
APPENDICES

*Special Area Analysis - Historic Downtown Raytown
Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*

City of Raytown, Missouri

Special Area Analysis - Historic Downtown Raytown

*Raytown Planning and Zoning Commission
Raytown Board of Aldermen*

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SPECIAL AREA ANALYSIS
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN RAYTOWN

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SPECIAL AREA ANALYSIS -- HISTORIC DOWNTOWN RAYTOWN

Introduction

The following analysis and future development scenario for Raytown's downtown is a component of the Comprehensive Plan for Raytown. The Historic Downtown Raytown plan was developed through community meetings and workshops. These meetings were attended by members of the Chamber of Commerce, business owners, City Staff and also by many Raytown residents. While the first workshop helped identify issues and concerns for the future development of the area, the next workshop focused on refining the proposed development scenario for the area and defining specifics, such as design considerations, regulations, incentives and other implementation tools, within downtown.

The following report is organized around the four main elements of the planning process; *Existing Conditions, Community Issues, Recommended Plan and Recommended Implementation Strategies*.

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Existing Conditions

The downtown in Raytown, was defined during the initial phases of the Comprehensive Plan process, as six blocks along 63rd Street. Its western edge is generally defined by Elm Street, with Willow Street defining its eastern limits. Current commercial development is moving away from downtown, as thus defined, on to Raytown Road/Trafficway. The following analysis is based on a visual survey of the area. This analysis identifies the existing strengths and weaknesses of Raytown's downtown.

Orientation and View

Generally, 63rd Street is an east-west thoroughfare with a slight bend around Raytown Road. This bend in the alignment of the street makes the United Missouri Bank building at the northwest corner and the car repair shop at the southeast corner of the intersection of Raytown Road and 63rd Street the termini of views along the corridor. These two buildings therefore play major role in defining the image and character of downtown (See Figure A).

Another characteristic of the downtown area is its elevation, which is particularly noticeable where the old Santa Fe Trail merges with 63rd Street. The ridge, located between Raytown Road/Trafficway and Elm Street, provides significant views of northern Raytown. The topography north of 63rd Street slopes gradually to the Missouri river. Certain areas in the northwestern section of Raytown drop by nearly 200 feet from the ridge identified above. Where the Chicago-Rock Island Railroad crosses 63rd Street, surrounding vegetation provides a visual break to the cluster of commercial establishments along Raytown Road/Trafficway.

Because the identified downtown area stretches in an east-west direction, the southern sidewalk is shaded most of the day while the northern sidewalk is unshaded. This orientation implies that the street be sensitive to the height of the buildings along its southern side.

FIGURE A: VISUAL ANALYSIS

63rd Street - Elm Street to Willow Street

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With respect to landmarks, the two water towers north of 63rd Street are immediately noticeable when approaching downtown. The tower by Elm Street, due to its height and bulk, literally functions as a gateway when driving east into downtown. None of the downtown buildings offer any visual competition to the eight story, white water towers.



Western water tower along 63rd Street

Traffic and Parking

Downtown Raytown stretches east and west from two significant intersections in the City; 1) 63rd Street with Blue Ridge Boulevard and 2) 63rd Street with Raytown Trafficway. Traffic studies show that Blue Ridge Boulevard and Raytown Trafficway carry the largest average daily traffic (ADT) volume among the north-south streets in the City. Similarly, 63rd Street carries the highest amount of east-west traffic among arterials in Raytown. This suggests that downtown traffic provides high exposure to adjacent land uses. At the same time, however, the high volume of fast moving traffic does not allow for a pedestrian oriented environment and discourages pedestrian movement across 63rd Street.

Currently, parallel parking is available along 63rd Street on east and west of Raytown Trafficway. During the visual analysis, and also observed by residents, the number of parking spaces appeared to meet the current demand for short-term parking. Off-street parking is generally available at every commercial establishment. Most off street parking lots are located toward the front of commercial properties, though a few businesses created rear parking lots. Very few properties west of Raytown Trafficway and south of 63rd Street, have parking provisions toward

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the back of their properties.

Land Use and Building Form

Unlike some central business districts, Raytown's downtown has a mixture of commercial and residential uses. Additionally, Raytown's downtown does not have the City's greatest concentration of higher density uses. While clusters of large buildings and businesses tend to distinguish a downtown area from other commercial areas in a City, in Raytown the high-density commercial uses are generally located at a number of nodes that do not lie within the defined downtown.

The buildings within downtown Raytown are generally single story, though the medical offices and medium density residential structures west of Raytown Trafficway are two story. The Boatman's Bank building is another two story structure on 63rd Street. Nearly all of the structures are oriented towards 63rd Street, yet they fail to add to the character of the street. This could be the result of a combination of factors, such as the low height of the buildings, the varying setbacks from 63rd Street and finally, the distance between buildings.

An area that has a noticeable character and offers a feeling of enclosure to the street is located along 63rd Street between Raytown Road and Blue Ridge Boulevard. This block is defined by a contiguous row of buildings that are aligned along the sidewalk and are characterized by a well-defined roofline. This is the only block with only retail uses. Other blocks have varying combinations of retail, office and residential uses (See Figure B).

The retail uses on 63rd Street are generally single story, similar to most of the office buildings. A number of fast-food franchises are distinguished by their bright exteriors and off street parking lots. Almost none of the retail establishments would be considered to be of regional significance, and thus they serve a very limited clientele beyond the Raytown city limits. On the other hand, offices in the downtown, such as the medical and financial institutions, probably draw a number of out-of-town clients to the area.

Other than the financial institutions, very few of the buildings downtown are architecturally noteworthy. The Raytown Historical Society Museum represents the only semipublic use in the downtown, while the Water District Office is the only public use in downtown. A significant number of public uses are clustered further north of the downtown, around City Hall.

The buildings in downtown also vary considerably in their exterior colors and textures. In Raytown's downtown, the commercial buildings generally have either a brick facia or are painted white. A few buildings have a combination of both, as shown in the photo on page 4. Smaller structures, such as the Raytown Post building, have wood siding exteriors that are painted with bright colors. The rooflines of the buildings are mostly flat, with some buildings having sloped rooflines of asphalt shingles.

FIGURE B: EXISTING LAND USE

63rd Street - Elm Street to Willow Street

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Buildings located in the 9700 block of 63rd Street

Streetscape and Signage

The streetscape in the downtown varies along 63rd Street. Near Elm Street, the surrounding landscape (consisting of fields and landscaped buildings) lends a green, pastoral quality to the area. Further east, the streetscape appears chaotic, as numerous signs contribute to the visual disharmony. At the eastern end of the downtown more single family residences are interspersed with commercial uses. A greater number of trees and front lawns offer a welcome relief to the relatively austere landscape of the central portion of the downtown.

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Land located at west end of the downtown.

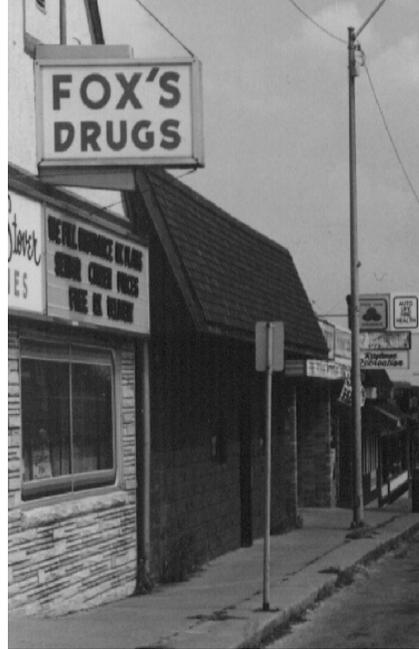


Visual clutter along 63rd Street.

Sidewalks do not extend along the entire length of the downtown. They are interrupted by frequent curb cuts from driveways and landscaping, and often simply end at a property line. Streetlights, aboveground utilities, and traffic signals in Raytown's downtown, either detract or hinder the formation of an unique identity for the downtown. Street furnishings, such as benches, trash receptacles, and newspaper vending machines are not present or not noticeable

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One of the most striking features of the streetscape along 63rd Street is the variety of large, bold signs. As apparent from the photos below, sign types range from freestanding signs, either mounted low or on tall pylons; building mounted signs; or hanging signs. Compared to the building signs, street markers are considerably less noticeable. Similarly, historical markers that are present go unnoticed.



Commercial signage



Historic markers / signage

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Planning Implications

The downtown, as defined, is not bounded by any definite physical limits. Its current physical definition, which essentially parallels 63rd Street would suggest a strip commercial area, rather than a downtown. The defined downtown area also includes educational institutions and day care centers, which could affect the nature of future uses in downtown. Therefore, the current limits for the downtown area should be reassessed. Physical boundaries need to be established such that the downtown can be visibly distinguished, and can support a variety of uses.

Raytown's downtown also needs to build on its strengths. The downtown area has an unique setting, mainly due to the abundant vegetation and presence of nearby housing. Further, the proximity to City Hall and the lake, the surrounding retail establishments as well as the financial institutions on 63rd Street provide strong anchors for the downtown area. The railroad right-of-way not only helps retain the natural environment, it also offers the potential for introducing a pedestrian and bike trail directly into the core of the downtown area.

The parts of downtown that are elevated and offer views to the north could accommodate outdoor retail (such as restaurants) and/or recreational facilities. Appropriate incentives could encourage new development to respond to and preserve views. This would affect development north of the current downtown.

Further, the downtown area has abundant sunlight. Exposure to sunlight contributes to the success of a pedestrian oriented environment. This attribute of downtown development should be reinforced.

The area should take advantage of a number of opportunities and build on some of its inherent strengths. For instance, the downtown is strategically positioned within the transportation network of the City, and is directly accessible by the three busiest streets in the City. This will enable downtown development to take advantage of its regional location and proximity to regional attractions, such as the stadiums and Longview Lake in Kansas City. Also, it is located within a half mile of City Hall, the heart of public administration in Raytown.

Downtown needs to define itself as an unique destination. Facade and other improvements should focus on creating an unique identity for downtown. While many cities have used their varied architectural character to create a diverse and interesting image, many successful downtowns across the nation have created vibrant environments by limiting the variations of the exteriors of the buildings and the texture / character of the urban fabric.

Community Issues and Concerns

The above visual analysis was presented to Raytown residents and investors at a community workshop. The community workshop was attended by nearly forty participants. After a review of the visual analysis, workshop participants identified some of their major concerns with the downtown. Generally, the observations targeted the current role and function of the downtown, infrastructure issues and the image of the area.

Role and Function of the downtown

The downtown, as defined earlier, does not appear to play a distinct role in Raytown's economy, or image. There are many businesses and financial institutions in the downtown, yet, collectively they do not contribute to a cohesive image or role for the entire area. Workshop participants determined that the commercial use of noncommercial structures was an image issue. If designed appropriately, these apparently dissimilar uses could work collectively to create an unique downtown within the metropolitan area.

Additionally, the City Hall complex at the end of Raytown Road generates considerable traffic near the downtown and was perceived as an opportunity by workshop participants. Similarly, the intersection of the railroad tracks and 63rd Street was described by many participants as a potential trailhead for a bike trail through downtown. It was also felt that the downtown would benefit from the rehabilitation and reuse of the Baptist Church building on Blue Ridge Boulevard. If the building continued to be vacant, it would have a negative impact on the future of downtown.

Specialty shops, cafes, bicycle shops and other unique retail uses were recommended for the downtown. There was also interest in introducing distinct residential opportunities such as lofts and senior citizen housing within the downtown.

Infrastructure

Workshop participants also identified many issues related to existing infrastructure within the downtown. Many commented on the inadequate lighting and the traffic congestion in downtown during peak hours, as well as the need to provide further parking options within the area. Currently, the sidewalks are narrow and do not support extensive pedestrian activities or significant streetscape elements.

Recommended improvements to the downtown included new centrally located parking lots as well as shared parking lots located behind businesses. There was also interest in retaining some on street parking for short-term users, and accommodating public transportation and alternate modes of travel, such as a trolley and bicycles, within the downtown.

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Downtown Image

Raytown's downtown has a number of positive attributes. A few, such as the Museum and the offices for the Raytown Post reflect the City's history. Among the downtown's drawbacks, workshop participants noted the poor image that parts of Raytown's downtown presented. Old or vacant buildings, varying architectural character, distance between buildings and the lack of a cohesive character for the storefronts were aspects of the downtown area that appeared to contribute to this image.

Recommendations included introducing an architectural theme for the downtown that reflected its heritage, enforcing improved codes targeting poorly maintained buildings, and developing new design codes regulating signage and storefronts within the downtown.

Recommended Plan for Historic Downtown

The Recommended Plan for Historic Downtown is a vision for the area. The plan is general in nature, and proposed programs or development proposals are intended to focus on the overall development of a strong highly identifiable downtown. Also, recommendations need to be viewed within the context of the entire city and the recommended future development pattern. It should be noted that the proposed Historic Downtown Plan does not consist of isolated development actions, but relies on a coordinated and committed approach to realizing and implementing the proposed development scenario for the downtown.

