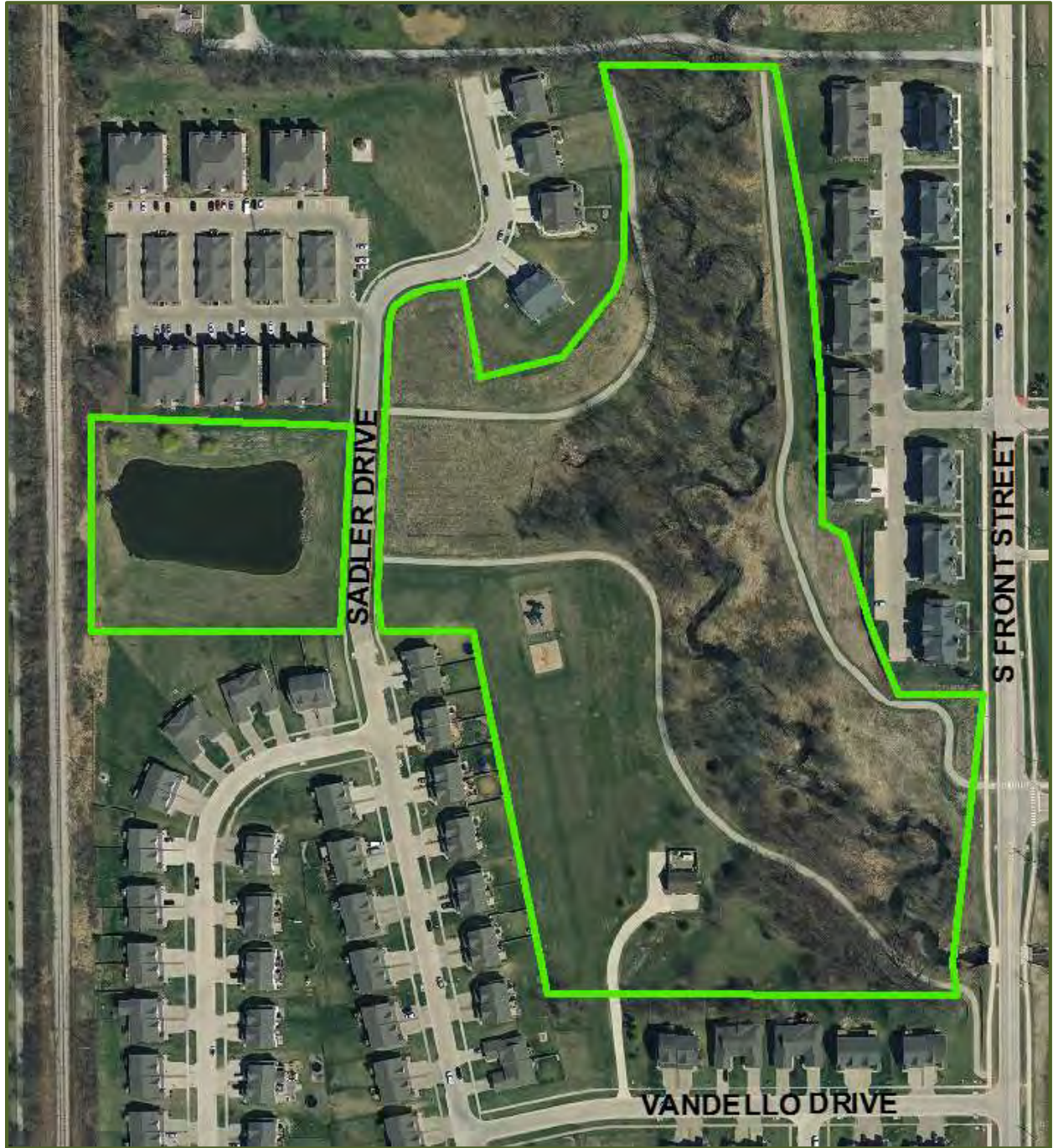
Recent Parks Department activities at Creekside Commons Park include:

- New Playground structure 2008.
- New playground safety surface summer of 2015.
- Added two new park benches.
- Cleared trees and brush by playground structure to make more usable area 2015.
- Restocking of fish.

Challenges: Creek/Drainage area, grade

Recommendations:

- Create walking path in cleared area and from trail to playground.
- Install trail lighting.
- Add picnic table.
- New trash receptacles.
- Plant additional trees.
- Install stone monument park signage.
- Construct small shelter.
- Install solar trail lighting.



Creekside Commons Park



## Deerfield Park, Established 2005

This park has excellent opportunity to develop as one of North Liberty's best neighborhood parks. Potentially surrounded by residential development, this park will serve the adjacent community well. This plan recommends that an additional four to six acres of land to the north be acquired for future development, and that frontage be provided with this newly dedicated parcel. This additional land would provide excellent visual access, vehicular access and connection to both sidewalks and trails.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	3.9	2	x	x							x										
<b>Future</b>	9	2	x	x				1	1		x			x							

Recent Parks Department activities at Deerfield Park include:

- New playground safety surface summer of 2015.
- General Park maintenance.
- Added two new park benches.

Challenges: Flat and featureless site, somewhat limited space



Recommendations:

- Acquire additional land to north of existing park.
- Install new steel roof on shelter.
- Install new trash receptacles.
- Plant additional trees.
- Pave small parking lot.
- Install stone monument park signage.

## Fox Run Park, Established 2000

Fox Run Park is relatively small, but features can be maximized because of its rectangular size and flat terrain. It is located within an established large single-family area.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	1.1	1	X					1													
<b>Future</b>	1.1	1	X					1													

Recent Parks Department activities at Fox Run Park include:

- New playground safety surface summer of 2015.

Challenges: Flat and featureless site, small size

Opportunities: Access to large adjacent neighborhoods, opportunity for synergy with nearby pond.

Recommendations:

- Upgrade playground equipment.
- Upgrade benches & trash receptacles.
- Install stone monument park signage.



## Fox Run Pond Area, Established 2002

Fox Run Pond and Park is an example of a storm water management facility that can provide park amenities for the community. In addition to storm water management, this park provides excellent trail and wildlife development opportunities as well as shelter development opportunity. Due to the close proximity of Fox Run Park and the playground amenities at that location, it is recommended that play structures not be located in the Fox Run Pond area.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
Current	8		x									2.6A									
Future	8		x		x							2.6A									

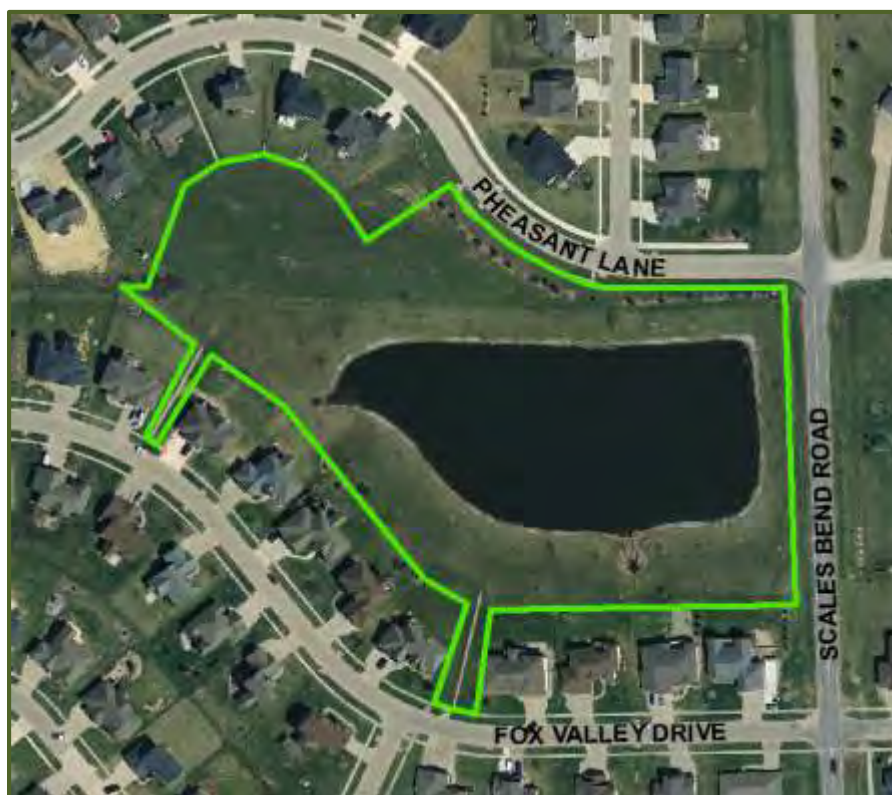
Recent Parks Department activities at Fox Run Pond include:

- General park maintenance.
- Tree planting.
- Restocking of fish.

