



Parks and Recreation
MASTER PLAN

ADOPTED DECEMBER 18, 2023

Acknowledgments

Thank you! The participation and cooperation of community leaders, residents, and members of civic organizations in the preparation of the 2024-2028 Parks and Recreation Master Plan is greatly appreciated.

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Chapter 1

Executive Summary



Welcome

Welcome to Birmingham's 2024-2028 Parks and Recreation Plan, outlining the future vision for the city's parks and recreation facilities for the next five years. This plan will serve as a roadmap for decision-making, considering current assets and projected demands. It also acts as a potential funding basis for recreation grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and other organizations, following MDNR guidelines for the development of community parks and recreation plans.



Planning for Excellence

Birmingham’s 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan was developed by the city in conjunction with the community’s Parks and Recreation Board and with strong citizen participation. The jurisdiction of this Plan is the City of Birmingham, and it focuses on all aspects of parks, facilities, open spaces, recreation, and programming as overseen by the City’s Department of Public Services.

This Plan serves as a blueprint for shaping Birmingham’s parks and recreation strategy over the next five years, while also providing insights into future requirements. The planning process, driven by public participation and industry insights, grants a comprehensive understanding of the community’s desires for parks, recreational facilities, and programs. Crucially, this plan is the result of a dedicated endeavor to mirror a vision that’s genuinely supported by the community, achieved through extensive engagement with the public and stakeholders.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RECENT PLANNING EFFORTS

This planning process was informed by other recently-completed and ongoing studies that include recommendations for parks, most notably The Birmingham 2040 Master Plan (adopted in 2023) and the Birmingham Museum 2021-2024 Strategic Plan. The Birmingham 2040 Master Plan especially established context for several areas of analysis and investigation for this plan. This plan is more tactical, narrower in scope, and a shorter time horizon, than the 2040 Master Plan, but this plan’s goals and recommended policies are aligned with and guided by the 2040 Master Plan recommendations.

This process also was conducted concurrent with the early stages of two efforts germane to planning for parks. Led by City planners and the Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee, the City is developing a sustainability and climate action plan. Given that the goals and policies that will set the agenda for Birmingham are not yet adopted, this plan endeavors to illustrate the ‘art of the possible’ for how parks can eventually participate in meeting those goals, and to begin to align policies for parks provision to best advance the sustainability conversation in Birmingham. Similarly, the Ad Hoc Aging in Place committee, working with staff from the City Manager’s office, is setting the groundwork for a more inclusive Birmingham that support residents at all stages of life. This plan considers the work of that group to date, and endeavors to align parks planning to support the City’s eventual goals and policies for aging in place.



Accomplishments

Since the last five-year planning process, the City of Birmingham continued its tradition of parks and recreation excellence. Specifically, the City made considerable strides in institutionalizing outstanding design and recreation provision, as well as achieving the goals and objectives identified in the previous plan. The City continually strives to provide parks and recreation facilities that are of the highest quality, preserve open space, and are accessible to all residents. The City has undertaken the redevelopment of Adams Park, which was completed in 2022, providing a world-class recreation space to the community. Significant improvements were made at Kenning Park with the redevelopment of two baseball fields. As champions of active lifestyles the Parks and Recreation Department installed pickleball courts at Crestview Park. In the spirit of continuing to provide high quality, efficient facilities, major building improvements were made to the Ice Arena. The City is also in the process of improving the Rouge River Trail and installing a bathroom at Booth Park and enhancing the entry experience to the park and trail system.

Guiding Principles

For generations, Birmingham has upheld an enduring tradition of excellence and a commitment to providing top-notch park services. This plan carries this legacy forward and charts a course by defining objectives and aspirations that address the present and future needs of Birmingham's parks and recreation system. The planning process and the resulting recommendations were guided by four core principles:

Sustainability: A commitment to environmentally responsible practices, ensuring that our parks and recreation facilities continue to thrive for years to come.

Inclusivity and Accessibility: Embracing diversity and ensuring that everyone in the community can enjoy our parks, regardless of their background or abilities.

Public Engagement: Engaging the community, stakeholders, and experts to develop a plan that genuinely reflects the desires and requirements of Birmingham's residents.

Efficient Service Delivery: A dedication to delivering park services effectively, making the best use of available resources, and continually improving our offerings to the community.

CITY COMMISSION GOALS

ENGAGED AND CONNECTED

COMMUNITY. Birmingham is a community that is connected to one another and engaged in the decision making process

- » Bridge the divide that Woodward Avenue creates in the City and transform the Woodward environment
- » Offer City services and amenities that enrich the lives of residents of all ages
- » Encourage robust resident engagement with their government and community
- » Increase connectivity between the Rouge River trail system, downtown, and the neighborhoods

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

The City of Birmingham positions itself for a changing future by instituting policies and practices that protect the natural environment and reduce extreme weather impacts on the community

- » Create a sustainability board to review projects, investigate funding opportunities, and offer public education opportunities
- » Maintain and upgrade infrastructure to prepare for future climate conditions
- » Modernize City facilities for energy efficiency and sustainability

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICES.

Birmingham will address the needs of the community in a timely and respectful manner

- » Incorporate new technologies to improve service delivery for residents including digitization of public records and museum materials
- » Build and retain an effective and professional staff who serve the community
- » Create community risk reduction policies and programs that emphasize citywide increased safety and security



4. **Engage.** Chapter 5 includes a comprehensive overview of the Plan’s engagement activities, with extensive details found in the appendix. The City proactively engaged with the public to gather input for the development of this Plan through a multifaceted approach. This involved conducting an online survey, hosting in-person engagement events, and facilitating discussions with various stakeholders.
5. **Analyze.** Chapter 6 examines the information resulting from public and stakeholder engagement and the recreation inventory and analyzes the viability of facilities, state of accessibility, and opportunities for sustainability. Facility data was analyzed against the nationwide benchmarking tool for parks and recreation, the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Park Metrics.
6. **Prepare.** For Chapter 7, both short-, mid-, and long-term action plans were prepared, offering a checklist of what actions are to be accomplished. These action plans are presented as both system-wide recommendations and projects that are specific to certain parks. The Parks, and Recreation Board also reviewed and recommended the Plan.
7. **Plan Completion and Adoption.** The draft Plan was made available for the 30-day public review period where the recommendations of the document were validated by the community. Following the public review period, a public hearing was held on December 18, 2023, at which the Plan was adopted by the Birmingham City Commission.

Task 1
Describe Community

Task 2
Identify

Task 3
Inventory

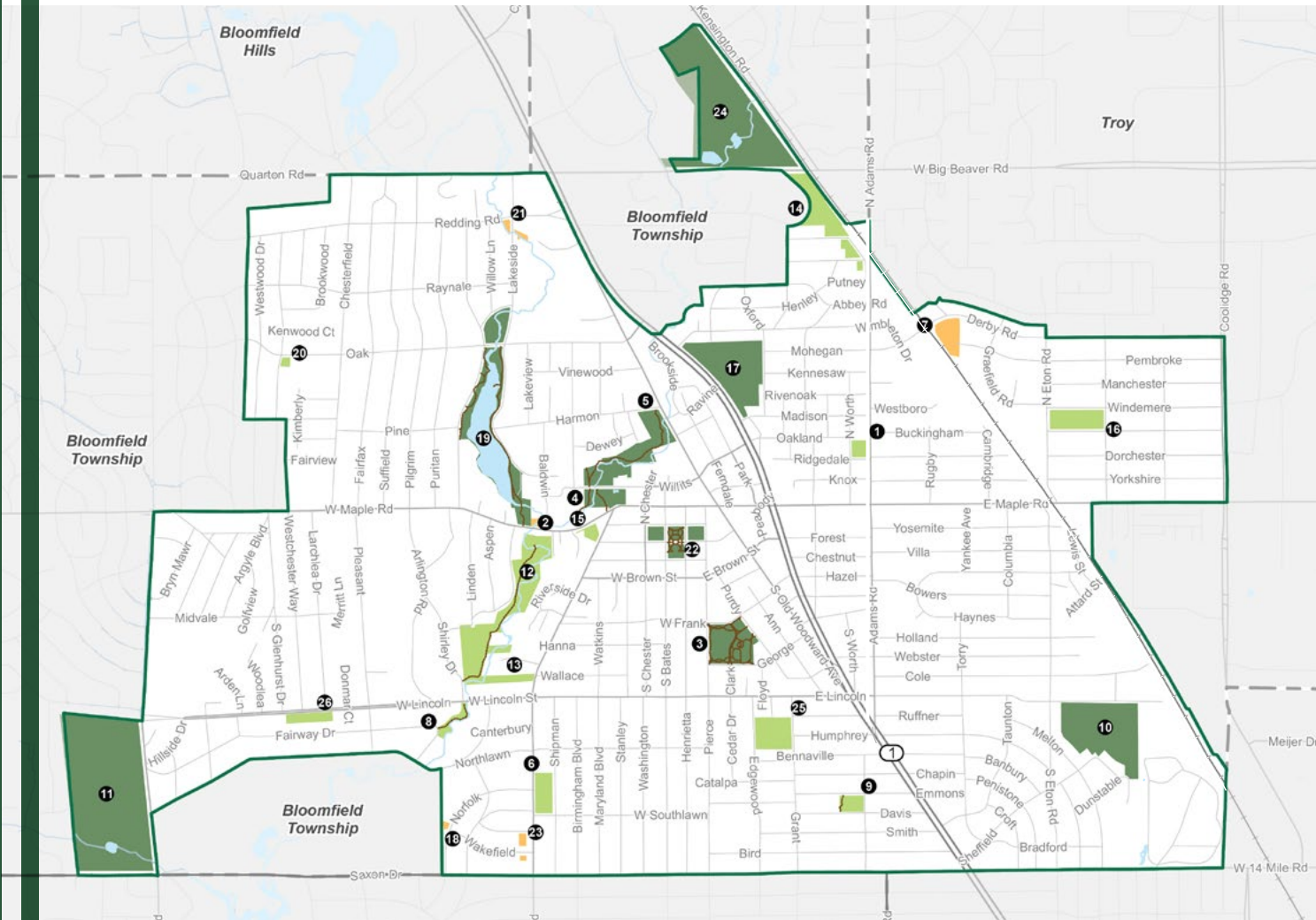
Task 4
Engage

Task 5
Analyze

Task 6
Draft Plan

Task 7
Adoption

Overview of Birmingham Parks



MAP 1. Parks and Recreation Facilities

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Adams Park | 15. Martha Baldwin Park |
| 2. Baldwin Well Site | 16. Pembroke Park |
| 3. Barnum Park | 17. Poppleton Park |
| 4. Birmingham Museum | 18. Pumphouse Park |
| 5. Booth Park | 19. Quarton Lake Park |
| 6. Crestview Park | 20. Quarton Tennis Court |
| 7. Derby Well Site | 21. Redding Well Site |
| 8. Fairway Park | 22. Shain Park |
| 9. Howarth Park | 23. South Well Site |
| 10. Kenning Park and Ice Sports Arena | 24. Springdale Golf Course & Park |
| 11. Lincoln Hills Golf Course & Dog Park | 25. St. James Park |
| 12. Linden Park | 26. West Lincoln Well & Park |
| 13. Linn Smith Park | |
| 14. Manor Park | |

-  Park Trails
-  Community Parks
-  Mini Parks
-  Neighborhood Parks
-  City Birmingham Boundary



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data: City of Birmingham, 2023. McKenna, 2023.

Key Recommendations

The objectives outlined in Chapter 6 and the detailed actions in Chapter 7 are strategically devised to uphold and advance an all-encompassing, accessible, and sustainable parks and recreation system in Birmingham, maintaining the high-quality standards associated with our Parks and Recreation services. These recommendations stem from public input, technical analysis, and insights gained from related planning initiatives, collectively working to realize this vision.

The subsequent section provides a concise overview of the central strategic actions derived from this planning process, ensuring the continued provision of a wide-ranging array of recreational opportunities. For a comprehensive understanding of these actions and the context in which they are proposed, please refer to Chapter 7.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS

System Wide Recommendations:

- Universal Playgrounds
- Restrooms
- Dog Infrastructure
- Bicycle Infrastructure
- Adult Fitness Stations
- Sustainability Pilots and Education Programs
- Food Truck and Lawn Game Pilots
- Improved Communication Tools
- Wi-Fi and Charging

Park-Specific Actions:

- Install inclusive playgrounds
- Evaluate and update the Kenning Park redevelopment master plan to reflect changed conditions.
- Develop a master plan and design for the redevelopment of St. James Park to leverage the redevelopment of the former YMCA into a facility for Birmingham Next, and create a nexus of intergenerational recreation opportunities.
- Add benches and places to rest along paths and park entrances to support all users and to contribute to residents' ability to age in place.
- Install accessible entrances to parks.
- Add directional signage and ensure signage is consistent.

Chapter 2

The Birmingham Community Today



Community Description

A welcoming community, Birmingham maintains its small town feel while offering the recreational and cultural advantages of an urban area. Birmingham's thriving, walkable downtown includes restaurants, movie theaters, art and antique galleries, retailers, and serves as a center for real estate, accounting, finance, insurance, legal, and other services. The Community Description is a picture of the various physical and socioeconomic characteristics of the City of Birmingham. This information provides valuable insight into determining future parks and recreation facility development, maintenance, and programming needs for the community.



Regional Setting

The City of Birmingham is located in southeast Oakland County, Michigan, and is bordered by five communities: Bloomfield Hills, Bloomfield Township, Beverly Hills, Royal Oak, and Troy. Birmingham incorporated as a city in 1933 and its history dates before 1819. Throughout its past, Birmingham has enjoyed a substantial level of citizen involvement, which has contributed to the high quality of life in the community. Birmingham covers 4.8 square miles and is centrally located between the cities of Detroit and Pontiac. Woodward Avenue serves as a major artery through two miles of the city, running in a southeast to northwest direction from 14 Mile Road to Big Beaver Road (16 Mile). The city is accessible within Metropolitan Detroit via three major routes: US-24 located approximately 1- $\frac{3}{4}$ miles to the west, I-696 four miles to the south, and I-75 approximately four miles east.

Demographic Characteristics

Birmingham's current demographics and population trends provide the foundation for understanding the types of recreation facilities and amenities that are needed in the future.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

- The 65 and older population is projected to grow, indicating a need for senior-friendly amenities like walking paths and social gathering spaces.
- With a 3.6% increase in total families, and a 7.2% rise in average family size from 2010 to 2021, the Parks and Recreation Department should continue to emphasize the importance of family-oriented facilities and programs.

DISABILITY

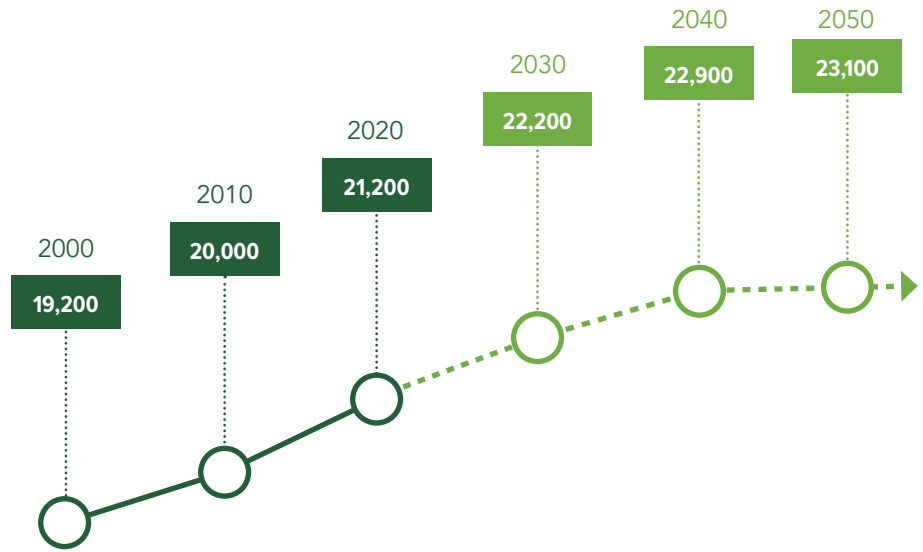
- Approximately 13% of the Birmingham population has some type of disability; prioritizing accessibility and offering adaptive equipment and programs is essential to serve these individuals effectively.
- Given that 3% of Birmingham children have a disability, predominantly cognitive, it is crucial to ensure that recreational activities and facilities are designed with inclusivity in mind to accommodate all children, fostering a more accessible and inclusive park environment.
- To address the needs of the City's senior population, 50% of which have some sort of disability, it is imperative to prioritize accessibility improvements in parks, such as walkways, shaded seating areas, and consider programs and amenities that cater to mobility difficulties.

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

- In light of the significant rise in median household value (21.1%) and median household income (9.3%) from 2010 to 2021, this plan should continue to consider the potential for more premium or upscale recreational offerings and services, catering to the economic prosperity of the community.
- To accommodate the increasing high educational attainment in Birmingham's population, planning should incorporate advanced educational programming, amenities for intellectual engagement, and sustainable practices within the park system, aligning with residents' growing interest in lifelong learning and environmental awareness.
- Anticipated growth in the young professional demographic suggests a need for fitness areas, sports facilities, and outdoor workspaces.
- The increasing daytime population, particularly in the knowledge industry, calls for amenities that cater to this workforce, such as Wi-Fi-enabled spaces and networking areas.

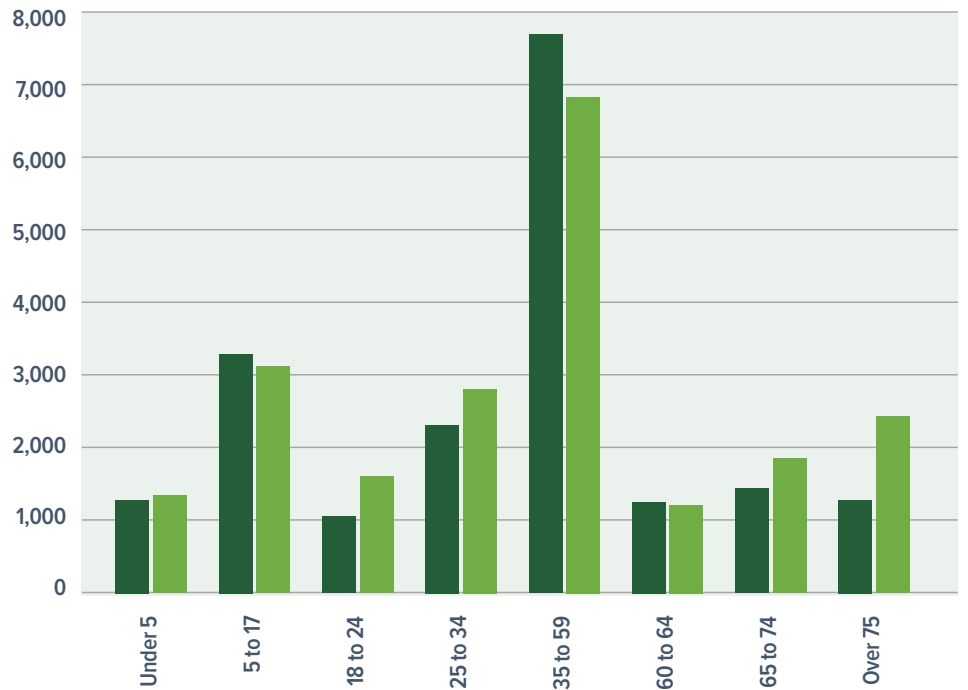
Source: SEMCOG, Census ACS 2010-2021 Estimates, Birmingham 2040.

**POPULATION
TRENDS AND
FORECAST**
2000-2050



**AGE
POPULATION
TRENDS**
2010-2040

■ 2010
■ 2040



FAMILIES & EDUCATION



5,432

2010
Families

2.91

2010
Average
Family Size

5,628

2021
Families

3.12

2021
Average
Family Size



77.5%

Over 25 Years Old
Obtained a Bachelor's
Degree or Higher

HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS



\$580,200

2021 Median Home Value

TOP FORECASTED INDUSTRIES

2010 - 2040

Knowledge-Based
Services

+ 1,488

Services to Households
and Firms

+ 756

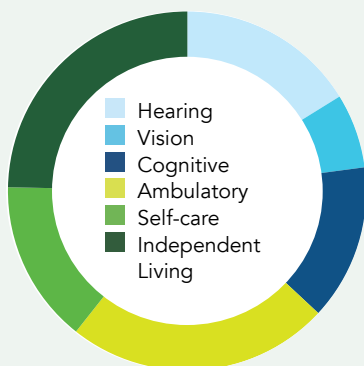
Private Education
and Healthcare

+ 602

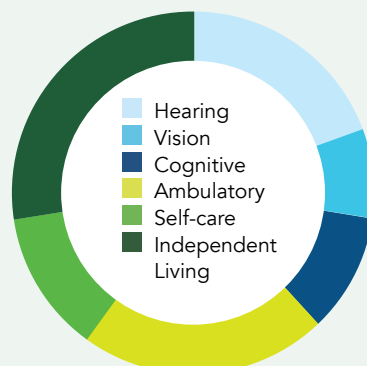
Leisure Service
and Hospitality

+ 191

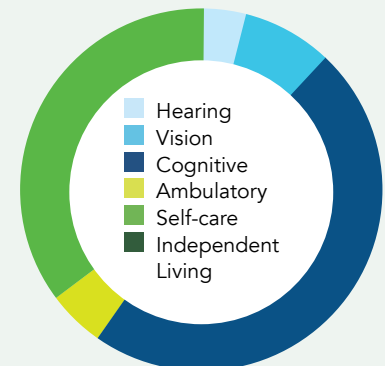
TYPES OF DISABILITY FOR ALL AGES



DISTRIBUTION OF DISABILITY FOR 65+



DISTRIBUTION OF DISABILITY FOR UNDER 18



Chapter 3

Administrative Structure



Management and planning for the City of Birmingham's parks, recreation facilities and limited programming is primarily completed by two groups: The City of Birmingham Department of Public Services (DPS) and the Parks and Recreation Board. DPS oversees the operation of the Birmingham Ice Sports Arena, two golf courses, maintenance of more than 230 acres of park land, and two miles of trails along the Rouge River. DPS responsibilities include the maintenance of Birmingham streets, sewers, and water operations. The Department is responsible for the maintenance of 25,000 street and park trees.

Public Act 156 of 1917 authorizes the City of Birmingham to administer recreational activities and resources within the public sector. The Act allows local governments to operate systems of public recreation and playgrounds.



Martha Baldwin Park

Administration

The City Charter of the City of Birmingham was first adopted in 1933, providing for a City Manager, Commission form and division of legislative and administrative functions. The Charter provides that all powers are vested in the Commission, consisting of seven members, all elected at large on a non-partisan basis. Commissioners serve staggered terms of four years and elect from their own members each year a Mayor who is a voting member of Commission. A Mayor Pro-Tem is also elected to serve in the absence of the Mayor. The City Manager oversees the administrative functions of the City, including the operations of all City Departments and Department Directors are all appointed by the City Manager, while the City Clerk is appointed by the Commissioners and then reports to the City Manager.

The City Commission is responsible for establishing policies to guide the overall operation and development of Birmingham and making all decisions concerning land acquisition and purchase of major recreation facilities based on recommendations received from staff. The budget for recreation facilities and programs is adopted annually by the City Commission, as part of the total annual budget after appropriate public hearings. The City Commission is advised by a number of public Board and Commissions, whose members are appointed by the City Commission.

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

The Parks and Recreation Board was established in 1963 by ordinance. It is charged with the duties detailed in Chapter 78 of the City Code entitled Parks and Recreation. The ordinance states that the Parks and Recreation Board shall consist of seven members who are electors in the city and appointed by City Commission, with each member serving a three-year term. The Board serves solely in an advisory capacity and may not assume any legislative or administrative authority.

The Parks and Recreation Board objectives and duties include:

- Serve as a forum for the consideration of policy matters related to the operation of a park and recreation program.
- Advise the public with regard to the policies established by the City Commission relating to the park and recreation program.
- Serve in an advisory capacity to the City Commission in regard to all matters affecting parks and recreation which are referred to it by the City Commission.
- Recommend to the City Commission a recreation program, fee schedules, and the adoption of long range program for the development of park areas and facilities.
- Recommend to the City Commission hours of operation and allocation of facility use.

The Parks and Recreation Board and City Staff's participation in various committees give citizens the opportunity to provide feedback on the operations, maintenance, and improvement of parks and recreation facilities.

The City also has a four-member Martha Baldwin Park Board to provide input on the design and maintenance of Martha Baldwin Park. In addition, there is a Birmingham Museum Board, which is an advisory board that participates in strategic planning and policy recommendations for the museum and grounds. The site consists of two historic buildings on nearly four acres and is adjacent to the Rouge River.

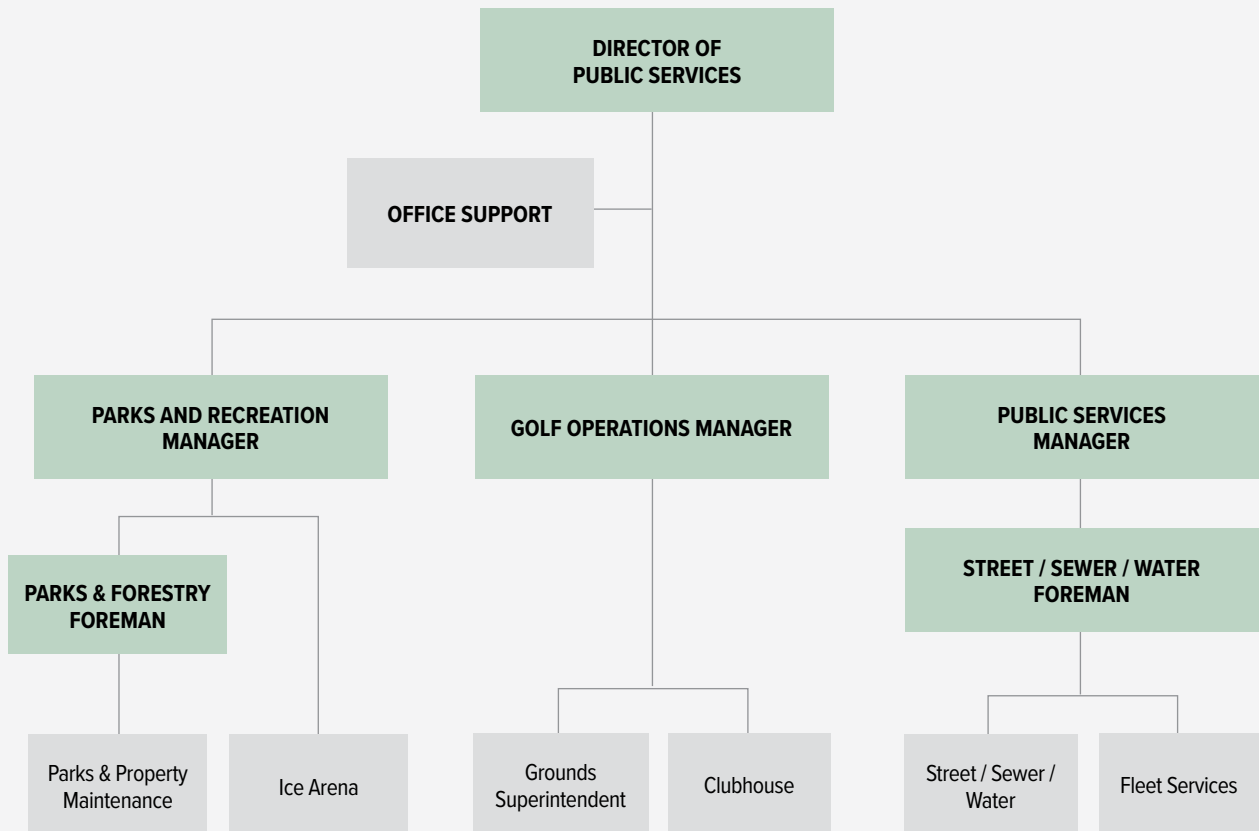
Lastly, there is a Public Arts Board, whose objectives are to enrich the city's civic and cultural heritage; to promote a rich, diverse, and stimulating cultural environment in order to enrich the lives of the city's residents, business owners, employees, and all visitors; and to establish an environment where differing points of view are fostered, expected, and celebrated by providing the opportunity for such expression through the display of public art.



THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES (DPS)

The DPS oversees the operation of the Birmingham Ice Sports Arena, two popular 9-hole golf courses, maintenance of more than 230 acres of parkland and two miles of trails along the Rouge River. DPS is also responsible for forestry items such as the removal, transplanting and/or maintenance of 25,000 street and park trees. Other responsibilities include: placement of holiday decorations, maintenance of public horticulture gardens, and logistic support for the summer “In the Park” concert program. In addition, this department is responsible for park improvements, park signage, support for special events, maintenance of the Greenwood Cemetery, various contractual services such as forestry services, park mowing, invasive vegetation removal, commercial/residential sidewalk snow removal and residential noxious weed enforcement. Figure 1 shows the administrative organization of the Department of Public Services.

Figure 1: Services Organizational Chart



Community Partnerships and Programming

An understanding of the programs and events which are currently offered by the City of Birmingham as well as programs offered by other entities within the city will help identify programming needs and avoid the duplication of services.

Birmingham Next (formerly Birmingham Area Seniors Coordinating Council and Center): Birmingham Next is a non-profit tax-exempt organization providing services to persons 55 and older in the Birmingham School District and surrounding communities. The Senior Center is located within the Midvale Center with membership costs varying. Next offers such services as activities and travel programs, meal programs, medical equipment for loan, housing information, support groups, transportation and information and referrals. Next publishes a newsletter highlighting activities, classes, information and opportunities such as new tax laws, holiday parties, computer classes, aerobics, golf and bowling leagues, card games and support groups.

City of Birmingham Golf Courses: The Junior Golf Program is available for children between the ages of 6 and 16. The program teaches golf fundamentals and offers golf on the Course. Adult golf leagues are a staple at both golf courses during the week.