As currently defined, the downtown in Raytown will not achieve a strong foothold economically or physically within the local or regional context. This is due to the linear nature of the current area and the disconnectedness that exists from block to block, and in some cases, building to building. In order for the downtown to become an attractive area that appeals to people and that functions well, its physical nature must be redefined.

Redefining Downtown - The Boundaries of Historic Downtown

Instead of a linear strip, the downtown should be viewed as a set of activity nodes and districts, linkages, and entryways that act collectively to create a unique “place.” Such redefinition of the area allows the full recognition and utilization of existing strengths in the area instead of focusing on the detriments of the existing downtown. These activity nodes and districts, linkages, and entryways are generally identified on Figures C and D, and described in the following discussion.

Nodes / Districts

Given the varied development patterns within the proposed Historic Downtown boundaries, the recommended plan divides downtown into two activity nodes and one district; the Civic Center node anchoring the north, the Rock Island Mixed-use District in the center, and the Santa Fe Retail Square anchoring the southern end of Historic Downtown. The limits of these areas are shown in Figure C.

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- A. Civic Center:** The Civic Center contains City Hall and adjacent development. The property owned by the City could be developed into a significant anchor for Raytown that would include additional office space required by several City departments, as well as landscaped open space designed to accommodate large crowds and a variety of events. The Civic Center concept would require the improvement of vehicular access to the lake and enhance the potential for linking the node to the proposed trail along the railroad.
- B. Rock Island Mixed-Use District:** The Rock Island Mixed-Use District would recognize a distinctly residential area towards the north and the west, institutional buildings to the east and commercial development along 63rd Street. The district currently contains a number of vacant properties and dilapidated buildings. Therefore, there is potential for consolidating properties and introducing new uses within the district.

Its unique setting within the heart of Raytown with access to support services and facilities would allow for the creation of new and unique living environments and residential character within the City. This district will play an important role in retaining continuity between the Civic Center and the Santa Fe Retail Square. Linkage to the potential trail along the Chicago Rock Island Railroad can be maintained by a trailhead north of 63rd Street that could incorporate a rest area and parking.

- C. Santa Fe Square:** With a realignment of Cedar Street, Santa Fe Square, bounded by 63rd Street and Cedar Street, would become a pedestrian oriented retail and activity hub for Raytown. The properties within the two-blocks would be developed to support retail uses, offering opportunities to small businesses and entrepreneurs in the City. The area would be developed with both central parking and on street parking. Potentially, the district could provide parking provisions at major entrances to the area. Visibility, excellent access, neighboring medium density development, appropriate design and well designed spaces for small businesses would collectively support the growth of this area (See Figure D).

Raytown Road would be redesigned to discourage unlimited vehicular access and allow for more vendor or pedestrian oriented uses and on-street parking, and to support special events and activities. By incorporating restaurants and/or entertainment activities such as a theater or playhouse, or a youth-oriented activity center, the area would attract customers throughout the day and create an environment safe for twenty-four hour use. Mixed-use developments, with offices or residences above street level should be encouraged.

FIGURE C: RECOMMENDED HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

***FIGURE D: RECOMMENDED PLAN FOR HISTORIC DOWNTOWN
RAYTOWN***

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Linkages

An integral element of the Plan for Historic Downtown are its linkages to neighboring development and other communities in the region. The linkages vary in their role and function either to make downtown resources available to Raytown residents or to a broader population base beyond city limits. Depending on their role and the recommended character of neighboring development, the linkages vary in width, and design.

The role of the various linkages within the downtown reflect the overall system of linkages recommended for Raytown as a whole. Blue Ridge Boulevard and Raytown Road/Trafficway will operate as regional linkages to neighboring highways and surrounding communities. 59th Street and 63rd Street will function as secondary arterial and primary collector, respectively, within the City and provide easy access for Raytown residents to and around downtown. Raytown Road will function as an internal linkage within Historic Downtown.

- A. Raytown Road/Trafficway:** As the only north-south street, which extends the entire length of the City, Raytown Road/Trafficway plays a critical role in providing access to Historic Downtown. Raytown Road/Trafficway also carries traffic from two regional attractions, the stadium area and Longview Lake, to the downtown. Given the important role of the street in the city, the generous width of the street and the nature of adjacent development, the street could be redesigned as a boulevard. Carefully placed landscaping elements and abundant street lighting would reinforce this identity.
- B. Blue Ridge Boulevard:** The 63rd Street intersection with Blue Ridge Boulevard is one of the busiest intersections in the City. As a result of its diagonal orientation and current street configuration within the City, Blue Ridge Boulevard is a popular means for residents in and around northern Raytown to access downtown. Blue Ridge Boulevard is also significant as it closely parallels the historical Santa Fe Trail through Raytown. Its designation as a boulevard could be better reflected in the streetscape design for Blue Ridge Boulevard. If appropriately designed, Blue Ridge Boulevard could also accommodate a bicycle use and provide a critical link from the proposed regional network of bicycle trails to Historic Downtown Raytown. The current designation of the street as an arterial street should be changed so that the stretch south of 59th Street acts as a secondary collector.
- C. 63rd Street:** As a result of the current network and condition of streets in Raytown, 63rd Street carries a high volume of traffic between Swope Park, I-435 and communities east of Raytown. Currently, most of the traffic is through traffic and therefore conflicts with the pedestrian circulation in downtown. Historic Downtown would benefit enormously if a portion of this traffic could be encouraged to stop and shop in the area, while also accommodating through traffic. This street will continue to attract commercial establishments and traffic. Future improvements should consider the incorporation of ample sidewalks and on-street parking within the downtown. Natural landscaping, such as trees and plant beds, would be less dense than that required for the boulevards. In contrast, streetscape elements, such as pedestrian lights, benches and planters would contribute more to a festive environment on 63rd Street.

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- D. 59th Street:** The Recommended Plan for Historic Downtown recommends that 59th Street should be designated a secondary arterial and designed to accommodate traffic from communities in and around eastern Raytown, as well as through traffic seeking to avoid the area. 59th Street intersects with major north-south streets, such as Blue Ridge Boulevard, Raytown Road/Trafficway, and Blue Ridge Cutoff. Almost entirely built out with residential and public uses in addition to a few offices, the street will probably induce little pedestrian activity except near designated pedestrian linkages and the Civic Center area. The Street should be designed with prominent landscaping
- E. Raytown Road:** An appropriate character and design for Raytown Road in Historic Downtown is critical to the success of the Plan for Historic Downtown, as the road plays a significant role in linking the two extreme nodes. It is intended that the road will be designated a primary collector and redesigned for slow traffic movement, parallel parking and generous sidewalks. The uses at the street level will need to respond to pedestrian and vehicular traffic anticipated for the district. With appropriate design and landscaping, the part of Raytown Road south of 63rd Street could become a colorful and active section of the downtown. Raytown Road should have an enhanced urban character, with frequent crosswalks, corbelled paving, on street parking and very wide sidewalks. Landscaping should be minimal and used only to highlight focal points within the Retail Square. Banners, frequent pedestrian lights, small shops and a variety of urban spaces can make this area an unique experience within Raytown.

Entryways

As conduits for bringing people to and from the downtown, parts of certain linkages function as entryways. Entryways are areas of transition between surrounding neighborhoods and downtown. Generally, retail uses are interspersed with residential uses in entryways. Also, entryways typically enjoy high visibility and therefore are important elements contributing to the image and perception of the downtown. Consequently, entryways require careful planning, design, and signage. The streetscape and developments surrounding an entryway would also need to be regulated. Important entryways to the downtown are the corridors along 63rd Street west of Raytown Road/Trafficway, along Blue Ridge Boulevard from the north / northeast, and along Raytown Road/Trafficway both north and south of 63rd Street. Treatment of these entryways has been discussed in the section above. These corridors are important to the overall success of Historic Downtown.

Gateways

In addition to entryways, “gateways” contribute to the definition of Historic Downtown. As the term suggests, gateways symbolize an entry or exit from a district and usually occur at major intersections along the outer limits of a district. They are critical in influencing both the first or last impression of an area, (in this case Historic Downtown) and need to be treated with special consideration. Typically, a gateway would require a significant marker and intense landscaping. Often arches or pediments have been used to symbolize a gateway.

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In Raytown, the intersections of 59th and 63rd Streets with Raytown Trafficway, new Cedar Street and with Raytown Trafficway intersection, and Raytown Road with 59th Street, as well as the intersections of Blue Ridge Boulevard with 59th and 63rd Streets are the major gateways into Historic Downtown. It should be noted that the last intersection was recently “embellished” with landscaping that suggests the feeling of a gateway. Minor gateways into the Santa Fe Retail Square could be established on 63rd Street, by Raytown Road and another near the Post Office.

Implementation Strategies

Linkages, nodes and entryways are the critical elements of the recommended downtown. Implementing these enhancements is integral to the success of the Plan for Historic Downtown. Following is an attempt to define strategies and actions necessary to realize the visions.

The implementation strategy for Historic Downtown is composed of four distinct programs; Physical Improvement, Regulatory, Administrative and Financial Programs. While each program would be managed by different agencies and would occur over time, it is essential that implementation is coordinated. It should be noted that without a coherent implementation strategy, there is a likelihood that area improvements will not have the desired impact described in the Plan for Historic Downtown.

Physical Improvement Programs

Critical to the success of the Plan for Historic Downtown is an improvement of the image of the area. Though this is tied mostly to extensive streetscape enhancements, the image of the downtown would also rely on the successful implementation and enforcement of codes and maintenance programs within the downtown. It is important to recognize that the following improvements will not occur simultaneously but over a period of time. The improvements will therefore have to be phased. A tentative phasing recommendation is shown in as part of Plan Implementation in the Future Development Plan for Raytown.

- p) **Streets:** The following improvements (not in order of priority), need to be implemented so that the streets function efficiently in their new roles:
 - a) **Cedar Street:** Construct the diversion of Cedar Street south of 63rd Street such that Cedar Street connects directly with Raytown Trafficway. Allow for on-street parking on Cedar Street, retaining two traffic lanes in both directions.
 - b) **63rd Street:** Reconstruct 63rd Street between Raytown Trafficway and Blue Ridge Boulevard to allow a parking lane on both sides of the street. Introduce two traffic lanes in either direction .
 - c) **Raytown Road:** Upgrade Raytown Road and provide for a single traffic lane and a parking lane in both directions.
 - d) **59th Street:** Upgrade 59th Street west of Raytown Road/Trafficway to the standards of a secondary arterial street. Though this stretch is beyond the downtown limits, upgrading the entire stretch of 59th Street to the standards of an arterial will serve regional through traffic seeking to avoid the downtown. (Note: Upgrading Woodson Road to arterial standards would also direct some traffic load off 63rd Street)

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- b) **Parking:** The Plan for Historic Downtown identifies those areas that would be preferable for on-street parking. The plan also recommends that parking lots / structures be constructed in the downtown, but does not tie this recommendation down to any specific location. With the help of a detailed traffic study and circulation plan for the downtown, and in collaboration with the relevant property owners, these sites can be identified. It would be desirable to have retail uses at the street level of the parking structures. The structures should also be visually pleasing and not detrimental to the overall scale and character intended for the downtown.
- a) Appropriately distinguish the designated parking areas from non-parking areas within the downtown.
 - b) Identify locations for new parking lots and parking structures. Prepare circulation and landscaping plans for the parking areas.
 - c) Create shared parking provisions within the downtown by negotiating with property owners to pool individual parking spaces.
- b) **Sidewalks:** Sidewalks should be refurbished and new sidewalks constructed within the downtown such that they are continuous, conform to ADA standards yet allow for driveways.
- a) Widen the sidewalks in the downtown.
 - b) Create mechanisms to minimize the impact of curb cuts within the downtown.
 - c) Place utility systems underground within the downtown.
- b) **Streetscape / Landscaping:** It would be important to introduce streetscape elements and landscaping along with sidewalk improvements in order to reduce overall construction costs. Landscaping and streetscape within the downtown should respond to the distinct role and pedestrian nature of the streets as recommended in the Plan for Historic Downtown.
- a) Create a vibrant and colorful urban environment on 63rd Street, and on the segment of Raytown Road, between 59th Street and the bridge by using elements such as banners, colorful paving, benches, and appropriate landscaping.
 - b) Intensify landscaping, including ground cover and trees, along Raytown Road north of 63rd Street, and along 59th Street. Street furniture like benches, will be used minimally on these streets.
 - c) Lighting is an important element of the Plan for Historic Downtown and lighting levels within the downtown should be upgraded to encourage pedestrian activity.
 - d) Integrate the signage system within the downtown and make it consistent with the overall character of the downtown.
- b) **Entryways:** Identify and prioritize the redesign of major entryways into downtown. Urban design plans for the entryways and guidelines for neighboring development should be prepared.