Challenges: Undeveloped, provides required storm water management, limited open space,

Recommendations:

- Add trail development around border and connections.
- Install new trash receptacles.
- Add park benches.
- Plant additional trees.
- Install stone monument park signage.
- Create landscaping enhancements.
- Add trail on east side along Scales Bend Road.
- Construct small shelter.





## Fox Valley Pond Area, Established 2009

Fox Valley Pond and Trail is an example of a storm water management facility that can provide an outside recreation area for the community. In addition to storm water management, this area provides excellent trail and fishing opportunities. In the future, as the neighborhood grows, another pond will be added, with additional land for potential neighborhood park opportunities.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	13.4		x		x	x						3.3A						x			
<b>Future</b>	NK		x									NK						x			

Recent Parks Department activities at Fox Valley Pond include:

- Improved outflow stabilization.
- Improved water flow problems on concrete trail.
- Restocking of fish.

Challenges: Mowing, provides required storm water management, currently limited open space.

Recommendations:

- Plant new trees.
- Install trash receptacles.
- Add park benches.
- Remove invasive willows.
- Repair concrete trails.



## Freedom Pond Area, Established 2000

Freedom Park provides great wildlife habitat and fishing opportunities for neighborhood residents, and could be improved with the addition of a trail and fishing pier.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	7.1		x									2.3A					x				
<b>Future</b>	7.1	x	x	x	x							2.3A					x				

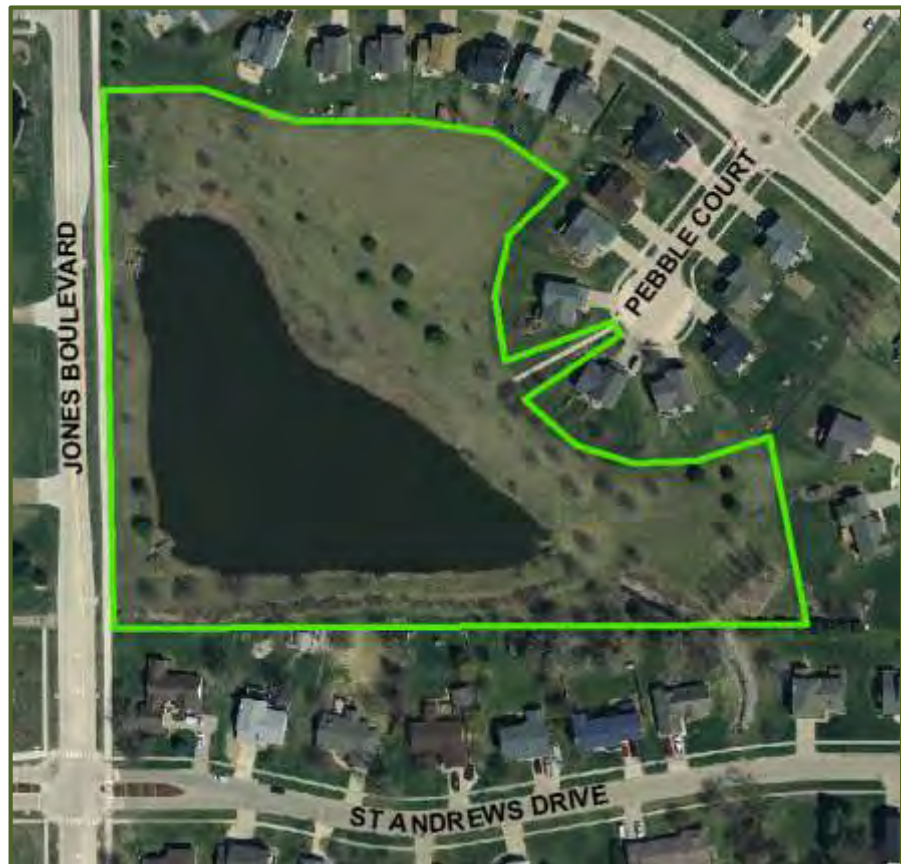
Recent Parks Department activities at Freedom Park include:

- Concrete trail along Jones Blvd.
- On street parking on Jones Blvd.
- Restocking of fish.
- Improved storm water outflow leaving the pond.
- Stone monument park signage.

Challenges: Limited area, storm water management function

Recommendations:

- Add trail development around pond.
- Add small shelter & picnic tables
- Add benches.
- Install new trash receptacles.
- Add flag pole with solar lighting.
- Add additional curbside parking.
- Add playground on north side of park.





## Goose Lake Nature Area and Wetlands, Established 2004

The large Goose Lake pond and wetland area was established to manage storm water runoff for the Progress Park development. Large portions of the public property are wetland mitigation areas and not groomed. This park will be good resource for elementary students, an amenity for surrounding neighbors, and an important part of the City's storm water management control system.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	16.6											14.8A					x	x			
<b>Future</b>	16.6											14.8A					x	x			

Recent Parks Department activities at the Goose Lake area include:

- Restocking of fish.
- General mowing and maintenance

Challenges: Area limited due to wetlands

Recommendations:

- Create landscaping enhancements.
- Install stone monument park signage.
- Upgrade pond edge & bank stabilization, with flattened fishing spots along bank.



## Joy's Park, Established 2006

Currently undeveloped, Joy's Park has a large relatively high, flat area along its west side, which could accommodate improvements in the future, especially facilities related to the nearby bicycle trail. The rest of the site is heavily timbered and sloping, includes a drainageway running generally northwest to southeast, and should be preserved for a nature trail area.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
Current	2		x			x	x														
Future	2		x			x	x														

Recent Parks Department activities at Joy's Park include:

- Removal of brush and downed trees within the interior of the park.
- General park maintenance and mowing.

Challenges: Very small usable area

Recommendations:

- Add nature walk area.
- Install picnic table.
- Create resting spot for trail users and concrete trail from main trail.
- Install trash receptacles.
- Install stone monument park signage.



## Koser Park, Established 1968

Koser Park, a baseball/softball field across Dubuque Street from Penn Elementary School, is a special place to the residents of North Liberty that has been in use for many years.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	2.1		X						1												
<b>Future</b>	2.1		X						1												

Recent Parks Department activities at Koser Park include:

- Stone monument park signage.
- Extended the outfield ball field fence.
- General mowing and maintenance.
- Tree planting.

Challenges: Lack of parking

Recommendations:

- Enhance the appearance of the storage building.
- Install new concrete around building.
- Add spectator seating and shade over seating.



## Liberty Center Pond Area, Established 2006

Liberty Center Park is a special place in North Liberty. This park is an attractive facility with unique amenities, including a pavilion, trail, pond, and other park furnishings with a high degree of finish and attendant high maintenance. This park will be the visual identity for North Liberty in years to come. As Highway 965 continues to develop with both commercial and residential uses, this park will be the most attractive and recognizable landmark in the City. Its current high level of maintenance requires a special ongoing commitment.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	6.9			x	x							4.1A									
<b>Future</b>	6.9			x	x							4.1A									

Recent Parks Department activities at the Liberty Centre Pond area include:

- Landscaping improvements 2015.
- Restocking of fish.
- Trail concrete repairs 2015.
- LED trail light upgrade.
- Repair of the pond stone bank edge due to storm water damage 2013.
- General mowing and maintenance.

Challenges: High maintenance

Recommendations:

- Continue with landscaping improvements.
- Upgrade and repair electrical.
- Add Signage.





Liberty Center Pond Area

## Mar Lee Park, Established 2011

Mar Lee Park is a recently-dedicated 2-acre park at the northwest corner of St Andrews Drive and Kansas Avenue, surrounded by those two streets and be the western part of West Lake Park/Ponds. A walking trail was constructed through the site as part of the University of Iowa Community Credit Union development project, and the City has planted a number of trees on the site. It serves as an open space and a permanent green space in the developing Kansas Avenue corridor.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
Current	2.1		x		x																
Future	2.1		x	x	x																

Recent Parks Department activities at Mar Lee Park include:

- Concrete sidewalk through park.
- Trees planted 2013-2014.
- Establishment of turf grass.
- Restocking of fish.

Challenges: Small size, flat and featureless

Recommendations:

- Add trail development and connections.
- Install new trash receptacles.
- Install park benches.
- Install stone monument park signage.
- Construct small shelter.





## Parkview Park, Established 1993

Parkview is a mini park located in a residential neighborhood south of Zeller Street on Parkview Court. It is limited in size and access, as it fronts on a cul-de-sac street.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
Current	.2	x				x	x														
Future	.2	x				x	x														

Recent Parks Department activities at Parkview include:

- New playground safety surface summer of 2015.
- General park maintenance.