City of Birmingham Ice Sports Arena: Programs offered through the City of Birmingham at the Ice Sports Arena include skating lessons for beginners to freestyle, an annual ice show, group parties, parents and tots skating and hockey, and adult hockey. The Ice Arena recently underwent a major renovation and addition, completed in November 2021. Open skating is available on various days and times.

City of Birmingham In-the-Park Summer Concerts: “In-the-Park” concerts are offered Wednesday evenings in Shain Park from mid-June to mid-August. The event highlights a wide variety of musical talents from the surrounding areas.

YMCA: The YMCA currently offers many programs and activities for all ages to Birmingham residents. The nature of the YMCA’s partnership with Birmingham will soon change. The building housing the Birmingham YMCA has been sold to the City, and plans are underway to create a re-imagined recreation/community center occupied and/or staffed and programmed by the City, Birmingham NEXT, and the YMCA. Details of this new venture are not finalized at the time of this writing, but the coming change creates significant opportunity to make this facility and St. James Park, which is adjacent to it, a nexus of multi-generational recreation opportunity.



Birmingham Next



Birmingham Ice Sports Arena



Birmingham YMCA

Volunteer Organizations/Leagues/Associations/Public/Private Partnerships: In addition to the above listed recreational programs, many other clubs and groups offer social, competitive, and child-oriented recreational activities. Many of these groups are volunteer organizations requiring payment of annual or monthly dues to support activities. These groups serve an integral role in recreation planning because they offer programs for residents that are not offered by the City of Birmingham. The following groups are active in Birmingham and utilize city properties and facilities:

- Birmingham Baseball Little League
- The Figure Skating Club of Birmingham
- Birmingham Girls Softball League
- Birmingham Hockey Association
- Birmingham Racquet Club
- Birmingham United Soccer
- Birmingham-Bloomfield Art Association

Special Events: Additional special events held in Birmingham throughout the year include:

- Art Birmingham
- Birmingham Cruise Event
- Birmingham Farmers Market
- Birmingham Restaurant Week
- Birmingham Winter Markt
- Birmingham Hometown Parade
- Cogs and Kegs
- Common Ground's Birmingham Street Art Fair
- Day on the Town
- Fine Art Festival
- HDSA Yoga in the Park
- Holiday Tree Lighting & Santa House
- Memorial Day Ceremony
- Our Town Art Exhibition and Sale
- Outdoor Movie Nights
- Quarton Slow Roll
- Strides for SOS
- Veteran's Day Ceremony
- Village Fair
- Woodward Dream Cruise

Public Schools Community Education: The Birmingham Public Schools offer many classes and organized activities throughout the year, some of which include:

- Aerobics and Pilates
- Baseball Camp
- Beading Classes
- Boating
- Culinary Arts and Entertaining Classes
- Dance
- Digital Photography
- Fencing
- Home, Garden and Pet Classes
- Languages
- Martial Arts/Self Defense
- Meditation
- Music
- Safety/first Aid and CPR Classes
- Skating
- Swim Lessons
- Tennis
- Yoga



Farmers Market

Annual Budget and Funding Sources

The estimated Department of Public Services operating budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year is \$16,489,530. Primary funding for the maintenance and programming of Birmingham’s recreation facilities comes almost entirely from sub-accounts of the City’s general fund. Alternative funding sources and revenues include bonds, passes and registration fees, and donations from individuals and private organizations. Specific information about the 2020 Parks and Recreation Bond is detailed in the following section. Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations, and individuals will also at times contribute to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the City.

EXPENDITURES

The various funds below describe the actual, adopted, and planned budget information for expenditures during the fiscal years between 2021/22 to 2024/25 (Table 1). Community Activities, Parks and Recreation Property/Programs, and the Ice Arena are all funded by the general fund account.

Table 1: Recreation Expenditures (Fiscal Years 2021 – 2025)

DIVISION DETAIL	2021 – 2022 ACTUAL	2022 – 2023 BUDGET	2023 – 2024 APPROVED	2024 – 2025 PLANNED
Parks and Recreation	\$1,052,672	\$1,506,444	\$1,525,450	\$1,736,020
Community Activities	\$310,542	\$358,290	\$381,090	\$378,980
Ice Sports Arena	\$568,402	\$780,850	\$760,800	\$770,260
*Lincoln Hills Golf Course	\$657,392	\$894,483	\$812,750	\$893,750
*Springdale Golf Course	\$474,849	\$644,067	\$752,520	\$1,143,250
Total:	\$3,063,857	\$4,184,134	\$4,232,610	\$4,922,260

*Enterprise Fund
Source: City of Birmingham 2023 – 2024 Approved Budget, 2023

REVENUES

The two golf courses listed above are *enterprise funds*, i.e. the intention is that the costs of providing the golf course amenity is recovered primarily through user charges. Additionally, the 2023 – 2024 approved general fund projections show the Ice Sports Arena generating about \$700,000, or 20% of the Charges for Services category, within the general fund revenue. The Lincoln Hills Golf Course was also projected to have \$938,910 in revenue, while the Springdale Golf Course was projected to have \$637,770 for 2023 – 2024.



PARKS AND RECREATION BONDS

The Birmingham City Commission approved a Parks and Recreation Bond to advance the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The last bond issuance for park improvements occurred in 2008. In November 2019, the Parks and Recreation Board recommended proceeding with the bond project priority list. In January 2020, as part of the City's Long Range Planning meeting, a parks bond discussion took place to consider options for funding much-needed improvements. At its regular meeting of July 20, 2020, the Commission approved putting the parks bond proposal before Birmingham voters on the ballot.

On November 3, 2020, Birmingham voters overwhelmingly approved the Birmingham Parks and Recreation Bond. Projects on the priority list included improvements at numerous City parks, playgrounds, the Rouge River trail system, and additional amenities including a pickleball court and splash pad. In addition, projects may include capital improvement upgrades within the parks system, such as an expanded irrigation system at Springdale Golf Course. Projects identified evolved from the previous Parks & Recreation Master Plan and from community-wide input. The bond approval allows for funding to advance these and other projects.

The Commission approved a total bond amount of \$11,250,000 issued in two series; the first in the amount of \$4,750,000 in 2021 and the second series in the amount of \$6,500,000 in 2024 as existing bond debt will be retired in these respective years. As of 2023, several of the Schedule I projects have been completed and others are under way:

PROJECT	STAGE
Adams Park Development	Complete
Ice Arena Building Improvements	Complete
Pickleball Court	Complete
Booth Park Corner Feature	Concept Plan
Rouge River Trail Corridor Improvements	Concept Plan



Pickleball Courts at Crestview Park

Grant History

When preparing a Parks and Recreation Plan, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires that information be provided concerning grants that have been received in the past for acquisition or development of recreation facilities. As of October 2023, the City of Birmingham has received grant funding from the following agencies since the adoption of the 2018 plan:

- **2018:** Grant from DTE Energy Foundation through the MDNR/Forest Resource Division for planting native trees along the Rouge River Trail Corridor.
- **2020:** Community Forestry Grant through the MDNR/Forest Resource Division to complete a Tree Manual and Standards of Practice, which includes guidelines, best practices, and specifications to support tree planting, tree pruning, tree removal decisions and risk management and tree preservation during construction activities across the community.
- **2022:** Oakland County Parks and Recreation Community Grant supporting the development of Adams Park.
- **2023:** Play is Essential Grant from mParks Foundation for a see-saw and a stationary cycle.
- **2023:** Oakland County Parks and Recreation Community Park and Trail Capital Pre-Development Grant for trail improvements in the Booth Park Section.
- **2023:** DTE Energy Tree Planting Program for the planting of trees in parks and city rights of way.

The City has not received any funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) nor the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).



Chapter 4

Parks & Recreation Inventory





Opportunities for recreation are available year-round in Birmingham. Parks, trails and green space cover more than 10% of the city's total acreage, and the school district also provides recreational facilities.

Birmingham's parks and recreational services extend beyond its residents. The city's exceptional facilities are host to a variety of private organizations and residents of neighboring communities who rely on these facilities for their programming needs. Birmingham's parks and programmed events (such as the In The Park concert series), are regional destinations. This section details the facilities in Birmingham's park network.

Municipal Facilities Inventory

DESCRIPTION OF PARKS AND FACILITIES

An inventory of existing facilities was conducted by Birmingham's consultant, McKenna, throughout the summer of 2023. The inventory of local facilities consisted of site inspections at each of the park sites, visits to the indoor facilities, and consultation with officials within the DPS about strengths and deficiencies within the parks. This inventory of facilities included the following attributes: name, location, acreage, equipment, quantity, quality, accessibility, and condition.

Each of the parks and recreation facilities were inventoried with the following objectives:

- Document and determine the character and viability of existing improvements, both of the site and of the structures.
- Determine accessibility of site and structures for compliance with State and Federal requirements.
- Consider opportunities for how the park system can support inclusiveness and be welcoming to all users.
- Consider sustainability opportunities to integrate sustainable components and position the park system to support Birmingham's environmental sustainability goals.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF RECREATION AMENITIES

Each of Birmingham's parks and recreation facilities is identified by the amenities available and the scope of services they provide, specifically based on criteria developed by the National Parks and Recreation Association (see Table 2). The classification provides an understanding of the main function of each park. For planning purposes, the classification helps to identify gaps in the range of parks available to residents.

The following four recreation classifications apply to Birmingham's parks, open space, and recreation areas: Mini-Park, Neighborhood Park, Community Park, and Special Use Park / Facility.

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

An evaluation of Birmingham's parks and recreation facilities was conducted as part of the inventory. Facilities were evaluated to determine if a person with certain criteria could safely and independently use the facilities. A five-point evaluation system was used to rank each facility's accessibility; the scale is described in Table 3.

Detailed analysis of these assessments is in Chapter 5.

Table 2: Classification of Recreation Amenities

**MINI-PARK
(POCKET PARK)**

Small, specialized parks, often less than an acre in size, that serve the needs of residents in the surrounding neighborhood. A mini-park may serve a limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens. Mini-parks usually serve people within a 1/4 mile radius.

**NEIGHBORHOOD
PARK**

Multi-purpose facilities that provide more active recreation activities, such as field/court games, crafts, playgrounds, skating, picnicking, etc. Neighborhood parks typically serve up to 5,000 residents located within a 1/4 to 1/2 mile radius.

**COMMUNITY
PARK**

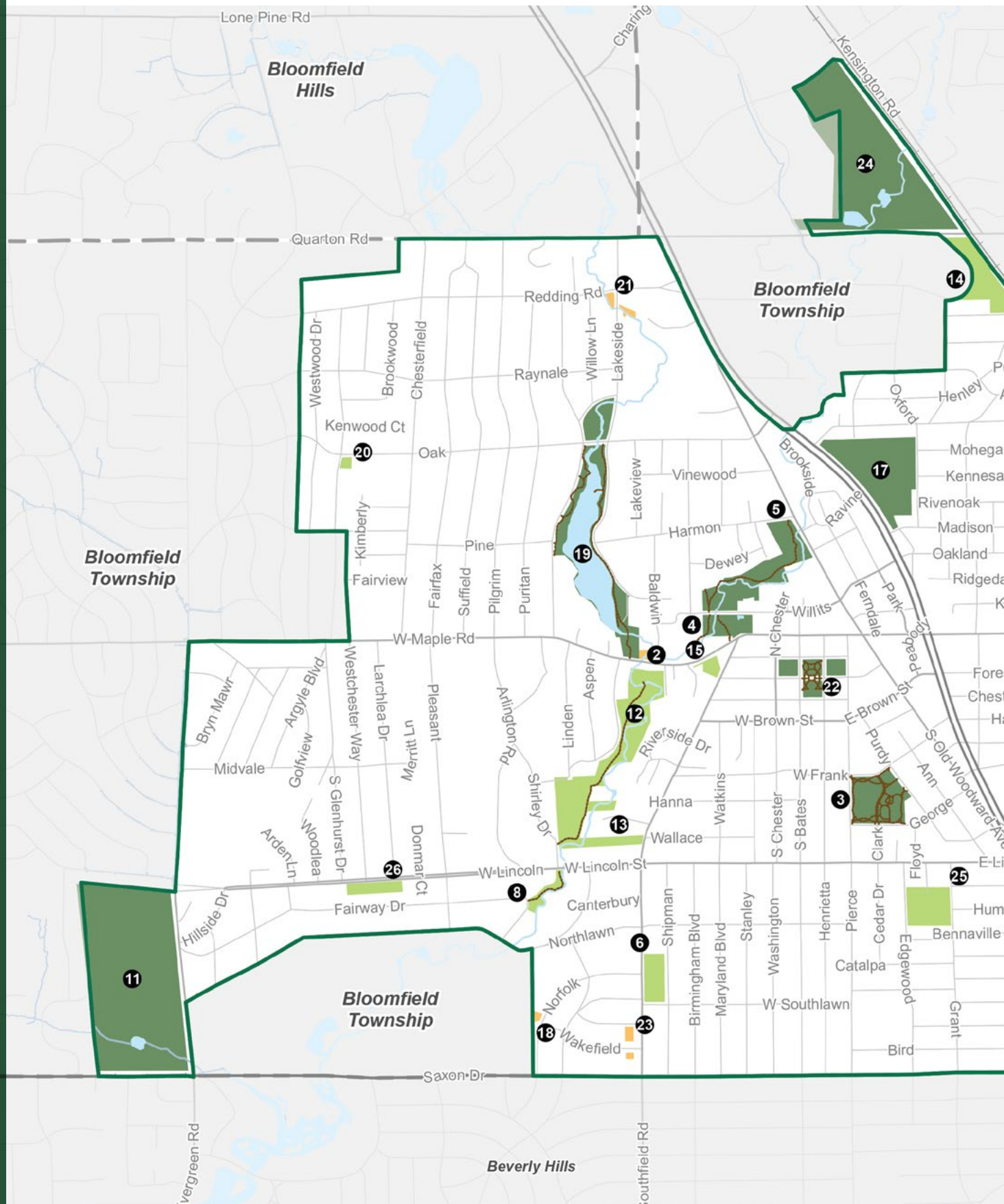
Offers a wide variety of recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents from many neighborhoods. Community parks may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes and swimming pools. These parks usually contain other facilities not commonly found in neighborhood parks such as nature areas, picnic pavilions, lighted ball fields, and concession facilities. Community parks serve residents within a 1/2 to 3 mile radius.

**SPECIAL USE PARK
/ FACILITY**

Specialized or single-purpose recreation activities, such as historical areas, nature centers, dog parks, sports complex, golf courses, arboretums, etc. There are no specific standards for size or acreage since each site will vary, each site is unique to the community it serves.

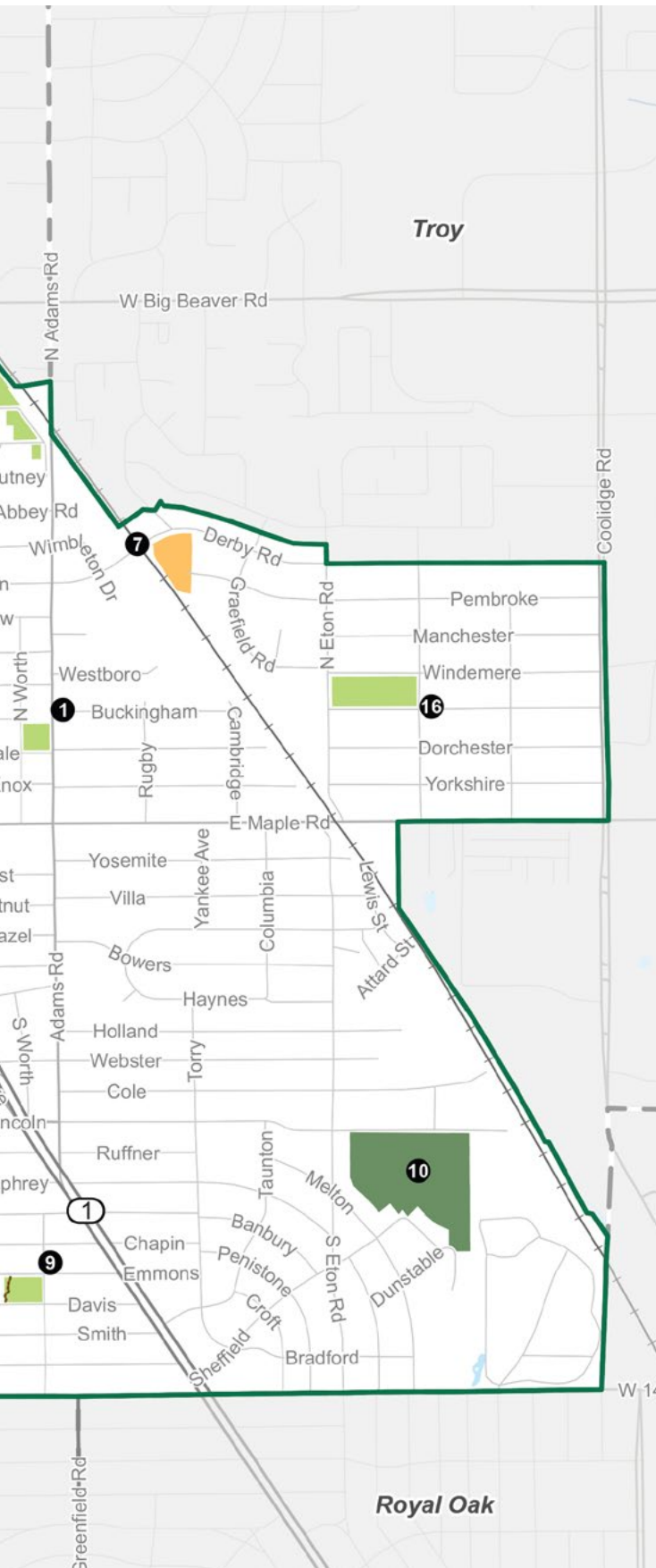
Table 3: Accessibility assessment

Level 1	The park is not accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. The site includes little paved areas and the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not accessible.
Level 2	The park is somewhat accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Either the parking area or pathways are paved, but not both. Many of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
Level 3	The park is mostly accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Most of the parking areas and pathways are paved, and some of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are accessible but may not be completely barrier-free.
Level 4	The park is completely accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Parking areas and pathways are paved, and most of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are easily accessible.
Level 5	The entire park was developed or renovated using the principles of universal design, a design approach which enables all environments to be usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation.



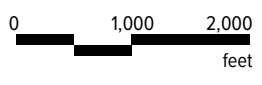
Parks and Recreation Facilities

City of Birmingham, MI



- Park Trails
- Community Parks
- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- City Birmingham Boundary

1. Adams Park
2. Baldwin Well Site
3. Barnum Park
4. Birmingham Museum
5. Booth Park
6. Crestview Park
7. Derby Well Site
8. Fairway Park
9. Howarth Park
10. Kenning Park and Ice Sports Arena
11. Lincoln Hills Golf Course & Dog Park
12. Linden Park
13. Linn Smith Park
14. Manor Park
15. Martha Baldwin Park
16. Pembroke Park
17. Poppleton Park
18. Pumphouse Park
19. Quarton Lake Park
20. Quarton Tennis Court
21. Redding Well Site
22. Shain Park
23. South Well Site
24. Springdale Golf Course & Park
25. St. James Park
26. West Lincoln Well & Park



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data: City of Birmingham, 2023. McKenna, 2023.



Neighborhood Park Adams Park

Between Adams Rd. and N. Worth St., South of the Roeper School



Accessibility
Ranking



Located directly adjacent to Roeper School (a private middle and high school), Birmingham acquired this park property in 2006 from Roeper using bond proceeds from the 2001 City Parks and Recreation Bond issue. As part of the purchase agreement, the city is responsible for the maintenance, lawn care and snow removal and the property must be used as a public park so long as the school is operated.

Adams (Elementary) School (now Roeper Upper School) was built in 1926 to accommodate the growth of the neighborhood. A property parcel south of the school was reserved for use as a playground for Adams, becoming a field practice area for older

Roeper students in recent years. The current park has returned to its roots in providing play equipment for young children, while also retaining practice areas for the Roeper students, meeting the needs of the both the neighborhood and school.

In 2021, a concept plan for Adams Park was adopted and construction on the redesigned space started in June of 2022. Today, Adams Park features several active recreational amenities and a gathering space, as well as green infrastructure.

AMENITIES

- » Basketball Court
- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Open Space (Multi-Purpose Field)
- » Picnic Table (1)
- » Seating (Benches, 9)
- » Gathering Space with Small Pergola
- » Long Jump Track
- » Shot Put and Discus Pitch
- » Bike Racks (1 Set)
- » Drinking Fountains (2)
- » Rain Garden

Baldwin Well Site

Corner of Baldwin and W. Maple

0.6
acres



No active recreational amenities are located at this site, except for a sidewalk along W. Maple Road. The area is partially covered by a dense tree canopy.

AMENITIES

- » Mature Tree Canopy, Open Space for Passive Recreation

Community Park

Barnum Park

East of Pierce St., between Frank St. and George St.

9.0
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Barnum Park is a popular destination in the community, year round, as it features a variety of activities and amenities. The park was previously the site of the Barnum School, built in 1912 to accommodate the expanding population of Birmingham. It was named for Horace Barnum, a blacksmith who originally owned the property. Several later additions to the original 8-classroom building included a Gothic arch entry. Although the school was no longer needed and eventually demolished, the grand stone and brick entrance was left as a monument to the building's past.

The park offers a play structure, softball, soccer fields, a crushed stone walking path, garden sanctuary, tree-lined promenade and an outdoor ice rink.

The Birmingham Department of Public Services has conducted periodic prescribed ecological burns at Barnum Park in the native prairie no-mow areas.

AMENITIES

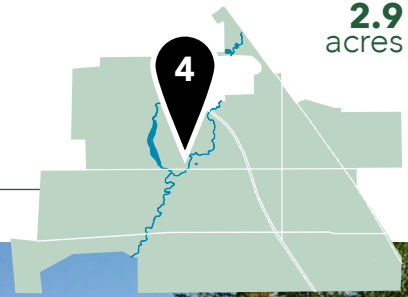
- » Baseball Field
- » Little Free Library
- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Multi-Purpose Field
- » Picnic Tables (6)
- » Seating (Benches, 58)
- » Gardens (4)
- » Bike Racks (3 Sets)
- » Drinking Fountains (2)
- » Ice Rink (Seasonal)
- » Public Art

Community Park

Birmingham Museum

556 W. Maple Road

2.9
acres



1 4

Accessibility
Ranking



The Birmingham Museum is located in the Mill Pond Historic District in downtown Birmingham. In 1969, voters approved a bond to purchase the historic 1926 Allen House and approximately 3 acres adjacent to the Rouge River. The 1822 John West Hunter House (the oldest dwelling in Oakland County) was added to the property, and the two are joined by a public plaza with a historic bell from Birmingham's Hill School, demolished in 1969. The steeply sloping property features a natural pond and vestiges of a historic pool that attracts a wide variety of wildlife. Accessible parking and seating is available at the upper park area near Maple Road as well as in the lower, natural area along Willits.

Accessibility rankings: Museum and site (4); Park and open space (1)

AMENITIES

- » Public Museum with Two Accessible Historic Buildings and Parking Area
- » Picnic Tables (3)
- » Seating (Benches, 8)
- » Public Plaza with Paved Paths and Historic Bell Feature
- » Gardens
- » Bike Racks
- » Natural Water Features and Connecting Paths to Rouge Trail
- » Public Wi-fi

Community Park

Booth Park

Southwest corner of Harmon Street and N. Old Woodward Avenue

3.9
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Booth Park is located just north of the downtown core, and north of the Rouge River. The park features an expansive playscape, a labyrinth and tunnel, rock features, turf hill/amphitheater, and during the winter months an area for sledding. Located along the Rouge River, there are important environmental features such as a rain garden, stabilized stream banks, and native plantings. Running through the park and to the south is the Booth Trail section—which ultimately connects to the Birmingham Museum and the Willits Trail and further to the west, the Quarton Lake Trail off W. Maple Road.

The property was formerly the site of the Detroit United Railway's Powerhouse that served the light rail cars that connected Birmingham to

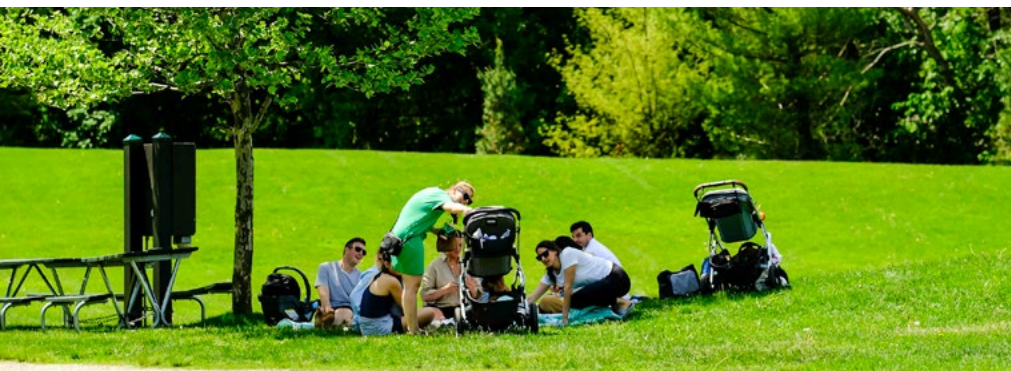
Pontiac and Detroit from the late 1800s to the 1920s. After the DUR's bankruptcy during the Depression, the site was purchased by Cranbrook's George Booth, who ultimately donated it to the city in 1943.

The design of Booth Park won a merit award from the Michigan Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) in 2009. It is now a beautiful recreational area attracting hundreds of visitors from all over southeast Michigan.

Soon, Booth Park will receive additional improvements to its trail system from the Parks and Recreation bond project, including a new entry plaza with restrooms and smaller gathering space for a coffee cart / food truck, wayfinding signage, and trail markers.

AMENITIES

- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Event Lawn / Amphitheater
- » Walking Trail (Mix of Crushed Stone and Wood Chips)
- » Sledding Hill
- » Picnic Tables (2)
- » Umbrella Tables w/ Chairs (3)
- » Benches (10)
- » Bike Racks (1 Set) and a Repair Station
- » Drinking Fountain
- » Riparian Buffer
- » Little Free Library
- » Public Art



Neighborhood Park

Crestview Park

North of W. Southlawn Blvd. between Southfield Rd. and Shipman Blvd.

3.6
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



AMENITIES

- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Multi-Purpose Field
- » Picnic Tables (3)
- » Seating (Benches, 7)
- » Drinking Fountain
- » Pickleball Courts (6)

Crestview Park is located near the southern border of Birmingham. This neighborhood park contains a large open space for soccer and other activities, and playground equipment (swings, climbers, and a play structure). Sidewalks line the park along Southfield Road, W. Southlawn Boulevard and Shipman Boulevard.

Most recently, pickleball courts were constructed in 2023 and are highly used by the community.

Mini Park

Derby Well Site

South of Derby Road, East of the Canadian National Railroad



Accessibility
Ranking



Located on the northeast portion of the city, this open space area is directly adjacent to the railroad and is south of Derby Road. Pedestrian access to the park is available from both the sidewalk on Derby Road, as well as the sidewalk from the cul-de-sac on Pembroke Road; a short, paved sidewalk traverses the park from these two entry points. Aside from mature trees and a fenced in water tower, the park largely acts as a natural buffer to the railroad.

AMENITIES

- » Walking Path
(.10 Miles, Paved)

Mini Park

Fairway Park

South of W. Lincoln St., East of Fairway Drive

1.6
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Fairway Park contains a walking trail along the Rouge River, south of Lincoln and adjacent to Fairway Dr. A sculpture is located at this park. The park is partially covered with mature tree canopy.

AMENITIES

- » Open Space for Passive Recreation
- » Walking Trail
- » Public Art

Neighborhood Park

Howarth Park

West of Cummings Ave. between Emmons and Davis Avenues



Accessibility
Ranking



Howarth Park is located at the intersection of Cummings and Emmons Roads in the southern portion of the city. Howarth consists of a large open space in the middle of the park, flanked by a baseball field on one end and play equipment on the other. Street trees and sidewalks line the park on three sides and an ADA accessible path connects the sidewalks to the play equipment. The play area includes swings, a climber, and a play structure (all over a wood chip surface).

In 2005, the Birmingham Rotary Club was recognized by the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association with a community service award for their donation and improvements to Howarth Park. Improvements included a park bench, drinking fountain, and the planting of new trees.

AMENITIES

- » Baseball Field
- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Picnic Tables (3)
- » Seating (Benches, 11)
- » Drinking Fountains (2)

Community Park Kenning Park

21.7
acres

10

South of E. Lincoln Street, between S. Eton St. and the Canadian National Railroad



Accessibility
Ranking



Kenning Park is the primary recreation complex in the community and is home to the Ice Sports Arena. Outdoor facilities at Kenning Park include Little League baseball diamonds and one softball diamond, tennis courts, open space and playground equipment with an ADA accessible path leading from the parking area to the playground.

In 2004, a skate park was installed on the east side of the arena, designed by skaters.

The city negotiated a long-term lease for the Racquet Club at Kenning Park. The contractor provides two tennis bubbles which



cover six courts during the winter months. These bubbles meet the demand for year-round tennis opportunities for area residents. Inside the racquet club are locker rooms, a pro shop, and children's nursery.

In 2020, the Kenning Park ball fields project (a partnership between the City and Birmingham Little League (BLL) which has used the facilities at Kenning Park since 1947) was completed, which resulted in the complete reconstruction and reorientation of two fields with better drainage and field amenities.



AMENITIES

- » Tennis Courts (4)
- » Racquet Club (Leased)
- » Baseball Fields (3)
- » Softball Field
- » Skate Park
- » Benches (5)
- » Bike Racks (4 Sets) and a Bike Repair Station

Community Park Ice Sports Arena

2300 E Lincoln St.



Accessibility
Ranking



The Birmingham Ice Sports Arena is located on the Kenning Park property in the southeast portion of the city.

The indoor arena contains a regulation sized ice rink with bleacher seating for 550 spectators. A smaller, studio arena is used for lessons and skate parties within the complex.