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Catalyst Projects: The Plan for Historic Downtown is general in nature, yet identifies several development projects that would lend to the overall revitalization of the downtown. The recommended projects are also broadly defined and could be redefined under different development programs. Some of the proposed projects are described below:

- a) **Bike Trail:** As a part of the proposed linkage system for the City, the Chicago Rock Island Railroad could be converted into a bike trail. This project is subject to the needs and plans of the final owner of the tracks.
- b) **Bike Trailhead:** Integral to the railroad project is a potential trailhead north of 63rd Street. This could include parking, as well as refreshments and restroom facilities.
- c) **Twin Retail Developments:** As a part of the Santa Fe Retail Square, major redevelopment is recommended south of 63rd Street. This redevelopment could be initiated by a single developer. Or, the properties could be redeveloped gradually, by a number of different developers, or by a coalition of existing business owners as a Community Development Corporation..
- d) **Civic Extension:** Several City Hall departments have identified the need to expand their facilities. Expansion on the property north of City Hall may be possible. A master plan would be necessary to use this area appropriately and create a civic center for Raytown. Along with additional office uses, this area could include an open-air amphitheater, trails and a lake. Amenities, such as benches and pits, could be incorporated within the landscape to support a variety of uses.
- e) **Community Facility:** Ideally, an activity center could be located within the vicinity of City Hall. If tied in with the trails, it could function also as a recreational center. For further discussion, please refer to the parks plan in the Comprehensive Plan document.

Regulatory Programs

Programs and statutory changes are critical to both maintaining public improvements, in addition to encouraging and guiding private development efforts. Above all, supplementary studies and programs by the City would contribute to improving the efficient functioning of the downtown. Following are recommendations for a number of programs, ranging from design guidelines to upkeep programs for maintaining the downtown.

Zoning Overlay District: For the area within the downtown and another separately for the entryways, establish zoning overlay districts that would incorporate additional building and site planning requirements for new construction.

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- a) **Parking:** Currently, zoning does not encourage shared parking facilities and requires setbacks between two properties and along a street front. These requirements should be revised to encourage shared parking and reduce setbacks between commercial properties. Parking at the front of properties should be discouraged. Landscaping at the periphery of parking lots, especially adjacent to residential areas, should be mandated. Parking structures should be required to include retail space at the street level along a major street.
 - b) **Setbacks:** Reduce front and side setback requirements for commercial properties within the downtown. General practice is to mandate no front and side setback allowances for downtown properties. However, where downtown properties lie adjacent to residences, retain setback requirements and introduce landscaping and buffering guidelines.
 - c) **Building Openings:** To reduce the expanse of blank walls, it should be required that openings, either doors or windows, be incorporated at regular intervals. Other cities, for instance, have necessitated store openings at intervals of 25 feet.
 - d) **Building Form:** Long horizontal building forms should be discouraged. A regular vertical element within the downtown is essential. As a result, new construction and facade improvements should reinforce this character for the downtown by highlighting vertical features of the facade such as columns and posts, elongated windows and so on.
 - e) **Building Height:** A maximum building height should be established for the downtown such that it retains the sunlight on the north side of the street for most of the year and ensures that downtown development does not overwhelm nearby residential development, yet allows for greater density within the area.
- **Driveways:** Currently driveways close to street intersections impede efficient traffic flow. To reduce traffic conflicts some cities do not allow driveways near street intersections and require a minimum of fifty feet between the nearest edge of the driveway and the edge of the street intersection.
 - **Sign Ordinance:** Currently the sign ordinance for the City allows for very generous and oversized signs. Revise the ordinance, in particular for signs within commercial and multifamily zones to reduce the maximum sign area allowable by code. Ground signs and signs projected beyond 4'-0" from the wall should not be permitted within the downtown. In addition to these permanent signs, the City should mandate the minimum requirements for temporary signs within the downtown. These should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance for the City using the overlay zoning district.
 - **Property Maintenance:** Poor maintenance of properties can be dealt with by enforcing strict property maintenance codes, establishing an ordinance that would define blighted buildings and through occupancy permit standards. This ordinance would allow the City to acquire poorly maintained property for redevelopment.
 - **Vacancy Ordinance:** Associated with a successful downtown are low percentages of

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- vacancies. Building occupancy is generally low in a weak local economy, which can be aggravated by poor management. Speculation can also generate vacancies. Often cities have instituted ordinances that penalize property owners for keeping properties vacant and have offered incentives to encourage rental / sale of properties.
- **Facade Improvement Program:** To create a new image for the downtown, encourage renovation of existing building exteriors. The new facades should conform to the design guidelines established for the downtown. Some cities have created revolving loan funds or offered architectural services at reduced rates. Other cities have offered free paint.
 - **Design Guidelines:** Establish design guidelines for the downtown, which incorporates the historical background of the City, yet allows for considerable innovation and modernization of building exteriors. A distinct character for the downtown area would differentiate it from surrounding development, thereby making it more imaginable. Appropriate application of these guidelines would be monitored through a design review process.
 - **Sidewalks:** To improve maintenance and upkeep of sidewalks in the downtown, Raytown should establish an ordinance that will transfer responsibility for condition of sidewalks to adjacent businesses.
 - **Urban Renewal District:** In order to facilitate redevelopment and reinforce the identity of the downtown, the City should establish the boundaries for the downtown as an Urban Renewal District.
 - **downtown Traffic Study and Plan:** Initiate a detailed study of traffic patterns, parking facilities / requirements and potential for alternate modes of travel within the downtown. Prepare a traffic and parking plan for the downtown that should be incorporated in future development within the downtown
 - **Public Transit:** Survey Raytown residents and determine the feasibility as well as the desirability of public transit within the City. Determine preferable routes and destinations for the system. Accommodate a major stop within the downtown.
 - **Streetscape / Landscaping Guidelines:** Prepare a streetscape improvement plan for the downtown. As a part of the streetscape plan prepares guidelines for streetscape improvements especially for those improvements that could be initiated by adjacent private businesses. The plan should indicate preferable streetscape elements, their location criteria and maintenance requirements. Separate guidelines for entryways should be included in the plan.
 - **Historic Preservation:** For historic sites and structures in the downtown, establish a historic preservation district and a local Historic Preservation Commission for reviewing any new buildings or modifications to existing historic structures within the designated areas.
 - **Amortization Program:** This program needs to be established to allow property owners to gradually upgrade the properties as per code, over a period of time.

Special Area Analysis - Historic Downtown Raytown

Administrative Programs

Administering the above programs would be difficult within the current framework of City government in Raytown. Below are recommendations for efficient management of the proposed programs. These changes could be implemented through the creation of new agencies or administered by incorporating new functions within current Raytown government.

- ***Downtown Development Agency / Coordinator:*** In order to aggressively pursue the Plan for Historic Downtown, create an administrative and management body that would be responsible for overseeing the redevelopment and management of the downtown, manage future studies of the downtown and organize aggressive marketing strategies. The Downtown Development Agency/coordinator will also need to assist in aggregating properties for redevelopment and offering appropriate compensation for impacted property owners. Rather than purchasing properties, some cities have assembled a loosely organized development corporation consisting of downtown property owners for redeveloping properties. Cities have therefore reduced the need for large up-front costs for redevelopment projects.

The Downtown Development Agency/Coordinator could be set up as an independent agency or as a part of a larger City department. Some cities have contracted this function out to private management / development firms. Without a coordinating force for downtown development, the Plan for Historic Downtown would be difficult to implement.

- ***Interdepartmental Committee:*** To support the functions of the Downtown Development Agency/Coordinator create an interdepartmental committee that would facilitate coordination between the activities of City departments to ensure that the downtown is accorded to a high priority by all.
- ***Business Development Agency:*** Raytown should take the opportunity provided by the revitalization of downtown to foster the growth of local small businesses. Encouraging entrepreneurs within Raytown to set up businesses through outreach programs, training programs and loan programs should be among the responsibilities of a City department. Establishments, such as a business incubator, would help potential business owners start new businesses, with minimal up-front costs.
- ***Tax Increment Commission; Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority; Historic Preservation Commission; Design Review Committee:*** As Raytown introduces new means of financing downtown developments, retaining its historic structures/sites and enforcing design guidelines, it would be necessary to identify a commission / board for monitoring and overseeing the distribution of funds and successful completion of the projects.

Special Area Analysis - Historic Downtown Raytown

Financial Programs

Above all, the City will need funding for the above programs. With a decreasing tax base, the City will have to be entrepreneurial, innovative and aggressive in pursuing means of financing, other than City taxes. A variety of alternate funding sources are available to Raytown, such as private loans, grants, joint development, state and federal grants, tax subsidies and collaboration with nonprofit agencies.

- ***Land Assembly Fund:*** In order to realize a meaningful revitalization of the downtown, it would be important to assemble properties for redevelopment. A fund could be established that would be earmarked for downtown development. Land would need to be assembled strategically, dependent on the location of the property within the overall context of the Plan for Historic Downtown, the willingness of the property owner to sell the property and the availability of other properties nearby.
- ***Business Development Loans:*** In an effort to support and promote small business development in the City, it will be important to provide small business loans as well as fund local business development programs.
- ***Facade Improvement Program:*** Expenses for the Facade Improvement Program would include revolving loans in addition to the administrative costs for the program. In some cities, this program is managed by the Public Works Department, while in other cities it is administered by the economic development department.
- ***Downtown Development Agency / Coordinator:*** Costs involved include one-time cost of setting up the agency and annual administration, as well as programs costs. If established as a community development corporation, (CDC) consisting of volunteer members, the organization could apply for the status of a nonprofit organization (501 (c) 3) which would enable it to apply for many federal and state grants and other assistance.
- ***Streetscape Improvements:*** Once the improvements are phased, the budget for implementing the improvements will need to be included in capital improvement program and the annual budget for the City. These improvements could be one time investments by the City with adjacent properties undertakings subsequent maintenance costs.
- ***Tax Increment Financing (TIF):*** TIF allows for payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTS) to be used to pay for approved project related costs, infrastructure and capital improvements. Property owners make PILOTS in an amount equal to the tax abatement granted, as well as 50 percent of all local operations and activity taxes generated within the plan area to a special allocation fund. Approved project costs are then paid or reimbursed to the developer from the special allocation fund. Other TIF incentives include bond financing and property acquisition assistance.
- ***Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA):*** LCRA incentives are designed to encourage investment in areas or structures that are in blighted condition. Urban renewal areas and the associated Redevelopment Plans are designated by the LCRA Board of Commissioners and City Council. LCRA offers 100 percent property tax abatements on property *improvements* for ten years, based on the Urban

Special Area Analysis - Historic Downtown Raytown

Redevelopment Corporation Law, Missouri State Statute “353”. The authority can also issue bonds to assist with the financing of approved projects within redevelopment areas. The LCRA may assist approved projects with property acquisition, coordination of relocation benefits and assistance, and make use of its powers of eminent domain when necessary.

- a) Kansas City, Missouri has established a Planned Industrial Expansion Authority (PIEA) to similarly foster redevelopment for commercial and industrial developments. **Special Business District; Chapter 71.790 (1972):** The governing body of any city may establish special business districts in the manner provided hereafter. Once the business district is established, with the governing body’s approval, the district can close streets or open new streets; undertake physical improvements and public uses; landscaping improvements; public facilities; public transportation and so on. Any Special Business District thus established may upon a vote of two-thirds of the voters of the district voting thereon, incur indebtedness and issue bonds or notes for the payment thereof. The indebtedness authorized by this section shall not be contracted for a period not more than twenty years and shall not at any time exceed, including existing indebtedness in the district, in the aggregate ten percent of the value of taxable tangible property therein.
 - b) **Neighborhood Improvement District:** Statute RsMO 67.453 -67.475 (1990): The purpose of this program is to provide an affordable mechanism to finance public improvements. Cities or counties raise the funds by issuing general obligation bonds. The payments of these bonds are passed on to property owners who benefit from the improvements through special assessments. Public votes are NOT required for issuing the bonds, but 2/3 of the land area within the district must sign the petition. The monies would sponsor public improvements, including acquisition, construction, engineering, legal and related costs. Any balance after completion shall be credited against the amount of the original assessment of each parcel on a pro-rata basis and refunded. The county has a limit on NID bonds of 10 percent of the assessed valuation of taxable tangible property, which does not impact on limits imposed for other general obligation bonds.
- **Neighborhood Assistance Program:** The Neighborhood Assistance Program (1978) enables businesses to redirect their tax dollars to help finance local projects in endangered neighborhoods. The state tax credit stretches the amount a business might normally be able to give and does not involve transfer of state dollars to help finance local projects. The State’s role is to approve projects and to offer tax credits up to 50 percent of the value of the contribution. Donations may be in the form of cash, materials, supplies, real estate, labor or technical assistance. This assistance can be extended to any type of community development project that improves the neighborhood in one of the following categories; community services; crime prevention; education; job training; physical revitalization; and economic development.

Special Area Analysis - Historic Downtown Raytown

The primary focus of NAP in downtown revitalization centers on organizational development, physical improvement, and downtown promotion. Applicants should consist of volunteers who have organized themselves for the purpose of improving or preserving the overall condition of the downtown. The tax credits can be used for staff salaries and benefits, consultant services, postage and stationery, training and conferences, travel, office equipment, landscaping, revolving loan fund to businesses; and downtown promotional material.