Challenges: Small size, isolated location

Recommendation:

- Install monument stone park signage.



## Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park, Established 1983/2001/

This park complex, while dominated by the sports fields, is large in area and offers a good variety of activities that currently meet the needs of many North Liberty residents. It is well groomed and expansive, with open areas, compacted trails and paved trails providing connectivity. This complex is a significant community highlight, especially with ongoing and planned upgrades including new play equipment, paved trails, shelter/restrooms, and splash pad. An overall plan has been developed and is included on a following page.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Splash Pad	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	40.7	2	x	4	x				9	x	x		4	x	x						x
<b>Future</b>	40.7	2	x	4	x				9	x	x		4	x	x						x

Recent Parks Department activities at Penn Meadows Park area include:

- New playground structure 2011.
- Restroom/Concessions facility 2015-2016.
- New water & sewer service to Restroom/Concessions facility & future Splash Pad.
- Concrete trail running north & south on East side 2013.
- Community gardens 2012 52 plots available.
- Two storage sheds at Community Gardens.
- Added new playing surface to ball fields 2015.
- Rain gardens and 66 stall previous parking lot on south side 2011.
- New landscaping at north parking lot entrance 2015.
- 4 new park benches at playground area 2014.
- Parking lot repairs and new paint striping 2015.
- Stone monument park signage.
- New playground safety surface summer of 2015.

Challenges: Substantial gravel area.

Recommendations:

- Pave all internal rock trails.
- Construct splash pad (summer 2016).
- Construct shade structure by splash pad and playground structure.
- Add parking on north side and resurface existing parking.
- Add parking by tennis courts.
- Relocate north shelter to make way for new parking and new roof.
- Replace roofs on south and middle shelters.
- Add ballfield lighting: north 4-plex and Babe Ruth.



- Replace press box and restroom at Babe Ruth ball field.
- Add new tot lot playground on north side.
- Upgrade appearance of storage building at ball fields.
- Expand community gardens.
- Pave parking and trail at Community Gardens.
- Replace playground structure west side by middle park shelter.
- Replace ball field spectator seating.
- Add shade structures over spectator seating.
- Install small Stone monument park signage – Old Town.
- Continue landscaping enhancements – Old Town.
- Upgrade LED lighting upgrade – Old Town.





Penn Meadows Master Plan

## Quail Ridge Park, Established 1991

Quail Ridge Park is a perfect neighborhood park example. This park, roughly 12.5 acres in size, provides a large open space with great visual and physical access to Zeller Street. Well connected to Cory Court and other adjacent streets, this park provides great access and connections to the adjacent neighborhood. A portion of the park on the north side of Zeller Street provides open space.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	12.5	1	x	x				1	1		x			x							
<b>Future</b>	12.5	1	x	x	x			1	1		x			x							

Recent Parks Department activities at Quail Ridge Park include:

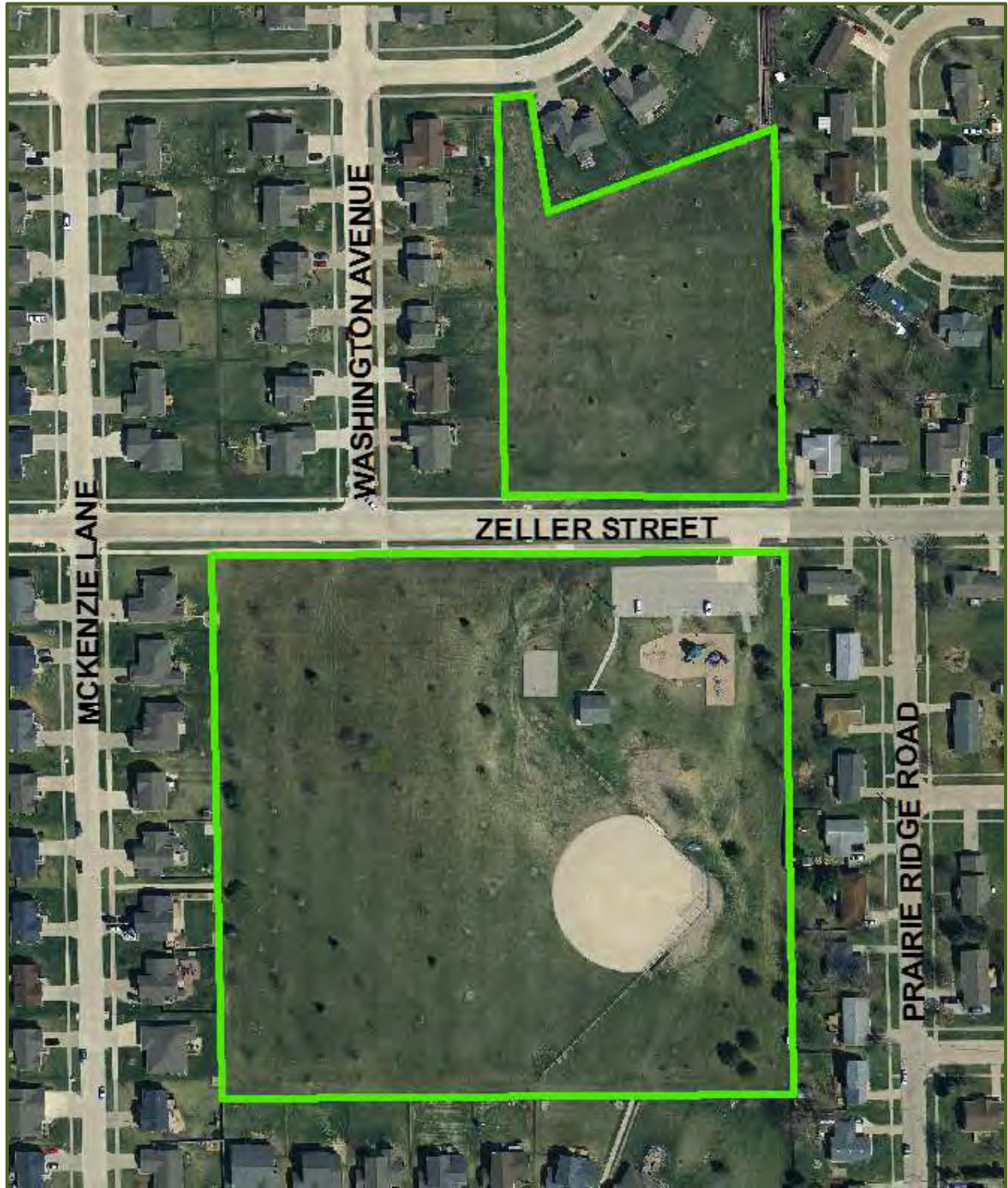
- New ballfield.
- Added water & sewer along with new Restrooms.
- New playground structure ages 5 to 12 summer 2013.
- New playground safety surface summer of 2015.
- Installed memorial bench and tree.
- Removed disc golf to make room for ball field.

Challenges: Park is fully developed. No space available to add other activities.

Recommendations:

- Replace roof on shelter.
- Install new trash receptacles.
- Add new dugout roof covers on ball field.
- Add ball field spectator seating and shade over seating.
- Add concrete trail around border of park and parking lot expansion.
- Expand parking lot.
- Add Frisbee golf course on the north portion of the park.





Quail Ridge Park

## West Lake Pond Area, Established 2008

The large West Lake pond and wetland area was established to manage storm water runoff for the West Lake development. Large portions of the public property are wetland mitigation areas that are not groomed, but a paved trail extends through the area, with connections to adjacent neighborhoods. This park will be good resource for elementary students at the adjacent school, an amenity for surrounding neighbors, and an important part of the city's storm water management control system.

	Acres	Playground	Open Space	Shelter	Trail/Sidewalk	Timber	Creek	Basketball	Ball Fields	Concession	Restrooms	Pond	Tennis	Parking	Pool	Rec. Center	Prairie	Wetlands	Historic Bldg.	Events Center	C. Gardens
<b>Current</b>	32.5		x		x							15.9A						x			
<b>Future</b>	32.5		x		x							15.9A						x			

Recent Parks Department activities at the West Lakes area include:

- 2 Park benches.
- Repaired concrete trail 2013-2014.
- Tree planting 2014-2015.
- Pond edge stabilization.
- Removal of invasive willow trees 2014.
- Restocking of fish.

Challenges: Area limited due to wetlands

Recommendations:

- Install stone monument park signage.
- Install pedestrian lighting.