In 2021, a number of renovations were made to the facility, including the remodel of the existing locker rooms, addition of a fifth locker room, new observation area and meeting room space; and concession area upgrades.

AMENITIES

- » Regulation Ice Rink
- » Studio Ice Rink
- » Observation Area
- » Conference Room
- » Skate Rentals Available
- » Skate Sharpening
- » Full Service Concession Stand
- » Locker Rooms
- » Officials Room
- » Party Room
- » Public Wi-Fi

Community Park

Lincoln Hills Golf Course

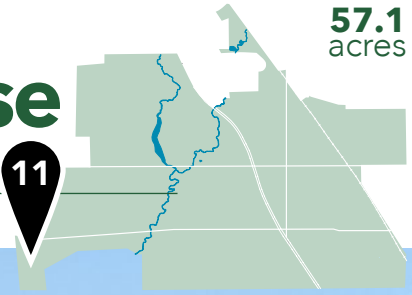
57.1
acres

2666 W. 14 Mile Road

11



Accessibility
Ranking



The 9-hole municipal Lincoln Hills Golf Course is located in the southwest portion of the city off 14 Mile Road. The terrain is rolling and offers golfers a fun and challenging golf experience. The par for men and women is 35 and the course ranges from 2994 yards from the blue tees to 2336 yards from the red tees.

The Lincoln Hills Clubhouse offers a variety of golf items, a snack bar, pull carts and power carts. Course offerings include a PGA golf pro, youth and adult lessons, an exceptional Junior Golf Program, accessible service, golf education center and league play. A membership is available to Birmingham residents,

Birmingham property owners, Birmingham businesses, and nonresidents. Non-members may play during April and October. Lincoln Hills is also made available for winter activities including sledding and cross-country skiing.

An off-leash dog area is also adjacent to the Lincoln Hills Golf Course. Resident and non-residents access the dog park through a key fob; a maximum of 10 dogs are permitted in the dog park at one time.

AMENITIES

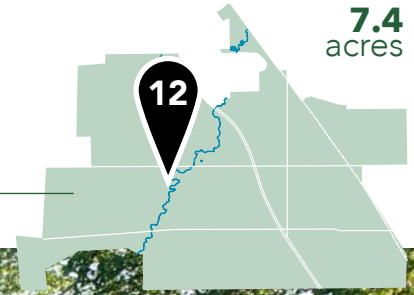
- » Golf Course (9-Holes)
- » Dog Park
- » Cross Country Skiing
- » Sledding

Neighborhood Park

Linden Park

Between W. Maple Rd. and W. Lincoln St.,
East of Hawthorne St., Linden St. and Shirley Rd.

7.4
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



This riverside park recalls the historic importance of the waterway to Birmingham's story. Before the settlement of Oakland County, the Rouge River was deeper and faster, and its location near the Saginaw Trail (now Woodward) made it a significant resource for the Indigenous people who passed through the area for centuries. In the late 1800s, it became an unofficial refuse dump, and Martha Baldwin urged the Village of Birmingham to turn the disused area into a park. The section at Maple Road became the site of a municipal well and waterworks that was active in the 1910s.

The park is predominately open space with lush, natural scenery and access to the Rouge River Trail Corridor (from Shirley and Hawthorne), making it an ideal space for walking and enjoying nature. There is also a play structure with wood chip surfacing near Brandon Street. A storm-water treatment control station with a gravel access road is also located on the east side of the park, adjacent to the Rouge River.

AMENITIES

- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Seating (Benches, 5)
- » Cross County Skiing
- » Walking Path
- » Public Art

Neighborhood Park

Linn Smith Park

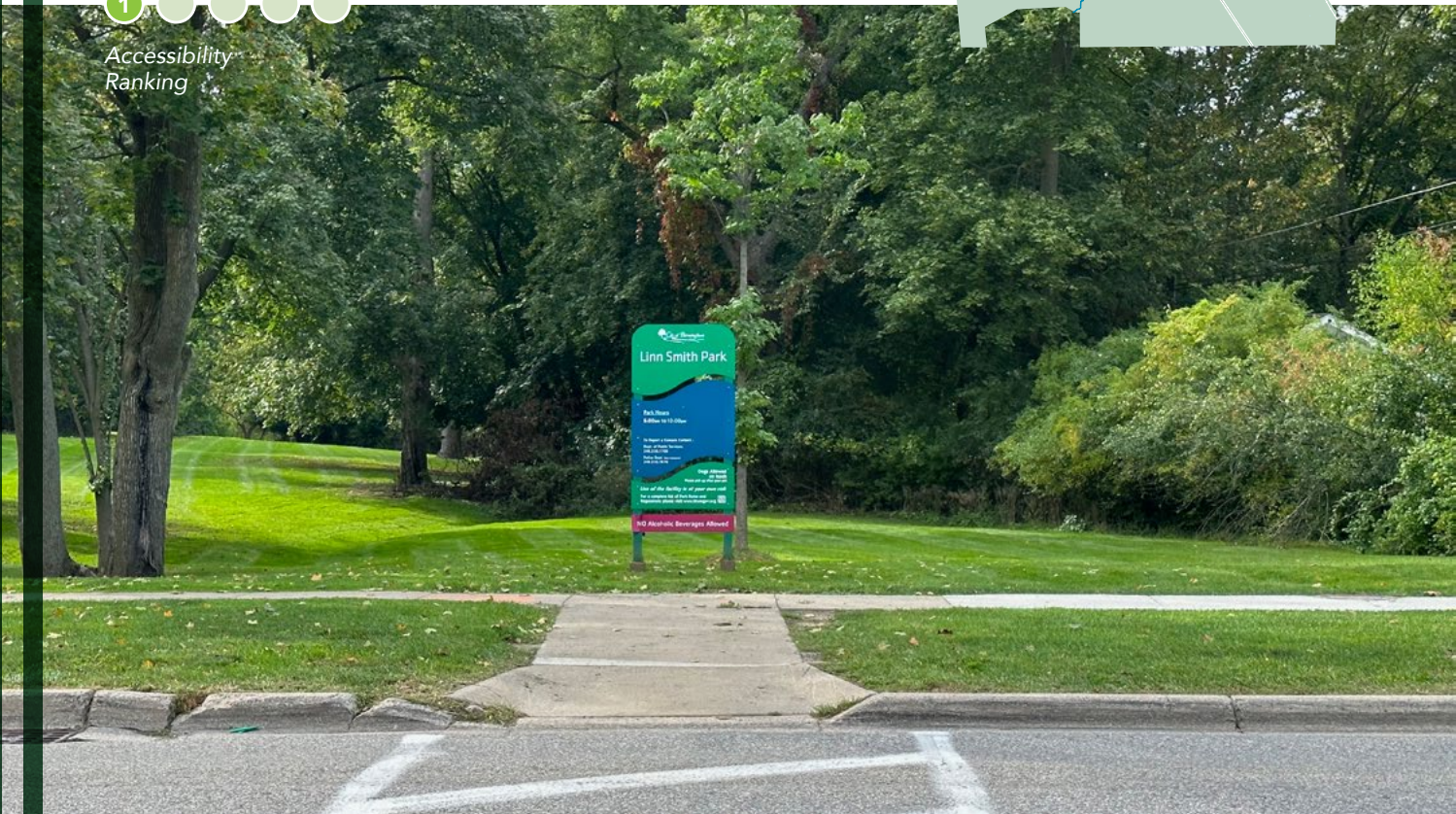
West of Southfield Road, North of Lincoln

2.0
acres



1

Accessibility
Ranking



AMENITIES

- » Open Space for Passive Recreation

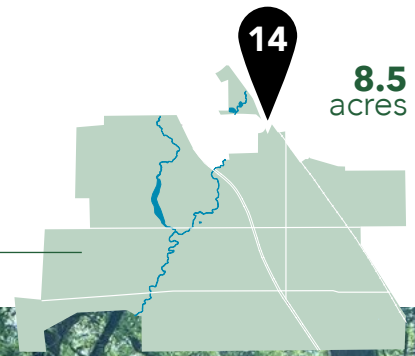
Linn Smith Park is a small, linear shaped park on the east side of the Rouge River (west of Southfield Road).

Today, the park consists entirely of open space with a rolling topography and a mature tree canopy. Future expansion of the Rouge River Trail Corridor includes a bridge connection and a trail that will traverse through the park. An entry plaza along Southfield Road and a boardwalk located near the proposed bridge will eventually connect Linn Smith Park with Linden Park and the larger trail system.

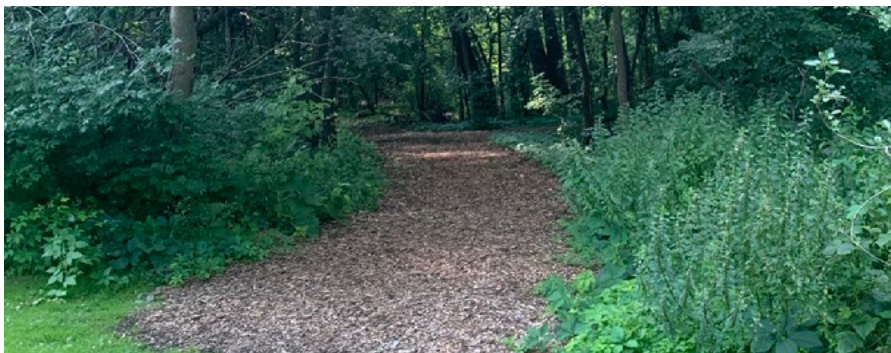
Neighborhood Park

Manor Park

South of Big Beaver Road and adjacent to the Canadian National Railroad



Accessibility
Ranking



AMENITIES

- » Walking Path
(.50 Miles, Wood Chip)

Manor Park is a nature preserve. The park contains a variety of hardwood, ornamental, and coniferous trees. The park is bordered by green basalt boulders, procured from Michigan's Upper Peninsula, along Shepardsbush. There is a gravel off-street parking area for visitors. Manor Park remains undeveloped open space used for passive recreation and features a half-mile wood chip trail connected to both Big Beaver Road and Manor Road.

Neighborhood Park

Martha Baldwin Park

Southwest of the intersection of W. Maple and Southfield Roads

1.0
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Martha Baldwin Park is located on the west side of Southfield Road, at the intersection of Southfield and Maple Roads.

This park is named for a woman with a significant impact on Birmingham and the development of its park system. Martha Baldwin, despite being unable to vote herself in the late 19th century, was able to influence the male officials of the Village to adopt beautification efforts throughout the town. She donated the property that became Baldwin Park with the requirement of a public board to ensure that it remain a public amenity. She also planted a half circle of maple trees there that survived to the latter 20th century. The park consists of open space, mature trees, and a water garden. Bioswales have been integrated into the natural drainage system. There is a bench and steps leading into the park from Southfield Road.

The park is named after Martha Baldwin who donated the land to the City in 1913. Martha Baldwin, a native of Birmingham, teacher, and elected official significantly contributed to the development of the City. A four-member board ensures that the wishes and memory of Martha Baldwin are preserved at her namesake park.

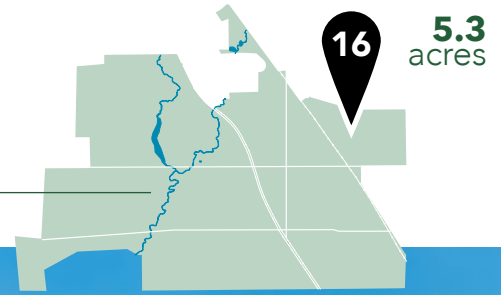
AMENITIES

- » Seating (Benches, 3)
- » Decorative Gardens (3)
- » Bioswale Garden & Monarch Waystation
- » Public Art

Neighborhood Park

Pembroke Park

Between Eton, Edenborough, Windemere and Buckingham Roads



Accessibility
Ranking



Pembroke Park comprises one block on the east side of Birmingham. The park includes open space areas and several pieces of playground underneath a mature tree canopy (equipment including swings, slides, climbers, sandboxes, play-structures and rockers installed over a wood chip surfacing).

The park also contains a Little League baseball field, picnic tables, two tennis courts, multi-purpose fields largely used for soccer, a basketball area, and drinking fountains. Sidewalks are only located along Eton Street and Edenborough Road.

AMENITIES

- » Basketball Court
- » Baseball Field
- » Playground Equipment (2)
- » Swings
- » Multi-Purpose Fields (3)
- » Picnic Tables (5)
- » Seating (Benches, 12)
- » Bike Racks (1 Set)
- » Drinking Fountains (2)
- » Tennis Courts (2)

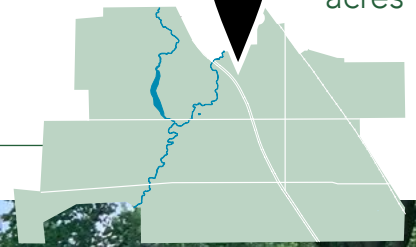
Community Park

Poppleton Park

East of Woodward Avenue between Wimbleton Drive and Madison Street

17

17.2
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Poppleton Park comprises a significant piece of property in the northern portion of the city. The park is accessed from Oxford and Rivenoak Roads, both of which are residential streets.

Named for merchant and farmer Orrin Poppleton, the park and neighborhood developments around it were once part of a large parcel farmed by the Poppleton family from the 1840s to the 1910s. The farm raised corn, wheat, cattle and other livestock. The original farmhouse was located on Maple Road. The property was reserved when the Poppleton Park subdivision was platted in the 1920s and became a community park.

The north end of the park contains several pieces of play equipment including swings, climbers, sandboxes, and playscapes. There are also benches and trash containers in this area as well as considerable open space.

Poppleton Park also contains a softball field with a crusher dust infield, grassy outfield, warning track, home run fence and bleachers. A paved parking lot is located at the end of Rivenoak Road. A drinking fountain is located between the parking lot and baseball field. The park has two tennis courts, which were rebuilt in 2000.

AMENITIES

- » Baseball Field
- » Tennis Courts (2)
- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Picnic Tables (4)
- » Seating (Benches, 16)
- » Drinking Fountain
- » Bike Racks
- » Public Art

Mini Park

Pumphouse Park

Corner of Wakefield and Norfolk Roads

0.2
acres



Covered by a mature tree canopy, Pumphouse Park features smaller play equipment and seating.

AMENITIES

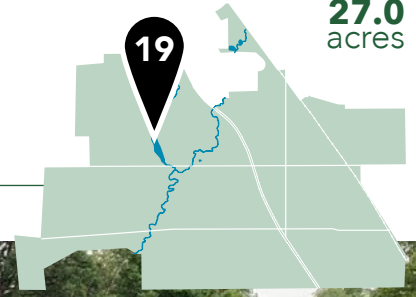
- » Playground Equipment
- » Seating (Benches, 4)

Community Park

Quarton Lake Park

North of W. Maple Rd., between Lakeside Dr. and Lake Park Dr.

27.0
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Quarton Lake, located on the city's west side, is fed by the Rouge River. The Quarton Lake Park surrounds the lake almost entirely and provides passive recreation areas for the public.

Early in its history, Birmingham's location on the Rouge River made it possible to harness the power of flowing water to mill flour for the growing village. The river was deeper and swifter at the time, and a dam and mill race was built near what is now Maple Road (formerly Mill Road) at the river to force the water into a channel to operate the mill wheel. (The dam remains and today is often referred to as 'the waterfall'.) The Mill Pond became Quarton Lake, and the area around the lake became an important subdivision for executive homes in the 1920s auto industry's boom period.

Over the past decade, the City has installed native plants and flowers along Quarton Lake to provide natural beauty, prevent stream bank erosion, and deter geese.

AMENITIES

- » Seating (Benches, 34)
- » Bike Racks (4 Sets)
- » Fishing Pier
- » Riparian Buffer
- » Bike Repair Station
- » Wedding Plaza

Neighborhood Park

Quarton Tennis Court

Southeast of the intersection of N. Glenhurst Drive and Oak Ave.

20

0.4
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Located directly west of Quarton Elementary School, the Quarton Tennis Court site is limited to two tennis courts. Sidewalks run along the park on both Oak Avenue and N. Glenhurst Drive.

AMENITIES

- » Tennis Courts (2)
- » Seating (Bench, 1)

Mini Park

Redding Well Site

South of Redding Road, East and West of Lakeside Drive

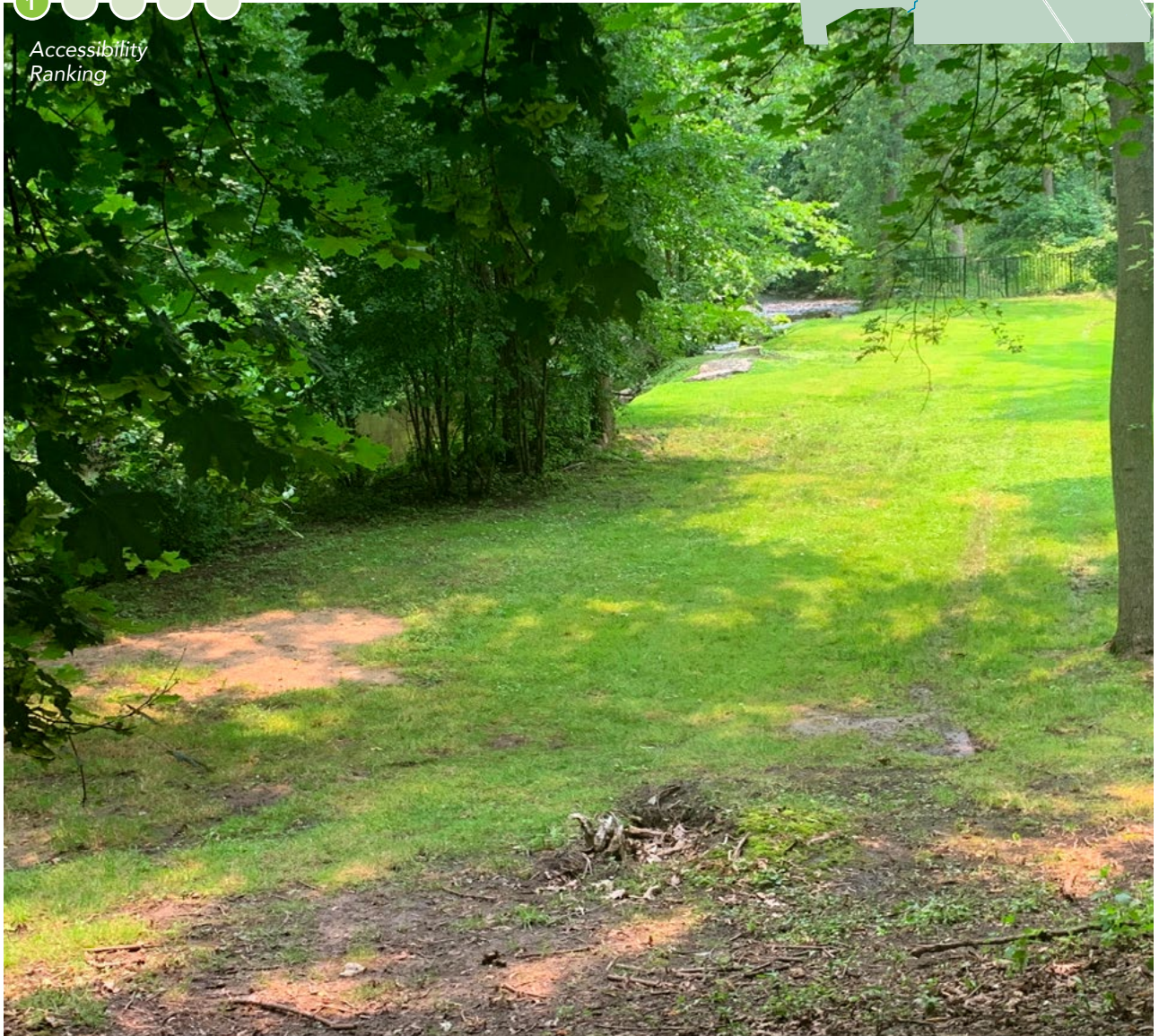
21

0.4
acres



1

Accessibility
Ranking



This park consists of open space and a sidewalk along both Lakeside and Redding. The park space contains both a mature tree canopy and recently planted deciduous trees.

AMENITIES

- » Open Space for Passive Recreation
- » Bench (1)

Community Park Shain Park

Between Martin and Townsend, S. Bates and Henrietta Streets, Downtown Birmingham

2.3
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Shain Park, located on Merrill Street in downtown Birmingham, is considered the heart of the city.

This park was named after Charles Shain, a business man, local civic leader and “Mr Birmingham.” In the late 1920s, Shain and his wife, Ruth were instrumental in planning Birmingham’s “municipal district” consisting of the municipal building, the Baldwin Public Library, and the Community House surrounding a city center park. Shain Park is now the recreational heart of Birmingham, with a band shell, treasured public art, a large fountain, and two war monuments, fulfilling the Shains’ vision for a welcoming gathering place in the busy center of Birmingham.

Features include a plaza fountain with granite decor, a band shell, a children’s play area, and a granite paved Merrill Street (with the Marshall Fredericks statue in the center of the park). A performance stage area with open lawn space for large audiences is also located within the park and hosts the summer In-the-Park concerts.

AMENITIES

- » Band Shell and Gathering Space
- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Public Art
- » Seating (Benches, 35)
- » Drinking Fountains (2)
- » Bike Racks (4 Sets) and Repair Stations
- » Gardens (4)
- » Public Wi-Fi
- » Plaza Fountain
- » Historic War Memorial Monuments

Mini Park

South Well Site

West of Southfield Road at Southlawn Boulevard

0.6
acres



1

Accessibility
Ranking



The South Well Site, in the southwestern portion of the city, is broken into two small parcels and largely consists of open space.

Though this park has recently been dedicated as a recreational amenity, the Birmingham Plan's Future Land Use map designates the northern parcel as an "Activity Seam" that aspires to provide places for neighborhood-scaled infill development along Southfield Road. The southern parcel is designated a "Commercial Destination", acknowledging its proximity to the parcel currently housing the Market Square grocer and aspiring to continue a neighborhood-serving small commercial use in this general location. This plan acknowledges that these designations include recommendations for potential future development on this site. This kind of small-scale commercial development can coexist with and enhance the park. Until and unless an appropriate development opportunity comes along, this land remains a part of the recreation system.

AMENITIES

- » Open Space for Passive Recreation

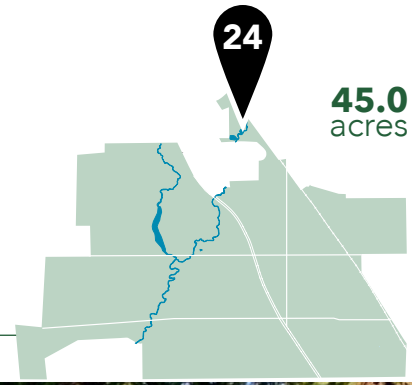
Community Park

Springdale Park and Golf Course

316 Strathmore Road

24

45.0
acres



Accessibility
Ranking



Springdale Golf Course is a picturesque, challenging 9-hole golf course. Course offerings include a PGA golf pro, youth and adult lessons, accessible service, and league play. The par for men and women is 34 and the course ranges from 2,732 yards from the blue tees to 2,196 yards from the red tees.

The course was originally built in 1929 and is the shorter of the two City of Birmingham golf courses. A membership is available to Birmingham residents, Birmingham property owners, Birmingham businesses, and non-residents.

The course is also home to Springdale Park, which features a picnic pavilion, children's playground and picnic facilities. The park is a popular venue for all types of parties, family events and social gatherings as the pavilion is available for group rentals.

AMENITIES

- » Golf Course (9-Holes)
- » Pavilion (For Rent)
- » Grills (5)
- » Drinking Fountain
- » Seating (Benches, 36)
- » Picnic Tables (38)
- » Play Equipment

Neighborhood Park

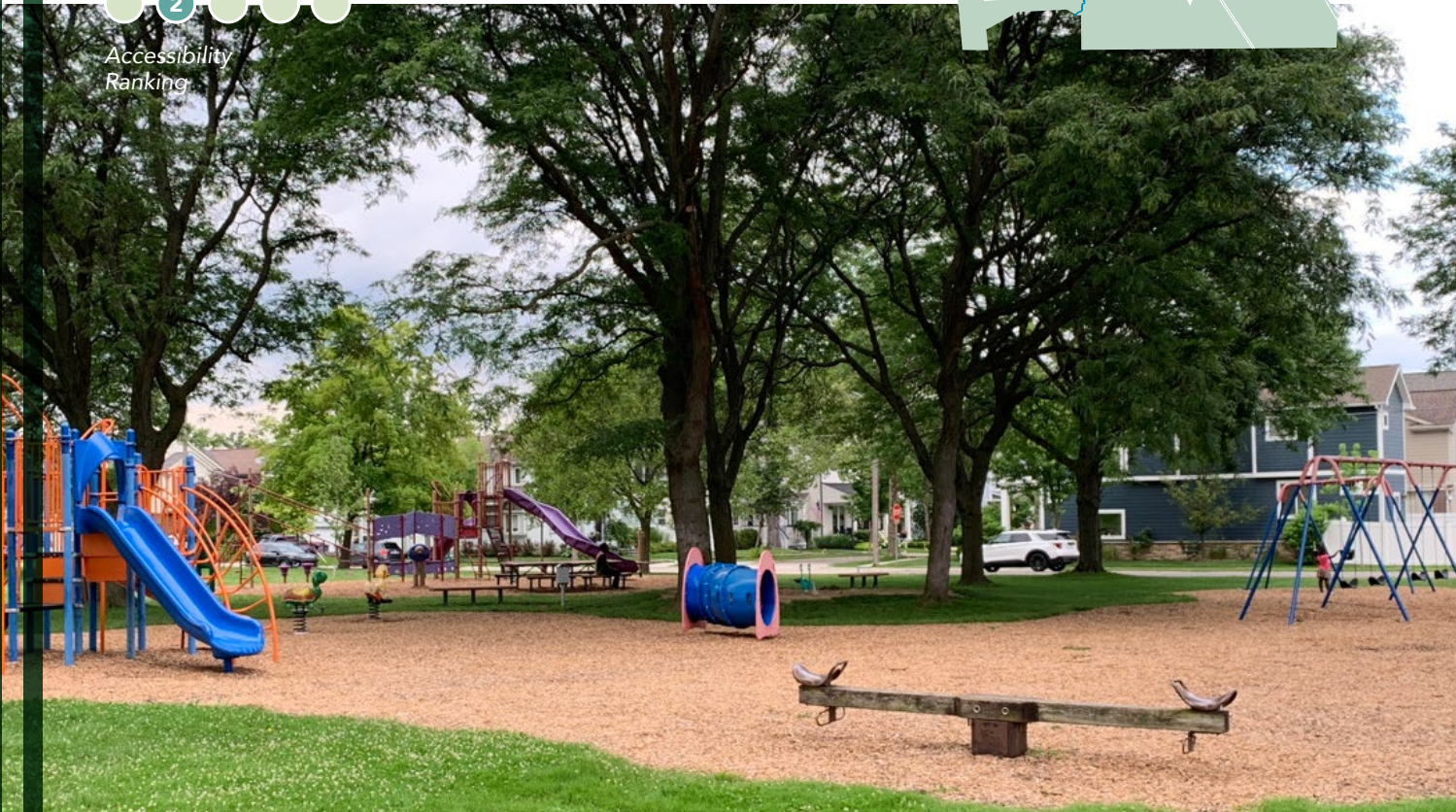
St. James Park

South of W. Lincoln St. between Edgewood Rd. and Grant St.

6.0
acres



Accessibility
Ranking: 2



St. James Park is located in the southern portion of the city and adjacent to the YMCA.

The park contains open space (which is primarily used for soccer) and the city's only regulation-size baseball diamond. In addition, St. James features two tennis courts, and several pieces of ADA-compliant play equipment installed over a wood chip surface. Sidewalks run alongside both Grant Street and Edgewood Road. The park contains a hard surface basketball area, benches and trash containers located in the proximity of the play equipment.

AMENITIES

- » Basketball Court
- » Baseball Field
- » Tennis Courts (2)
- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Multi-purpose Field
- » Picnic Tables (3)
- » Seating (Benches, 12)
- » Drinking Fountain
- » Bike Racks

Neighborhood Park

West Lincoln Well & Park

2.2
acres



South of W. Lincoln Street between Glenhurst and Larchlea Drives



Accessibility
Ranking



Located in the southwest quadrant of the city, the Lincoln Well Site largely consists of open space, two tennis courts, and play equipment (which includes swings, slides, a sandbox, and rockers). A sidewalk runs along the front of the park, along W. Lincoln Street.

AMENITIES

- » Tennis Courts (2)
- » Playground Equipment
- » Swings
- » Picnic Tables (2)
- » Seating (Benches, 7)
- » Drinking Fountain
- » Bike Racks

School Facilities

The City of Birmingham maintains a working relationship with the Birmingham Public School District (BPS). The school district provides much of the recreation programming through the Community Education Program. The city and schools maintain communication for use of city and school facilities with an informal policy for scheduling.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

A total of five public school properties were inventoried for available recreation facilities. While school facilities are not accessible at all times and are not maintained or upgraded by the City of Birmingham, they do play an important element in the provision of recreation opportunities and facilities to residents.

Derby Middle School: Derby Middle School is located in the northeast portion of the city between Adams Road and the Canadian National Railroad. The school is located on a large piece of property which includes a practice football field, two soccer fields, a regulation-size baseball field and a football field with goal posts. The school site also has three basketball hoops and a partial asphalt path leading past the baseball field near the railroad tracks. The school also has an indoor pool.

Midvale Center: The Midvale Center is located adjacent to the Seaholm High School property along Midvale Street. The center includes the Birmingham Next and the BPS Early Childhood Center. There are swings, a play structure, tot lot structure, soccer field, and baseball field on the west side of the Center.

Pierce Elementary School: Pierce School is located near the southern border of the city, east of Pierce Road. The site contains two basketball hoops, a baseball field, two soccer fields, a children's garden, and a variety of play equipment throughout the site.