- ***Private Lending Consortium:*** Where financing packages and loans are limited or have restrictive clauses, local lenders have in other cases created a “pool” of funds for low interest loans to local businesses. These funds can be rotated among applicant businesses for business development purposes or physical improvement projects.
- ***Central Businesses Block Grant (CDBG):*** Federal funds are available at the Missouri Department of Economic Development for distribution among nonentitlement cities, for purposes of public improvements or housing development. These funds are distributed on an annual basis by the federal government, which implies little to no guarantee as a reliable source of public improvement funds. Competition for procuring these funds is usually high.
- ***Missouri Housing Development Commission:*** The Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) monitors and provides federal tax credits, state tax credits, rental housing production, rental assistance for families and individuals, down payment assistance, as well as permanent financing of housing through cooperation with local governments, developers and not-for-profit organizations.

If there is interest in constructing multifamily housing in the downtown, developers could apply for assistance from MHDC using the following programs:

- a) Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program
- b) Missouri Housing Tax Credit Program
- c) Bridge Loan Program
- d) Missouri Affordable Housing Tax Credit Program
- e) HOME Rental Housing Production Program
- f) Multifamily Tax Exempt & Taxable Bond Program

Special Area Analysis - Historic Downtown Raytown

- **Private Foundations:** There are a number of private foundations that provide financial assistance to historic preservation, housing or other redevelopment projects. One agency, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is a national, privately funded organization that has maintained ongoing activities in Kansas City. The agency essentially provides below-market interest loans for redevelopment or construction costs for revitalization projects sponsored by CDCs. LISC also provides technical assistance for development projects.
- **Revenue Bonds:** Conventional revenue bonds are not applicable in the present instance, because municipal enterprises that would produce a dependable stream of revenues is not a given. There is however, significant advantage of public improvements financed from tax free municipal debt. It is generally recommended that all uses of bonds be evaluated in terms of the City's short-term capacity to deal with default. Though default has no legal repercussions, it could affect the City's overall credit rating and ability to issue future bonds. The issuance of revenue bonds could require voter approval.
 - a) **Revenue Bonds Secured by User Charges:** The term "user charges" in the context of this discussion, refers to charges collected to secure 1933, 1941 and 1957 Act revenue bonds. These bonds are designed to finance facilities that provide services to a group of identifiable users. Debt service payments are met from charges placed exclusively on the users of the public facility.
 - b) **Lease Revenue Arrangements:** These are typically issued by public nonprofit corporations, redevelopment agencies, joint power authorities or parking authorities to construct or acquire a facility to be leased to a public entity in return for lease payments that secure the debt service. Security for the bond issue is provided by the lease agreement and subsequent lease payments. In addition, a reserve fund and insurance are usually required. Title to the lease facility passes to the public agency after the bonds are paid off.

The above Plan for Historic Downtown is a component of the overall Comprehensive Plan for Raytown. As determined by community members, the City should place a high priority on the revitalization of the downtown. Along with the M-350 corridor, the downtown continues to be an opportunity for economic development within Raytown. As the downtown area develops and draws revenues from the region, the City should utilize the additional funds to support its local needs and identity within the metropolitan context.

City of Raytown, Missouri

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

*Adopted as an element of the Raytown
Comprehensive Plan: November 1996*

*Raytown Planning Commission
Raytown Board of Aldermen*

***Planning Consultant: Gould Evans Associates, P.C., Kansas City, Missouri
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Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

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Park, Recreation and Open Space

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City of Raytown, Missouri

Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

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Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide a set of strategic recommendations for the City of Raytown Park Department and facilitate decision making for the future development of the parks, recreation and open space system. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan provides an inclusive framework for orderly and consistent planning through the establishment of preferred future directions.

The Master Plan is the result of a study of the City's existing facilities, an assessment of its existing park system, the determination of public need and demand, and the development of recommendations for improvements to the system. These recommendations are based on survey data, population trends, environmental analysis and land use issues discussed in portions of the Comprehensive Plan and Master Plan. Information obtained through work sessions with recreation provider representatives, as well as from public meetings, was also utilized in forming recommendations.

The Master Plan, as part of Raytown's Comprehensive Plan, is divided into 4 sections. Section 1 (Community Context) provides a perspective of the history and past development of the City. Demographic trends and other information provide a basis for understanding where the community is and where it is heading. The information in this section provides the foundation from which the current park and recreation system originates. Sections 2 and 3 (Parks and Recreation Provision, and Need and Demand) focuses on the potential needs in the City for improvements to the parks, recreation and open space system. This section analyzes parks and facility needs in comparison to national and/or state standards to assess the scale of potential improvements needed to serve existing and future residents. This need is tempered by analyzing community demand for park-related services as stated in public workshop meetings and local citizen surveys, and by considering the provision of related services and facilities by other providers in the area. Section 4 (Future System Recommendations) presents a vision for the parks and recreation system. This section is intended to set direction for meeting the City's future needs.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan consists of goals developed by the Park Board that are utilized to create a framework for implementation. The system's future (as stated by these goals) has a direct effect on the future development of the City outlined in portions of the Comprehensive Plan. In order to gain regional recognition and an improved quality of life, the parks, recreation and open space system for the City of Raytown needs to address the collective needs of the community. This Master Plan will assist the City in achieving its goals and determining how park and recreation services will play a part in the development of the City in the future.

As the community of Raytown strives to support the needs of its senior citizen population, attract new residents and young families, and create an identity and enhance its image through public and private improvement efforts, the Park Department will play an increasingly important role in addressing the overall "quality of life" in Raytown. The challenge confronting the Park Department and Board in this community effort will be three fold:

- ↳ Continuing to maintain the high quality of services and facilities currently provided.
- ↳ Targeting energy and resources toward the development of appropriate services and facilities to meet the changing needs of the community.
- ↳ Developing joint ventures and partnerships that maximize strengths and resources to fill gaps in parks, recreation and open space delivery.

Park and Recreation Trends

The following discussion is intended to indicate the connection between parks, recreation and quality of life in the United States and Missouri. It provides a broad context for open space and recreation values, and participation trends. As Raytown develops, it is critical that the City understand and respond to the needs of its residents and employers, while at the same time is attractive to new residents and employers, that may have similar values as reflected by this information.

In 1985, President Reagan created the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors to formulate recommendations for policies and programs to assure adequate outdoor recreation opportunities for Americans into the next century. The goals of the Commission were to determine what outdoor recreation means to the American people, and to recommend ways to ensure that government, community, and individual actions reflect the values that citizens attach to recreational activity.

The Commission found that nearly 50 percent of Americans describe themselves as "outdoors people". Listed below are a some key findings that the Commission learned and reported to the President from surveys and public hearings throughout the United States:

- ↳ Americans place a high value on the outdoors. It is central to the quality of our lives and the quality of our communities.
- ↳ Outdoor recreation provides significant social, economic, and environmental benefits.
- ↳ High quality resources, such as land, water, and air, are essential.
- ↳ We are losing available open space on the fringe of fast-growing urban areas and areas near water.
- ↳ The quality of recreation services delivery is inadequate.
- ↳ Inadequate funding for staff, development of facilities, and maintenance limits recreation use of some public lands.
- ↳ People in central cities have a harder time experiencing the outdoors.
- ↳ Resource management and recreation programs offered by public and private providers are not coordinated as well as they should be.
- ↳ We do not have a good overall picture of resources and lack systematic monitoring of resource conditions and public needs.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

From the key findings, Americans appear concerned primarily with the outdoors and environment as it affects their quality of life, as well as the protection and management of recreation resources. According to the President's Commission, 89 percent of Americans (approximately 188 million) use the outdoors for recreation. Fitness and health related reasons are the most commonly cited reasons people go outdoors for recreation. Other reasons that people engage in recreation cited by the Commission include:

- ↳ To be with other people
- ↳ To experience excitement
- ↳ To enjoy nature and the outdoors
- ↳ To escape

Surveys found that most Americans participate in swimming, walking, fishing, and bicycling. In these surveys, the fastest growing activities were canoeing, swimming, boating, walking, bicycling, and snow skiing, with many of these popular and fast-growing activities taking place in linear corridors - roads, rivers, sidewalks, and snow paths. The recreation activities that adults reportedly participated in most often are listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1. PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION ACTIVITIES BY AMERICAN ADULTS

Rank	Activity
1	Walking for pleasure
2	Driving for pleasure
3	Swimming outdoors
4	Sightseeing
5	Picnicking
6	Fishing
7	Attend outdoor sports
8	Camping
9 (tie)	Bicycling
9 (tie)	Running and jogging
9 (tie)	Visit zoos, fairs and amusement parks

Source: President's Commission on Americans Outdoors

In addition to the findings cited above, the State of Missouri through its efforts conducted in 1990 for the Missouri Outdoor Recreation Plan found similar patterns for recreation activity. Two-thousand state residents were asked about their participation in outdoor recreation and it was found that walking for pleasure was the top outdoor activity. Second most popular was visiting special facilities and events (zoo, fairs, amusement parks). Other popular activities included family gatherings, picnicking, driving for pleasure, festivals, fishing, swimming, visiting historic sites and watching outdoor sports. Many of these popular activities in Missouri parallel the national findings in 1985.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

More recently, a 1992 national survey and research study, conducted by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), focused its efforts on public parks and recreation at a local delivery level. The significant findings are provided below.

- ⌋ 75% of the U.S. population uses public parks and recreation facilities
- ⌋ 69% of the population believes in park and recreation services to such a degree that they support funding derived from both taxes and user fees
- ⌋ More than 75% of the population indicated that they thought their local park and recreation services were worth more than the national average expenditure on parks (\$45 per person per year)
- ⌋ 71% of the population has a park or playground within walking distance
- ⌋ 60% of the population said their community as a whole received a great deal of benefit from local park areas
- ⌋ 30% had participated in a recreation activity organized by their local government, recreation or park department
- ⌋ 71% of park non-users said they received a benefit from having park and recreation services in their area
- ⌋ Park users were generally more healthy than non-users

Planning Implication

National and State trends can assist Raytown in identifying appropriate park facilities and recreation services that will meet the needs of both current and future users of the public park and recreation system. In 1984, a needs assessment was conducted in the City of Raytown, and much of the activity reported was outdoor oriented and paralleled the findings reported above. Swimming, biking, picnicking and outdoor sports were and still are popular activities in Raytown.

A key to the success of the Raytown Park Department will be its ability to identify and review local trends on a regular basis, so that it can match limited resources with creative ideas to effectively meet the greatest needs within the community. Understanding the subtle changes that occur in Raytown along with the metropolitan context in which Raytown exists will allow for continued excellence in service delivery.

Trends do impact individual participation patterns at all levels -- national, state, and local. Changes, such as attitudes toward recreation and leisure, population and household composition, workplace and economic change, housing and lifestyle conditions and patterns, as well as many other social, political, financial and physical qualities and aspects of our lives, will impact how and what park and recreation opportunities are provided in the future.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The Raytown Park and Recreation system not only exists within a framework of trends, but is directly impacted by a set of given conditions within the metropolitan area. This section summarizes key existing conditions affecting Raytown that impact how and what services and improvements should be made in the City. Greater details regarding the existing context are provided in the Raytown Comprehensive Plan.

Location

Raytown lies at the southeastern periphery of the Kansas City metropolitan urban core. The City covers an area of 6,415 acres, or approximately ten square miles and is one of the few land-locked communities in the metropolitan area that is entirely enveloped by Kansas City, Missouri.

The City of Raytown occupies a strategic location in the metropolitan area and is conveniently linked to major centers of employment, education, art, culture and recreation. Regionally, the City of Raytown depends on neighboring communities for much of its retail needs. Raytown residents also tend to seek opportunities for entertainment, recreation and higher education elsewhere in the region. Activities that draw neighboring residents to Raytown include schools (since the School District boundaries extend beyond the City limits), Super Splash USA, medical facilities, car dealerships and other regional scale retail businesses located along Missouri Highway 350.

Blue Parkway or Missouri Highway 350 connects the City to the Brush Creek Cultural Corridor in Kansas City, Missouri. Institutions, such as the University of Missouri - Kansas City, Menorah Medical Center, Rockhurst College, the Kansas City Museum and the Kansas City Art Institute, are located along this Cultural Corridor. In addition, 63rd Street connects Raytown Road to Swope Park, which is the metropolitan region's largest park, and Raytown Road provides access to the Truman Sports Complex and Longview Lake.

Planning Implication

This locational context within the metropolitan area provides Raytown the unique advantage of convenient access to many cultural, recreational and open space opportunities provided in the surrounding area. Strengthening linkages to these opportunities and providing services and facilities that supplement, not directly compete with these opportunities, may prove to be the most effective use of resources in the future.

Historic Perspective

Raytown is one of the oldest settlements in Jackson County. It is located along the Santa Fe Trail and was developed soon after the City of Independence was established.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

The land within Raytown was originally a part of the vast territory inhabited by the Osage Indians. With the development of the Santa Fe and Oregon trails, a tiny trail stop was established just eight miles south of Independence, within the boundaries of present day Raytown.

Raytown's regional role was recognized as early as the 1850s when a successful petition to the County resulted in the construction of Raytown Road as another link between Independence and Raytown. This same road was extended from the Santa Fe Road to Kansas City in 1883, and two years later, a road was opened to Lee Summit. Within the City of Raytown, the Santa Fe Trail essentially follows the path of Blue Ridge Boulevard and is highlighted by markers at various points along the trail.