West Lake Pond Area

## **Bike Trail, Established 1998**

The main recreational trail through North Liberty is maintained by the Parks Department. Recent Parks Department activities on the trail and adjacent land include:

- Asphalt trail overlay from Penn street to Forever Green Road 2015.
- Elevation of trail to improve drainage behind Holiday trailer court 2015.
- Tree Planting

Challenges: User security.

Recommendations:

- Add trail lighting from Zeller Street to Forevergreen Road.
- Penn Street to Zeller Street LED lighting upgrade.
- Extend the Scales Bend Road trail to Pheasant Lane.
- Add a trail from the Recreation Center to the 965 tunnel.
- Add a trail section on Alexander Drive from Maytag 1,075 north.
- Replace 1,448' of 6' sidewalk on Kansas Avenue with 8' trail.

## **Trails Plan**

The City has approved a separate Trails Plan, and updates that plan periodically. One main goal when developing the approved trails network was to connect as many City parks facilities as possible.

## **Dog Park**

It is evident from only casual observation that dog ownership in North Liberty is substantial, and that a dog park would most likely be highly used by residents. The challenges in locating and constructing a facility include noise considerations for existing and planned residential neighborhoods, cost of developing the park, and ongoing costs for operations. The following paragraphs provide discussion of those issues in some detail.

**Noise.** A determination of acceptable noise impact to especially existing residential areas will need to be made in order to establish a “noise buffer” for analysis. Dog barking is typically cited at 80 – 90 decibels, while kennels with multiple dogs can range from 95 – 115 decibels (source: ISHN – Industrial Safety & Hygiene News, and others). The chart presented here provides some simple comparisons of typical noise levels.

Noise intensity is measured in decibel units. The decibel scale is logarithmic; each 10-decibel increase represents a tenfold increase in noise intensity. Human perception of loudness also conforms to a logarithmic scale; a 10-decibel increase is perceived as roughly a doubling of loudness. Thus, 30 decibels is 10 times more intense than 20 decibels and sounds twice as loud; 40 decibels is 100 times more intense than 20 and sounds 4 times as loud; 80 decibels is 1 million times more intense than 20 and sounds 64 times as loud. Distance diminishes the effective decibel level reaching the ear. Thus, moderate auto traffic at a distance of 100 ft (30 m) rates about 50 decibels. To a driver with a car window open or a pedestrian on the sidewalk, the same traffic rates about 70 decibels; that is, it sounds 4 times louder. At a distance of 2,000 ft (600 m), the noise of a jet takeoff reaches about 110 decibels—approximately the same as an automobile horn only 3 ft (1 m) away.

Subjected to 45 decibels of noise, the average person cannot sleep. At 120 decibels the ear registers pain, but hearing damage begins at a much lower level, about 85 decibels. The duration of the exposure is also important. There is evidence that among young Americans hearing sensitivity is

decreasing year by year because of exposure to noise, including excessively amplified music. Apart from hearing loss, such noise can cause lack of sleep, irritability, heartburn, indigestion, ulcers, high blood pressure, and possibly heart disease. One burst of noise, as from a passing truck, is known to alter endocrine, neurological, and cardiovascular functions in many individuals; prolonged or frequent exposure to such noise tends to make the physiological disturbances chronic. In addition, noise-induced stress creates severe tension in daily living and contributes to mental illness. (Last 2 paragraphs: *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*, 6th ed.)

Logically, then, we must reach a decision on how much noise is acceptable to introduce into residential areas in North

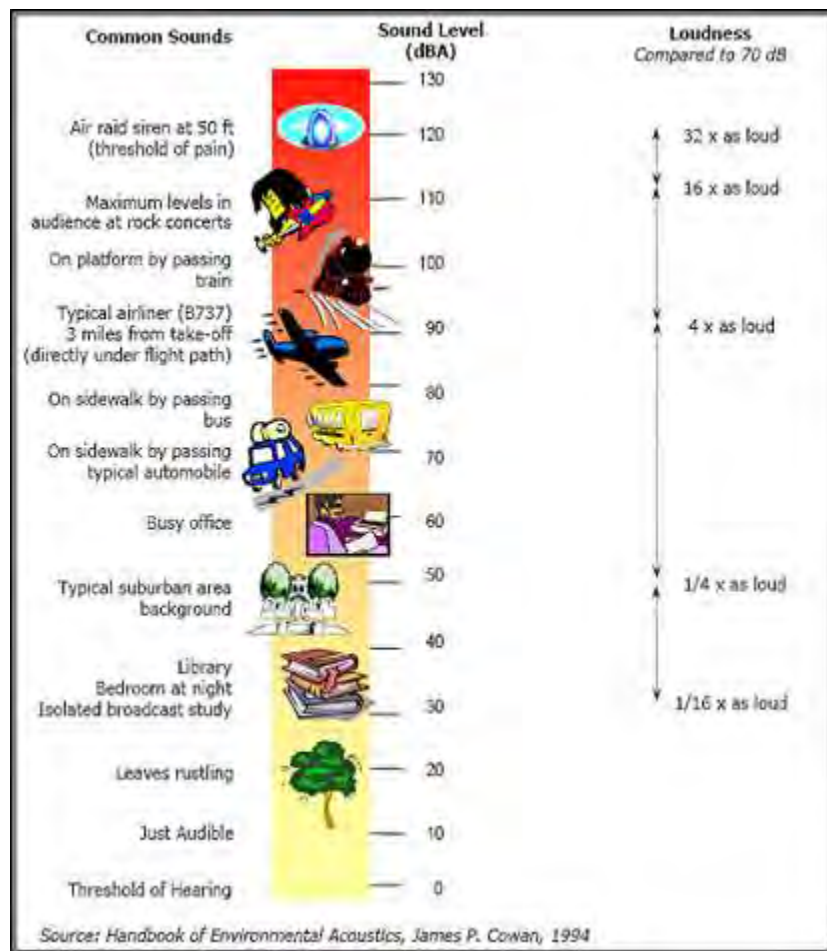
Liberty. A commonly-used guideline mentioned in paragraphs above is the “Inverse Square Law,” which states for every doubling of the distance from the noise source, the sound pressure levels will be reduced by 6 decibels. Here is a table showing the effects of distance on a 90dB sound such as dog barking:

Distance from 90dB Noise Source	dB
100'	50
200'	44
300'	41
600'	34
900'	31

Note that although trees and other vegetation are commonly assumed to impact noise, the actual effect of vegetative buffers is very small.

If we assume a goal would be to impact residential areas at a level similar to those typically expected in urban areas, the level would be somewhere in the range of 30-45dB. Applying that measure to distance gives us a rough distance buffer of 200'-900', quite a range, but a place to start. Maps at the end of this section show a number of buffer distances for reference. The first shows the buffers around all areas that are currently in use as residential or planned for residential in the future. The second shows the same buffers around just existing residential zoning, whether built or not. This mapping does tend to narrow the potential sites as defined by noise impacts on neighborhoods to several areas:

1. The I-380 corridor.
2. An area on either side of Highway 965 north of Penn Street.



3. A narrow corridor on the west side of Highway 965 south of Ashley Court.
4. An area generally between Penn Street and 240<sup>th</sup> Street running east-west from I-380 to 965.

The I-380 corridor offers the additional advantage of already having elevated noise levels from constant vehicular traffic. The only City parkland that falls outside of the buffer zones is the westernmost West Lakes pond area, on the west side of Kansas Avenue.