Quarton Elementary School: The Quarton Elementary School is located near the western border of the city, off Oak Street. The school property includes a practice soccer field, a baseball field, four basketball hoops, and play equipment including swings, climbers and two play structures. Adjacent to the school sits two tennis courts, a bench, trash receptacle and a drinking fountain.

Seaholm High School: Birmingham Seaholm High School is located on the western edge of the city, north of Lincoln Road. The high school is currently undergoing a major renovation, including a brand new athletic facility. Facilities include seven tennis courts and a football/soccer stadium with lights, a press box, scoreboard and bleachers, a baseball and softball field with bleachers as well as open areas for practice fields. The high school has an indoor pool, outdoor track and a climbing high rope course. The property is also the location of the Birmingham Community Education Department.



Derby Middle School



Pierce Elementary School



Quarton Elementary School



Seaholm High School



Eton Academy

PRIVATE SCHOOL FACILITIES

There are four private schools within the city boundaries including:

Eton Academy: Eton Academy is located in the southeast portion of the city, adjacent to Melton Road, south of Kenning Park. The Academy has one soccer field, a basketball court, benches, and a small open area with swings and a playscape.

Holy Name Catholic School: Holy Name Catholic School is located north of Harmon Street, west of Old Woodward Avenue. The school has a small playscape.

Our Shepherd Lutheran: Our Shepherd Lutheran School is located in the southeast portion of the city, south of Lincoln Street. The property includes a practice softball diamond, a soccer field, indoor gym, open space, and play equipment.

Roeper Middle and Upper School: Roeper Middle and Upper School is located in the northeast portion of the city, north of Maple Road. The school is adjacent to the newly renovated Adams Park.



Roeper Middle and Upper School



Holy Name Catholic School



Our Shepherd Lutheran

Quasi-Public and Private Recreation Facilities

Recreation facilities which are not owned or operated by the City of Birmingham or the Public School District were also inventoried due to their relevance in the provision of recreational opportunities to Birmingham residents.



Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center

Birmingham / Bloomfield Art Center: The Birmingham/Bloomfield Art Center is located in the southwest portion of the city, west of Cranbrook Road, adjacent to the Lincoln Hills Golf Course. The non-profit Art Center offers over 500 high quality art classes and workshops annually for students of all ages and abilities. The Center also holds a children's art camp, changing exhibitions and competitions, works of fine art for purchase or rental and a student pottery sale. The annual Birmingham Fine Arts Festival is held each year in May. A Gallery Shop is located in the Center, providing an opportunity to purchase high quality fine works of art by regional and national artists.



Birmingham First United Methodist Church

Birmingham First United Methodist Church: The Christian Life Center, located on Maple, west of Southfield. The center offers a wide range of physical, social and spiritual enrichment activities that can be integrated through recreation, education and fellowship and serves all ages. Activities include dance, pilates, and yoga classes, as well as drop-in basketball, a walking track, and pickleball facilities.



The Community House

The Community House: In 1923, in a small frame structure at the heart of the Birmingham community, a small committee of people built a place where all would be welcome. The Community House was created to be a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-exclusive community center serving as the starting point for all of life's journeys. The Community House offers music- and language-related programming, and has a childcare center offering day care and preschool services.



Birmingham Family YMCA

Birmingham Family YMCA: The Birmingham YMCA is located adjacent to Lincoln Road, west of Woodward and directly north of St. James Park. The YMCA offers classes, programs and activities for all ages, that are detailed in the 'programs' portion of this chapter. The YMCA has gymnasiums, swimming pools, weight rooms, exercise rooms and a variety of individual meeting rooms.

Regional Parks and Facilities

Regional parks offer unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, fishing, boating, hiking, and trail use. Many also include active play areas such as ball fields or courts. While these parks are not used for formal programming by the City of Birmingham, they provide active and passive recreational opportunities to the residents of the community. Regional facilities are provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority, and Oakland County Parks System. The regional parks located within close proximity of the City are shown on Map 2 - Regional Parks and Facilities.

Addison Oaks: Addison Oaks is a scenic 1,139-acre Oakland County park in northeast Oakland County with two lakes and spring-fed ponds. The park includes camping facilities, over 20 miles of trail systems for hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking and winter fat tire biking, boat, kayak, and bike rentals, an 18-hole disc golf course, fishing, geocaching, picnicking, and group picnic shelters.

Catalpa Oaks: Catalpa Oaks is another Oakland County park with nearly 24 acres of open space in Southfield, just west of Greenfield Road. The park currently features six soccer fields, playgrounds (including a universally-accessible playscape), a 0.8-mile aggregate perimeter pathway around the park, and sizable pavilion which can accommodate up to 100 people.

Glen Oaks Golf Course: Oakland County's Glen Oaks Golf Course features an 18-hole, par 70 course with challenging par 3 holes crossing streams, with rolling terrain. The 122-acre course includes a 1920's English-style stone clubhouse designated as a Michigan Historical Building serves as a beautiful setting for banquets, weddings and golf outings (food service provided by Oak Management). There's also a formal garden ideal for outdoor weddings.

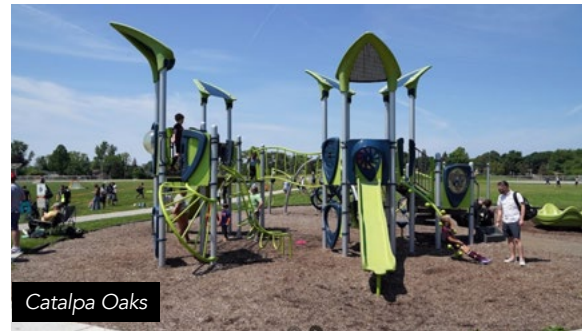
Groveland Oaks: Groveland Oaks County Park is a summer family favorite, with picnicking, swimming and family camping on 362 acres near Holly on Stewart Lake in northern Oakland County. The park offers full hookup and modern campsites, group camping areas, eight cabins, four yurts, and two island pavilions for group parties. The park also features Stewart Lake, a sandy beach, miniature golf, campground recreation program, pedal boat and kayak rental, bike rental, fishing pier, three large children's playscapes, skateboard park, bike skills course, basketball and volleyball courts and paved trails.

Highland Oaks: Highland Oaks County Park offers 302 acres of picturesque rolling hills, wetlands and old pastures in Oakland County, located within the headwaters of the Shiawassee River. Highland Oaks preserves sensitive habitat while providing recreational experiences in a natural setting. It offers 2.5 miles of trails for hiking, horseback riding, geocaching and cross-country skiing, as well as fishing from an accessible floating dock. Archery deer hunting is allowed in designated areas.

Independence Oaks: The largest Oakland County Park is this naturally-maintained 1,285-acre park near Clarkston. Independence Oaks includes the Wint Nature Center which offers interactive exhibits, interpretive programs; a youth group overnight camping area; over 12 miles of natural and paved trails; a swimming beach; archery range; volleyball courts; and a boat launch for non-motorized boats. In winter, cross-country ski equipment is available for rent, depending on staff availability and amount of snow. Twin Chimney Shelter provides a sweeping view of 68-acre Crooked Lake and is popular for outdoor wedding ceremonies and receptions.



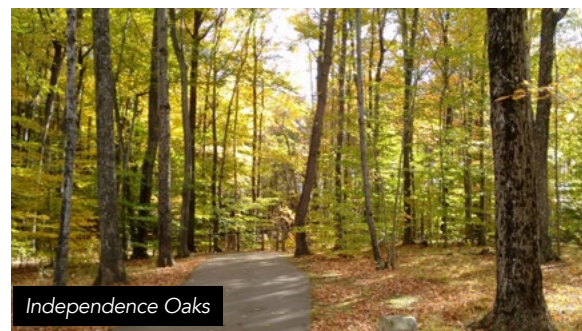
Addison Oaks



Catalpa Oaks



Glen Oaks Golf Course



Independence Oaks



Lyon Oaks

Lyon Oaks: Lyon Oaks in Wixom preserves 800 acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands within a 1,041-acre park. The park features a sprawling 18-hole golf course, day-use area with picnic shelter and playground, volleyball, horseshoes pits, and soccer and cricket fields, 6 miles of natural trails for biking, cross-country skiing and on-leash dog walking; and a 13-acre, fenced dog park for off-leash fun.



Orion Oaks

Orion Oaks: Orion Oaks County Park preserves more than 916 acres of environmentally sensitive green space and is known for its popular dog park. The 24-acre dog park features enclosures for off-leash play, two trails, field area, picnic pavilion and modern restrooms. There is also access to the dog dock on Lake Sixteen for dog-only swimming. The park also offers 10 miles of hiking and mountain bike trails, geocaching and fishing on Lake Sixteen, with a wheelchair accessible fishing pier. A small boat launch is also provided for non-motorized boats.



Red Oaks

Red Oaks: At this 163-acre Oakland County park built on the Red Run Drain, golfers, dog lovers and sports enthusiasts will find clean, safe facilities and opportunities to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends. It includes a dog park, golf course, nature center, soccer complex, water park, and 1.3 mile trail system.

Rose Oaks: Rose Oaks County Park preserves 640 acres of gently rolling open meadows and wooded uplands, including approximately 200 acres of valuable wetlands and frontage on several glacial lakes within the site. It includes 5 miles of trails including accessible boardwalks and floating docks, which are also shared by hikers, cyclists, geocachers and cross-country skiers. Fishing is permitted and non-motorized boats and electric motor boats are allowed.



Springfield Oaks

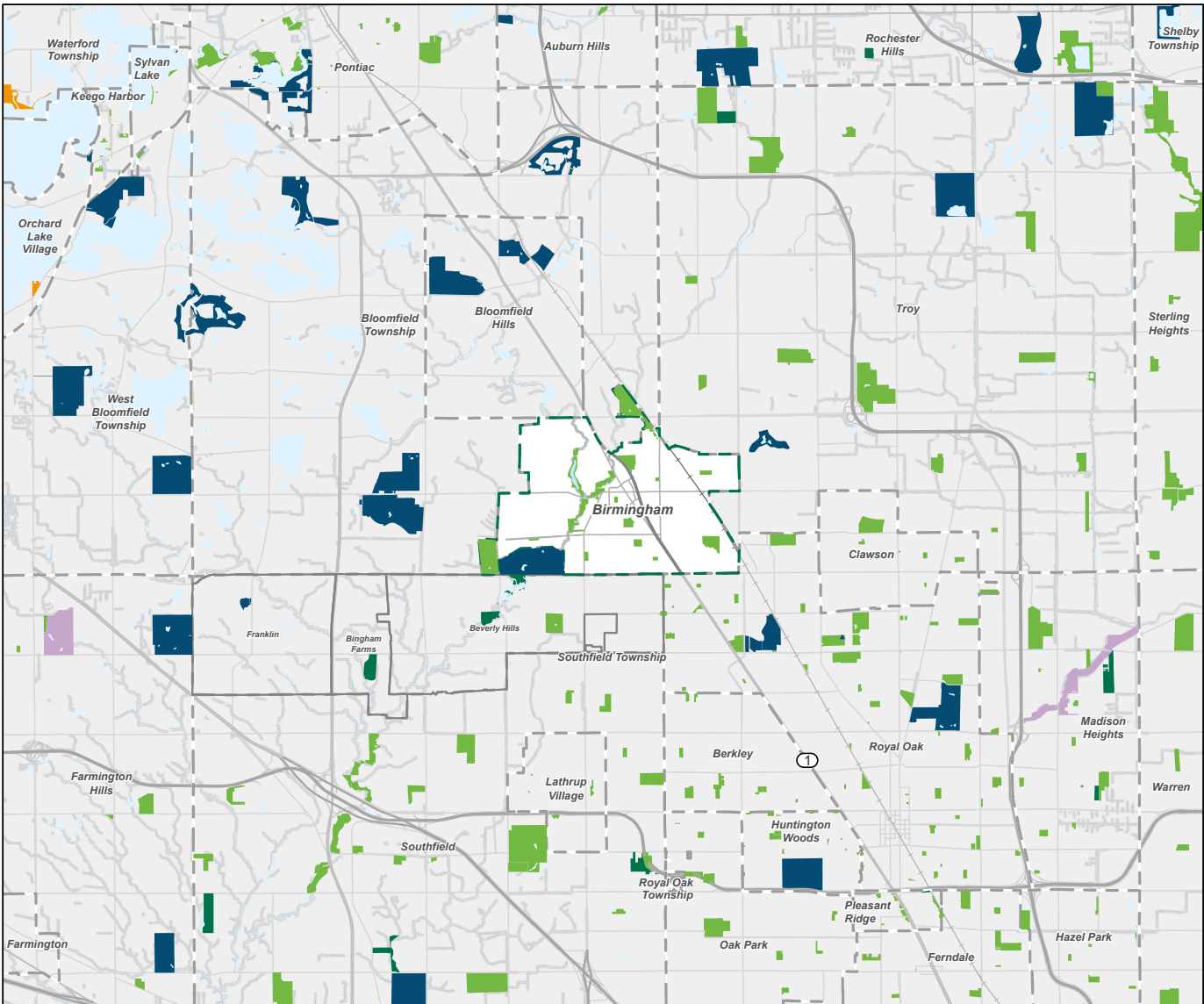
Springfield Oaks: Springfield Oaks County Park's 332 acres is home to the annual Oakland County Fair, the historic Ellis Barn, the Springfield Oaks Golf Course and a Community Service Garden.

Waterford Oaks: Waterford Oaks is a 185-acre park near Pontiac, and headquarters of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission. The park includes the Waterford Oaks Wave Pool, a bicycle motocross (BMX) track; more than 3 miles of hiking trails, a universally-accessible playscape, two platform tennis courts; sand volleyball courts, a winter family sledding hill; and outdoor fitness equipment.



Waterford Oaks

White Lake Oaks: White Lake Oaks is a scenic 18-hole, par 70 course. The 197-acre course has a well-manicured, player-friendly layout with front nine open and back nine tight, featuring wetlands and woodlands. The new clubhouse features a pro shop, club room, garden patio, and banquet facilities for groups up to 200.



MAP 2. Regional Parks and Facilities

LEGEND

- Private Park
- County Park
- Metropark
- Municipal Park
- MDNR Park
- Conservation Area
- City of Birmingham Boundary
- Water Areas



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data: City of Birmingham, 2023. McKenna, 2023.

Chapter 4

System and Facilities Analysis



The needs of the community and recommended future actions were determined through several analyses, benchmarking and consideration of current best practices. In this section, Birmingham's parks and recreation system is evaluated through the lenses of opportunity for:

1. **Facilities** provision,
2. **Accessibility and Inclusion** in park and facility design,
3. **Environmental** sustainability,
4. **Walkability and Non-Motorized Access** to parks.

Facilities

This section compares Birmingham's parks and recreation facilities with national benchmarks for provision of facilities. In 2020, the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) introduced a nationwide benchmarking tool known as NRPA Park Metrics. Each year, NRPA releases the Agency Performance Review, summarizing benchmarking data from 1,000 park and recreation agencies in the Park Metrics database. This database categorizes data by the size of the served jurisdiction. NRPA Park Metrics offers a comparison of Birmingham's parks and recreation facilities with data from similar-sized communities, providing a valuable perspective. This data is a foundation and will be complemented by community-specific insights and experiences to determine the best combination of facilities.

OUTDOOR FACILITIES ANALYSIS

Birmingham has a comprehensive range of outdoor park and recreation facilities. Table 2 reveals that the city exceeds in its provision of most facility types and by the national average. Compared to peer communities, Birmingham clearly excels in terms of the sheer amount and range of outdoor facilities it offers.

INDOOR FACILITIES ANALYSIS

Indoor park and recreation facilities are often more costly to build, staff, and maintain than outdoor facilities. Consequently, fewer peer communities have such facilities, as is reflected by the percentages in the Table 2. The table is intended to only capture indoor facilities owned and operated by the Birmingham Parks and Recreation Department. It should be noted that Birmingham is fortunate to have community partners that fulfill many of the indoor recreational needs of the community.

Looking to the future, the City will partner with Next, the 50+ Community Center, by leasing the building at St. James Park for their use. Given that the population is likely to remain steady it is unlikely that new indoor recreation spaces will be needed in the near future.

HOW TO INTERPRET THE FACILITIES ANALYSIS DATA

The data in the table to the right has been compiled by the National Recreation and Parks Association. It contains four key pieces of information:

- 1. Percent of Agencies with Facilities:** This percentage indicates how many of the surveyed agencies have the specific facility in their system.
- 2. Median Number of Residents per Facility:** This figure tells us approximately how many people each facility serves in communities with populations ranging from 20,000 to 49,999.
- 3. Number of Facilities Benchmark:** To contextualize Birmingham's situation, we've established a benchmark. This involved dividing Birmingham's total population by the median number of residents served by agencies within the 20,000 to 49,999 population range. This benchmark aids in estimating the likely presence of each facility in Birmingham based on its population size. Given Birmingham's placement at the lower end of this population range, this benchmark holds particular relevance.
- 4. Actual Facilities:** The actual number of facilities in Birmingham, as shown in the last column of the table, can be easily compared to the benchmark.

Table 4: Facilities Analysis

Facility Type	Percent of Agencies that Provide Facility	Presence of Facility In Birmingham	Median Number of Residents/ Facility	Number of Facilities	
				Benchmark	Currently In Birmingham
OUTDOOR FACILITIES					
Playgrounds	95%	Yes	3028	7	9
Tot Lots	48%	Yes	11,195	2	10
Basketball Courts	86%	Yes	7117	3	4
Tennis Courts	76%	Yes	5,815	4	14
Pickleball Courts	31%	Yes	9,257	2	6
Volleyball Courts	49%	Yes	14,800	1	0
Softball Diamond	62%	Yes	11,802	2	3
Regulation Ball field	55%	Yes	20,228	1	1
Ballfields (youth)	79%	Yes	19,556	1	5
RECTANGULAR FIELDS	• Multipurpose	No	7,674	3	0
	• Soccer (youth)	Yes	4,947	4	6
	• Football	No	18,785	1	0
	• Multipurpose - Synthetic	No	25,330	1	0
Dog Parks	68%	Yes	28,000	1	1
Swimming Pool (outdoor)	51%	No	25,191	1	0
Community Gardens	52%	No	26,741	1	0
Skate Parks	41%	Yes	32,000	1	1
Ice Rinks (outdoors)	18%	Yes	13,247	2	1*
Golf Course (18-hole)	29%	Yes	32,990	1	2**
INDOOR FACILITIES					
Recreation Centers (including gyms)	63%	No	24,380	1	0
Community Centers	59%	No	26,696	1	0
Senior Centers	41%	No	31,199	1	0
Performance Amphitheaters	37%	No	30,283	1	0
Nature Centers	33%	No	32,000	1	0
Aquatic Centers	28%	No	31,645	1	0
Stadiums	20%	No	31,000	1	0
Teen Centers	13%	No	31,645	1	0
Indoor Ice Rinks	12%	Yes	24,838	1	1
Arenas	8%	No	24,626	1	0

* Seasonal Only

** Two 9-Hole Courses

Inclusion and Accessibility

WHY PLAN FOR INCLUSIVE PARKS?

It is evident that historically marginalized individuals experience considerable health, environmental, and economic inequalities due to various social factors affecting their well-being. These factors include housing, employment, education, healthcare, access to healthy food, and the availability of safe and environmentally sustainable recreational areas. The quality of these determinants significantly influences people's overall quality of life and life expectancy. Birmingham's Parks and Recreation can play a vital role in creating welcoming and inclusive spaces that promote positive health outcomes physically, socially and mentally and connect people to the City's natural habitats, with an emphasis on reaching vulnerable and historically underserved community members.

It is important to aim to not only provide physical access but also to cultivate a culture of inclusivity

that welcomes individuals from all backgrounds and abilities, enabling their active participation in recreational activities. This holistic strategy prioritizes the creation of accessible facilities that accommodate the city's diverse resident base, which includes people with mobility challenges and cognitive disabilities. It encompasses designing pathways suitable for individuals with varying motor skills and offering spaces and activities that promote the development of fine motor skills, ensuring that inclusivity extends to everyone, regardless of their physical capabilities. Additionally, access and inclusion can be reinforced by ensuring that communication within park spaces are clear and effective.

In tandem with these physical considerations, it is important to acknowledge the potential to foster social-emotional development. This means envisioning outdoor environments intentionally designed to encourage emotional expression, support the nurturing of relationships, and facilitate

positive social interactions among community members. The emphasis here is on interaction and cooperation, providing opportunities for individuals to connect through outdoor activities while honing essential relationship skills.

Furthermore, development of inclusive, universally designed playgrounds can help to instill self-confidence by helping children interact with others and the environment in a variety of ways. A creatively designed recreation space can also embrace the sensory domain, encompassing the seven senses. By integrating sensory experiences into park design, spaces are created that cater to varying sensory needs, benefiting all visitors, including those with sensory sensitivities. Parks and playgrounds should also thoughtfully consider cognitive development by encouraging features that promote problem-solving, abstract thinking, and experiential learning.



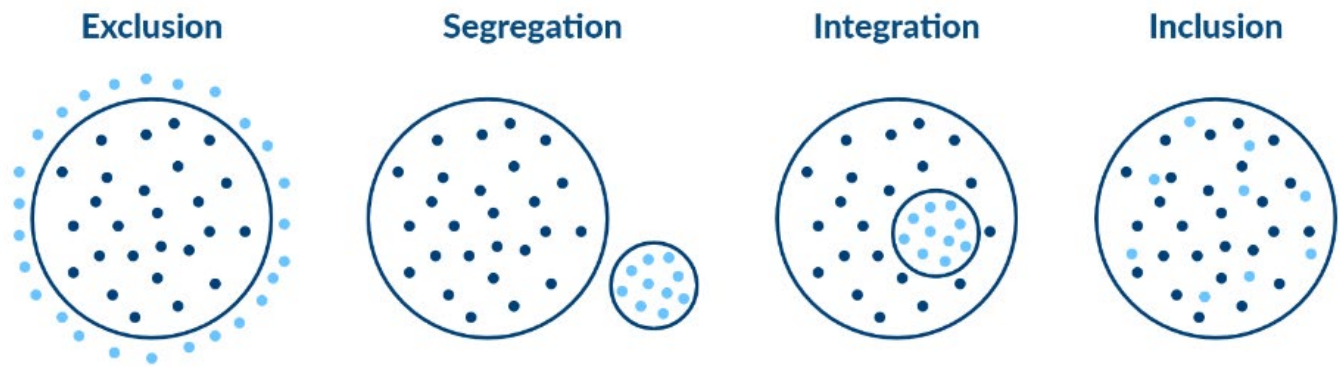
EQUITY AND INCLUSION: FOUNDATIONS FOR A VIBRANT RECREATION SYSTEM

Striving for a universally inclusive recreational space is the goal, but it's essential to start by embracing the fundamental principles of equity and inclusion to cultivate a thriving community.

Equity means recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work. Every individual has unique starting points, and it's crucial to create opportunities that cater to their specific needs. Prioritizing equity involves ensuring that all community members have access to the resources necessary for their success, distributing these resources based on individual needs.

Inclusion is about fostering a culture of belonging by actively inviting everyone to contribute and participate. It entails creating environments where people can access facilities and engage in programs that make them feel safe, welcomed, and respected.

When equity and inclusion work hand in hand, the result is a vibrant community. Such a community is committed to creating inclusive environments where every individual feels welcome, safe, and respected.



BEST PRACTICES: ACCESSIBLE PATHWAYS

To ensure park facilities are able to be enjoyed by users of all ages and abilities, accessible paths and walkways should be primary considerations in park design and capital improvements. MDNR guidelines for accessible paths include:

DIMENSIONS

Walkways within a site: at least 6 feet wide with cross-slopes under 2% and running slopes under 5%

- » Multi-use trail: at least 8 feet wide, with cross-slopes under 2% and running slopes under 5%
- » Regional trail system: at least 10 feet wide, with 1-foot buffers on either side, with cross-slopes under 2% and running slopes under 5%

MATERIALS AND DESIGN

- » Unitary surface like concrete, boardwalk or asphalt, crushed aggregate/screenings that have been "stabilized" or natural soils enhanced with soil stabilizers
- » Transition plates between trail and pedestrian bridges, decks, etc.
- » Contrasting color treatment of the surface and textured surface treatments such as brushed concrete at intersections or interpretive stations to cue people who have vision impairments that there is something to pay attention to at that spot
- » Larger (greater than 60 x 60") level areas at all turns and intersections thoughtfully laid out on the site to maximize the experience with minimal difficulty



EXPANDING INCLUSION ACROSS RECREATION

Universal design is a key principle that ensures all individuals, regardless of age or ability, can enjoy the parks and recreation facilities in Birmingham. To implement universal design effectively, several strategies should be considered:

Inclusive Play Areas: Creating inclusive play areas in parks by incorporating universally designed playground equipment allows children of all abilities to engage in play together.

Accessible Trails and Pathways: Developing accessible trails and pathways that connect different park amenities allows everyone to explore and enjoy the natural environment. Pathways should ensure that curb cuts are accessible from parking areas and crosswalks.

Seating and Rest Areas: Installing seating and rest areas at regular intervals throughout parks better accommodates individuals with varying mobility needs.

Accessible Restrooms: Upgrading or building new restroom facilities with accessible stalls, changing tables, and clear signage indicating their location allows individuals to stay at parks longer and enjoy more amenities.

Universal Signage: Implementing universally designed signage throughout parks by using clear and simple language, large fonts, and high-contrast colors helps allow people to more easily locate facilities.

Shade and Shelter: Providing shade structures and shelters with accessible seating areas allows park visitors to take refuge from the sun or rain.

Adult Fitness Equipment: Incorporating adult fitness equipment creates opportunities to increase health and fitness for a wider range of users, especially older adults.



INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUNDS

The City plans to replace a number of playgrounds throughout the city with inclusive equipment, utilizing capital from the 2020 Bond. Today, the City does not have adaptive playground facilities for children with physical or cognitive disabilities. The planned improvements include playgrounds at the Lincoln Well, Pumphouse, Linden, Pembroke, St. James, Springdale, Crestview, Howarth, Poppleton, and Kenning Parks. Discussion of the prioritization of these improvements can be found in the Action Plan.

When designing these playgrounds it is important to consider the following seven design principles:

1. **Fairness.** The play environment promotes equitable use as it is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities. It encourages multi-generational play by supporting the active participation of individuals with diverse abilities, needs, and interests.
2. **Flexibility in Use.** The play environment offers flexibility in use and accommodates everyone's right to play by being more usable, by more people, to the greatest extent possible.
3. **Simple and Intuitive Use.** The design is easy to understand, allowing individuals to be successful and gain confidence through play.
4. **Perceptible Information.** The design communicates perceptible information and allows individuals to effectively explore, interact and participate in sensory rich activities.
5. **Tolerance for Error.** The environment is safe by meeting current safety standards, considering unintentional actions, and promoting emotional security for personal growth and development in children.
6. **Low-Physical Effort.** The play environment can be used efficiently, supporting diverse opportunities for children to engage in sustained, healthy physical activity with an emphasis on social participation and cooperation.
7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use.** Appropriate size and space are provided for approach and use so that the play environment is comfortable for individuals with diverse sensory needs, body size, posture, mobility, environmental sensitivity, and motor control.

Mindful application of these seven principles guarantees the creation of exceptional destinations, the following table details best practices and interventions that can help achieve playgrounds that foster both physical and social inclusion.

Table 5: Best Practices for Inclusive Playgrounds

Inclusivity Element	Inclusive Benefits	Physical	Social-Emotional	Sensory	Cognitive	Communication
Music	Encourages collaboration, creativity and age-appropriate play for multi-generational users at any developmental stage.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dramatic Play	Encourages imagination, creativity, symbolic thinking, and social dialogue through pretend play.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Graduated Levels of Physical Challenge	Supports the progression of physical skill development by incorporating play components that address the needs of beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of skill through activities such as climbing and upper body events.	✓	✓	✓		
Communication Tools	Encourages language skills through motivating collaborative and reciprocal activities with friends and family.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Active vs. Passive Play Settings	Enhances play experiences through well-organized easy to recognize areas while avoiding user conflict.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Slide Transfer	Assists individuals transferring out of wheelchairs and/or their caregivers onto slides and provides additional height.	✓	✓	✓		
Ramp Access	Allows diverse users, adaptive equipment and caregivers access to social and physical play on the structure.	✓	✓			✓
Accessible Safety Surfacing	Creates accessible routes of travel to and throughout the play environment	✓	✓	✓		
Cozy Spot	Offers quiet or semi-enclosed places, such as under the deck or crawl tubes, where children can seek sensory relief and retreat until ready to engage in play.		✓	✓		
Seating	Offers clear visibility and supervision of activity areas.	✓	✓			✓
Motion/ Movement	Offer sensory rich feedbacks to provide vestibular and proprioceptive stimulation through spinning, sliding, rocking, and/or swinging elements.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accessible Upper Body Event	Offers an equitable alternative to upper body/climbing equipment while still providing a rewarding fitness experience that promotes healthy physical activity.	✓	✓	✓		
Cooperative Play	Reinforces positive interactions between children through dynamic and fun experiences as they work together to drive the action or engage in the activity.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Half Activity	Provides adequate space underneath the panel to allow individuals using mobility devices to comfortably reach play activities while facing forward.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shade	Integrates a balance of sunlight exposure and relief to environmental conditions	✓		✓		
Fencing/ Enclosure	Create a secure and contained space, reducing sensory over-stimulation or anxiety for children.		✓	✓	✓	

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The American Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires all areas of public service, including parks and recreation facilities, to have barrier-free accessibility.

An evaluation of Birmingham’s parks and recreation facilities was conducted as part of the inventory in the summer of 2023. In accordance with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements, facilities were evaluated to determine if a person with any of the following criteria can safely and independently access and use the park or facility:

- » Has limited sight or is blind
- » Uses a wheelchair
- » Has low hearing or is deaf
- » Uses a walking aid
- » Has a cognitive disability

A five-point evaluation system was used to rank each facility’s accessibility; the system is described in the table below, and the accessibility rankings are detailed in the table that follows.

You can find the quick-reference rating on each park’s description page below the name and location of the park.