Planning Implication

A community's strength is its ability to be unique. This uniqueness many times is its history. Raytown is no different, but there exists a framework of historic events and resources (the Santa Fe Trail) within the community that may be tied to existing or future festivities or facilities, thus serving not only a recreational need, but also fulfilling an educational and community building role.

Environmental Attributes

Raytown is part of what is known as the Scarped Plains Region, midway between the Great Plains to the west, and the Ozark Plateau to the southeast. The topography of Raytown is generally described as gently rolling uplands.

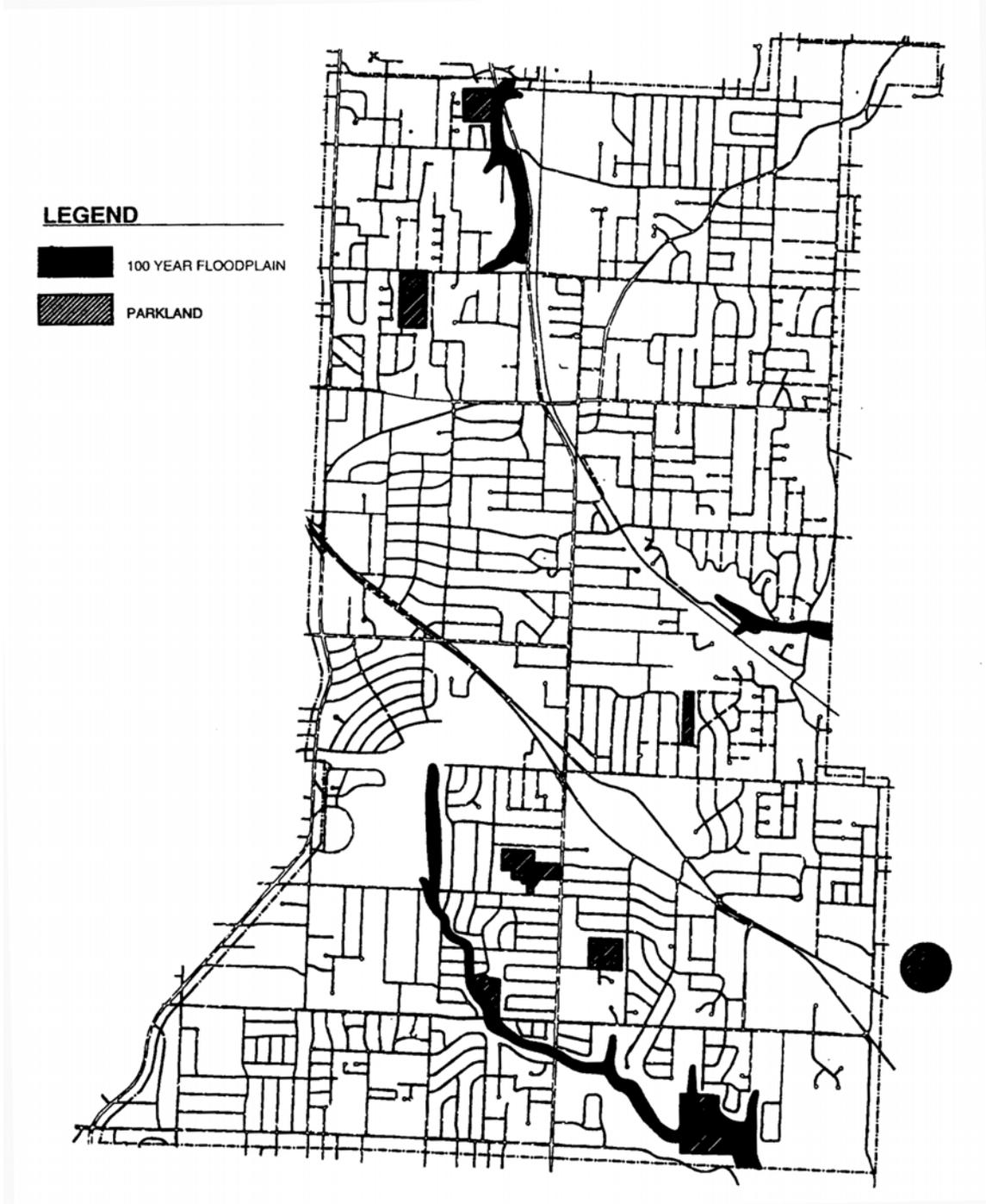
The City's most rugged terrain is located in the extreme southeast portion of the community along the White Oak tributary to the Little Blue River. The other significant valley is the Wildwood Lakes area near the eastern City limits. The Round Grove Creek Valley is also marked by steep slopes of more than 20 percent.

Three areas in Raytown are affected by the 100-year floodplains (Figure 1). They are:

- ↳ **White Oak Creek Valley:** Extending south from Mount Olivet Cemetery to the south boundary of the City limits. Floodplain widths range from approximately 200 to 600 feet. Flooding in this area has considerably reduced as a result of two retention basins: Ong Lake and Mount Olivet.
- ↳ **Tributary of the Little Blue River:** Extending east from the Wildwood Lake Dam to the eastern City limits. Floodplain widths range from approximately 100 to 350 feet.
- ↳ **Round Grove Creek:** Extending north from 59th Street to the northern City limits. Floodplain widths range from approximately 200 to 650 feet.

Prior to urban development, the Raytown area was generally covered by short-grass prairie with limited oak / hickory woodlands located on upland hills and mixed deciduous forest along creek banks and drainage ways.

FIGURE 1: 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN



Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Currently, significant concentrations of tree cover tend to follow creek alignments and floodplains. Various areas throughout the City contain small pockets of wooded areas. These are most prevalent north of Missouri Highway 350.

Planning Implication

The natural environmental characteristics within Raytown do provide qualities and opportunities that may be exploited for park and recreation use in the future. The purchase of land in floodplains, the use of landscape vegetation and materials that are native or enhance native characteristics, as well as the effective use of topography, will create a unique setting and image for activities in Raytown. Such efforts will not only have to consider user needs, but also environmental sensitivity.

Physical Development Pattern

Raytown is predominantly a residential community, and nearly 62 percent of the total area within its jurisdiction is used for either low-density, medium-density or high-density residential purposes. The residential areas are separated by commercial strips (consisting of retail establishments and offices) along Missouri Highway 350 and Raytown Trafficway. Public and semi-public uses are mostly located adjacent to the commercial areas.

Since 1940, most of the development in Raytown has been residential dwellings and commercial uses. Residential construction primarily occurred along Round Grove Creek, the upper reaches of the White Oak Creek and along the tributary of the Little Blue River. Commercial establishments developed along the Missouri Highway 350 corridor and Raytown Road, and many during the 1970's and 1980's.

Raytown's current land use distribution is unique within the metropolitan region due to a number of factors. For example, unlike other cities, Raytown is almost built-out. Less than 8% of its total area is currently undeveloped. A large portion of this undeveloped land consists of rugged terrain and/or lies within the designated 100-year floodplain. Related high development costs and recurring ecological threats have deterred potential development in these areas.

Planning Implication

Just as the natural environment provides opportunity and constraints for the development of parks, so does the built environment. The development pattern in Raytown tends to divide the community (Missouri Highway 350 and the railroad tracks with the respective land use patterns are examples). Such constraints need to be overcome and the creation of a unified park system by linking open space with other aspects of the built environment may enhance the outdoor experience and draw together the citizens of Raytown.

Demographics

Between 1980 and 1990, the eight-county metropolitan Long Range Forecasts from the Mid-America Regional Council's Research Data Center suggests that the region is projected to grow by 7.2 percent between 1990 and 2000 and by 5.1 percent between 2000 and 2010. (The region includes Jackson, Cass, Johnson, Wyandotte, Leavenworth, Platte, Clay and Ray Counties.) Johnson County is anticipated to attract most of the projected growth in population and employment. Raytown, however, is similar to Jackson County, in which it experienced most of its growth prior to 1970.

Much of this trend is due to the regional exodus further and further away from the urban core. While Raytown captured the population migrating from the core during the 1950s to 1960s, Lee's Summit and Overland Park will probably acquire a disproportionately large share of the region's future growth.

Since 1960, the City of Raytown has experienced two types of population trends: explosive growth and moderate decline. During the first trend, which occurred between 1960 and 1970, the City's population increased from 17,083 persons to 33,306 persons, resulting in a 10-year growth rate of 95 percent. Raytown's second population trend, which was characterized by moderate declines in growth, occurred after 1970. During the 10-year period between 1970 and 1980, the City lost 4.4 percent of its population, and between 1980 and 1990 it lost another 3.9 percent. The population in 1990 was 30,601 persons.

The most widely used and accepted population projections (which are by Census Tract) are prepared by Mid-America Regional Council (MARC). These projections indicate very slow growth for the City of Raytown, approximately 3% between 1990 and 2020.

**TABLE 2. POPULATION PROJECTIONS
CITY OF RAYTOWN, MISSOURI***

Population Projection	1990 (actual)	Year 2000	Year 2010	Year 2020	% change; 1990 to 2020
Tract 125.01	3,875	3,738	3,478	3,314	-14%
Tract 125.02	2,702	2,521	2,368	2,301	-15%
Tract 126	4,869	4,696	4,601	4,519	-7%
Tract 127.01	6,815	6,907	7,145	7,705	13%
Tract 128.01	8,413	8,546	8,937	8,733	4%
Tract 128.02	3,396	3,732	4,010	4,424	30%
Total Population*	30,070	30,140	30,539	30,996	3%

* The boundaries of these six Census tracts do not match the City's boundaries exactly. Thus, the 1990 population of these six Census tracts is different than the 1990 population of the City of Raytown, which was 30,601.

Source: MARC, "Draft Baseline Total Population Forecasts," June 21, 1994

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

The primary benefit of MARC's population projections is that they identify the areas within the City that are expected to grow and those that are expected to decline. As Table 2 shows, the north and northwestern parts of Raytown (which include tracts 125.01, 125.02, and 126) are expected to decrease in population over the next three decades. As a whole, this area's population is projected to decrease by 11.5 percent, with the most intense losses occurring north of East 63rd Street. The remainder of the City is expected to increase in population by 12 percent during the next 30 years. The most intense growth occurring east of Raytown Road and south of Missouri Highway 350.

Another trend within Raytown shows that the percentage of one-person and three-person households in Raytown is similar to the metropolitan area, and its percentage of two-person households is somewhat higher-than-average. However, the City's percentage of larger households (four or more persons) is significantly lower-than-average.

Although the number of households in Raytown grew moderately between 1980 and 1990 (4.8 percent), the number of one-person households experienced double-digit growth during this same period. In the ten years between 1980 and 1990, the number of one-person households increased by 46.1 percent. The number of two-person households showed a slight increase (2.5 percent). All other household types in the City declined in number during the 1980s.

In comparison to the metropolitan area, the age composition of Raytown includes a higher-than-average percentage of persons over the age of 55. In 1990, almost 30 percent of Raytown's population was over the age of 55, compared to only 20 percent of the metropolitan population. Raytown's median age is significantly higher than the metropolitan area (37.8 to 32.9 years respectively). Despite the City's total population loss between 1980 and 1990 (-3.6 percent), a number of age groups gained population. The most significant population increases, Table 2A, were in the 65 to 74 age group (+47.1 percent) and in the 75 and over age group (+60.9 percent).

**TABLE 2A. AGE, 1980 AND 1990
CITY OF RAYTOWN, MISSOURI**

Age Group	1980 Population	1990 Population	10-year change
Under 10	3,606	3,746	3.9%
10 - 19	5,005	3,442	-31.2%
20 - 24	2,580	1,787	-30.7%
25 - 34	4,651	4,917	5.7%
35 - 44	3,661	4,315	17.9%
45 - 54	4,466	3,239	-27.5%
55 - 64	4,211	3,709	-11.9%
65 - 74	2,267	3,335	47.1%
75 and over	1,312	2,111	60.9%
Total population	31,759	30,601	-3.6%
Median age (years)	35.1	37.8	

Sources: 1980 and 1990 U.S. Census

Raytown's median household income is somewhat higher than the areas in the metropolitan. In 1989, the City's median household income was \$32,002, compared to \$31,613 at the regional

level. The City's median household income was even higher when compared to the Missouri portion of the metropolitan area, which had a 1989 median household income of \$29,791. (Median household income for the Kansas portion of the region was \$35,375.) On a related issue, the City of Raytown has a significantly lower percentage of its residents below the poverty level than the metropolitan region. While almost 10% of metropolitan residents have poverty level status (as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census), only 5% of Raytown residents are considered below poverty level.

In terms of annual income, about 75% of Raytown households, like most of metropolitan households, earn between \$15,000 and \$74,999. While having a lower-than-average percentage of households earning less than \$10,000 per year, Raytown also has a lower-than-average percentage earning \$75,000 or more per year. These factors again suggest that Raytown's household income tends to be primarily middle-range, with relatively few low-income families and relatively few high-income families.