Development Costs. Cost to develop the park will depend on the characteristics land selected. For example, grading, tree removal, paving, and other needs can be expected. The Parks Director considers 10 acres to be a preferred size for a healthy and worthwhile dog park, and a 10 acre square of land is included in the preceding map for size/scale reference. Here are some very rough cost estimates for consideration:

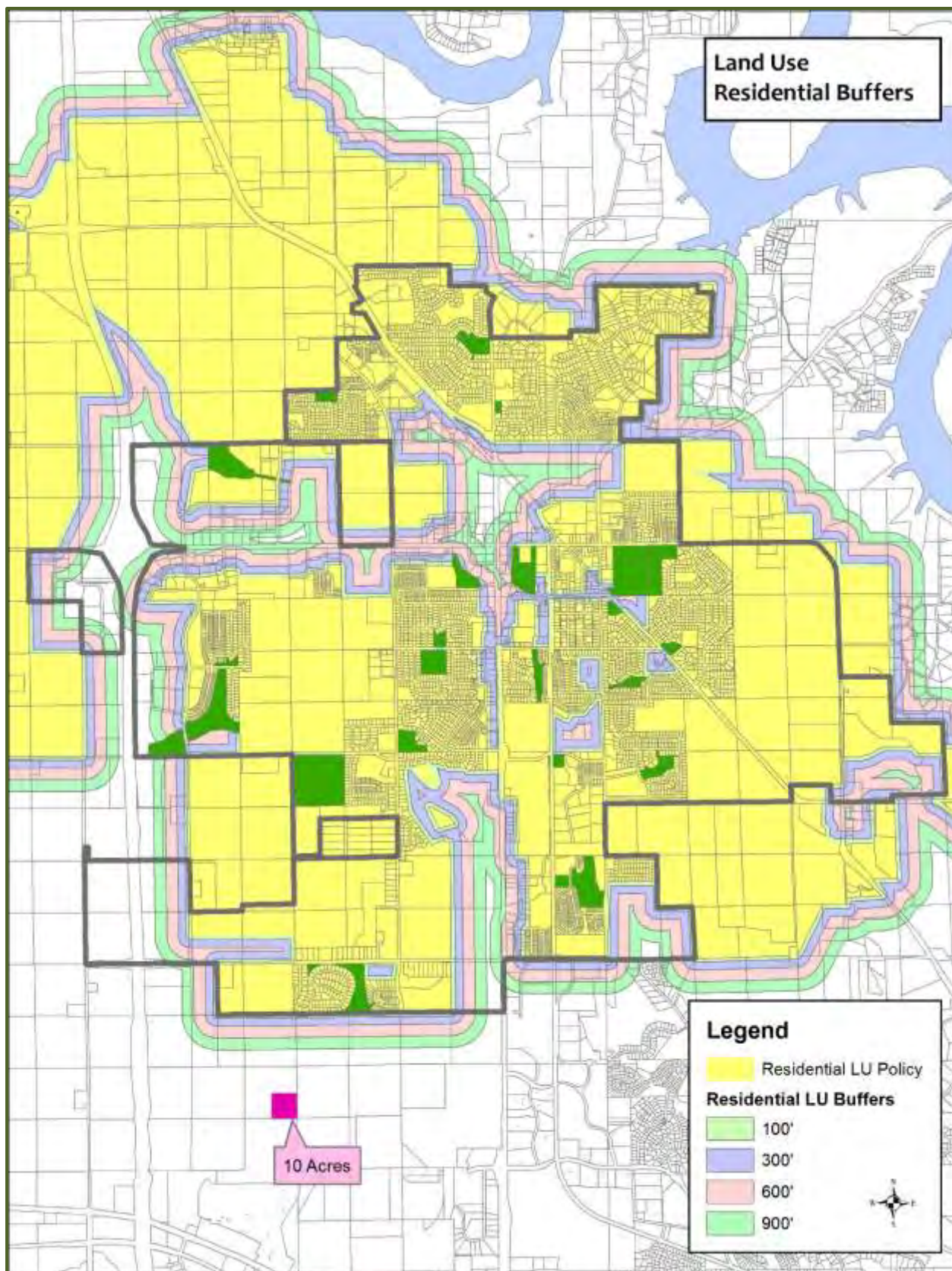
Land acquisition cost @ \$40,000 per acre	\$400,000
Fencing cost	\$115,000
Drive and parking construction cost (20 spaces)	\$300,000
Misc grading, landscaping, tree planting, seeding	\$100,000
Total Estimate	\$915,000

Ongoing Operational Costs. Online research reveals that many dog parks started by volunteers and operated as City/Private partnerships eventually are turned over to the City to run, and also that demands related to operation tend to increase over time. Prevalent issues include:

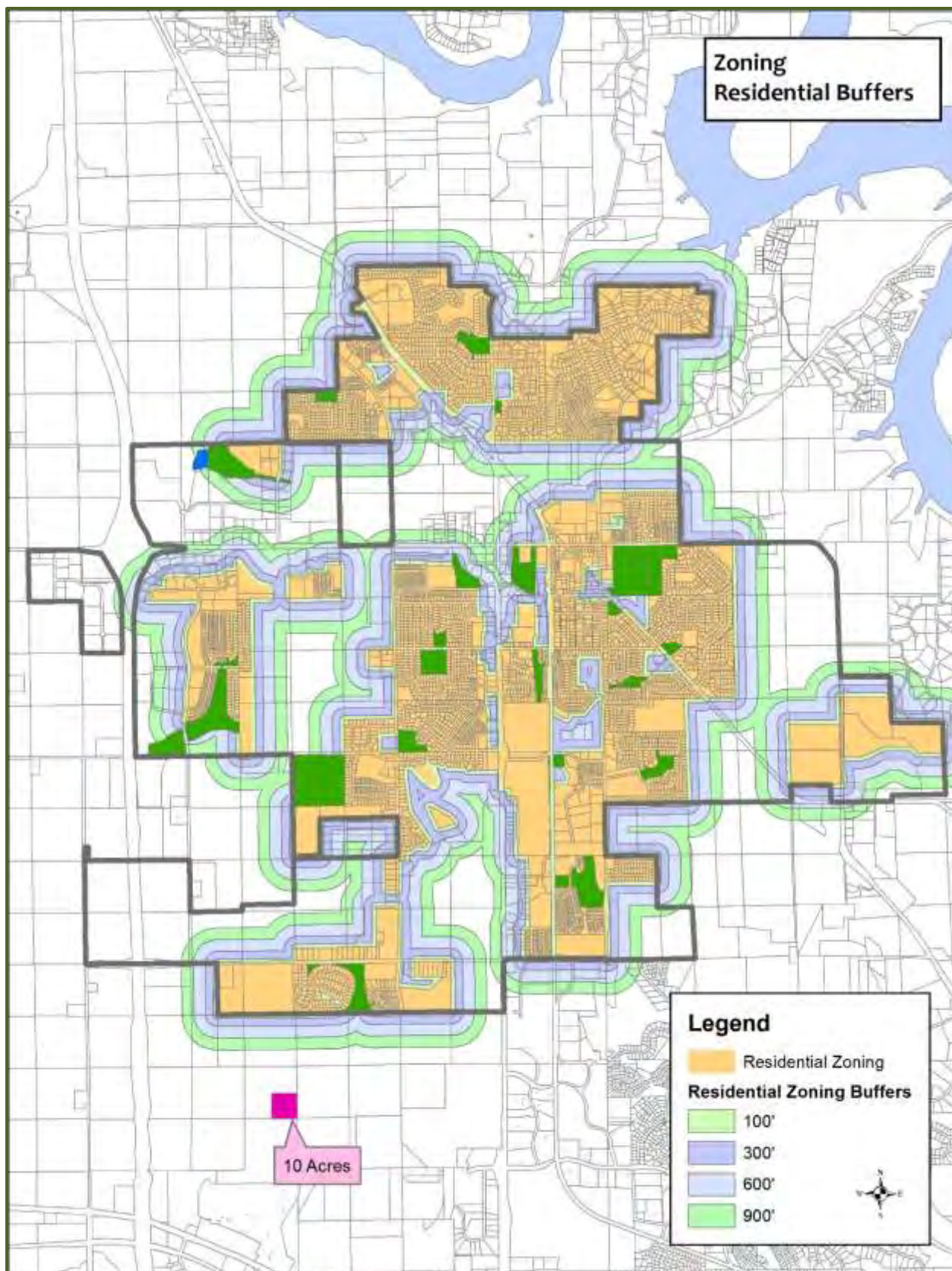
- Dealing with biting dogs
- Owners leaving dogs unattended
- Hours of operation
- Care of the land (refuse removal)
- Fees for use
- Providing evidence of vaccinations

Most likely a dog park will require City staffing during hours of operation, an annual full-time cost of approximately \$28,000 if paid the new \$8.10 minimum wage.









### Summary of Parks Needs Identified

This table summarizes all improvements recommended for each park in preceding pages, and establishes a priority ranking and cost for each.