Level 1	The park is not accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. The site includes little paved areas and the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not accessible.
Level 2	The park is somewhat accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Either the parking area or pathways are paved, but not both. Many of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
Level 3	The park is mostly accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Most of the parking areas and pathways are paved, and some of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are accessible but may not be completely barrier-free.
Level 4	The park is completely accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Parking areas and pathways are paved, and most of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are easily accessible.
Level 5	The entire park was developed or renovated using the principles of universal design, a design approach which enables all environments to be usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation.

Table 6: Comments, Key Deficiencies / Opportunities

	Park Name	1) In General	2) Approach and Entrance	3) Navigability
Proposed Accessibility Ranking LEVEL 1	Baldwin Well Site	Opportunity for more accessible benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point does not exist.	No off-street parking. No pedestrian entry.	No Signage; not Internet-searchable
	Fairway Park	Opportunity for more accessible benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point does not exist.	No off-street parking. No pedestrian entry.	No Signage; not Internet-searchable
	Linn Smith Park	0 Benches/Places to Rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Manor Park	Undeveloped nature preserve; no benches/places to test, no accessible entry.	Parking spaces are not ADA-compliant / accessible.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Pumphouse Park	4 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point does not exist.	No clear entry into park. No off-street parking.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Redding Well Site	Opportunity for more accessible benches/places to rest.	No accessible entrance to park.	No Signage; not Internet-searchable
	South Well Site	2 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	1 ADA Parking space, with accessible path.	No Signage; not Internet-searchable
LEVEL 2	Derby Well Site	0 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking. Accessible pedestrian entry path exists.	No Signage; not Internet-searchable
	Linden Park	Opportunity for more, accessible 5 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking. Pedestrian path is accessible.	Inadequate signage for navigation.
	Quarton Tennis Court	1 place to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point does not exist.	No off-street parking. No accessible pedestrian path to courts.	Signage exists and is adequate. Not separately Internet searchable.
	St. James Park	12 benches/places to rest. No accessible paths to play equipment, access from parking lot could be improved.	2 ADA parking spaces – no accessible access aisle.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	West Lincoln Well & Park	7 benches/places to rest. Entry point shared with vehicles/ gravel driveway.	No off-street parking. Pedestrian path is accessible.	Signage exists and is adequate.

		4) Inclusiveness for Play Areas	5) Activity Areas	6) ADA Requirements	7) Toilet Room	
	Baldwin Well Site <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	No accessible paths.	None	Proposed Accessibility Ranking LEVEL 1
	Fairway Park <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	No accessible paths.	None	
	Linn Smith Park <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	None	
	Manor Park <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	No accessible paths.	None	
	Pumphouse Park <i>(cont.)</i>	No accessible routes to different play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist. No inclusive play equipment.	N/A	No accessible paths.	None	
	Redding Well Site <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	No accessible paths.	None	
	South Well Site <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	No accessible paths.	None	
	Derby Well Site <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	Pathways that exist are accessible.	None	LEVEL 2
	Linden Park <i>(cont.)</i>	No accessible routes to different play equipment. Rest areas for caregivers exist but are not adequately shaded.	N/A	Pathways that do exist are 60" and paved, with no inappropriate slopes.	None	
	Quarton Tennis Court <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	No accessible route to court.	No accessible paths.	None	
	St. James Park <i>(cont.)</i>	No accessible routes to play areas. No inclusive play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist.	Partial routes of entry to each area. Facilities are not accessible.	Pathways that do exist are 60" and paved, with no inappropriate slopes.	Seasonal portable toilet	
	West Lincoln Well & Park <i>(cont.)</i>	No accessible routes to different play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist.	N/A	No accessible paths.	Seasonal portable toilet	

	Park Name	1) In General	2) Approach and Entrance	3) Navigability
LEVEL 3	Birmingham Museum	8 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	1 accessible parking space with accessible path to facilities. Accessible ramp into building.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Crestview Park	7 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking. Accessible path to entrance exists but may require long travel distance in street.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Howarth Park	11 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking. Pedestrian path is accessible.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Kenning Park & Ice Sports Arena	5 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	7 accessible parking spaces with accessible path.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Lincoln Hills Golf Course & Dog Park	7 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	3 accessible parking spaces with accessible paths.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Martha Baldwin Park	3 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking. Pedestrian path across park has stairs but no ramp.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Pembroke Park	12 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Poppleton Park	16 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	1 ADA space with accessible aisle and entrance toward ball field; no accessible path to field.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Quarton Lake Park	34 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	Route of entry is gravel.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Springdale Golf Course & Park	36 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	1 accessible parking space with accessible path.	Signage exists and is adequate.
LEVEL 4	Adams Park	9 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking. Pedestrian path is accessible.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Barnum Park	58 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	2 accessible parking spaces, with accessible path.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Booth Park	10 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	No off-street parking. Pedestrian path is accessible.	Signage exists and is adequate.
	Shain Park	35 benches/places to rest. Unobstructed, pedestrian-safe entry point exists.	2 accessible parking spaces with accessible paths.	Signage exists and is adequate.
LEVEL 5	None	Level 5 means that all facilities within a park are universally accessible. This designation is unusual, especially in parks that were developed when most of Birmingham's parks were designed. This designation is a worthy aspiration for all future park design.		

	4) Inclusiveness for Play Areas	5) Activity Areas	6) ADA Requirements	7) Toilet Room	
Birmingham Museum <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	Accessible paths exist; northern edge of park is not accessible from parking or street – stairs only.	Accessible toilet rooms	LEVEL 3
Crestview Park <i>(cont.)</i>	No accessible routes to different play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist.	No accessible path to multi-surface fields.	Pathways that do exist are 60" and accessible, with no inappropriate slopes.	Seasonal portable toilet	
Howarth Park <i>(cont.)</i>	Accessible routes to different play equipment, but not within play areas. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist.	Partial accessibility to and within sport courts.	Pathways that do exist are 60" and paved, with no inappropriate slopes.	Seasonal portable toilet	
Kenning Park & Ice Sports Arena <i>(cont.)</i>	Accessible routes to sandbox only. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist. Some inclusive play equipment.	Accessible paths to Little League diamonds, ice arena.	Pathways that exist are accessible.	Accessible permanent toilet rooms.	
Lincoln Hills Golf Course & Dog Park <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	Accessible route into (but not within) dog park.	Accessible toilet room.	Accessible permanent toilet rooms	
Martha Baldwin Park <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	N/A	Pathways that do exist are 60" and paved, with no inappropriate slopes.	None	
Pembroke Park <i>(cont.)</i>	Partial accessible routes to different play equipment. Inclusive play equipment.	No accessible paths to activity centers.	No accessible paths to activity centers.	None	
Poppleton Park <i>(cont.)</i>	No accessible routes to different play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist.	Accessible path to tennis courts only. No accessible path or spectator seating to ball field.	Pathways that do exist are 60" and paved, with no inappropriate slopes. Turnarounds and loading spaces do not exist.	Seasonal portable toilet	
Quarton Lake Park <i>(cont.)</i>	N/A	Trail is able-bodied pedestrian-friendly, not wheeled accessible.	Pathways that exist are accessible.	None	
Springdale Golf Course & Park <i>(cont.)</i>	Partial accessible routes to different play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist but could be supplemented. No inclusive play equipment.	Accessible path to clubhouse.	Pathways that exist are accessible.	Accessible permanent toilet rooms	
Adams Park <i>(cont.)</i>	Accessible routes do not exist to all play areas, some inclusive play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist.	Accessible routes to basketball court. No accessible routes to track facilities or soccer field.	Pathways that do exist are 60" and accessible, with no inappropriate slopes.	None	LEVEL 4
Barnum Park <i>(cont.)</i>	Accessible routes to different play equipment. Shade (upon landscape maturity) and rest areas for caregivers exist.	Accessible paths to both sides of baseball diamond, spectator areas.	ADA requirements accounted for.	Year-round portable toilet	
Booth Park <i>(cont.)</i>	Accessible routes to separate play areas, some inclusive play equipment. Shade and rest areas for caregivers exist.	N/A	Pathways that do exist are 60" wide and have adequate landings. Stairs and handrails are ADA compliant.	Year-round portable toilet	
Shain Park <i>(cont.)</i>	Accessible routes exist to play areas.	Accessible routes to activity areas; non-accessible fall surface between equipment.	Pathways that do exist are 60" and accessible, with no inappropriate slopes.	Year-round portable toilet	
					LEVEL 5

Opportunities for Improvement

SYSTEM-WIDE OPPORTUNITIES

Accessible Access

Many of the parks lack accessible access – many parks do not have a pedestrian-safe entry point or easy access from the parking lot. Ensuring that curb cuts exist at entrances to the park to provide connectivity with the surrounding areas and neighborhoods ensures access for everyone. Many parks have opportunities to add accessible routes to play equipment, sports courts, and fields. Installing paved pathways with appropriate slopes and widths can improve accessibility. Parks like Pembroke, Poppleton, and Quarton Lake either have non-paved pathways or no pathways at all, the installation of graded or paved surfaces through the parks should be considered.

Priority improvements should be made at parks with a ranking of 1 or 2. However, it may be appropriate for some parks that have been intentionally designated as nature preserves or designed for low impact, such as Manor Park and Rouge River Trail, to maintain their naturalized trails.

Shade and Seating

While many of the parks have benches or places to rest there are opportunities to install more accessible benches and resting places. Strategic placement of seating along trails and pathways can allow for more individuals with a variety of physical abilities to use the paths. Ensuring that the benches have paved access points and foundations is also key to ensuring that those with mobility devices can utilize the resting places. Often resting points are used to lessen physical exertion— to further facilitate such use, all parks should have some shaded benches or seating areas. Shaded seating areas are especially important around play areas to allow for safe supervision of children.

Restrooms

Most parks lack permanent restroom facilities. Seasonal portable toilets are available in some parks, and portable toilets are available year-round at Barnum, Booth and Shain parks.

Installing permanent restrooms that are ADA accessible should be a priority for heavily used parks. It is important to consider safety and maintenance with the installation of permanent bathrooms.

PUBLIC RESTROOM BENEFITS AND BEST PRACTICES

Safety:

- » Restrooms should be well-lit with exterior lighting.
- » Restrooms should be locked at park closing and opened in the morning ensuring no one can enter the facilities overnight.
- » There should be no blind spots, and baby changing stations should be available.
- » Security cameras can deter unlawful activities if problems persist.

Maintenance:

- » Restrooms should be regularly cleaned and inspected.
- » Using vandal-resistant construction materials, automatic faucets/flushers, and non-porous surfaces simplifies maintenance.
- » Adequate ventilation is key.



Pop Up Play

Pop Up Play opportunities refer to life sized board games or permanent yard games such as corn-hole, shuffleboard, ping pong, or ladder toss. These games provide an opportunity for inter-generational play and provide an activity for teens and young adults, who often do not have park specific features that cater to them. The installation of these games also has been shown to increase the amount of time people spend in the area, potentially increasing their likelihood to shop or dine in the city. These types of facilities are best suited in parks closer to the urban center of Birmingham.

Adult Fitness Parks

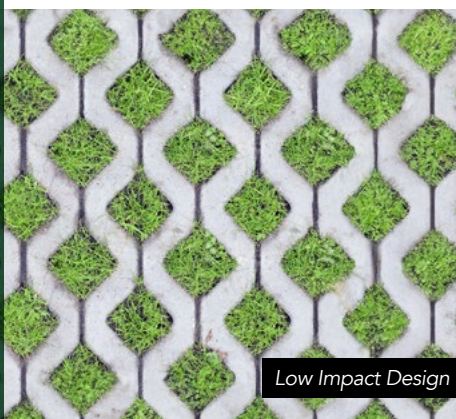
Providing opportunities for adults to work out is another way to broaden the opportunities for different populations to use the parks in a variety of ways. These adult fitness areas are a great way for older adults to engage in a diverse range of exercises during a daily walk or visit to the park. Fitness courts or equipment is best suited for neighborhood parks.

Sustainability in the Birmingham Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Park facilities have robust potential to help a community achieve environmental sustainability goals. This planning process occurred concurrent with the early stages of an effort, led by City planners and the Ad Hoc Environmental Sustainability Committee, to develop a sustainability and climate action plan for the entire city. Given that the goals and policies that will set the agenda for Birmingham are not yet adopted, this plan endeavors to illustrate the 'art of the possible' for how parks can eventually participate in meeting those goals, and to begin to align policies for parks provision to best advance the sustainability conversation in Birmingham.

In this plan, sustainability in parks is viewed through the four lenses of opportunity shown below. Although these categories have some overlap, we have broadly defined them to address the following topics:

1. **Climate.** This category of sustainability addresses the negative effects of a warming climate and how parks can be used to mitigate these effects. In particular, this category focuses on increased air temperatures and extreme heat events and how vegetation/trees can help with cooling.
2. **Life Cycle.** This category of sustainability addresses how parks can change their construction and maintenance practices to lower the impact on the environment. This category addresses things like recycled construction materials, low-maintenance plantings, nature-conscious building design, and more.
3. **Ecosystem.** This category of sustainability addresses how parks can support native plants and animals and provide habitat for these species.
4. **Low Impact Design.** This category of sustainability addresses how parks can be used to capture stormwater, helping to reduce flooding and clean water as it flows into streams and back into the ground.



WHY PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR PARKS?

Climate

The climate of Birmingham and southeast Michigan is influenced by its location within the urban “heat island” of metro Detroit. Climate change is already having noticeable health impacts as temperatures rise, leading to more dangerously hot days, and pollution increases, affecting those with lung conditions.

The more natural vegetation is replaced with buildings and pavement, the hotter the city gets. Two factors create the urban heat island effect: the loss of trees and vegetative cover to development (since tree canopy and plantings function to cool cities and waterways by shading surfaces, buildings, and waterways, deflecting solar radiation

and transpiring water back to the atmosphere) and the construction of dark surfaces (especially pavement and rooftops) that absorb heat and re-radiate that heat. A 2020 study in Scientific Reports magazine found that greenery alone can mitigate the urban heat island effect by up to 21%.

In general, research has found that trees can reduce local temperatures by up to 5°F, providing significant relief during summer months. For example, when comparing two hypothetical parks where one has 30% less trees than the other, the park with less trees would be an average of 4°F hotter. This poses a great risk to public health, given that heat wave mortality risk increases by 2.5% for each 1°F increase in air temperature.

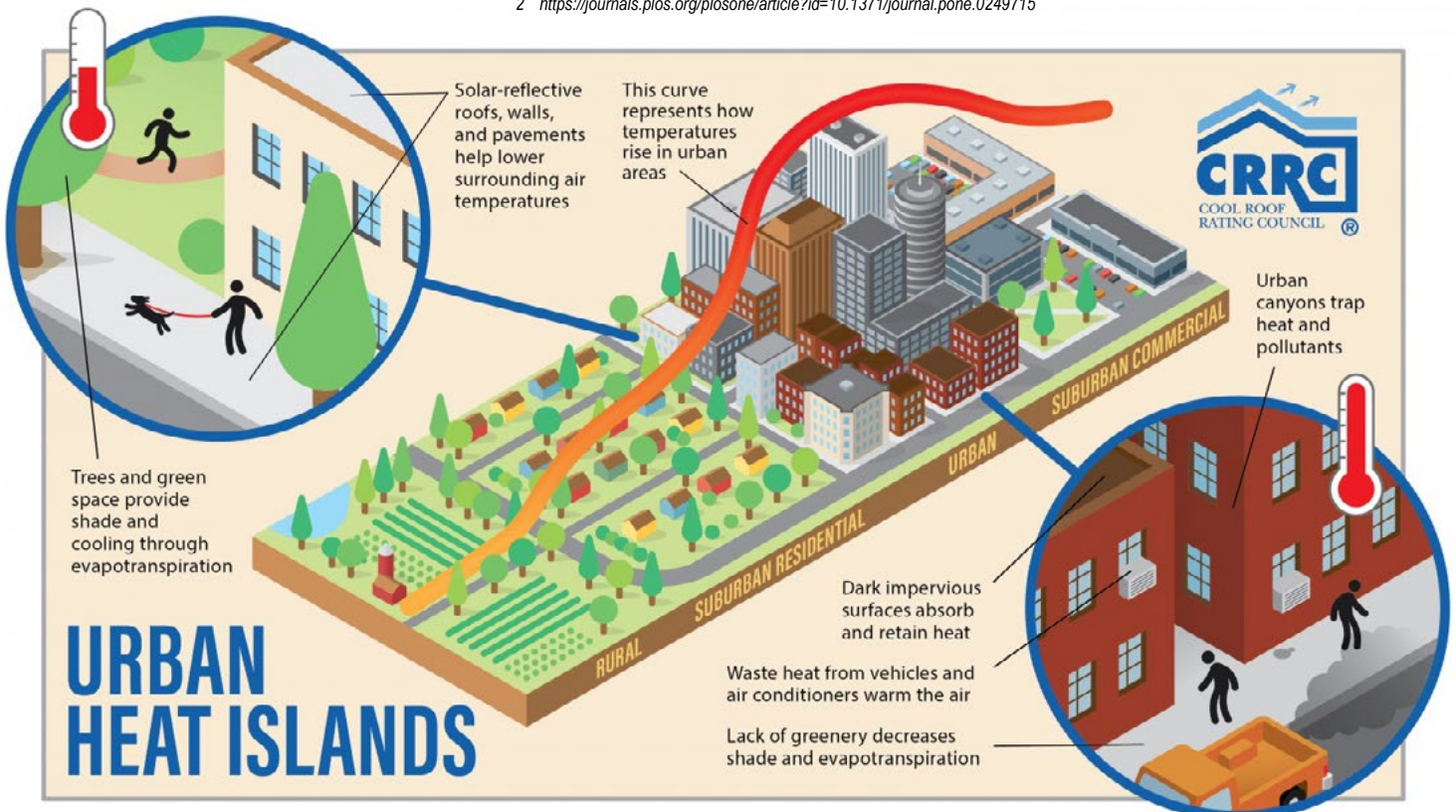
How we design our communities may also determine how well we

cope with climate change in the future. People are exposed to climate change through changing weather patterns (for example, more intense and frequent extreme events) and indirectly through changes in water, air, food quality and quantity, ecosystems, agriculture, and economy.

Adding new trees in parks is one of the simplest ways to help fight the urban heat island effect. It is also wise to retain and **protect existing trees**, since their wide, mature leaf canopies provide ample cooling and they are must less costly than planting new trees. The type and position of new trees can also be planned to maximize cooling benefits—researchers found that planting deciduous trees to the west of a high-heat surface (parking lot, building, etc.) was the most effective method for shading and cooling.

1 <https://dirt.asla.org/2023/03/15/more-urban-trees-could-cut-summer-heat-deaths-by-a-third#:~:text=New%20research%20published%20in%20The,heat%20islands%20by%2040%20percent.>

2 <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0249715>



Maintenance. Lawn maintenance, a substantial obligation for the operation of a typical suburban city's park system, is a significant undertaking of both time and money—the cost of labor, fertilizer, pesticides, and equipment all add up to make turf grass a costly park feature. If they are irrigated, lawns are also water intensive and are becoming more expensive as the climate warms. Birmingham only selectively irrigates lawns in strategic areas.

Replacing lawn areas with drought-resistant, zero maintenance plants is one of the most effective ways to eliminate park maintenance costs. This is not to say that all parks should be lawn-free – lawns will still be needed for sports and other activity areas, passive recreation and as a placeholder for planned future amenities. Some lawn areas, especially those that are under-used, can be replaced. Michigan State University has compiled an extensive list of drought-resistant plants which are also visually pleasing for parks and gardens, and their guide provides advice on the soil conditions best suited for each.

Heat is also a considerable factor in the wear and tear of surface parking lots and asphalt roads. Increased temperatures lower the structural integrity of asphalt roads, leading to buckling and cracking over time. When feasible, park roads and sidewalks should be constructed of concrete, which is considerably more durable than asphalt even though concrete roads come with higher construction costs. This measure is a simple way to reduce maintenance and improve sustainability over time.

Building Materials. New techniques of nature-conscious building have emerged over the last five years, including using bio-conscious construction materials and incorporating habitat into building design. These technologies can be evaluated for future built elements in Birmingham parks.

Beyond green roofs, which use vegetation to capture stormwater, some engineers are now considering roof ponds, which can capture water and provide habitat for waterfowl in areas that otherwise lack open water. Initial research has found that roof ponds are about equally effective in maintaining indoor thermal comfort as other passive heating and cooling strategies.

Additionally, some companies are finding ways to change the composition of construction materials themselves to reduce carbon emissions and make it easier to grow plants on the surface of buildings – the London School of Architecture has been experimenting with a bio-concrete that lets moss grow on the surface, step toward incorporating green infrastructure into previously unexplored aspects of development.

New parking lots at parks that experience frequent and higher amounts of flooding could benefit from additionally installing pervious (or permeable) pavement materials. Pervious pavement allows stormwater to infiltrate into the soil, which minimizes wear on the pavement. The type of permeable pavement design can influence the durability of the surface, which can include pavers, porous asphalt, or pervious concrete.

However, permeable pavement costs twice as much as regular pavement, and it also requires regular maintenance to clean out debris that will stop water from filtering through the pavement. As such, permeable pavers are not appropriate everywhere, though they can make a big difference where employed.



Drought resistant yarrow

As development pressures continue to increase along bird migration corridors and impinge upon pollinator and wildlife habitat, scientists, conservation groups, and gardening clubs are encouraging people to forsake much of their relatively lifeless lawns and to cultivate native shrubs and plants that have many benefits to the landowner and the environment alike. Cities can also participate in these efforts by improving the habitat conditions on parks and other institutional properties.

Land Habitat. Tree planting alone is not enough to boost habitat quality and encourage new species to thrive in parks. Replacing some lawn with a variety of native plants, shrubs, and trees of differing size classes is necessary to encourage native birds, insects, and wildlife. In essence, a diversity of land plantings is needed to provide adequate habitat. The best practice used by parks planners today is to create “multi-functional” green spaces – spaces which serve humans and other species at the same time through amenities enjoyed by all, like gardens and nature trails.

Water Habitat. Where already present or planned, retention ponds can provide habitat for marine animals, native plants, and birds. Planting these ponds with native wetland grasses provided habitat for birds and small amphibians in particular which take refuge in the tall brush. To keep both retention ponds and detention basins clear of mosquito breeding, it is necessary to keep the inlets, outlets, and the bottom of the pond clean of debris; maintain erosion; and maintain the vegetation around the ponds.

Even smaller detention features such as rain gardens provide valuable habitat in local parks.



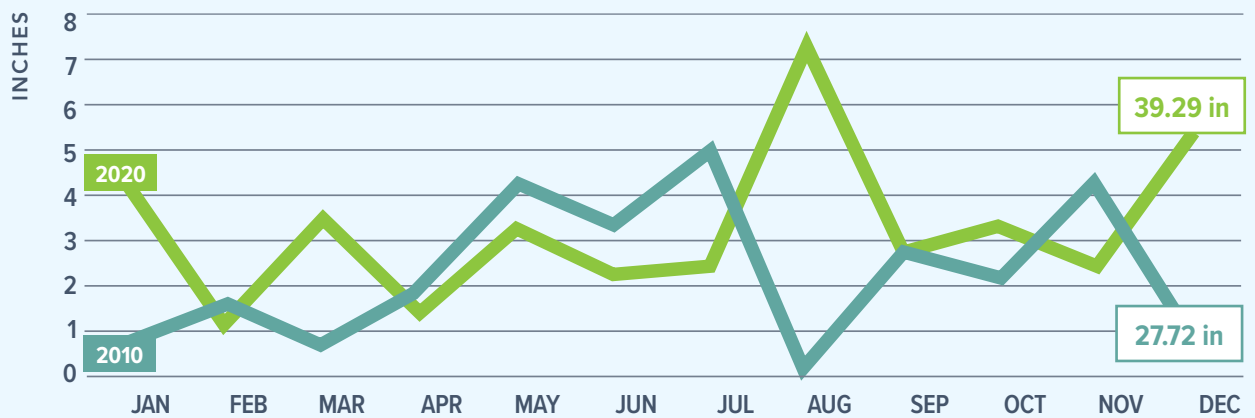
A detention pond in Mary Beth Doyle Park, Ann Arbor

LOW-IMPACT DESIGN

Stormwater infrastructure, hidden in the streets around us, usually goes unnoticed on a dry day. However, these systems play a vital role in every community, including Birmingham, because Michigan is one of the most water-rich and rainy states in the country. Stormwater infrastructure has traditionally consisted of solely storm drains and pipes, which directly dispose of the water into the Rouge River.

However, impervious (vegetated) surfaces that capture stormwater are now considered a part of the stormwater infrastructure system because they help control floods and naturally cleanse dirty rainwater. Instead of flowing straight to the river, the water is slowed down by the vegetation and absorbed back into the soil. These features are referred to as **green infrastructure** (or bioretention)—rain gardens, wetlands, and swales are some of the features that improve water quality and make the community more attractive. As a bonus, these features also provide urban wildlife habitat and lower air temperatures.

Figure 2: Historic Rainfall 2010 vs 2020



Sources: Oakland Water Authority

Term	Definition
Rain Gardens	An attractive, sunken landscape filter planted with flowers and blooming shrubs. Rain gardens are designed to absorb storm water run-off from impervious surfaces such as roofs and parking lots.
Swale (aka Bioswale)	An attractive, sunken landscape filter planted with grasses and other low-maintenance shrubs. Swales are designed to absorb storm water run-off from impervious surfaces such as roofs and parking lots.
Green Roof	Green roofs are roofs planted with vegetation that absorbs stormwater. Green roofs provide a 50%-90% annual runoff reduction and reduce energy for heating and cooling.
Detention Pond	A man-made pond which is used to collect and store stormwater during heavy rains. Detention ponds store water for a limited amount of time, after which it soaks into the soil.
Wet Meadow	A low-lying marshy area, home to a variety of native plants and animals, that captures water and generally stays wet during most of the year. Wet meadows occur where land is flooded in some seasons and moist in others, such as along the shores of rivers or lakes.
Urban Forest	Areas of tree canopy cover that exist in multiple forms throughout the city, such as woodlots, private landscapes, street trees, and park trees.
Permeable Pavement	Paving surfaces that are made of either a porous material that enables stormwater to flow through it, or nonporous blocks spaced so that water can flow between the gaps.

Green infrastructure features **lower the impact** that storms have on the community by reducing the burden on pipes, reducing flooding, and providing numerous environmental benefits.

The link between increased runoff volume (despite managing discharge rate and water quality) and degradation of downstream surface water bodies has become a key issue in managing storm water runoff. Low-impact practices (managing storm water at its source rather than on a site or regional-wide basis) have become a preferred method for managing storm water.

Benefits of Birmingham's Urban Forest

Communities around the US are increasingly starting to think of trees as a key part of the stormwater infrastructure system. Trees act as a "living utility" by intercepting stormwater and absorbing it before it becomes a burden on municipal pipes and waterways.

Birmingham's urban forest is already a key element of its green infrastructure. An inventory of the city's trees is in process (15,547 trees have been inventoried within the city along streets and in select parks so far). These trees provide the following benefits:

1,189,646 pounds	2,771,413 gallons	12,683,407 gallons
of carbon dioxide is sequestered annually	of runoff is avoided annually	of rainfall is intercepted annually

As cities trend toward more invocative definitions for "utilities," Birmingham's current success can continue to be an example of natural features actively contributing as a formal infrastructure asset.

What are the benefits of GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE?

Water Quality



Green infrastructure reduces the amount of polluted stormwater runoff entering our rivers and lakes. In cities with combined sewer systems, green infrastructure is being used to reduce sewer overflows during storms.

Reduce Flooding



Green infrastructure can reduce flood risk by slowing and reducing stormwater runoff into waterways.

Water Supply



Harvesting rainwater is good for outdoor irrigation and some indoor uses. Water infiltrated into the soil recharges groundwater and increases flow into rivers.

Quality of Life



Green infrastructure provides aesthetic benefits to the area by increasing the amount of a community's green space.

Recreation



Green infrastructure can provide recreational and tourism opportunities including increased access to hiking, hunting, fishing, and bird watching.

Economic Growth



Green infrastructure can increase residential property values located near trails, parks, and waterways. In addition, green infrastructure is one way to attract and retain the knowledge-based workforce in our region.

Traffic Calming



Green infrastructure techniques along roads can also be used to slow traffic and provide a buffer between the roadway and pedestrians.

Habitat Connections



Green infrastructure can provide needed links in habitat corridors to strengthen and support rare and important plant and animal areas in the community.

Air Quality



Increased vegetation positively impacts air quality through carbon sequestration, the capture of fugitive dust, and removal of air pollutants.

Individual Health



Green infrastructure encourages outdoor physical activity, which can have a positive impact in fighting obesity and chronic diseases.

Public Finances



Green infrastructure can reduce a community's infrastructure costs by using natural systems rather than built systems, and by avoiding building lengthy new stormwater pipes.

Energy and Climate



Implementing techniques such as green roofs, increased tree plantings around buildings, converting turfgrass to no-mow areas, and reclaiming stormwater for use on site can reduce energy consumption and save money.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Climate

Trees provide several valuable services, from cleaning the air to shielding people from hot temperatures. The main ways to reduce temperatures and the urban heat island effect are by:

- Creating parks, green rooftop parks, gardens, and green spaces.
- Promoting green infrastructure stormwater management techniques in site design, including the trees, green roofs, permeable pavements, and other plantings that filter water and reduce heat island effects.
- Making buildings more energy-efficient.
- Minimizing the use of dark surfaces (such as parking lots and black roofs) that absorb heat and re-radiate that heat during the evenings, when the cities would otherwise cool down.

Out of the 231.4 acres of parkland in Birmingham, 84.39 acres (or 36%) are covered by trees. Birmingham has recently made great strides throughout the park system in increasing the tree canopy while maintaining purposefully allocated open space (e.g. for golf courses, athletic fields, planned future amenities). That essential progress should be continued, and opportunities should be continuously sought to continue to maintain and increase the tree canopy.