Planning Implication

The demographic factors above will, in many ways, influence the effectiveness of the Raytown Park and Recreation system. The disparity in population patterns between north and south Raytown, as well as the desire to accomplish community goals by attracting young families and curbing population losses, require a balanced provision of services in the future. The services and facilities must be located and programmed to address the changing needs that are a part of the life cycle process for the community. Senior citizens may not desire active contact sports, but the desire to attract young families may require sports programs.

Focusing on the needs of the existing population, without attempting to provide opportunities that accomplish community goals, will only serve to predetermine the projected outcome of the community. The Raytown Park Department and System is and will be an important factor as the City strives to achieve its community vision while meeting the needs of a changing community.

Summary

Raytown is a changing community within the metropolitan area, but that change is somewhat predictable. Aging population, decreasing household size and other factors are similar to national trends. These trends and existing activities in Raytown must be considered in the formulation and implementation of the Master Plan.

Raytown's history and environmental characteristics provide an initial framework for the provision of parks, recreation and open space opportunities. The Santa Fe Trail, related historic remnants and natural features, such as drainage areas and topography; and even the pattern of land development within Raytown, serve to create potential opportunities in the definition of the City's future parks, recreation and open space system.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

In addition to these factors, the Master Plan must recognize both current and future population dynamics. These dynamics include an aging population, smaller households, the movement of people out of older sections of the community and the middle incomes of most Raytown residents. Such factors influence the recreation needs of Raytown residents and other clientele. The future success of Raytown's parks, recreation and open space system will depend on how well the City meets existing demand and on its ability to adapt to or influence changes in future demand, either reactively or proactively.

Finally, Raytown is uniquely positioned physically to take advantage of its link to park and recreation opportunities available within the immediate area of the metropolitan region. Park and recreation opportunities, provided by others around Raytown, can potentially supplement and be linked with those offered in Raytown.

PARK AND RECREATION PROVISION

Raytown Parks and Recreation System

In 1955, Mrs. Sarah Colman-Livengood donated 12 acres of land to create Raytown's first public park. From that date, the Raytown Park Board and Department has grown through a series of key events. 1964 marked the year in which the Park Board was created as an autonomous decision-making body to administer a 10 cent dedicated park levy and manage the park system. This event set the stage for a series of improvements to the system, including the hiring of a professional Director of Parks (1975); the receipt of 10% of the City's one cent general sales tax for capital improvements (1979); the development of administration offices and maintenance headquarters in 1981 and 1983; the acquisition of the Raytown Swim Club Pool (1986) and completed conversion of that pool into Super Splash USA (1993).

Today, the services provided by Raytown include Super Splash USA operations, open space, facility maintenance, recreational facility provision and seasonal recreation programming. The Department's programs include: Children's aquatics / tennis and adult sport leagues. Such operations and activities, as these are outlined within this section of the Master Plan, are provided through the powers and limitations placed upon the Park Board by way of State Law and the implementation of the Park Board's mission and goal statements provided below.

Mission / Goals

Daily activities of the Raytown Park System are guided by a mission statement and a set of goals, that were recently adopted by the Park Board.

The mission of the Park Department of the City is to provide the following:

1. Pleasant, safe, and well-maintained parks and recreational facilities and equipment at a reasonable cost to the participant.
2. A variety of recreational programs that are scheduled and staffed to maximize accessibility.
3. A working environment for its staff that promotes safety, efficiency, open communication, and fair treatment.
4. The City of Raytown, Missouri and its tax-payers that effectively and efficiently uses its funding and resources to generate a sense of pride in the community.

From this mission statement, a series of goals and objectives have been developed as a framework for decision-making and improvements regarding parks and recreation in Raytown. These goals were reviewed by the public as part of planning process and should be continually evaluated and improved upon as the community changes and implementation occurs.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

The nine parks and recreation goals are as follows:

1. To provide sufficient space, facilities and programs for the wide range of leisure opportunities desired by the residents of Raytown.
 - a)
 - b) a. Provide for both active and passive recreation services.
 - c) b. Warrant that the Park System and Park Board are adaptable and amenable to change.
 - d) c. Provide equitable distribution of the highest quality park opportunities throughout the City.
2. To assure accessibility of parks, programs and facilities to all citizens, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, physical or mental capabilities, or socioeconomic position.
3. To assure suitable provisions for both present and future park and open space needs of the City.
 - a)
 - b) a. Give priority to rehabilitation and maintenance of existing parks and facilities over further acquisitions and development, without disregard to advantageous opportunities for park acquisition.
 - c) b. Justify proposed acquisitions in terms of need and how they fit into the park and recreation system as a whole.
 - d) c. Evaluate all proposed acquisitions with concern for benefits derived versus long-term commitments for operation, upkeep and program services.
 - e) d. Seek out cooperative agreements with private landowners that may benefit our residents in terms of benefits to be derived and tax dollars saved and/or maximized.
4. To pursue the provision of recreation, open space and beautification to meet needs in the downtown area and other business areas as a necessary part of the many ingredients of a healthy business environment and a keen community image.
5. To achieve and sustain a firm financial basis for operational and capital requirements.
 - a)
 - b) a. To help the City gain the voter's consent to retain the one cent general sales tax and to sustain the 10% allotment to parks from the proceeds.
 - c) b. To sustain operations of programs and facilities by way of participant user fees that are reasonable, fair and legitimate to our residents and sufficient to effectively support desirable services.
6. To strive for the best possible recreation or park experience by giving special attention to upkeep, including daily maintenance, safety and cleanliness, worn or obsolete equipment and facilities, landscaping, redevelopment brought about by changing needs or conditions and reasonable accessibility.
7. To foster the best possible image of Raytown by paying particular attention to the parks,

recreation and open space system as a visual resource and point of pride.

- a)
 - b) a. Recognize that the views of our parks along streets, fence lines, and buffer areas, are important visual resources that portray a positive image to the neighbors and the traveling public.
 - c) b. Recognize that our efforts to beautify other public (non-park) spaces also helps to portray a positive image of Raytown to its residents and the traveling public.
8. To promote cooperation, partnerships and resource-sharing among public, quasi-public, and responsible non-profit agencies whose responsibilities in whole or in part include the provision of recreation programs, parks and open space that benefit the residents of Raytown.
9. To assure Raytown residents a voice and opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes of the system; and to assure continuous review of these goals in a public forum; and to assure communication of the above to all residents of Raytown, together with other information needed by the public to make use of its park system.

Park Inventory

Beyond the aspirations of the mission statement and goals it is important to identify what constitutes the existing park and recreation system in Raytown. In order to adequately do so, a baseline assessment of the existing system, an inventory of parks, programs and facilities that are provided by the Park Department was conducted. Approximately 156 acres of park land are included in the eight parks owned and operated by the Park Department. It should be noted that nearly 40% of this park land acreage is undeveloped. Southwood Lagoon Park, which served as a sewage lagoon and accessibility, as well as development, is an issue for future use of the land. Table 3 lists the parks provided in Raytown, as well as the acreage and park type . Classifying the parks by park type was done using general criteria based on standards for acreage and facility development.

TABLE 3. EXISTING PARKS - RAYTOWN, MO

Park	Acres	Park Type
Sarah Colman-Livengood Park	12	Community
C. Lee Kenagy Park	19	Community
Minor Smith Park	10	Neighborhood
Southwood Park	9	Neighborhood
Little Blue Trace Recreation Area	33	Community
Southwood Lagoon Park*	60	Community
Cap Garvin Park*	3	Neighborhood
Super Splash USA	10	Special Use Facility

* These park lands are undeveloped.

Park facilities vary in terms of land area and type of facilities. Table 3 classifies each park as either a playground, neighborhood, community, regional, linear park or open space based on the following criteria and standards.

- ⌋ **Playground parks** are typically 1.5 acres and offer a service radius of 1/4 to 1/2 miles that may serve 500-2,000 people. They are small parcels of land that serve portions of adjacent nearby neighborhoods and sometimes stand alone as mini-parks or play lots in highly urban areas.
- ⌋ **Neighborhood parks** tend to be somewhat larger than playgrounds and serve the needs of one or two surrounding neighborhoods. These parks can be 2-20 acres in size and have a service radius of 1/2 mile that may serve 2,000 to 10,000 people.
- ⌋ **Community parks** serve the needs of two or more neighborhoods. They are generally larger than 15 acres in size and have a service radius of 1 to 1.5 miles.
- ⌋ **Regional parks** serve large portions of the community, as well as parts of the metropolitan area. Such parks can be 100 or more acres and serve 40,000 people within a 5 or more mile radius of the park.
- ⌋ **Linear parks and open spaces** are typically elongated parcels of land related to parks, drainage ways, waterways, trails, hedgerows, and roadways. They link parks, residential areas, and community activity centers physically and aesthetically.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

- b **Special use facilities** are locations that focus upon a particular type of use or facility that may be unique within a park and recreation system. Such facilities may include golf courses, water parks, zoos and/or cultural facilities. Users of such facilities usually come from a community wide or regional service area.

Parks in Raytown are community parks, neighborhood parks, and park areas serving specific recreation needs (such as swimming). Linear parks or regional parks do not exist within the City limits. Super Splash USA, a special use facility, is an existing water park that draws attention. Parks are not evenly distributed throughout the City of Raytown. As shown in Figure 2, there are no parks existing within the northeastern and central portions of the City. This is the same area of the City that is projected to experience population decline within the next thirty years. Undeveloped park land is primarily located in the southeastern area of Raytown near areas projected to grow in the future.

Figure 2 provides a glimpse at possible service gaps based upon the general service radius criteria discussed above. This base analysis helps to identify areas that could be better served by targeting future park and open space land acquisition based on geographic needs. Such a targeted strategy should also consider the location of other public open space, such as school playgrounds. Therefore, Figure 3 includes school locations and estimated service areas. School land should play a critical role in the provision of public open space, but also note that such land is available to the public on a limited basis due to school activities and hours of operation.

Yet, these facilities act to supplement the neighborhood and community parks in the City of Raytown. Considering the implication of playground, open space and sports facilities offered by the schools will help to prevent duplication of facilities in close proximity to one another in the future.

In addition, Raytown is in a geographically advantageous position for utilizing planned improvements or existing open space and facilities offered by other metropolitan area providers. For instance, MARC has sponsored two plans for the metropolitan area that directly effect the City of Raytown Park System. These plans are the Metro Green and Metro Bike. Metro Green develops a goal of an interlocking greenway system that would be developed through the entire metropolitan region. Metro Bike utilizes Metro Green as the framework and develops a long-range bike / greenway plan for the region. These plans will change and be enhanced over the years, however, both seek to tie Raytown into the network within the metropolitan area.

Currently existing within the metropolitan area, several regional parks are provided and are easily accessible to the citizens of Raytown. Longview Lake and Swope Park (housing the Kansas City Zoo and Starlight Theater) are less than five miles from Raytown's City limits. Fleming Park or Lake Jacomo, Bur Oak Woods State Forest, and Lake Lotawana are approximately 12-15 miles east and north of City limits. Lake Jacomo houses the Kemper Nature Center and the Audobon Library. Raytown has convenient access to all of these park land and recreational opportunities and should seek to supplement, not necessarily replicate, these opportunities in the future.