Table 9: Improvements, Priorities & 2015 Estimated Costs		
	Priority	Est Cost
<b>Beaver Creek Park</b>		
Add new picnic tables	1	900
Remove old outdated playground structure	1	1,500
Remove deteriorating basketball court to add new playground	1	2,000
Continue to remove old decaying trees and replace with new trees	1	3,000
Install concrete trail to playground area	1	25,000
Install new playground age 5 to 12 playground	1	60,000
Replace section of concrete trail over culvert	1	1,500
Add new trash receptacles	2	500
Replace rip rap along culvert under concrete trail that goes over creek	2	1,500
Add new park benches	2	1,800
Install trail lighting	2	15,000
Install stone monument park signage	3	4,000
<b>Broadmoor Estates Pond Area</b>		
Add benches and trash receptacles	2	1,600
Install stone monument park signage	2	3,000
Add 1,672' trail development around pond and flattened bank areas for fishing	2	334,400
Add playground area in the northeast part of the property	5	70,000
<b>Centennial Park</b> (design, testing, bidding, contingencies not included)		
Add rain garden and bio swales, erosion control, survey, mobilization	1	259,000
Add 3,969' concrete trail	1	793,800
Construct smaller park shelters	1	150,000
Erect playground structures ages 5 to 12 and ages 2 to 5	1	215,000
Add park entry treatment and internal signage	2	83,500
Create landscaping enhancements	2	201,000

Install climbing rocks, tubes and swings	2	75,000
Build park road, parking lot, utilities, lighting	2	1,196,125
Construct "Tom Salm" climate controlled shelter and perf. stage	2	1,500,000
Install gazebo	2	20,000
Install site furnishings	2	75,000
Add honorarium for service men and women	2	75,000
Add sculpture and flower gardens	2	100,000
Install splash pad	3	75,000
<b>Community Center/Ranshaw House</b>		
Improve playground structure: entire replacement or rehab existing	4	10,000 or 55,000
<b>Cornerstone Nature area and Wetlands</b>		
Add park benches	2	800
Install new trash receptacles	2	800
Continue removing brush & garlic mustard	3	3,500
<b>Creekside Commons Park</b>		
Install new trash receptacles	2	500
Install stone monument park signage	2	3,000
Construct small shelter	2	20,000
Add picnic table	3	1,000
Plant additional trees	3	2,500
Create walking path in cleared area & from trail to playground	3	10,000
Install trail lighting	4	20,000
<b>Deerfield Park</b>		
Install new trash receptacles	2	500
Install stone monument park signage	2	3,000
Acquire additional land	3	5 acres
Plant additional trees	3	2,500
Install new steel roof on shelter	3	6,000
Pave small parking lot	3	20,000
<b>Fox Run Park</b>		

Install stone monument park signage	2	3,000
Upgrade benches & trash receptacles	4	1,500
Upgrade playground equipment	4	8,000
<b>Fox Run Pond Area</b>		
Install new trash receptacles	2	800
Add park benches	2	1,800
Install stone monument park signage	2	3,000
Plant additional trees	3	2,000
Create landscaping enhancements	4	5,000
Add 1,537' trail development around border with connections	4	230,500
Construct small shelter	5	40,000
<b>Fox Valley Pond Area</b>		
Remove invasive willows	1	1,500
Plant new trees	1	3,000
Install trash receptacles	2	800
Add park benches	2	1,600
Repair concrete trails	2	20,000
<b>Freedom Pond Area</b>		
Install new trash receptacles	2	800
Add park benches	2	1,600
Add flagpole with solar lighting	2	5,000
Add 1,253' trail around pond	4	250,000
Add small shelter & picnic tables	5	40,000
Install playground equipment	5	65,000
<b>Goose Lake Nature Area and Wetlands</b>		
Upgrade pond edge and add bank stabilization	1	30,000
Install stone monument park signage	2	5,000
Create landscaping enhancements	4	6,000
<b>Joy's Park</b>		
Install new trash receptacles	4	800



Install picnic table	4	1,000
Add nature walk area	4	3,000
Install stone monument park signage	4	3,000
Create resting spot for trail users	4	10,000
<b>Koser Park</b>		
Add spectator seating and shade over seating	2	4,000
Install new concrete around building	3	5,000
Enhance appearance of storage building	3	18,000
<b>Liberty Centre Pond Area</b>		
Upgrade and repair electrical	1	20,000
Add signage	2	3,000
Continue landscaping improvements	2	8,000
<b>Mar Lee Park</b>		
Install new trash receptacles	2	800
Install park benches	2	800
Install stone monument park signage	2	3,000
Add 411' trail development and connections	4	41,100
Construct small shelter	4	40,000
<b>Parkview Park</b>		
Install monument stone park signage	2	3,000
<b>Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park</b>		
Construct shade structure by splash pad and playground structure	1	35,000
Install tot lot	1	50,000
Construct splash pad (summer 2016)	1	120,000
Install small Stone monument park signage – Old Town	2	3,000
Relocate north shelter to make way for new parking & new roof	2	8,000
Add new spectator seating and shade structures	2	100,000
Add parking on north side and resurface existing	2	450,000
Pave all internal rock trails	2	280,000
Upgrade lighting to LED – Old Town	3	3,000

Expand community gardens	3	4,000
Replace south and middle shelter new roofs	3	12,000
Upgrade appearance of storage building at ball fields & new roof	3	18,000
Replace playground structure west side by middle park shelter	3	25,000
Add new Tot lot playground on north side	3	55,000
Add parking by tennis courts	3	80,000
Continue landscaping enhancements – Old Town	4	5,000
Pave parking and trail at Community Gardens	4	30,000
Replace press box and restroom at Babe Ruth ball field	4	125,000
Add ballfield lighting north 4-plex and Babe Ruth (100,000 per field)	4	500,000
<b>Quail Ridge Park</b>		
Add new dugout roof covers on ball field	1	3,000
Install new trash receptacles	2	1,000
Add ball field spectator seating and shade over seating	3	24,000
Replace roof on shelter	3	6,000
Expand parking lot	3	70,000
Add 1,620' concrete trail around border of park & parking lot expansion	3	245,500
Add Frisbee golf course on the north portion of the park	4	4,000
<b>West Lake Pond Area</b>		
Install stone monument park signage	2	6,000
Install pedestrian lighting	3	25,000
<b>Bike Trail</b>		
Add trail lighting from Zeller Street to Forevergreen Road	1	200,000
Upgrade lighting to LED - Penn Street to Zeller Street	2	4,000
Extend the Scales Bend Road trail to Pheasant Lane – approx. 700'	2	140,000
Add segment: Recreation Center to 965 tunnel, 885'	2	\$177,000
Add segment: Alexander Way from Maytag north 1,075'	2	\$215,000
Widen segment: Kansas Avenue, 6' to 8', 1,448'	2	\$289,600
<b>Dog Park</b>		
Identify specific potential dog park location	1	NA

### **III. Implementation**

#### **Implementation and Phasing**

The North Liberty Parks Facility Master Plan is a tool for park staff and community leaders, intended to help focus planning efforts for park system growth. More importantly, this document identifies and promotes a “Quality of Life” that North Liberty residents are proud of and look forward to expanding. Identifying proper park service standards and planning for growth will help to ensure that this “Quality of Life” is extended to future generations of park users. This document provides a flexible road map for staff and community leaders to make informed decisions for the short-term future. The high rate of growth in North Liberty dictates that the plan’s implementation section be revisited and updated regularly.

#### **Increased Staffing Needs**

A major challenge for this quickly growing park system will be to maintain existing and future facilities at the high level of current maintenance. As North Liberty grows, each component of the park system will grow, creating a significant need to add staff and to enhance park maintenance facilities.

#### **Financing Strategies**

Enhancement, development, acquisition and maintenance/operations are all investments that will be required to strengthen and grow the park system. To address these financial obligations, a variety of financing opportunities will need to be relied upon, as follows:

- **Capital Improvement Program (CIP).** The Capital Improvement Plan assesses capital facility needs against overall city goals and objectives using a multi-year planning horizon. North Liberty Park and Recreation receives annually no dedicated allocation for land acquisition and no dedicated allocation for park enhancements and development. Transportation Enhancements (TE). TE Funds are federal moneys programmed through the Johnson County Council of Governments for trails, corridor beautification, and many other transportation-related enhancements.
- **Grants.** Funding sources through federal or state agencies.
- **Recreation Service Fees.** Dedicated user fees, established by the department.
- **Private Foundations and Contributions.** Foundations and private donors can be significant contributors to park and development, especially for unique facilities or for major community quality of life features.
- **General Obligation (GO) Bonds.** GO bonds allow cities to borrow funds to be repaid over time by general tax revenues. Issuance of GO bonds requires voter approval, and typically forms the core of park non-operational financing mechanisms.
- **Storm Water Utility (SWU).** The City currently maintains a storm water utility fund, which may be accessed for several existing parks that include dedicated storm water management facilities to maintain these storm water facility portions of community parks.
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** This tool allows municipalities to promote economic development by earmarking property tax revenue from increases in assessed values within a designated TIF district.

- Advertising Sales. There may be some potential to sell advertising within a park system if done in an appropriate manner.
- Agreements with Private Concessions. A contractual relationship with a private business to operate concessions at a municipal facility.
- Rental. Renting equipment or facilities.
- Life Estates. This source is available when a person wants to leave his or her property to the city in exchange for living on the property until his or her death.
- Special Fund-Raisers. Special event to cover specific programs and capital projects.