There are additional opportunities to plant additional trees in almost every city park, even when excluding areas reserved for sports or already natural spaces. The US Forest Service recommends that urban areas maintain a minimum of 40-60% tree coverage to stave off the negative impacts of climate change, both for people and the natural environment.

The location of new trees will vary from park-to-park. However, new trees should be targeted toward areas where people are at the greatest risk for heat, while avoiding dedicated athletic areas and areas planned for future amenities. Some open lawn expanses that have high temperatures are potential locations for new trees. As a part of the roundtables conducted during this Plan, participants indicated that trees would be especially welcome adjacent to bleachers and sport spectator areas. Additionally, all new plantings should align with the city's existing Public Tree Management Plan.



Life Cycle

Today, only four (4) of the city's 25 parks have low-maintenance planting beds. Low-maintenance means that the plants do not require mowing, fertilizing, or irrigation to survive—instead, the plants are specifically chosen for their attractive appearance and resistance to extreme weather. These plantings require less city resources to maintain and help improve the overall sustainability of the parks system.

It should be noted that low-maintenance planting beds do not necessarily have to capture stormwater, but some do. These double-duty features are covered under the Stormwater Plantings section below.

Adams, Quarton, Barnum, and Booth Parks all currently have sustainable features, which take different forms. In Booth Park, the beds are very simple and include mulch, leafy trees, decorative stones, and well-sculpted hedges. Except for the occasional hedge trim, these features require no additional maintenance.

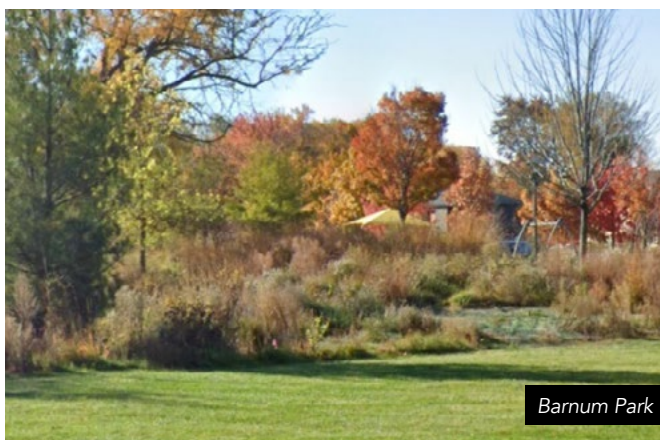
Adams Park's low-maintenance plantings are integrated with the playground design, providing play space and also improving the park's appearance. These beds include mulch, leafy trees, low-growing flowering shrubs such as lavender, and decorative boulders (used for play).

In contrast, the planting beds near the dock at Quarton Lake have more of a naturalized look—they swap out mulched beds for mid-height grasses and hardy shrubs, but are still contained within a defined area. Additionally, at Barnum Park, the 'no-mow' areas are scattered across the hillside where they act as an attractive wildflower meadow and landscape feature.

There are opportunities to add low-maintenance planting beds in almost every park in the city. Most of the city's parks have under-used lawn space adjacent to sports fields and picnic areas that can readily be converted into

meadows or re-landscaped to eliminate costly mowing and watering. Planting beds should be prioritized in large, sunny turf areas which require intensive management. Meanwhile, planting beds do not have much utility in forested parks like Pump House Park and nature areas, and other sustainability measures should be pursued in these locations.

Today, Birmingham has already made excellent progress in reducing the use of fertilizers, insecticides, and herbicides in local parks. Fertilizing is limited to the turf areas of parks only, and insecticide/herbicide is only used to control infrequent major outbreaks. As such, the most intensive management component for the many park lawns is mowing. On average, each park in Birmingham gets mowed once per week (26 times annually, excluding winter). Lawn equipment contributes 50% of particulates in local airways, making them one of the most polluting forms of gas-powered equipment. Replacing strategic turf areas within the park system could potentially reduce long-term maintenance costs and increase overall sustainability and air quality by reducing the use of gasoline-powered lawn equipment.



Low-Impact Design

Locations. Not every Birmingham park is equally suitable for green infrastructure. Green infrastructure requires both a water source and well-drained soils, so that the plants get adequate water but do not drown during long flood events. Planting hardy plants which are drought and flood resistant can help expand the range of locations where green infrastructure is possible.

When it comes to parks, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) recommends focusing on two types of locations for green infrastructure:

- **Park Lawns:** Large open space areas managed as turf present options for constructing native plant grow zones in areas not generally accessed by the public.
- **Parking Lots:** In parking lots, bioretention areas, bioswales, and porous pavement are techniques that can significantly reduce stormwater runoff. Inset parking lot islands can double as bioretention areas when coordinated with engineering design.

Most Suitable Parks. The most suitable parks for near-term green infrastructure projects are parks that have both well-drained soils and ponding during storms. These locations can accommodate large-scale green infrastructure projects, such as detention ponds and wet meadows, which capture lots of storm water. As Michigan starts to get more and more severe storms during the summer season, these large features will be especially important to reduce flooding.

Analysis of the suitability Birmingham parks for green infrastructure included a compilation was compiled using data from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the park inventory performed in 2023 by staff. This analysis identified that portions of the Springdale and Lincoln Hills golf courses, Pump House Park, Linden Park, and Barnum Park have areas that experience ponding and also have soil conducive to draining. It should be noted that USGS can only estimate where ponding occurs, and there are likely many more parks which experience ponding during storms.

Although these parks are the best opportunity today, it's important to remember that **green infrastructure comes in many different forms and can be successfully incorporated into almost any park.**



Rain garden/bioswale in Barnum Park parking lot

Only a few parks may have the water needed to support a wet meadow, but almost every park in the city can support a swale. For example, Martha Baldwin park is neither well-drained nor does it have frequent water ponding, but it has successfully supported a large bioswale since 2018.

In the future, Birmingham should continue to pursue the opportunities for new green infrastructure at other parks across the city. Green infrastructure should also be considered as a priority possibility for including in any future park designs. This includes the recommended design processes included in this plan for St. James and Kenning Park. The possibility of green infrastructure implementation should also be considered when planning for universally-accessible playground installation and any other significant capital investments.

Built Amenities. Over the past decade, local governments across the country have been continuously upgrading their buildings and facilities to become more energy-efficient through things like LED bulbs and low-flow faucets. However, very few have taken the leap from efficient to sustainable when considering their building and operations. Currently, none of the City's recreation buildings include sustainability enhancements such as backup solar panels, green roofs, or recycled construction materials. As such, there is ample opportunity for improvement when it comes to site-level sustainability.

Most existing recreation buildings are located adjacent to sunny, open parks, which makes them perfect locations for rooftop solar panels. These panels would not only reduce the environmental impact of the building, but also provide a vital backup source of power during blackouts. As winter storms increase across Michigan, municipalities are increasingly being called upon to provide public warming centers during crisis events. Adding solar panels to the Racquet Club, Ice Arena, and other existing park buildings with suitable roofs would help improve sustainability and resilience.

Sustainability is not just considered at the building-level, but at the community-level. Parks which provide built amenities that encourage walking, biking, and other non-motorized transportation help encourage more active and sustainable living. Amenities which help encourage these activities include safe walking paths, cross-walks, bike racks, and more. However, only 12 of Birmingham's parks have a bike rack, and many of these have limited spaces. As such, there is opportunity at every single city park for additional bike racks, thereby accommodating cyclists from within and around the community.



Ecosystem

Continuous plantings, which are vegetated areas that are not separated by large patches of lawn or pavement, are important for the wellbeing of humans and wildlife. Continuous stands of trees provide people with relief from hot summer days, allowing them to take advantage of parkland without putting themselves at risk. Continuous trees and groundcover plantings also provide a “highway” for birds, small mammals, and insects by allowing them to move from place to place safely and expand their habitat. Furthermore, continuous plantings help break up large lawns and paved areas, creating a wider variety of views and experiences for park-goers.

Out of the city’s 25 parks, only 18 have continuous rows of perimeter or interior trees. Some parks have entire sides that are devoid of trees, both along the street and on the interior. Additionally, very few of the city’s parks have continuous areas of ground-cover plants, such as grasses, flowers, and shrubs—only Barnum, Quarton, and Linden Parks have areas with continuous groundcover.

Oftentimes, tree-planting programs target open spaces in parks but do not consider the possible connections with existing tree stands. While it’s important to avoid overlap between trees, new trees should be strategically located to “connect” with existing ones as they grow, thereby creating a network for people and wildlife. Similarly, when new ground plantings are planned, efforts should be made to avoid gaps larger than 10 feet between beds to encourage wildlife habitat. Today, the greatest opportunities for improvement in continuous planting exists in Kenning Park, Poppleton Park, Crestview Park, the South Well Site, and Martha Baldwin Park. All of these parks have sections of existing trees around the perimeter and some trees on the interior, which could be connected through minimal additional plantings to create a continuous network. There is also ample opportunity in the city’s golf courses, although additional planning would be required to ensure the sport aspects of the courses are not impaired.



Quarton Park

Walkability and Non-Motorized Access

WALKABILITY ANALYSIS

Parks are essential ingredients in healthy communities—access to parks facilitates increased physical activity and many health benefits. If access to a park is convenient without the use of an automobile, those benefits also include reduced car trips and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Birmingham residents, with some notable exceptions, are generally very well served in their ability to access a park close to home. The walkability analysis presented in Figure 3, showing 5-, 10-, and 15-minute walking times from Birmingham parks, shows that very few residents are more than a 10-minute walk from a City-owned park of some type.

To help focus and prioritize future facility investment, the walkability access was also overlaid with an analysis of the age of residents. Figures 4-7 show 5-minute walk access overlaid with the presence of children (ages 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, respectively). The southeast portion of the city generally has the most children of all ages, especially those 4 and under. The neighborhoods north of Maple and west of Quarton Lake also have a higher concentration of children, especially those 10-14 years old.

The Birmingham Plan identifies Planning Districts (areas of consistent character that embody the structure of a neighborhood unit) within the City, and further identifies several of those Planning Districts that are not well-served by walkable park access. Most notable in this group is the Torry Planning District (bounded by Maple, Eton, Lincoln and Adams). Torry is home to one of the largest concentrations of residents over age 65 in the city, but relatively fewer children. This could suggest that efforts to enhance green space access in this area be focused on passive recreation opportunities and gathering places that are well-equipped with places to rest, as well as programming for seniors.

B. Future Land Use

Zoning Plan

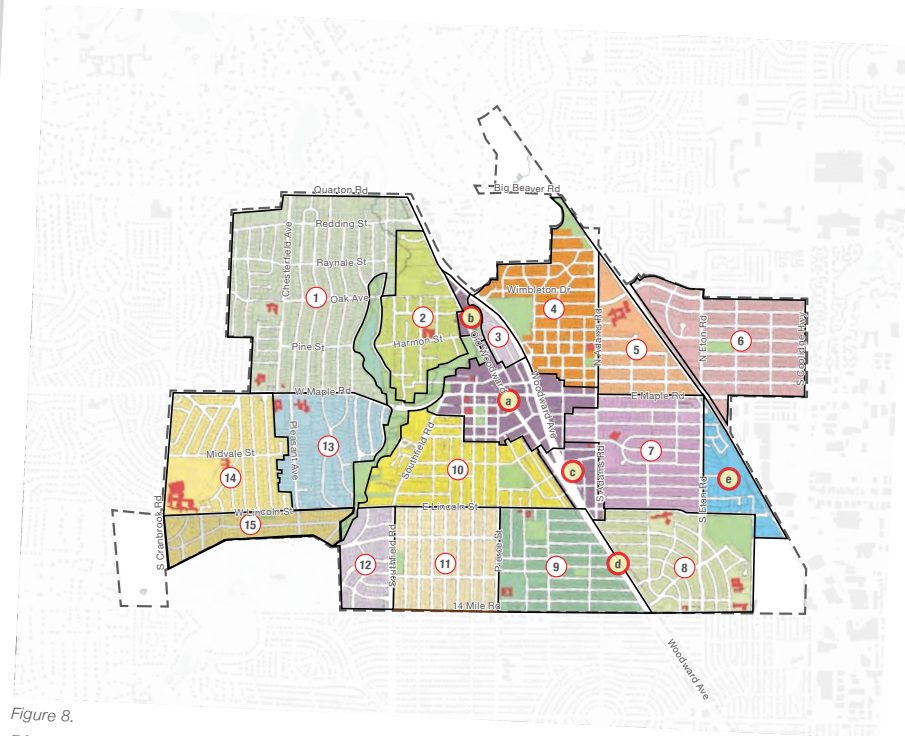


Figure 8.

BIRMINGHAM PLANNING DISTRICTS

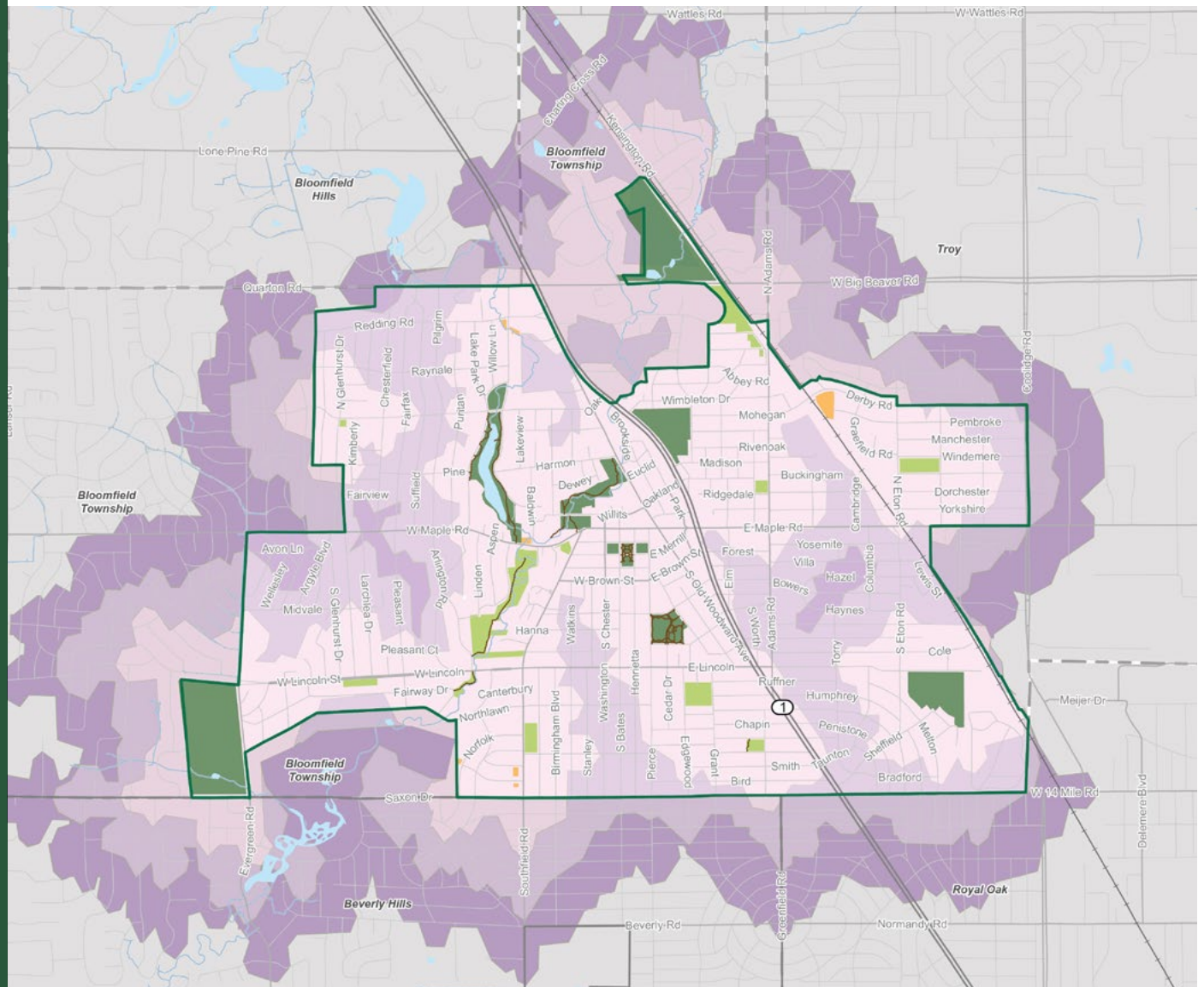
Neighborhood Districts

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1 Quarton | 9 Pierce |
| 2 Holy Name | 10 Barnum |
| 3 The Ravines | 11 Crestview |
| 4 Poppleton | 12 Birmingham Farms |
| 5 Derby | 13 Linden |
| 6 Pembroke | 14 Seaholm |
| 7 Torry | 15 Lincoln Hills |
| 8 Kenning | |

Mixed-use Districts

- | |
|--------------------------|
| a Maple & Woodward |
| b Market North |
| c Haynes Square |
| d South Woodward Gateway |
| e Rail District |

Planning Districts as described by *The Birmingham Plan*, the current city-wide Master Plan

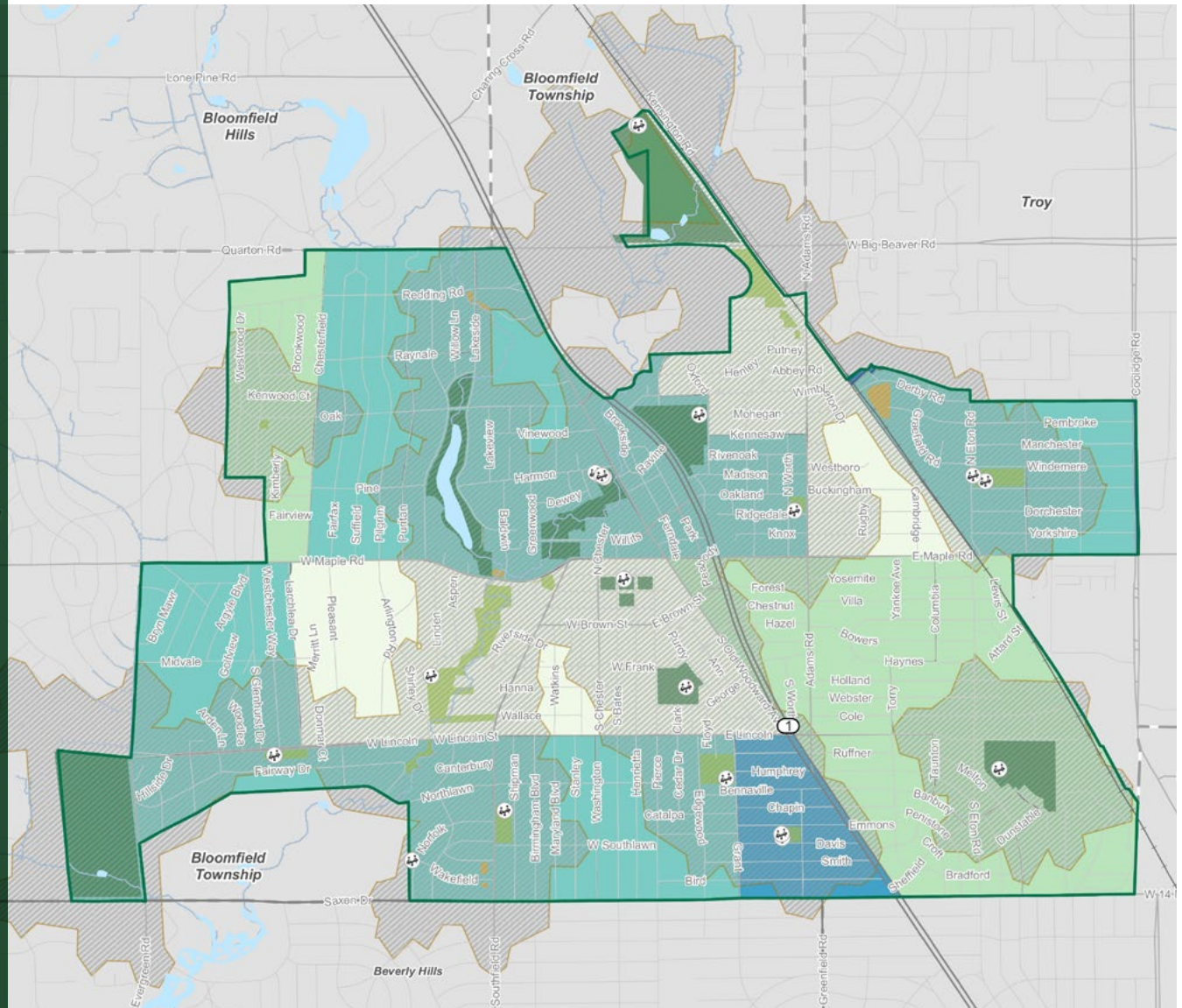


MAP 3. Walkability Analysis

- Park Trails
- Community Parks
- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- City Birmingham Boundary
- 15 Minute Walk from Park
- 10 Minute Walk from Park
- 5 Minute Walk from Park



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data: City of Birmingham, 2023. McKenna, 2023.

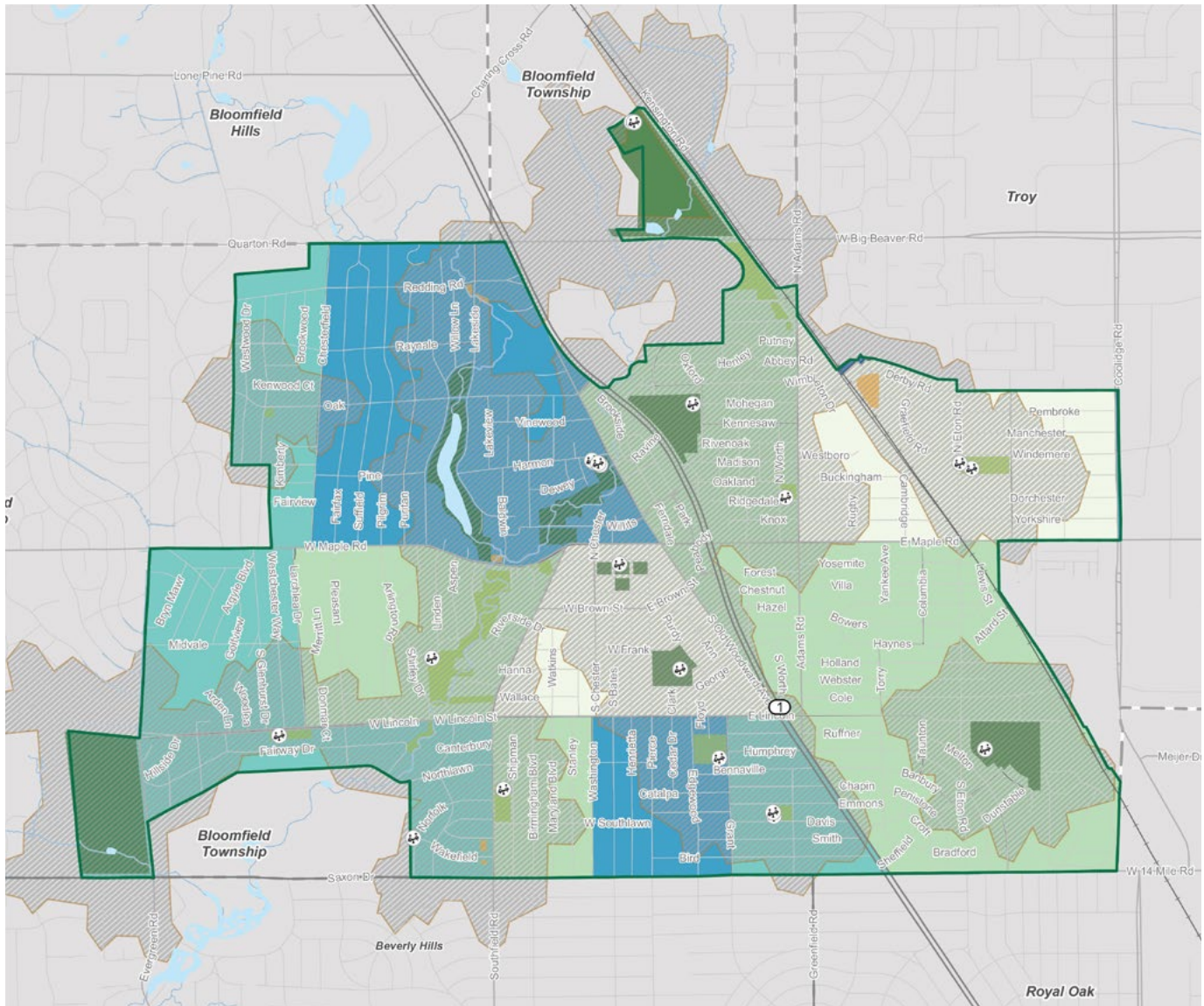


MAP 5. Walkability Analysis: Population of Children Ages 5-9

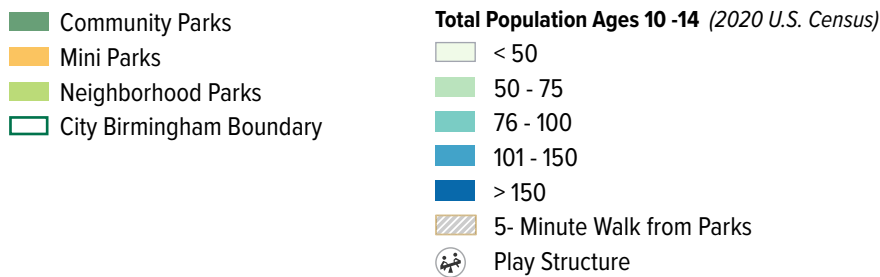
- Community Parks
 - Mini Parks
 - Neighborhood Parks
 - City Birmingham Boundary
- Total Population Ages 5-9 (2020 U.S. Census)**
- < 50
 - 50 - 75
 - 76 - 100
 - 101 - 150
 - > 150
 - 5- Minute Walk from Parks
 - Play Structure



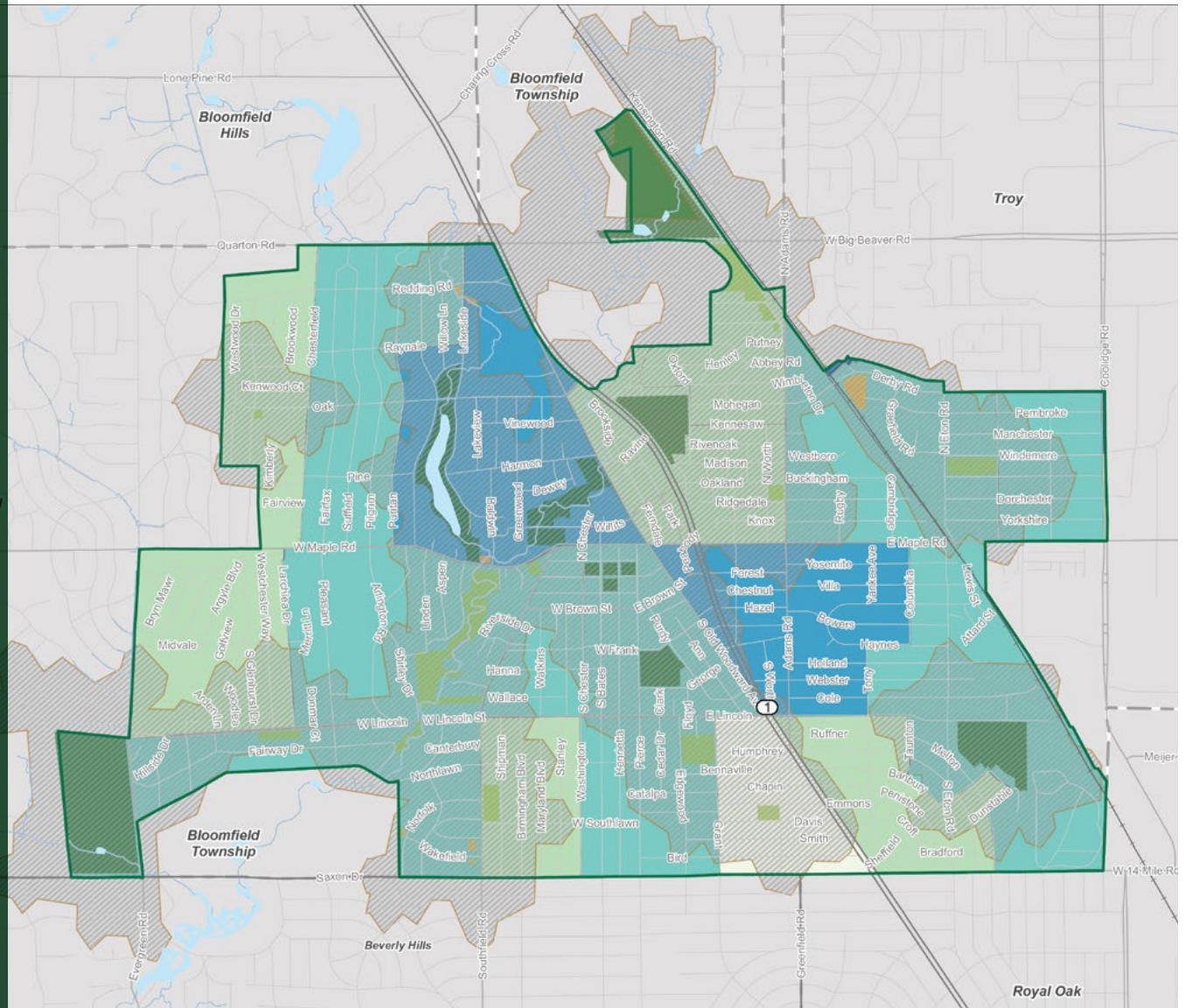
Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data: City of Birmingham, 2023. McKenna, 2023.



MAP 6. Walkability Analysis: Population of Children Ages 10-14



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data: City of Birmingham, 2023. McKenna, 2023.



MAP 7. Walkability Analysis: Population Over 65 Years of Age

- Community Parks
- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- City Birmingham Boundary

Total Population Over 65 (2020 U.S. Census)

- < 50
- 50 - 75
- 76 - 100
- 101 - 150
- > 150
- 5- Minute Walk from Parks



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data: City of Birmingham, 2023, McKenna, 2023.