FIGURE 2: EXISTING RAYTOWN PARKS

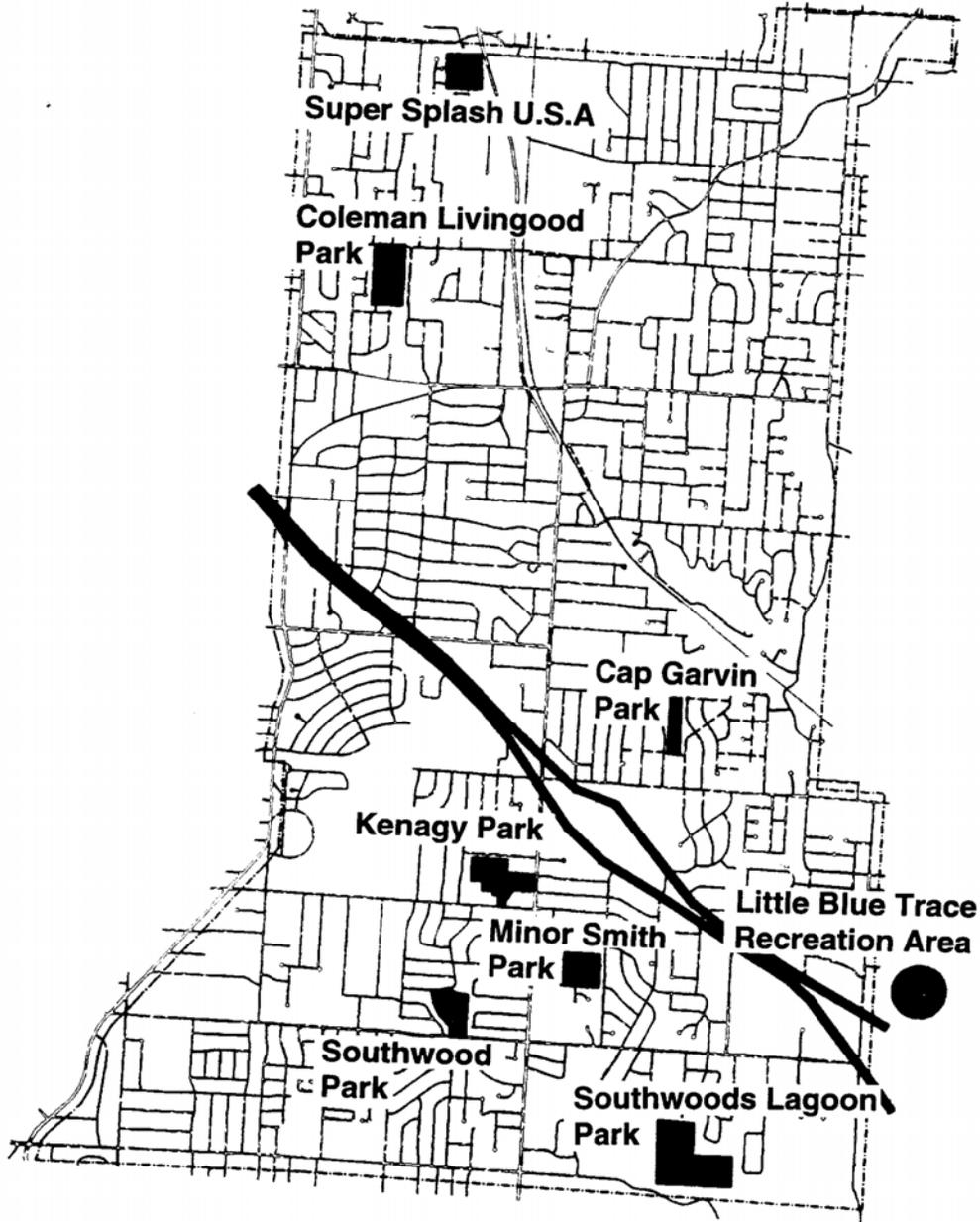


FIGURE 3: RAYTOWN SCHOOL AND PARK SERVICE AREAS



Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Facility Inventory

Taken together, the City's eight park areas offers many recreation opportunities and facilities to the community. Table 4 outlines the facilities offered by the Park Department. While individual parks do not offer a wide variety of recreation opportunities, in regards to having a combination of tennis courts, baseball diamonds, soccer fields, basketball courts and picnic shelters within the same park, the overall system does provide a diverse array of facilities and activity potential.

TABLE 4. EXISTING FACILITIES

Facilities	Sarah Colman-Livengood Park	C. Lee Kenagy Park	Minor Smith Park	Southwood Park	Little Blue Trace Recreation Area	Southwood Lagoon Park *	Cap Garvin Park *	Super Splash USA
Shelters	3	7	1	1	0	0	0	0
Picnic Sites w/ grill	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	0
Playground	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Outdoor Tennis Courts	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Lighted	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0
Horseshoe Pits	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outdoor Basketball Courts	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Softball / Baseball Fields	1	1	0	1	4	0	0	0
Football / Soccer Fields	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Multipurpose Courts	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Walking / Jogging Trail	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Public Fishing Lake	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

* These parks are currently undeveloped.

The general condition of the facilities in these parks is good. Meaning that, most facilities and parks are well-maintained. Some playground equipment could be considered out dated and in need of replacement or repainting. Also, paved surfaces that serve as walkways and parking areas generally have minor cracking that can be handled through general maintenance activity. Fields and hard courts are in relatively good condition and appear to be well-maintained. Cracking that has occurred has been addressed in a timely fashion. Most problems appear to be

associated with the typical use of the facilities and the aging process of the materials utilized. Particularly in the case of Kenagy and Colman Parks, age is a contributing factor that is being addressed through current capital improvement planning efforts. In order to maintain or improve the quality of the facilities provided, it will become important to maintain a continuous strategic capital improvements program along with standard maintenance practices.

Program Inventory

The Raytown Park Department provides several program opportunities for residents of the community. These programs include:

- ↳ Slo-pitch softball (men's, women's, co-rec, seniors) spring, summer, fall
- ↳ Volleyball (co-rec) spring / summer, fall, winter
- ↳ Basketball (men's)
- ↳ Tennis (adult / youth instruction, tournament, league play)
- ↳ Youth swimming lessons (all levels)
- ↳ Annual fishing derby
- ↳ Santa calling program (volunteer)
- ↳ Earth Day celebration youth sports coaches training

In addition to offering these programs, the Park & Recreation Department provides a number of special services for the community, including:

- ↳ Softball, soccer and football fields for local youth leagues
- ↳ Flower beds in public locations throughout the City
- ↳ Work with the Chamber of Commerce annually on the Mayor's Christmas Tree
- ↳ Manage Trees For Raytown program to provide trees for residents at discount prices
- ↳ Manage Recreation Developmental Grants program to provide financial assistance to non-profit groups who provide local recreational opportunities
- ↳ Discount tickets to: Worlds of Fun, Oceans of Fun, Silver Dollar City, and sponsors a Youth Sports Recognition Banquet every five years.

Programmed activities offered by the Park Department have met with varying degree of success due to the offering of programs by other providers in the immediate area and other factors. Therefore, the Park Department has become strategic in its methodology to supplement various existing programs or provide facilities and other support for such providers.

Strong recreation programming is provided by an array of other agencies. These agencies enroll a large number of participants in a variety of programs. The following discussion highlights the major providers of recreation opportunities in Raytown, other than the Park Department.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Raytown Soccer Club

The Raytown Soccer Club is currently using seven soccer fields in the Little Blue Trace area. Two of the fields are on Little Blue Trace Park property and the other five are on a property owned by the Raytown Soccer Club. The two soccer fields on the park property are considered among the finest fields in the metropolitan area. They are maintained during the off-season by the Park Department. The soccer club maintains the fields three months in fall and three months in spring, during high activity.

The club has approximately 1,400 children enrolled annually, in age brackets from under 6 to 19 for both boys and girls. Youths come in from as far away as Sedalia, MO and Atchison, KS to play on these fields. Soccer is growing and this club has been seeing a large increase in recent years.

The club would like to see some permanent bathroom facilities located in the park in order to make the facility more pleasant for the users. The club is concerned with improving its image in the region and growing into a premier type club. This club is currently self-sufficient. They are building more fields and managing their own property, but a good relationship with the Park Board is necessary for the long-term future.

Raytown Girls Basketball League

This basketball league is using Raytown School gym facilities, specifically Raytown Middle School, Raytown South Middle School and Robinson Elementary. Facility use is contracted with the district and the league pays hourly fees. They do not see large growth and little enhancement to existing conditions, although, access to more courts for tournament play and use fees for courts are issues.

The league serves girls between the 2nd and 8th grade and has a total of 240 participants. The Parks Department currently assists with coaches training.

Raytown Girls Softball League

This league plays at Little Blue Trace Park. They use four ball fields provided by the Raytown Park Department. The league maintains the fields while in use with the exception of mowing duties. Little growth is anticipated but programs are full at 500+ girls. The facilities are excellent and problems are associated with the lack of quantity and quality of practice fields in the area.

Raytown Sports Association

The Raytown Sports Association is a non-profit organization providing football, baseball and basketball recreation to Raytown youths. They own their own property with eight baseball diamonds, one football field, and additional property available for more fields to be built. They use Raytown School's outdoor fields for practicing baseball and football and they rent gymnasiums for basketball events.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Participation ranges from ages 5 to 18, and includes boys and girls. They have over 1200 boys in their baseball program alone, on 100 teams. Last season, they had the largest enrollment ever. The increase has been seen in outside teams coming into the league to compete with other teams of similar caliber. Though they are bringing in outside teams, their most important goal is to provide recreation to Raytown youth. Growth is not occurring with local teams, so even though the practice fields are in short supply, they are not any more crowded than in the past years. The biggest concern was related to the quality of practice facilities at the local schools. Also, a concern was the fact that most schools do not charge for gymnasium use, yet, Raytown Schools charge for their indoor facilities and this is reflected in team charges.

Raytown Swim Team

The Raytown Swim Team is a USA sanctioned swim club in the Missouri Valley Conference. They practice at the YMCA during the school year and at Super Splash USA during the summer. They are satisfied with their facilities and they do not see facilities as restricting future growth. The Team hosts two meets per year at Bridger School. They are expanding to a small degree, but plan to make no changes to any of their facility arrangements.

Cave Springs

Cave Springs is located in the southwest corner of Raytown, at Gregory and Blue Ridge Boulevard. The park covers 36 acres and includes an interpretive center, natural areas and walking trails. Cave Springs is a member of the interpretive Site Coalition, a not-for-profit organization that promotes a variety of similar facilities in the Kansas City metropolitan region.

A wide variety of programs are offered to groups throughout the year. Cave Springs works with the school districts and scouting programs to provide programs on nature, Native Americans and pioneer life. For individuals involved with scouting, these programs fulfill requirements necessary to receive appropriate badges. In addition to these programs, the facility also offers: full moon hikes; fishing derby's; day camp; guided hikes; a Laura Ingalls Wilder birthday party; afternoons in the park; and a Missouri Free Trappers camping weekend.

The facility is funded through a variety of sources. Annual memberships are available for individuals or families. Members may participate in programs offered at Cave Springs at a lower price than non-members. A small user fee is collected for all programs offered. The fees are: \$2.00 members; \$3.00 non-members. In addition to memberships and fees, Cave Springs accepts donations and holds a series of fund-raisers every year.

Cave Springs is currently developing a family volunteering project that will increase the capabilities of the facility. Other plans include: expanding the gardening program and working with other similar facilities to better promote common objectives.

Raytown Community Education

Raytown Community Education offers spring and fall semester programs in association with the Raytown School District. Courses are offered in the evening and on weekends at local schools and businesses.

Courses are offered based on community interest and range from computers to exercise to lawn and gardening. Fees range from \$5.00 to \$60.00 per class. Seniors are allowed to take one free

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

class per semester. The number of classes in any given semester is dependent on the ability to find instructors and interest in particular classes. Currently, 130 classes are being offered at various sites throughout the community.

YMCA

The YMCA, currently located at 11811 E. 75th, offers a wide range of programs for groups and individuals of all ages. Child care programs, organized sports leagues, teen programs, classes and wellness programs are just a small portion of the programs offered at the facility.

Funds to operate the YMCA come from memberships, user fees and funding as a United Way Agency. While specific users are not targeted, the YMCA does mail brochures and flyers to attract potential users.

The YMCA tries to build partnerships with many local groups. Currently, the Y is working with the Raytown School District and the Raytown Park Department to offer programs. Other partnerships involve scouting organizations and churches.

Due to facility constraints, the YMCA is not able to offer all of the programs and services it would like. Plans for a new facility have been developed and ground should be broken during Fall 1996 or spring 1997. Construction is estimated to take approximately eight months and cost \$4 million. The new facility will be located on 350 Highway, which will be a more central location with better access for the community.

YWCA

The YWCA, located at 9110 E. 63rd Street, provides child-care and aquatics programs for the community. The aquatic program offers infant to adult classes, lap and open swim, water exercise classes, scout and water safety courses. Currently, the YWCA offers two child-care programs. There is a year round program for children aged two to five that focuses on child development and pre-kindergarten skills. In the summer, the YWCA provides a day camp program for children six to twelve.

Funding for programs comes from a variety of sources, including: individual and family memberships; user fees; grants; and funds from the United Way. Programs are marketed to the community through brochures and flyers, however, the most successful method has been from word-of-mouth referrals.

The YWCA would like to offer before and after school care for children in the future. There are no other current plans to expand programming. Partnering is currently exists with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Red Cross and Raytown School District.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Senior Citizens

In addition to the providers highlighted above, a significant number of senior citizen activities are provided by several organizations in Raytown. These organizations include AARP, the Silver Streaks and a variety of church and social groups. The groups arrange short-day oriented and longer trips, gather seniors together for organized social and recreation events and facilitate pot luck meals. Concerns mentioned by representatives of these groups reflected the desire for a central meeting place that could accommodate hot meals and non-programmed recreational activities, such as cards and shuffleboard. Transportation to locations and events was also a concern, as well as the cost of providing for the facility and other needs. Further insight regarding the comments made by senior citizens is included in the Citizen Input section of the Park Master Plan.

Budget Trends and Capital Improvement Plans

There are four primary financial resources for the Park Board and Department. These are a 13 mill property tax (from the park levy), 1/10 of the City's one cent general sales tax, fees from Super Splash USA, and fees from participants in recreation program and facility usage. According to the Park Board, the budget trend is toward increasing revenue from Super Splash USA, and non-changing (or minimal increase) revenue from the other sources. The Department's most serious issue is the ability to accumulate adequate funds for significant capital expenses and future improvements. The park facility infrastructure is aging, and mandated ADA improvements require attention.

The revenue and expenditure of revenue breakdown is depicted in Tables 5 and 6. The percent of total revenue or expenditure is calculated to show the importance and impact of each source of revenue and the focus of current expenditures. The requested 1995-96 Budget expenditures total \$2,414,300.50, while estimated 1995-96 revenue is \$2,553,900.00. It should be noted that these figures include a significant commitment to upgrading several parks during the 1995-96 fiscal year.