### Funding the Priorities

The following table is simply a reordering and financial summary of Table 9, useful for budgeting and for tracking accomplishments. It is important to remember that this document is a plan and not a capital improvements program. Some of these projects will very likely not be completed within the suggested years for each priority, or may not be accomplished at all, due to funding limitations, changes in policy, or changes in external conditions. Anticipated program years are:

Priority 1: FY17-18

Priority 2: FY19-21

Priority 3: FY22-23

Priority 4: FY24-25

Priority 5: FY26

<b>Table 10: Improvements and Estimated Costs by Priority Ranking</b>			
		<b>Priority</b>	<b>Est Cost</b>
Remove deteriorating basketball court to add new playground	Beaver Kreek Park	1	2,000
Replace section of concrete trail over culvert	Beaver Kreek Park	1	1,500
Remove old outdated playground structure	Beaver Kreek Park	1	1,500
Install new playground age 5 to 12 playground	Beaver Kreek Park	1	60,000
Add new picnic tables	Beaver Kreek Park	1	900
Install concrete trail to playground area	Beaver Kreek Park	1	25,000
Continue to remove old decaying trees and replace with new trees	Beaver Kreek Park	1	3,000
Add trail lighting from Zeller Street to Forevergreen Rd	Bike Trail	1	200,000
Add 3,969' concrete trail	Centennial Park	1	793,800
Erect playground structures ages 5 to 12 and ages 2 to 5	Centennial Park	1	215,000



Construct smaller park shelters	Centennial Park	1	150,000
Add rain garden and bio swales, erosion control, survey, mobilization	Centennial Park	1	259,000
Identify specific potential dog park location	Dog Park	1	NA
Plant new trees	Fox Valley Pond Area	1	3,000
Remove invasive willows	Fox Valley Pond Area	1	1,500
Upgrade pond edge and add bank stabilization	Goose Lake Nature Area and Wetlands	1	30,000
Upgrade and repair electrical	Liberty Centre Pond Area	1	20,000
Construct splash pad (summer 2016)	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	1	120,000
Install tot lot	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	1	50,000
Construct shade structure by splash pad and playground structure	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	1	35,000
Add new dugout roof covers on ball field	Quail Ridge Park	1	3,000
<b>Total for all #1 Priorities</b>			<b>1,974,200</b>
Replace rip rap along culvert under concrete trail that goes over creek	Beaver Kreek Park	2	1,500
Add new trash receptacles	Beaver Kreek Park	2	500
Add new park benches	Beaver Kreek Park	2	1,800
Install trail lighting	Beaver Kreek Park	2	15,000
Upgrade lighting to LED - Penn Street to Zeller Street	Bike Trail	2	4,000
Extend the Scales Bend Road trail to Pheasant Lane – approx. 700'	Bike Trail	2	140,000
Add segment: Recreation Center to 965 tunnel, 885'	Bike Trail	2	\$177,000
Add segment: Alexander Way from Maytag north 1,075'	Bike Trail	2	\$215,000
Widen segment: Kansas Avenue, 6' to 8', 1,448'	Bike Trail	2	\$289,600
Add 1,672' trail development around pond and flattened bank areas for fishing	Broadmoor Estates Pond Area	2	334,400
Install stone monument park signage	Broadmoor Estates Pond Area	2	3,000
Add benches and trash receptacles	Broadmoor Estates Pond Area	2	1,600
Add park entry treatment and internal signage	Centennial Park	2	83,500
Install site furnishings	Centennial Park	2	75,000

Install gazebo	Centennial Park	2	20,000
Create landscaping enhancements	Centennial Park	2	201,000
Build park road, parking lot, utilities, lighting	Centennial Park	2	1,196,125
Install climbing rocks, tubes and swings	Centennial Park	2	75,000
Construct climate controlled shelter and performance stage	Centennial Park	2	1,500,000
Add sculpture and flower gardens	Centennial Park	2	100,000
Add honorarium for service men and women	Centennial Park	2	75,000
Add park benches	Cornerstone Nature area and Wetlands	2	800
Install new trash receptacles	Cornerstone Nature area and Wetlands	2	800
Install new trash receptacles	Creekside Commons Park	2	500
Construct small shelter	Creekside Commons Park	2	20,000
Install stone monument park signage	Creekside Commons Park	2	3,000
Install new trash receptacles	Deerfield Park	2	500
Install stone monument park signage	Deerfield Park	2	3,000
Install stone monument park signage	Fox Run Park	2	3,000
Install new trash receptacles	Fox Run Pond Area	2	800
Add park benches	Fox Run Pond Area	2	1,800
Install stone monument park signage	Fox Run Pond Area	2	3,000
Add park benches	Fox Valley Pond Area	2	1,600
Install trash receptacles	Fox Valley Pond Area	2	800
Repair concrete trails	Fox Valley Pond Area	2	20,000
Add park benches	Freedom Pond Area	2	1,600
Install new trash receptacles	Freedom Pond Area	2	800
Add flagpole with solar lighting	Freedom Pond Area	2	5,000
Install stone monument park signage	Goose Lake Nature Area and Wetlands	2	5,000
Add spectator seating and shade over seating	Koser Park	2	4,000
Continue landscaping improvements	Liberty Centre Pond Area	2	8,000

Add signage	Liberty Centre Pond Area	2	3,000
Install new trash receptacles	Mar Lee Park	2	800
Install park benches	Mar Lee Park	2	800
Install stone monument park signage	Mar Lee Park	2	3,000
Install monument stone park signage	Parkview Park	2	3,000
Add parking on north side and resurface existing	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	2	450,000
Relocate north shelter to make way for new parking & new roof	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	2	8,000
Add new spectator seating with shade structures	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	2	100,000
Install small Stone monument park signage – Old Town	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	2	3,000
Pave all internal rock trails	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	2	280,000
Install new trash receptacles	Quail Ridge Park	2	1,000
Install stone monument park signage	West Lake Pond Area	2	6,000
<b>Total for all #2 Priorities</b>			<b>5,448,625</b>
Install stone monument park signage	Beaver Kreek Park	3	4,000
Install splash pad	Centennial Park	3	75,000
Continue removing brush & garlic mustard	Cornerstone Nature area and Wetlands	3	3,500
Create walking path in cleared area & from trail to playground	Creekside Commons Park	3	10,000
Add picnic table	Creekside Commons Park	3	1,000
Plant additional trees	Creekside Commons Park	3	2,500
Install new steel roof on shelter	Deerfield Park	3	6,000
Acquire additional land	Deerfield Park	3	5 acres
Plant additional trees	Deerfield Park	3	2,500
Pave small parking lot	Deerfield Park	3	20,000
Plant additional trees	Fox Run Pond Area	3	2,000
Enhance appearance of storage building	Koser Park	3	18,000
Install new concrete around building	Koser Park	3	5,000
Add parking by tennis courts	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	3	80,000

Replace south and middle shelter new roofs	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	3	12,000
Add new Tot lot playground on north side	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	3	55,000
Upgrade appearance of storage building at ball fields & new roof	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	3	18,000
Expand community gardens	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	3	4,000
Replace playground structure west side by middle park shelter	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	3	25,000
Upgrade lighting to LED – Old Town	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	3	3,000
Replace roof on shelter	Quail Ridge Park	3	6,000
Expand parking lot	Quail Ridge Park	3	70,000
Add 1,617' concrete trail around border of park & parking lot expansion	Quail Ridge Park	3	245,500
Add ball field spectator seating and shade over seating	Quail Ridge Park	3	24,000
Install pedestrian lighting	West Lake Pond Area	3	25,000
<b>Total for all #3 Priorities</b>			<b>717,000</b>
Improve playground structure: entire replacement or rehab existing	Community Center/Ranshaw House	4	10,000 or 55,000
Install trail lighting	Creekside Commons Park	4	20,000
Upgrade playground equipment	Fox Run Park	4	8,000
Upgrade benches & trash receptacles	Fox Run Park	4	1,500
Add 1,537' trail around border with connections	Fox Run Pond Area	4	230,500
Create landscaping enhancements	Fox Run Pond Area	4	5,000
Add 1,253' trail around pond	Freedom Pond Area	4	250,000
Create landscaping enhancements	Goose Lake Nature Area and Wetlands	4	6,000
Add nature walk area	Joy's Park	4	3,000
Install picnic table	Joy's Park	4	1,000
Create resting spot for trail users	Joy's Park	4	10,000
Install new trash receptacles	Joy's Park	4	800
Install stone monument park signage	Joy's Park	4	3,000
Add 411' trail development and connections	Mar Lee Park	4	41,100