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Encouraging bicycle connections to parks broadens the facilities and amenities accessible to residents, and conveys many of the same benefits as walkable access. Providing bicycle infrastructure can also lessen demand on parking spaces for parks that are activity centers, reducing the impact of those activities on surrounding neighborhoods. 12 Birmingham parks currently have bike racks. This number includes 6 additional locations within parks implemented in 2023 as part of Phase 5 of the Bicycle Parking plan. Bicycle repair stations currently exist at four parks.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

New Park Space

Mini Parks and Undedicated Public Lands. Since Birmingham is built out, there are few opportunities to create new park space. However, there are opportunities to leverage existing vacant land to enhance the network. Existing mini-parks are included in the walkability analysis, but most of them do not have many amenities, or even signage that identifies them as public places, as not all are dedicated (that is, with a deed restricting its use for a public park) as park space. The Parks Department has begun efforts to dedicate all these areas as parks. Following the completion of that process, the mini-parks should receive signage and additional amenities to identify them as city parks and enhance their function as neighborhood green space.

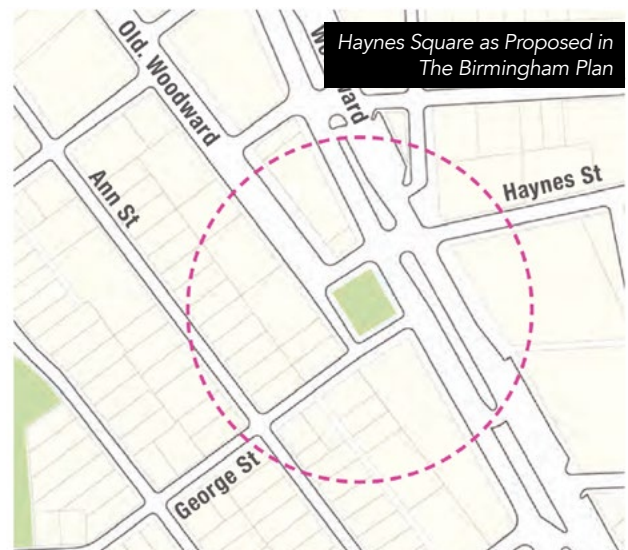
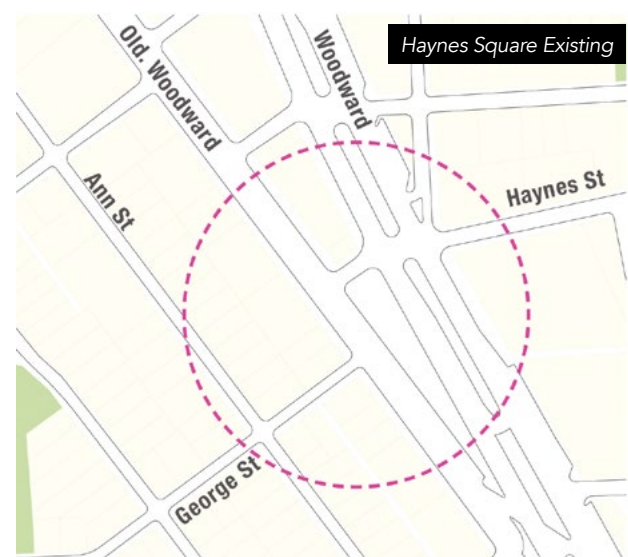
There are additional publicly-owned properties that have the potential to enhance access, some of which are already informally used as greenspace:

- The city-owned parcel at the corner of Buckingham and Cambridge is one such space that, if dedicated as a park, could provide a walkable mini-park with passive recreation amenities to the Torry Planning District.
- Similarly, vacant land at the northeast corner of Lincoln and Eton was identified by stakeholders in this planning process as a desired location for a neighborhood greenspace and gathering place. The future of this parcel should be considered as part of an update to the Kenning Park master plan design.

Haynes Square. The *Birmingham Plan* recommends the implementation of “Haynes Square”, a park to be developed through the reconfiguration of the intersection of Woodward Ave. and Old Woodward. The plan describes the intended character as follows:

“The square should be similar to Shain Park from a design perspective, but about half its size, with a cafe, seating, and restrooms as is recommended for other urban parks. Lined by trees along its edges, the square provides an attractive entrance to the greater Downtown area, flanked by tall, new development east along Woodward and the 555 building to its north.”

The implementation of this park should be pursued and would support the goals of this plan, though realizing it will require resources and coordination beyond DPS and beyond the time horizon of this plan.



Partnerships

The Birmingham Plan identifies planning districts that, while not well-served from existing city parks, benefit from greenspace that exists as part of the Birmingham school district or owned by private entities. These include Quarton (bounded by Quarton to the north, Woodward and Lakeside Dr. to the east, Maple to the south and the west municipal boundary) and Seaholm (bounded by Maple, Pleasant, Lincoln and Cranbrook). As mentioned in the master plan, formalized partnerships with the school district and other partners should be pursued when feasible to ensure the most convenient access to amenities for as many Birmingham residents as possible.

Bike Sharing

Bike-sharing and other emerging forms of ‘micro-mobility’ (i.e., transportation using lightweight vehicles such as bicycles and scooters), provides flexible transportation options and increase connections between urban destinations. Parks can both benefit from and help facilitate the expansion of micro-mobility in Birmingham. MoGo is a Detroit-based non-profit organization that provides shared bicycles between stations throughout the Woodward corridor, from Detroit to just south of the Birmingham border. Locating a MoGo station within one or more Birmingham parks would enhance connectivity within the city, between parks and between parks and other local or regional destinations.

Additional Bicycle Infrastructure

All parks could benefit from bicycle infrastructure, and bicycle parking should be installed at all city parks. Bicycle repair stations should be considered at the remainder of Community Parks, and also at parks that are proximate to the existing or planned bicycle network (such as Poppleton, Crestview, and the West Lincoln Well site).



Inclusive Playground Installation

The 2024 bond issue prioritization identified a subset of parks for installation of universally-accessible playgrounds. Those parks are shown in Table 8 below. The table also includes a recommended prioritization for the planned redevelopment of playgrounds based on a synthesis of information gathered or generated during this planning process. Highest prioritization is given to community parks because of the population they serve, as well as consideration given to the amount of children within a walkable distance of the park (based on the walkability analysis described earlier in this chapter), and the age and condition of existing equipment.

The desired prioritization of playground improvements may shift as implementation of these planned improvements occurs, due to the existence of additional resources, partnership opportunities, efficiencies of cost, and/or many other factors. Regardless of the order of implementation, the below playgrounds at a minimum should all receive inclusive playground updates, and every improvement that increases the inclusiveness of Birmingham parks aligns with the goals and desires expressed throughout this planning process.

Table 7: Planned Playground Improvements

Park	Park Type	Playground Age	Existing Playground Type	Condition (2023 Inventory) (5: Best, 1: Worst)	Walkability for Children	Recommended Priority for Universally Accessible Playground (1: Highest)	Comments
Crestview	Neighborhood	1995*	2-5 Yr	5	Medium population for all age groups	2	
Howarth	Neighborhood	2004	2-5 Yr	5	High population for all age groups	2	
		2004	5-12 Yr	5			
Kenning	Community	1998	2-5 Yr	4	0-4: High 5-9: Medium 10-14: Low	1	High concentration of young children; playground update should be considered as part of updated Master Plan design.
Linden	Neighborhood	1999	2-5 Yr	5	Low population for all age groups	3	
Pembroke	Neighborhood	1995	2-5 Yr	4	0-4: Low 5-9: Low 10-14: Medium	2	
		2001	5-12 Yr	4			
Poppleton	Community	1995*	2-5 Yr	3	0-4: Low 5-9: Medium 10-14: Low	1	Age and condition of existing equipment.
		1997*	5-12 Yr	4			
Pumphouse	Neighborhood	1999	2-5 Yr	4	Medium population for all age groups	1	Older existing structure, plus walkability.
St. James	Neighborhood	2002	2-5 Yr	4	High population for all age groups	1	High concentration of children. Opportunity for multi-generational destination adjacent to YMCA building.
Springdale	Community	1991	2-5 Yr	4	Low population for all age groups	3	
		1998	5-12 Yr	4			
West Lincoln Well	Neighborhood	2003	5-12 Yr	5	Medium population for all age groups	2	

*In some cases, more recent renovation or replacement has occurred.

Chapter 5

Envisioning Excellence



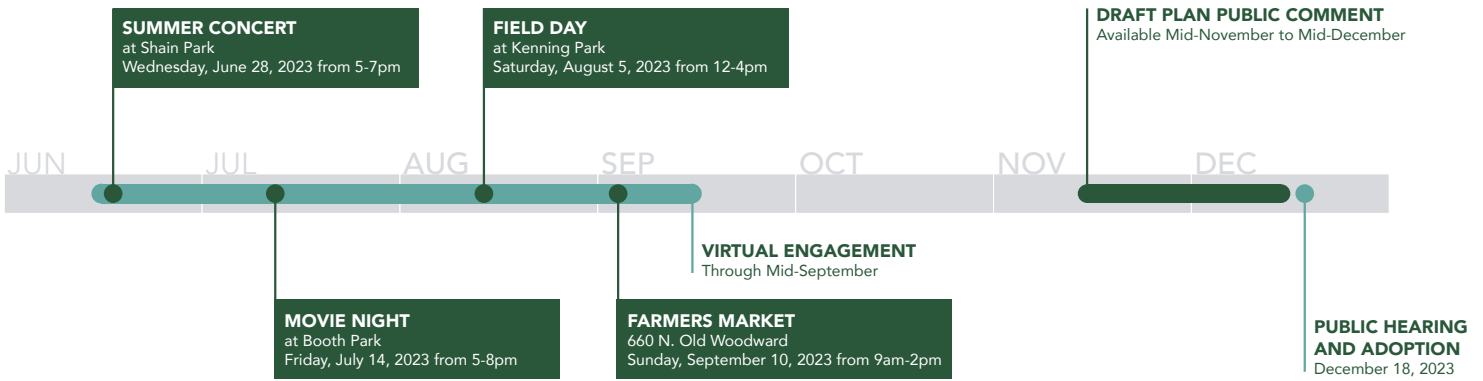


This Plan's recommendations are underpinned by feedback from an extensive community engagement process. This chapter synthesizes 'what we heard' from Birmingham residents and stakeholders, and translates that feedback and the technical analysis into Goals and Objectives.

Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Summary



ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Summary of Activities In-Person Outreach

FIELD DAYS

The planning team organized four community-wide 'Field Day' events from June through September to collect extensive input from the public, with a particular focus on Birmingham park users. These events aimed to gather feedback on the following topics:

1. Identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges specific to each park location.
2. Identifying and prioritizing sustainability considerations for the parks system.
3. Identifying and prioritizing inclusivity considerations for the parks system.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

The project team held roundtable discussions on August 22 & 23, 2023 with a variety of stakeholder cohorts representing residents, public agencies, leagues, associations, and community organizations. At this meeting, the groups had robust discussions about stakeholders' experiences, challenges, and opinions regarding the recreation programs, services, and facilities that Birmingham offers.

Summary of Activities Virtual Engagement

ONLINE COMMENT MAP

The public used an interactive city map to share feedback on Birmingham's parks and recreational offerings. This feedback aimed to achieve the following goals:

- Generating ideas on how to improve spaces and allocate resources to benefit residents.
- Identifying specific parks and recreational preferences, concerns, and requirements.

ONLINE SURVEY

Participants completed a concise survey designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights regarding what residents appreciate about Birmingham's parks and recreational services. It also aimed to capture their personal experiences with these amenities.

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

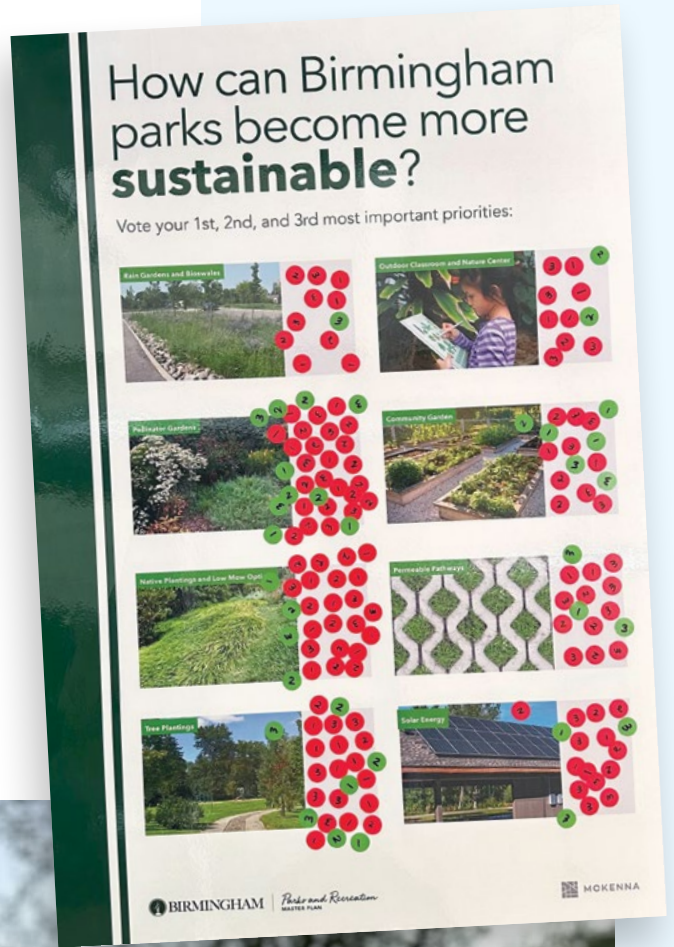
- 567 Visitors
- 210 Survey Responses
- 79 Map Comments
- 252 Responses to Online Comments

What We Heard

Engaged stakeholders generally acknowledged the excellent quality of park amenities and services. The conversations that the planning team had with park visitors consistently revealed a high level of satisfaction with the provision of parks and recreation in Birmingham.

WHAT'S WORKING / WHAT'S NOT?

Stakeholders offered the most feedback when asked about their thoughts on specific park facilities. This input was obtained through in-person discussions at Field Day events totaling 165 individual comments.



Key Results

WHAT'S WORKING?

Recreation Diversity:

- Residents appreciate a variety of recreational options, including pickleball and music events, that bring the community together.

Community Gathering:

- Parks serve as gathering places for residents, promoting social interactions and community cohesion.
- Features like café tables and chairs are well-received and contribute to a pleasant park experience.

Natural Beauty:

- Residents value the well-maintained plantings, native flowers, and scenic landscapes of the parks.



WHAT'S NOT WORKING?

Facilities and Amenities:

- Many residents called for upgrades to existing facilities, such as playgrounds, baseball fields, and additional pickleball courts.
- Residents also recommended the addition of extra facilities, including public bathrooms, pavilions/picnic shelters, shaded areas, splash pads, and even the possibility of a swimming pool.
- Design changes to enhance safety and security, and to improve visibility, are crucial for ensuring the comfort of park users, particularly at Crestview and Booth Parks.
- Suggestions were made to upgrade and diversify playground equipment to cater to a broader age range.

Awareness of Parks:

- Suggestions were made for improved signage and directional markers to assist park users and enhance the visibility of park features.
- There were recommendations for better promotion of events and park activities.

Maintenance:

- While the overall maintenance of parks received praise, there were specific mentions regarding opportunities for improvement in the maintenance around Quarton Lake.
- Noise concerns, particularly those associated with activities like pickleball, were shared and associated with a desire to preserve a tranquil park environment.

Dog-Friendly Spaces:

- Suggestions were made to incorporate dog parks within neighborhoods and provide clear signage regarding leash regulations for accessible parks.

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR PARKS

In the first two Field Days, participants were asked for their input on how Birmingham parks could become more sustainable. Respondents shared a range of ideas both in direct response to this question and as part of the overall park feedback activity. These ideas have been categorized into the following themes:

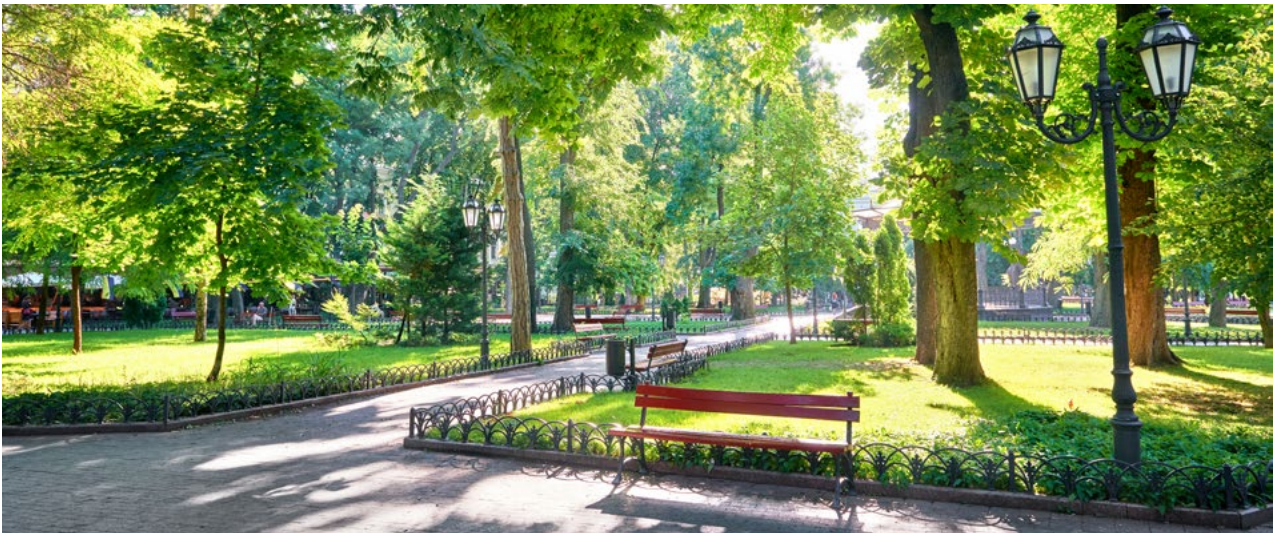
- **Recycling and Waste:** Residents called for increased recycling bins within the parks and the placement of waste bins closer to equipment.
- **Environmental Preservation:** Concerns included maintaining clean waterway edges, promoting native plantings, managing invasive species, and preventing fertilizer runoff into the Rouge River.
- **More Trees:** Requests for more street trees, shade trees, and trees along paths reflect a desire for shade, reduction in urban heat islands, and improvement of air quality.
- **Turf Maintenance:** Some suggested converting certain areas in parks into naturalized areas to cut down on the need for excessive lawn care and promote natural habitats.
- **Rain Gardens:** Some residents mentioned the need for more and increased effectiveness of rain gardens to help manage stormwater throughout the city.

PRIORITIZATION OF SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

After collecting and summarizing feedback on various sustainability ideas, staff presented a list of items for prioritization during the last two Field Days.

Participants were asked to vote for their top three priorities, ranking them as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd most important. The results were then weighted and calculated to determine the final rankings.

1. **Pollinator Gardens**
2. **Tree Plantings**
3. **Native Plantings and Low Mow Options**
4. Solar Energy
5. Community Gardens
6. Outdoor Classroom or Nature Center
7. Rain Gardens and Bioswales
8. Permeable Pathways



STRATEGIES FOR EMBRACING INCLUSIVITY IN OUR PARKS

In the first two Field Days, attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts on ways Birmingham's parks could become more inclusive. Participants offered a diverse range of ideas, with some directly addressing this topic and others sharing their input as part of broader park feedback. These ideas have been categorized into the following themes:

- **Space for Rest:** Some residents mentioned the need for more benches in the parks to allow rest points along walking paths.
- **Shaded Seating:** There were requests for shaded seating areas to allow parents to more easily enjoy watching their children play and to allow those who are more temperature sensitive an area of respite while visiting the parks.
- **Playground Upgrades:** Comments suggested upgrading playgrounds to include a greater variety of equipment that is usable to children with a wide range of abilities.
- **Walking Paths:** Several comments mentioned the need for paved or smooth surfaced walking paths to allow for ease of use by individuals who rely on mobility aids or have difficulty navigating uneven terrain.
- **Drinking Fountains:** Commenters also advocated for the addition of drinking fountains or bottle-filling stations at more parks to allow visitors to stay longer by having access to hydration while in the park.
- **Public Restrooms:** There were multiple requests for public restrooms in many of the most popular parks, which can allow for longer stays and convenience when using the parks.

PRIORITIZATION OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

After collecting and summarizing feedback on various ideas for inclusivity, staff presented a list of items for prioritization.

Participants were asked to vote for their top three priorities, ranking them as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd most important. The results were then weighted and calculated to determine the final rankings.

1. **Shade Areas**
2. **Paved Pathways and Trails**
3. **Inclusive Playgrounds**
4. Benches and Sitting Areas
5. Fitness and Exercise Equipment
6. Sensory Sensitive Activities
7. Welcoming Programming
8. Fenced Play Areas



ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

The planning team conducted a series of roundtable discussions with stakeholders that represented the city's institutional partners, current and past members of appointed commissions and boards, residents, and other key stakeholders. In addition to the roundtable discussions, two individual interviews were conducted with participants who were unable to attend the in-person event but still wanted to offer feedback. The feedback, much of which aligned with conversations in Field Day events, centered on the following themes:

Sustainability and Conservation: Discussions covered rainwater management, native habitat preservation, and reducing lawns to promote environmental sustainability. Participants also emphasized the need for educating the community on environmental issues, including watershed and stormwater runoff, and fostering partnerships for green infrastructure and habitat restoration.

Connectivity and Accessibility: Emphasis was placed on improving connectivity and accessibility with calls for crosswalks, bike-friendly routes, and better park-to-park connections.

Park Amenities and Activation: Residents advocated for enhancing park activation through various activities like lawn games, the introduction of adult exercise equipment and outdoor fitness stations and exploring partnerships for community gardens and programming. The idea of creating community gathering points in parks, potentially involving food and beverage options, was also explored.

Aging in Place and Inclusivity: Participants discussed promoting aging in place through senior-friendly park amenities and incorporating universal design principles for accessibility. They also stressed the importance of integrating multi-generational recreation spaces in parks.

Arts and Education in Parks: Ideas included incorporating art and historical elements in parks through art walks and sculptures, using park signage for educational purposes, and promoting art-based park programming and activities.

City Plans Alignment: Aligning park development with the Birmingham 2040 Master Plan and neighborhood improvement strategies was emphasized, along with addressing safety concerns in unfenced parks/playground areas and expanding passive recreation spaces in neighborhoods.

Ownership and Recreational Facilities: Discussions delved into the costs and benefits of the city's ownership of a golf course, as well as considerations for the provision of other recreational facilities like a pool. Recurrent feedback suggested at a minimum, activating the existing golf courses and leveraging them for things like winter recreation.

Online Comments

The online comment map produced the most specific suggestions out of all the engagement opportunities. Commenters made suggestions for exact locations for paths, connections, facility upgrades and maintenance concerns.

Some of the novel comments received on the map suggested making the area around the rail road more walkable and park-like, construction of a bridge across the Rouge River to connect Lynn Smith with Linden Park, and installation of a putting green with several holes for practice.

The most popular comments were:

- Provide picnic tables at Quarton Lake.
- Install a gate at the pickleball courts and lock it after hours at Crestview Park.
- Create demonstration sites for pesticide-free pollinator gardens around Quarton Lake.

Survey Results

2. Poppleton Park

1. Kenning Park

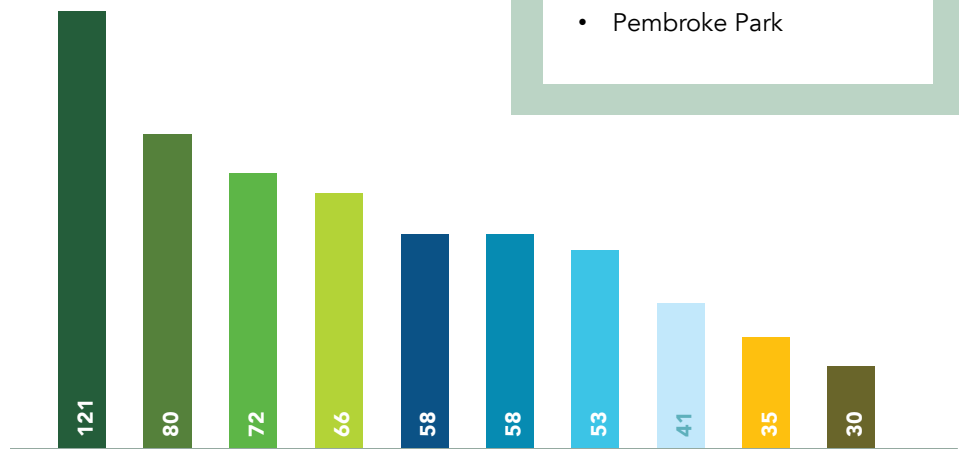
3. Pembroke Park

TOP 3 MOST FREQUENTED PARKS

- Kenning Park
- Poppleton Park
- Pembroke Park

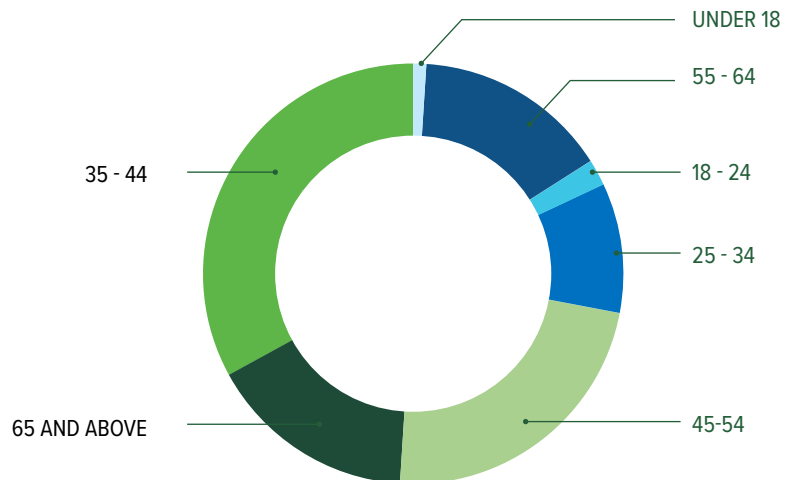
WHAT TYPE OF PARK USER ARE YOU?

- Parent with Children
- Nature Enthusiast
- Picnic and Leisure Seeker
- Dog Owner
- Sports Enthusiast
- Jogger or Runner
- Community Event / Social Gatherings Attendee
- Fitness Enthusiast
- Senior Citizen
- Cyclist



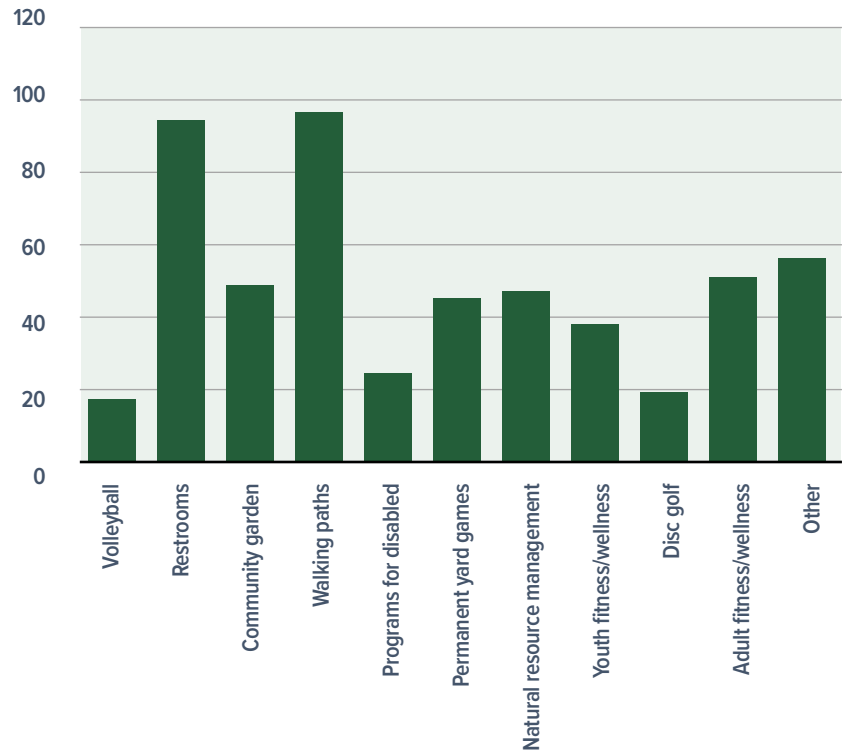
PROFILE OF SURVEY TAKERS

The majority respondent was a Birmingham resident, identified as a parent with children, and was aged 25 – 54 years old.



MOST REQUESTED ENHANCEMENTS OR NEW FEATURES

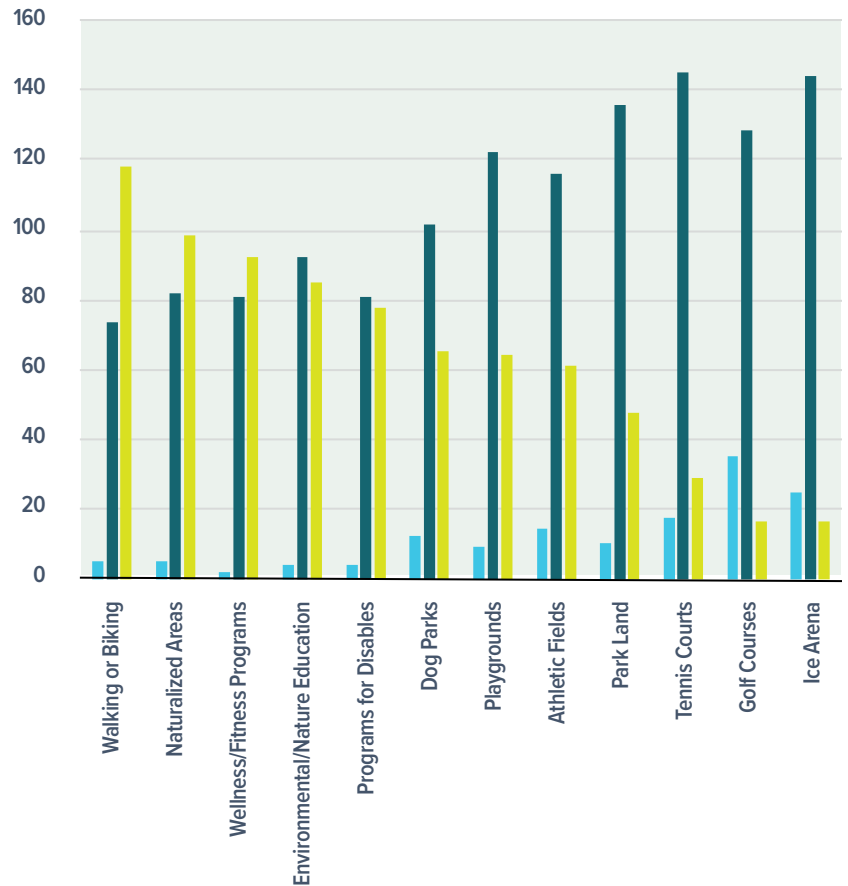
- Walking paths (97)
- Restrooms (95)
- Adult Fitness/Wellness (51)
- Community Garden (49)
- "Other" items frequently mentioned:
 - » More pickleball courts
 - » Improvements for Ballfields #1 or #4 at Kenning Park
 - » Walkable access to a dog park or unleashed areas



EXISTING AMENITIES THAT ARE FALLING SHORT OF NEEDS

- Walking or Biking Trails (118)
- Naturalized areas (98)
- Wellness and fitness programs (92)
- Environmental/nature education (85)
- Programs for people with disabilities (78)

- Exceeds Needs
- Meets Needs
- Falls Short of Needs



Survey respondents were also asked to provide their ideas on how to make the parks more sustainable and inclusive. The most frequently mentioned themes are as follows:

TOP SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS

Pollinator-Friendly Landscaping: Incorporate lots of pollinator-attracting flowers and plants to support local wildlife, particularly pollinators like bees and butterflies.

Nature Programming: Develop nature-focused programming in parks to educate and engage the community in environmental conservation.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations: Install EV charging stations to encourage sustainable transportation options.

Community Gardens: Create community garden spaces to promote local food production and community engagement.

Bike Infrastructure: Expand bike parking and trails by the river to encourage eco-friendly transportation.

Reduced Pesticide Use: Limit or eliminate the use of pesticides to support ecological balance.

Native Plantings: Use native plants for landscaping, rain gardens, and buffer zones along rivers to reduce harmful runoff.

Recycling and Trash Bins: Place recycling bins and trash receptacles throughout parks to encourage responsible waste disposal.

Solar Power Panels: Incorporate solar power panels in park facilities for sustainable energy generation.

Water Conservation: Implement water-saving measures, such as rain gardens and rainwater harvesting, to manage water runoff effectively.

TOP INCLUSIVITY IDEAS

Accessible Playground Equipment: Ensure that playgrounds have accessible equipment, including ramps instead of steps, to accommodate children with disabilities.

Permanent Public Restrooms: Install permanent public restrooms in parks to provide year-round access.

Pickleball Courts: Create more Pickleball courts to meet the high demand for this sport, with suggestions to build them near existing facilities and away from residential areas.

Safe Access to Parks Without a Car: Improve safe access to parks without the need for a car, emphasizing the importance of pedestrian and bicycle-friendly pathways.

Programming for People with Disabilities: Provide programming tailored to individuals with disabilities and their caregivers to make parks inclusive for everyone.

Fully Enclosed Playgrounds: Create fully enclosed playgrounds to ensure the safety of children, including those with disabilities who may be prone to running away.

Improved Signage and Enforcement: Enhance safety in parks by posting and enforcing ordinances effectively, particularly those related to leash rules for dogs.

Nature Trails and Walking Paths: Develop nature trails and walking paths that are wheelchair-accessible, potentially paved with smooth surfaces, to cater to individuals with disabilities.

More Seating and Picnic Tables: Install more benches and picnic tables, ensuring there are shaded areas and accommodations for people with disabilities.

Goals and Objectives

Goal #1:

Provide parks and recreation facilities that are accessible to all residents of the community, are beautiful and high quality, that respect history, and offer a variety of experiences, both passive and active.

Objectives:

1. Improve universal accessibility.
2. Maintain and improve designated wetlands, Rouge River Corridor, and open space.
3. Incorporate art/sculptures into park design.
4. Encourage central entry areas for sitting and gathering in park design.
5. Maintain and update park equipment and facilities as needed, such as playground equipment, ball fields, open space areas including natural landscaping.
6. Continue implementation of standardized park design for all City of Birmingham Parks including signage, installation of trees, tree transplanting, improved landscaping, benches, bike racks, and waste receptacles.
7. Standardize park features that ensure there is continuity between parks and regional systems.
8. Review Parks and Recreation Master Plan quarterly to establish priorities and responsibilities with Parks and Recreation Board.
9. Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan every five years to maintain a current assessment and ensure grant funding eligibility.

Goal #2:

Foster a connected and healthy community by providing recreational programming and facilities that address the varied needs and interests of residents, while actively promoting and facilitating an active lifestyle and enhanced mobility.

Objectives:

1. Increase non-motorized transportation connections between parks, historical sites, community facilities and shopping districts that allow residents to cycle, walk, and run safely.
2. Develop and promote programming that encourages active lifestyles for all ages.
3. Work with Oakland County to develop pathway connections with surrounding communities that include Beverly Hills, Bloomfield Hills, Bloomfield Twp., Royal Oak, Southfield, and Troy with the existing Rouge River Corridor.
4. Promote the establishment of the Rouge River Corridor along the Rouge River to encourage the preservation, enhancement and increase community understanding of this important watershed.
5. Develop a wayfinding program for the trail / greenway network that directs users of the non-motorized paths to City parks and other destinations.
6. Monitor the use of athletic fields and facilities to determine additional needs.
7. Create opportunities that go beyond the traditional team sports such as educational components, individual sporting pursuits, training/ self-improvement courses.

Goal #3:

Prioritize partnerships with other entities to ensure comprehensive, quality programs and facilities, while promoting the efficient use of existing community resources.

Objectives:

1. Explore opportunities with private partnerships and Oakland County Parks to jointly provide desired services and facilities, while minimizing duplication and competition between the agencies.
2. Coordinate efforts with Oakland County and Friends of the Rouge for opportunities to preserve open space and provide public access along the Rouge River Corridor.
3. Strengthen partnership with the Arts Board regarding public art at parks.
4. Continue working with local organizations, clubs, and institutions to provide a wealth and variety of organized activities and programs within the community. This includes:
 - a) Senior Walking Clubs.
 - b) "Theatrical" programming that involves schools, library, residents, and the Community House.
 - c) Seasonal, including winter activities.
 - d) Art and cultural programs.
 - e) Teen and youth programming during the summer and utilizing extended hours.
 - f) Family activities.
5. Provide volunteer opportunities in program delivery and improvement projects.
6. Partner for grants & outside funding.
7. Foster, promote and encourage cooperative relationships with public and private entities.
8. Promote a system for people to approach the city with ideas to collaborate on park improvements.
9. Increase opportunities for donation, sponsorships, and fundraising efforts.



Goal #4:

Strive to become a leader in sustainable and innovative maintenance practices within our community, with a comprehensive commitment to protecting our natural resources, showcasing environmental stewardship, and minimizing adverse health effects on all residents. With the mission to harmonize public use, access, and enjoyment of our parks while addressing four key pillars of sustainability.

Objectives:

1. Enhance climate resilience in parks and green spaces by increasing tree canopy cover, promoting heat-resilient infrastructure with cooling features, and educating the community about parks' vital role in climate mitigation and temperature regulation.
2. Advance sustainability in park development by implementing eco-friendly construction practices, adopting low-maintenance landscaping, embracing nature-conscious designs, and continuing to research best practices for infrastructure maintenance to reduce the environmental footprint.
3. Foster biodiversity in parks by promoting native plant use, creating wildlife-friendly habitats, implementing conservation initiatives, and collaborating with local organizations to conduct biodiversity assessments and habitat restoration projects.
4. Integrate and promote low-impact design strategies in park planning, development, and maintenance to effectively manage stormwater, improve water quality, raise community awareness, and ensure long-term environmental benefits.
5. Design, engineer and create a network of green stormwater infrastructure within parks to support the City's sustainability goals.
6. Reduce and minimize usage of chemicals in all parks to lessen the potential for adverse health effects to the extent that is practicable.



Goal #5:

Increase park accessibility to underserved areas, while preserving and enhancing current facilities.

Objectives:

1. Formalize and dedicate informal park spaces (especially in) underserved areas.
2. Utilize Planning Districts from 2040 Plan to guide the investigation of land acquisition of land for new park spaces, and consideration of activities for all seasons.
3. Celebrate the community with participation in festivals, community functions and events.
4. Support and encourage new developments to include areas for active and passive recreation.

Goal #6:

Improve public understanding of, engagement with, and utilization of the parks and recreation system.

Objectives:

Create mechanisms to enhance communications and increase awareness of Birmingham parks and recreation offerings.

1. Integrate technology with operations to increase access and efficiency of services.
2. Evaluate existing methods of publicity and outreach to identify potential improvements.

Chapter 6

Strategic Action Plan



This chapter describes recommendations for a set of actions for improvement and enhancement to the Birmingham parks and recreation system according to the analysis conducted for this planning process. System-wide actions to support the plan's goals and objectives are described along with a recommended time frame for implementation.

Recommended short-term actions and the associated relative scale of investment required for implementation are identified for both capital projects and policy recommendations. Some projects are multi-year efforts that will involve time and coordination with other agencies, while other projects are park-specific improvements that require largely monetary investment.

Priorities should be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted to respond to updated findings and identification of funding opportunities.

System-Wide Strategic Actions

Associated City Strategic Goal	Associated PR MP Goal	Associated Objective	Topic	Findings	Action / Recommendations	Facilities Affected	Time Frame
Engaged and Connected Community	1	1.1	Universal Playgrounds	The Parks and Recreation Bond Priority list recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board and reviewed by the City Commission identifies several parks for the installation of inclusive playgrounds.	Install playground equipment at identified parks that meet best practices for universal playground design and accessibility.	<p>First Priority: Pembroke Kenning Poppleton St. James</p> <p>Second Priority: Crestview Howarth Pumphouse West Lincoln Well</p> <p>Third Priority: Linden Springdale</p>	<p>Initiate: Short Term</p> <p>Complete: Long Term</p>
	1	1.1	Restrooms	Permanent restrooms are essential for inclusion, public convenience, and to support park programming and events.	Install additional permanent restrooms at strategic park facilities, focusing on parks with pavilions/picnic areas, sport fields, and those away from convenient public restrooms. Explore infrastructure and identify staffing capacity.	<p>Candidate Facilities:</p> <p>First Priority: Barnum Poppleton Pembroke</p> <p>Others to Consider: Kenning (Convenient to playgrounds, future picnic area, ballfields) Crestview</p>	<p>Initiate: Short Term</p> <p>Complete: Long Term</p>
	1	1.1	Splash Pad	Engaged stakeholders expressed a desire for a water feature at specific parks. The Schedule II bond issue identifies resources for a splash pad.	Conduct a feasibility study for the development and construction of a splash pad, including identifying/creating staffing capacity for ongoing maintenance, identifying location, prioritizing accessibility for all community members and the lack of disruption of existing park and/or recreation functions, developing a conceptual site plan, and cost estimates.	TBD	Short Term
	1	1.1	Splash Pad	Engaged stakeholders expressed a desire for a water feature at specific parks. The Schedule II bond issue identifies resources for a splash pad.	Based on results of the feasibility study, construct a splash pad at the designated location.	TBD	Long Term

Time Frame:

- Short Term: 1-3 years
- Mid Term: 4-5 years
- Long Term: 6-10+ years

Associated City Strategic Goal	Associated PR MP Goal	Associated Objective	Topic	Findings	Action / Recommendations	Facilities Affected	Time Frame
Engaged and Connected	1	1.4	Food Truck / Mobile Vendor Pilot	Both the Birmingham 2040 Plan and engaged stakeholders during this planning process identified the desire for food and beverage service within parks to provide additional social connection and support park activities.	Add support for mobile or permanent vending at strategic parks, prioritizing support of existing events.	<p>Candidate Facilities:</p> <p>Kenning Park: Food truck/mobile cart infrastructure</p> <p>Shain Park: Permanent café/vendor accommodations</p> <p>Booth Park: Permanent café/vendor accommodations</p> <p>Poppleton Park: Food truck/mobile cart infrastructure</p>	<p>Pilot: Short Term</p> <p>Complete: Long Term</p>
	1	1.4	Lawn Games	Engaged stakeholders for this plan identified a desire for lawn games to be incorporated into parks to allow for a greater range and diversity of users, some suggestions included cornhole, oversized chess, etc.	Install semi-permanent or permanent lawn games at identified parks and partner with community organizations to provide equipment for use of games.	<p>Candidate Facilities: Barnum Kenning Pembroke Poppleton Springdale St. James</p>	Short Term
	1	1.4	Wi-fi and Charging	Noting the demographic shifts in Birmingham which suggest that the City will have more knowledge based workers who wish to have the flexibility of working outside; engaged stakeholders for this plan suggested enhancing the business opportunities by providing wi fi and charging stations in the parks nearest downtown.	Install infrastructure to provide wi fi and charging stations at identified parks.	<p>Candidate Facilities: Shain, Museum (wi-fi exists, add charging stations)</p> <p>Booth Barnum</p> <p>Kenning (wi-fi exists in the ice arena, explore providing outside / outdoor work areas)</p> <p>Poppleton</p>	Medium Term
Environmental Sustainability	1	1.4	Recycling Facilities	Recycling facilities currently exist at 11 of 26 Birmingham parks.	Deploy recycling receptacles adjacent to waste receptacles at all parks.	Remaining parks where recycling facilities do not yet exist.	Short Term

Time Frame:

- Short Term: 1-3 years
- Mid Term: 4-5 years
- Long Term: 6-10+ years

Associated City Strategic Goal	Associated PR MP Goal	Associated Objective	Topic	Findings	Action / Recommendations	Facilities Affected	Time Frame
Engaged and Connected Community	1	1.5	Additional Dog Infrastructure	Engaged stakeholders for this plan identified a desire for more formal, off-leash dog areas throughout the city, especially as a way to mitigate off-leash dogs in parks not designated for that purpose.	Evaluate opportunities to provide additional off-leash dog areas in geographically distributed locations throughout the city.	Candidate Facilities: TBD	Long Term
	1	1.5	Park Permits for Dogs	Engaged stakeholders for this plan identified a desire for enhanced enforcement of park rules for dogs.	Add opt-in park permit option to dog licensing process that requires that users acknowledge dogs must be leashed and cleaned up after, and publicly display park pass when using parks with their dogs.	All	Short Term
Engaged and Connected Community, Environmental Sustainability	1	1.6	Bicycle infrastructure	The planning process demonstrated a desire for additional bicycle infrastructure in city parks. 10 parks in the city currently have or are planned to receive bicycle infrastructure of some kind. Parks can help bolster the existing nonmotorized network in the city.	Install bicycle racks in remaining parks, prioritizing remaining Community and Neighborhood parks that do not yet have them.	Community and Neighborhood parks that do not yet have bicycle infrastructure.	Short Term
	2	2.1	Bicycle infrastructure	The planning process demonstrated a desire for additional bicycle infrastructure in city parks. 10 parks in the city currently have or are planned to receive bicycle infrastructure of some kind. Parks can help bolster the existing nonmotorized network in the city.	Explore the possibility of bike share locations at strategic parks to enhance connectivity.	Candidate Facilities: TBD	Medium Term

Time Frame:

- Short Term: 1-3 years
- Mid Term: 4-5 years
- Long Term: 6-10+ years

Associated City Strategic Goal	Associated PR MP Goal	Associated Objective	Topic	Findings	Action / Recommendations	Facilities Affected	Time Frame
Engaged and Connected Community	2	2.7	Adult Fitness stations	Engaged stakeholders for this plan identified a desire for adult fitness 'stations'/ equipment as a park offering.	Install outdoor adult fitness stations, prioritizing locations in highly-utilized Neighborhood Parks near senior populations.	Candidate Facilities: First Priority: St. James Linden Pembroke Others to Consider: Crestview Howarth Kenning W. Lincoln Well	Initiate: Short Term Complete: Long Term
	3	3.3	Outdoor Classrooms	Engaged stakeholders for this planning process identified opportunities for park activation and arts integration	Identify areas in parks as outdoor classrooms.	Candidate Facilities: Booth Museum	Medium Term
	3	3.5	Garden Club Volunteers	Engaged stakeholders for this planning process identified a desire to engage and assist with park enhancement / maintenance. Similar programs have been successfully implemented in surrounding Southeast Michigan communities.	Organize garden club volunteers to help adopt parks, certain parts of parks, natural green areas, or gardens.	TBD as opportunity arises.	Short Term
Environmental Sustainability	4	4.2	Sustainability Education	Parks offer robust opportunities to advance the City's environmental sustainability goals.	Develop an interpretive sculpture/signage/ experience program in parks to expand educational opportunities about environmental protection.	Priority Facilities: Quarton Lake Barnum Manor Martha Baldwin Linden	Medium Term
	4	4.2 4.3	Native Planting List	Parks offer robust opportunities to advance the City's environmental sustainability goals. As steward of many acres of landscaped public land, the city has an opportunity to set an example, educate the public, and reduce maintenance obligations through the use of native plants.	Develop (and publicize) an approved list of native plant species appropriate for park and recreation applications. Long-term, commit to utilizing native plantings whenever feasible for park design and landscape features.	All	Develop List: Short Term Policy: Medium Term
	4	4.2 4.3	Design Guidelines	Parks offer robust opportunities to advance the City's environmental sustainability goals.	Develop Design Guidelines for future capital and park improvements that encourage low maintenance alternatives.	All	Medium Term
	4	4.3	Green Stormwater Infrastructure	Parks offer robust opportunities to advance the City's environmental sustainability goals.	Seek opportunities for green stormwater infrastructure in all future park designs.	All	Medium Term

Time Frame:

- Short Term: 1-3 years
- Mid Term: 4-5 years
- Long Term: 6-10+ years

Associated City Strategic Goal	Associated PR MP Goal	Associated Objective	Topic	Findings	Action / Recommendations	Facilities Affected	Time Frame
Environmental Sustainability	4	4.3	Environmental Pilots/ Demonstration Sites	Parks offer robust opportunities to advance the City's environmental sustainability goals. This planning process yielded several potential initiatives that are well-suited to be sited at parks, either permanently or on a demonstration/pilot basis.	Install a community garden pilot project.	Candidate Facilities: Kenning Poppleton Springdale	Medium Term
	4	4.3	Rouge River Trail Corridor Improvements	The Rouge River trail corridor is an essential element of connectivity and recreation in Birmingham, and also offers multiple education opportunities.	Complete Rouge River Trail Corridor improvements as conceptually described in the "Trail Concept Improvement Plan".	Rouge River Corridor	Medium Term
	4	4.6	Environmental Pilots/ Demonstration Sites	Parks offer robust opportunities to advance the City's environmental sustainability goals. This planning process yielded several potential initiatives that are well-suited to be sited at parks, either permanently or on a demonstration/pilot basis.	Implement a pilot "Pesticide Free Park" program at a City Park.	Candidate Facilities: Linn Smith Manor Mini Parks	Medium Term
Engaged and Connected Community	5	5.1 5.5	Park Accessibility	Not all areas of the city are equally served by walkable green space. There are several opportunities to mitigate this condition with existing City-owned land.	Dedicate informal green spaces as public parks, sign/advertise them appropriately and add amenities such as benches/ places to rest, accessible paths, and pollinator gardens/low maintenance landscape areas.	Identified Mini-Parks not yet dedicated as park land. City-Owned land at Cambridge and Buckingham.	Dedicate: Short Term Add Amenities: Medium Term

Time Frame:

- Short Term: 1-3 years
- Mid Term: 4-5 years
- Long Term: 6-10+ years

Associated City Strategic Goal	Associated PR MP Goal	Associated Objective	Topic	Findings	Action / Recommendations	Facilities Affected	Time Frame
Efficient and Effective Services	6	1	Website Updates	Not all amenities and park offerings are clearly identified on the website.	Update City website parks listing to include mapping, comprehensive list of amenities.	N/A	Ongoing
	6	1	Opportunity Advertisement	Engaged stakeholders expressed a desire for a 'guide' of programming activities to increase exposure and usership of parks programming.	Periodically (e.g., quarterly, semi-annually) publish a comprehensive advertisement of recreation opportunities in Birmingham parks.	N/A	Ongoing
	6	6.2 2.6	Utilization Data	Engaged stakeholders expressed a desire for an understanding of park usership to help prioritize improvements. The Principal Shopping District is exploring possibilities for user data with tracking software that might be utilized similarly for parks.	Building on existing engagements, explore methods for collecting park usership data.	N/A	Short Term

Time Frame:

- Short Term: 1-3 years
- Mid Term: 4-5 years
- Long Term: 6-10+ years

Short-Term Implementation of Capital Improvements

Park	Action / Recommendations	Scale of Investment	Potential Funding Source(s)
Baldwin Well Site	Install standard park entry signage.	\$	GF
Barnum Park	Install additional permanent restrooms.	\$\$	BI, G, GF
	Install semi-permanent or permanent lawn games.	\$	G, GF
Booth Park	Add additional directional signage and distance markers along Booth Trail.	\$	G, GF
	Install semi-permanent or permanent lawn games.	\$	G, GF
Crestview Park	Add ornamental fencing and/or low barrier landscaping along a portion of the Southfield Rd. frontage to enhance safety and buffer the park from the road.	\$	G, GF
Derby Well Site	Install benches and an accessible path.	\$	D, G, GF
	Install standard park entry signage.	\$	GF
Kenning Park	Install semi-permanent or permanent lawn games.	\$	G, GF
	Install inclusive playground and complete field improvements.	\$\$\$\$	BI, G
	Install infrastructure (electricity, water hook-ups, parking and circulation area) to support food truck / mobile vendors.	\$\$	BI, G
	Redevelop / improve the existing skate park.	\$\$	BI, G
Linden Park	Install outdoor adult fitness stations.	\$	NF, GF
Manor Park	Add benches/places to rest at park entrances.	\$	D, G
	Add accessible path at park entrances.	\$	G, GF
Pembroke Park	Install Inclusive playground and shelter/pavilion.	\$\$\$	BI, G
	Install outdoor adult fitness stations.	\$\$	NF, GF
	Add an accessible path along Windemere St. frontage connecting Eton to Edenborough.	\$	G, GF
	Install additional permanent restrooms.	\$\$	BI, G
Poppleton Park	Install infrastructure (electricity, water hook-ups, parking and circulation area) to support food truck / mobile vendors.	\$\$	BI, G
	Install additional permanent restrooms.	\$\$	BI, G
	Install inclusive playground.	\$\$	BI, G
Pumphouse Park	Install inclusive playground.	\$\$	BI, G
Quarton Lake Park	Install picnic tables at strategic area(s) around the Lake.	\$	GF
Redding Well Site	Install standard park entry signage.	\$	GF
South Well Site	Install standard park entry signage.	\$	GF
Springdale Golf Course & Park	Complete irrigation improvements.	\$\$\$\$	BI
St. James Park	Install outdoor adult fitness stations.	\$\$	NF, GF
	Install semi-permanent or permanent lawn games.	\$	G, GF

SCALE OF INVESTMENT

\$:	<\$50,000
\$\$:	\$50,000-\$250,000
\$\$\$:	\$250,000 - \$500,000
\$\$\$\$:	\$500,000+

FUNDING SOURCES

ASR	Additional Staffing Resources	GF	General Fund
BI	2024 Bond Issue	NF	National Fitness Campaign Grant
D	Donations	V	Volunteers
G	Grants		

Short-Term Implementation of Studies, Pilots and Administrative Actions

Action / Recommendations	Scale of Investment	Potential Funding Source(s)
Re-evaluate and update the Kenning Park Master Plan park design to reflect current conditions. In the update, prioritize an accessible walking path, a defined entry with places to rest, wayfinding signage and legibility, and defined connections to surrounding neighborhoods.	\$\$	BI, G
Commission a St. James park redesign and plan to realize opportunity for a multi-generational destination at this park. In the design, prioritize walking paths, places to rest, a well-designed entrance with seating opportunities and a well-designed interface to connect the park with surrounding neighborhoods.	\$\$	BI, G
Organize garden club volunteers to help adopt parks, certain parts of parks, natural green areas, or gardens.	\$	ASR, V
Develop (and publicize) an approved list of native plant species appropriate for park and recreation applications.	\$	ASR, GF
Dedicate informal green spaces as public parks.	\$	ASR
Update City website parks listing to include mapping, comprehensive list of amenities.	\$	ASR
Continue to study opportunities to add pickleball capacity, including identifying potential tennis courts that may be converted to dual-use facilities.	\$	ASR
Periodically (e.g., quarterly, semi-annually) publish a comprehensive advertisement of recreation opportunities in Birmingham parks.	\$\$	ASR, GF
Building on existing engagements, explore methods for collecting park usership data.	\$	ASR,GF
Conduct a feasibility study for the development and construction of a splash pad, including identifying/creating staffing capacity for ongoing maintenance, identifying location, prioritizing accessibility for all community members and the lack of disruption of existing park and/or recreation functions, developing a conceptual site plan, and cost estimates.	\$\$	ASR, GF
Add opt-in park permit option to dog licensing process that requires that users acknowledge dogs must be leashed and cleaned up after, and publicly display park pass when using parks with their dogs.	\$	ASR
Deploy Recycling Bins at all parks with litter receptacles.	\$	G, GF
Install bicycle racks in remaining parks, prioritizing remaining Community and Neighborhood parks that do not yet have them.	\$	G, GF

SCALE OF INVESTMENT

\$:	<\$50,000
\$\$:	\$50,000-\$250,000
\$\$\$:	\$250,000 - \$500,000
\$\$\$\$:	\$500,000+

FUNDING SOURCES

ASR	Additional Staffing Resources	GF	General Fund
BI	2024 Bond Issue	NF	National Fitness Campaign Grant
D	Donations	V	Volunteers
G	Grants		

Parks and Recreation Funding Opportunities

There are several existing or potential funding sources available for parks and recreation facility improvements. In addition to the City's General Fund, other potential sources of funding for parks and recreation include: a dedicated millage (such as a land acquisition millage), user fees, revenue bonds, donation of land and/or easements, and grants.

For Birmingham parks, it also is important to acknowledge the significant support Parks and Recreation initiatives have received in the past five years, specifically from the \$11.25 million dollar bond issue approved by the voters in 2020. The 2024 Series II of the bond will be a significant funding resource for many of the items in the implementation portion of this plan. Successful implementation of these priorities can build additional public support for potential future requests for bond funding.



GRANT FUNDING

In addition to the funding sources mentioned above, grant funding can be an important funding resource. Securing grant funding for parks and recreation initiatives is a pivotal component in seeking to enhance facilities and recreation opportunities throughout the city. There is a variety of Local, State, and National grants that can help achieve the installation of universally designed playgrounds, adult fitness equipment, dog parks, nature trails, and amenities like shade and suitable surfacing. The following is a non-exhaustive list of potential grant resources for the city to explore.

- **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF):** The MNRTF provides grants for the acquisition of land for public recreation and the development of outdoor recreational facilities. It's a key funding source for projects that improve parks, trails, and other outdoor spaces across Michigan.
- **Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Recreation Passport Grant Program:** This program offers funding to local governments and school districts to enhance public outdoor recreation facilities.
- **Spark Grants:** These Michigan Department of Natural Resources support projects that aim to create safe, accessible recreational spaces, improve community health, introduce new recreational experiences, enhance existing park infrastructure, and make indoor and outdoor recreation more accessible for residents and visitors alike.
- **Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC):** MEDC provides grants and incentives to support various community and economic development projects. While not exclusively for parks and recreation, MEDC grants can be a valuable resource for matching funds that are crowd-sourced for projects that enhance the quality of life within communities, including park improvements.
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund:** Administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, this fund provides financial assistance for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation sites and facilities. It's an important resource for communities looking to create or enhance parks and recreational areas.



- **National Fitness Campaign:** The National Fitness Campaign offers grant opportunities and resources specifically to support fitness equipment.
- **Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA):** MCACA offers grants for arts and cultural projects that can enhance parks and recreation facilities through art installations, cultural programs, and more.
- **Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program:** This grant supports projects related to managing and preventing invasive species in parks and natural areas.
- **PetSafe Bark for Your Park Grant:** PetSafe assists in development and construction of safe and fun spaces for dogs and their owners.
- **National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Grants:** NRPA offers several grant programs for park and recreation agencies, including the 10-Minute Walk Campaign and the Parks Build Community initiative.
- **AARP Community Challenge:** AARP provides small grants to fund projects that improve livability and enhance the quality of life for older adults, including those related to parks and recreational amenities.
- **Outdoor Foundation Grants:** This organization offers various grants aimed at getting more people outdoors and supporting initiatives that enhance outdoor recreation opportunities.
- **Nature Michigan Grant Program:** The Michigan Environmental Council provides grants for projects that focus on conservation, wildlife, and outdoor experiences.
- **Healthy Food Access Grant Program:** This program, offered by the Michigan Fitness Foundation, supports projects that increase access to healthy food in community areas such as community gardens, which can complement park spaces.

Community foundations and local charitable organizations are also vital contributors to parks and recreation initiatives. Many of these organizations offer grants and sponsorships tailored to community development projects. Their support can be instrumental in financing specific amenities. Furthermore, the establishment of partnerships with nonprofit organizations and local businesses can open up additional funding avenues. Collaboration can lead to sponsorships, in-kind donations, and volunteer support for park projects, which can significantly offset costs and increase community engagement.

Staff Acknowledgments



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