Construct small shelter	Mar Lee Park	4	40,000
Add ballfield lighting north 4-plex and Babe Ruth (100,000 per field)	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	4	500,000
Replace press box and restroom at Babe Ruth ball field	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	4	125,000
Pave parking and trail at Community Gardens	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	4	30,000
Continue landscaping enhancements – Old Town	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade Park	4	5,000
Add Frisbee golf course on the north portion of the park	Quail Ridge Park	4	4,000
<b>Total for all #4 Priorities</b>			<b>1,293,000</b>
Add playground area in the northeast part of the property	Broadmoor Estates Pond Area	5	70,000
Construct small shelter	Fox Run Pond Area	5	40,000
Install playground equipment	Freedom Pond Area	5	65,000
Add small shelter & picnic tables	Freedom Pond Area	5	40,000
<b>Total for all #5 Priorities</b>			<b>215,000</b>

### Park Land Dedication

While North Liberty has accepted as park land several subdivision tracts that include storm water retention ponds, there is a need to ensure that land is dedicated to the City for park purposes as the community grows. Currently, the City lacks specific ordinance standards governing park land dedication, and as a result has relied on case-by-case negotiation with developers. A North Liberty parkland dedication ordinance should be considered, including language requiring dedication of usable open space that meets at least neighborhood park requirements. There are several options for setting up a parkland dedication ordinance, including those outlined here.

Approach 1: Establish Parkland per Person Standards.

Approach 2: Establish required parkland dedication as a percentage of total development area.

There are additional issues related to establishing a parkland dedication ordinance that should be considered and included within the scope of the ordinance:

- **Payment in Lieu of Dedication.** There is some difference of opinion as to whether the city should allow payment of cash in lieu of dedication of land. It is clear that the City cannot mandate a payment in lieu of dedication. Ankeny, Johnston and Iowa City all have provisions in their dedication ordinance for payment of cash in lieu of dedication. West Des Moines and Clive ordinances prohibit such payments.
- **Usability of Dedicated Parkland.** Most ordinances require land to be usable for active recreation. Most allow wet lands/storm water management facilities to be included in dedicated land, but not count towards required acreage. In negotiating with developers for parkland the City should require a minimum of at least 1 ½ acres of relatively flat land that is usable for open play activities. Also, the City should attempt to incorporate storm water management facilities into park areas as amenities. Ankeny has developed a “5 to 1” rule

whereby it will allow storm water facilities to count toward parkland dedication requirements at a ratio of one acre of stormwater facility to every 5 acres of non-stormwater facility parkland.

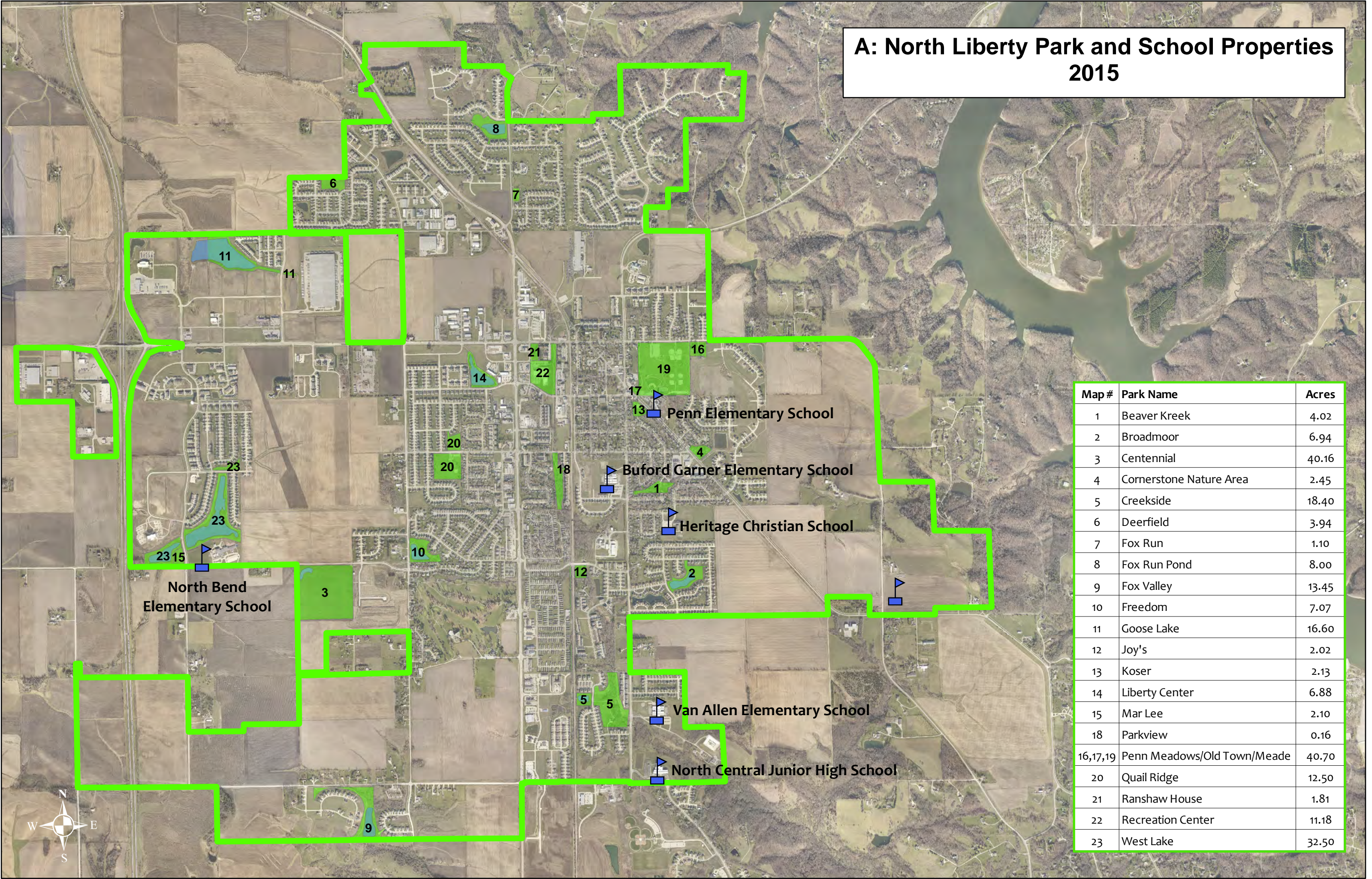
- **Location of Parkland.** The best ordinances require parkland to be located to reasonably serve the neighborhood. Also, small parcel dedications should be located at a boundary with adjacent vacant land to allow combination of parcels into a reasonably-sized park.
- **Access.** The best ordinances require minimum access to parkland from greenway/trails and from public streets. This is a critical point and as a goal, a minimum of 25% of the perimeter frontage of a neighborhood park should be along an open public street. Quail Ridge Park is an excellent example of a neighborhood park that fully meets this requirement.
- **Site Preparation.** The best ordinances require the developer to grade and seed the dedicated site, as well as install any required utilities and sidewalks along adjacent street segments. The specific ordinance language should require that the prepared site have the turf established and stabilized.
- **Master Agreement.** Some ordinances make provisions for development agreements whereby establishment of parks under a master plan for a larger area can supersede the parkland dedication procedure for an individual plat within the master-planned area.
- **Establishment of Land Value for Payments in Lieu of Dedication.** If payment is allowed, the ordinance should include provisions for establishing land value. Alternatives include: (1) establish value based upon a specific appraisal of the property in question, or (2) establish an “average community vacant land value” each year (Ankeny).



**Parks Department Staff, by Lori Linder**



**A: North Liberty Park and School Properties  
2015**





Map #	Park Name	Acres
1	Beaver Creek	4.02
2	Broadmoor	6.94
3	Centennial	40.16
4	Cornerstone Nature Area	2.45
5	Creekside	18.40
6	Deerfield	3.94
7	Fox Run	1.10
8	Fox Run Pond	8.00
9	Fox Valley	13.45
10	Freedom	7.07
11	Goose Lake	16.60
12	Joy's	2.02
13	Koser	2.13
14	Liberty Center	6.88
15	Mar Lee	2.10
18	Parkview	0.16
16,17,19	Penn Meadows/Old Town/Meade	40.70
20	Quail Ridge	12.50
21	Ranshaw House	1.81
22	Recreation Center	11.18
23	West Lake	32.50





# B: North Liberty Park and School Properties Service Area Analysis


**Legend**

 Gaps/Needs

 1/4 Mile Service Areas

 1/2 Mile Service Areas

 Corporate Limits

 Residential Land Use

Map #	Park Name	Acres
1	Beaver Creek	4.02
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