**TABLE 5. OBJECTS OF REVENUE
(ANTICIPATED 1995-96 FISCAL YEAR)**

Source	Amount	% of Total
Donations	\$100	(less than 1%)
Fees & Charges	\$70,000	6%
Grants & Loans	\$75,000	6%
Interest	\$45,000	4%
Other	\$11,800	1%
Pool	\$523,000	41%
Sales Tax	\$235,000	19%
Property Tax	\$305,000	24%
Fund balances carried forward	\$1,289,200	50%
TOTAL	\$2,553,900	

**TABLE 6. OBJECTS OF EXPENDITURE
(REQUESTED 1995-96 FISCAL YEAR)**

Source	Amount	% of Total
---------------	---------------	-------------------

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Personal Services	\$414,400	17%
Contractual Services and Charges	\$41,300	2%
Supplies and Minor Equipment	\$17,200	1%
Maintenance	\$28,600	1%
Misc. Expenses	\$20,000	1%
Recreation Programming	\$50,000	2%
Pool Operating Expenses	\$263,000	11%
Debt Service	\$450,000	19%
Special Projects	\$40,500	2%
Capital Expenditures	\$1,089,200	45%
TOTAL	\$2,414,300	

Budget figures in Tables 5 & 6 are rounded to the nearest 100.

As previously mentioned, the Park Department currently manages eight parks throughout the City. New master plans have recently been completed for the following locations:

- ↳ C. Lee Kenagy Park
- ↳ Sarah Colman-Livengood Park
- ↳ Minor Smith Park

The driving force for these updated plans was the need to provide better recreation and leisure opportunities for residents within existing park facilities. Through community surveying, the Park Department identified walking / fitness trails as a priority for many residents in Raytown. Current configurations do not provide the amount of trails desired and also did not meet ADA accessibility requirements. Other enhancements identified in the master plans included: tennis court construction and renovation, new shelters, improved signage and landscaping.

Implementation of the master plans will be phased over several years based on priorities identified by the Park Department. The total cost of the improvements is approximately \$1.65 million, with almost \$1.1 million dedicated to C. Lee Kenagy Park. Phase I of the improvements on the three parks is currently underway.

Planning Implication

The Park Department will need to strategically address not only capital improvements like those above, but also expanded roles and responsibilities in the provision of new facilities, land and programs in light of budgetary challenges in the future. As an autonomous decision-making Board, the Raytown Park Board is granted the authority to collect certain revenues (dedicated park levy) within limits and utilize those funds for certain park related activities and services. The Board also has set a direction for future activities through the mission statement and goals outlined above, as well as its budget and capital improvement priorities. This type of autonomy, or independence, can be good in the sense of ensuring that some amount of funding is reserved for park services and activities. On the other hand limitations to such funding can hinder or slow the capital improvement process. During the past 30 years, the Park Board has been a strong advocate for the establishment and maintenance of public lands, facilities and programs in Raytown. Dedicated individuals on the autonomous Board have accepted their duties and powers in a responsible fashion, as indicated by the practice of carrying over budget savings for future capital improvements.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

To date, the Park Board has worked cooperatively with the City governing body to provide a high quality park system. No matter what the formal relationship between the Park Board and the Board of Aldermen is in the future (as an autonomous or advisory board), the key to enhancing the “quality of life” in Raytown will be through the ability of the Park Board and Department to deliver quality services strategically. The goals within this section of the Master Plan are a good start toward a strategic direction that is concerned with accomplishing the broader community goals and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Furthermore, the inventories (park, facility and program) indicate the strengths of a system of providers that work together to deliver a range of services to the community. The continuance of such relationships and future joint partnerships will be necessary given the financial limitations of each individual provider. Mission statements and goals of each provider may require adjustment in order to create new and better service to the community. The Park Board may find it necessary to focus on the provision of park land and facility development, a current strength, in order to support effective recreation programs versus competing with existing programs that may overlap and have a detrimental effect. Also, other providers of recreation programs and facilities will need to continually evaluate their programs and services to meet or exceed community demand for quality and cost effectiveness.

NEED AND DEMAND

This section of the Master Plan analyzes existing and potential future park and recreation needs and demands in Raytown. Two approaches are used to look at need and demand. First, a typical standard-based analysis compares present delivery of facilities with accepted standards. This is a relatively objective way of analyzing the delivery system, but is easily misunderstood and misapplied. A second approach for analyzing the system is to assess community demand through public input. The use of past needs assessments, surveys, and public workshop input provides a basis for understanding if the standards and demands of community residents, are being met. The intent of this type of analysis is to create a “citizen driven” master plan. The objective of this section, therefore, is to obtain an understanding for potential priorities through these two types of analysis and consider the factors discussed in previous sections so that a responsive and realistic master plan can be developed.

Standard Analysis

Standards for outdoor recreational facilities for urban areas are helpful in terms of:

- ↳ Assessing a community to see if it is meeting recognized standards for service delivery
- ↳ Providing the community with the knowledge of what facilities and resources may be needed
- ↳ Allowing a starting point for policy determinations and capital improvement budgeting

Although generally, accepted park and recreation standards are helpful, they are guidelines only. Citizen demand for park facilities and recreation services is as important as standards because it allows for more effective and efficient targeting of potential priorities within a community.

As part of this analysis, two aspects of the parks, recreation and open space delivery system are assessed: total park acreage and facility type. The Raytown Park Department has adopted standards for the acquisition of park land and the development of facilities. These standards mirror the recommendations for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources

As discussed previously, the Park System consists of 156 acres of park land primarily in the form of neighborhood, community and special use parks (22, 124 and 10 acres respectfully). Sixty-three of these acres are undeveloped with no facilities. With this in mind, the current park system delivers approximately .52 acres of park land 100 people to the citizens of Raytown. Discounting undeveloped land, the system currently provides only .31 acres of developed park land per 100 people.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Utilizing the recommended State and Park Board adopted standard of 2 acres per 100 people, Raytown would need to acquire 445 more acres currently and 464 acres (19 acres above the current need) to meet those standards by the year 2020. More importantly the Park Department will need to consider the level of development necessary to create accessible and effective recreation experiences.

Recognize that acreage only serves as an indicator of one aspect of park provision. Other considerations are location / distribution of park land throughout the community and facility provision within the Park System. Figure 3 provides a map indicating potential service gaps in the system based upon the standard service radii for neighborhood and community parks. Accordingly, the northeast, central and southwest portions of Raytown are experiencing possible gaps in service or may be priority areas for future acquisition and development of parks.

In regard to facility provision, Table 7 indicates standards for an array of facilities. This table estimates the impact that standards would have, if directly applied to Raytown in terms of the number of facilities that should be provided. Also, it indicates the number of facilities currently provided; the number of facilities needed to meet the standards in 2020 given current population projections; and finally number of additional facilities necessary to meet the 2020 needs as indicated in the last column -- long range deficit.

By looking at standards alone Table 7 would reflect a rather tremendous need for the City of Raytown. Yet, quantifiable needs must be balanced with the knowledge of existing facilities in or near Raytown that supplement the provision of recreational opportunity. For instance, playground areas provided by local schools or the "Starlight" amphitheater in Kansas City and Teetering Rocks executive golf course. Therefore, to better identify future priorities and goals for the parks and recreation system, citizen input and other qualitative information must be utilized.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

TABLE 7. FACILITY STANDARDS AND IMPLICATIONS*

Facility	Standard for Urban Areas	Current Need per Standards	Currently Provided	Year 2020 Need	Long Range Deficit
Football Field	1 field per 4,000 population	8	2	8	6
Soccer Field	1 field per 4,000 population	8	2	8	6
Picnic Shelter	1 shelter per 2,000 population	15	11	15	4
Picnic Table	1 table per 125 population	241	80	248	168
Ball Diamond	1 diamond per 1,500 population	20	6	21	15
Tennis Court	1 court per 1,500 population	20	11	21	10
Handball Court	1 court per 5,000 population	6	0	6	6
Playground	1 playground per 1,000 population	30	6	31	25
Swimming Pool	800 sq. ft. per 1,000 population	24,000 sq. ft.	1	24,800 sq. ft.	-
Ice Skating Rink	1 rink per 50,000 population	0	0	0	0
Bicycle Trail	1 mile per 2,000 population	15 mi.	0	15 mi.	15 mi.
Jogging Trail	1 mile per 2,000 population	15 mi.	1.75 mi	15 mi.	13.25 mi.
Exercise Trail	1 mile per 7,500 population	4 mi.	0	4 mi.	4 mi.
Multi-Use Court	1 court per 3,000 population	10	2	10	8
Shuffleboard Court	1 court per 2,000 population	15	0	15	15
Horseshoe Court	1 site per 2,000 population	15	4	15	11
Volleyball Court	1 court per 3,000 population	10	2	10	8
Golf Course (9 or 18 hole)	1 course per 25,000 population	1	0	10	1
Ampitheater	1 ampitheater per 10,000 population	3	0	3	3

* Standards were developed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and adopted by the Raytown Park Board.

Citizen Input

As was alluded to above, there are different measures of need and demand, these measures provide clues and guidance for targeting future budget and expenditure priorities. Some of these demand measures have been captured through public input efforts. In an effort to understand current demand, the City of Raytown and the Park Department conducted a survey, hosted several meetings to facilitate input, and attempted to draw conclusions about what citizens desire.

Table 7 is the comparison of need measured by facility standards versus demand measured by citizen input through a recent survey conducted at a public meeting. Attendees were asked to rank the array of facility types in Table 7 according to priority 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest priority. Although none of them received a average score of 4 or higher, priorities for development tended to mesh well with facility development needs indicated by standards. This is not always the case. Generally, the facilities, which fell far short of the standard, were given the highest priority for future development by way of citizen prioritization. Exceptions to this statement include: football fields and shuffleboard courts.

The higher priorities were given to trails development, playgrounds, picnic area development, ball diamonds, and multi-use and volleyball courts. While these measures do not indicate the amount of facility development, which may be necessary, they do point toward areas of focus in the future.

Further public meetings throughout the comprehensive planning process also provided general base information related directly to the delivery of parks, recreation and open space in Raytown. The following, outlines community goals and citizen needs that were discussed in public meetings:

- ↳ Quality of life goal
 - Provide additional recreational activities in Raytown
- ↳ Image goal
 - Establish a street-tree program
- ↳ Recreational goal
 - Greenway / Bicycle trails
 - Basketball courts at Coleman and Kenagy Parks
 - Community Center (fitness center, large banquet hall with kitchen, activities for seniors and youth, indoor practice fields)
 - Soccer fields and multipurpose fields
 - Outdoor concerts
 - A large fishing pond (better than Kenagy Park)
- ↳ City Government and Quasi Public Services Goals
 - Improve communication among public services (stronger ties needed)
 - Provide additional funding for park maintenance

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan meetings, the Park Department hosted one public meeting, as well as a meeting with senior citizens, to discuss issues and concerns specific to parks and recreation. Through this meeting, many issues were voiced by participants and by way of a prioritization process. Four top issues and specific concerns were identified:

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

- 1) Community Center
 - Location
 - Cost and revenue
 - Need
 - Facilities
 - Joint Cooperation
 - Use of inflatable structure
- 2) Trails
 - Jogging - wide enough for bikes
 - Conflict of jogging and bike separation
 - May not be practical, people may ignore (signage)
 - Signs for etiquettness
 - Close circuit trails
 - Exercise stations
 - Connect to neighborhood parks
 - Rails to trails
 - Bike R.O.W. along existing roads (separate or marked)
 - Destinations - link to parks, downtown, safety, City Hall, Community Center
- 3) Elderly
 - Blue Ridge Mall, elderly go there for walking
 - Weather related
 - Safety
 - Social - need a place to meet
 - Storage
 - Nutrition site
 - Bus / transportation
 - If facility was provided, they would develop program
 - Older people = kids
 - Interactive programs
 - Number of elderly groups, churches, etc.
- 4) Upkeep
 - Need to keep what you have
 - Generally good maintenance
 - Parking lot lighting a Kenagy Park (safety)
 - Tree trimming & lighting
 - Lighting is terrible
 - Parks = image, visible representation of the city
 - Restrooms

The Senior Citizen meeting revealed similar concerns regarding the need for a central meeting place with meal preparation capabilities, walking facilities, maintenance needs and multipurpose facilities. Concern was raised regarding how to pay for facilities, the need for possible joint partnerships, transportation requirements and the coordination of activities.

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Supplemental to the meetings, surveys were distributed randomly to community residents and business owners to assist in understanding the importance of the existing system, as well as possible needs or desires. Again, many of the residents voiced concerns that not only effected the entire community, but also related to parks and recreation. Below is a summary of the results affecting parks and recreation. The percentages provided are based on the number of people who provided a response to the specific question and does not include those who chose not to answer the question. Those choosing not to respond to any one question varied dramatically and may be an indication of public familiarity or lack thereof of the issues or topics.

- ⌋ Out of the eight most important benefits of Raytown, “Good Parks” ranked sixth, slightly higher than “Good Schools.”
- ⌋ Of the four major reasons for a business to locate in Raytown, “Quality of Life” ranked number four.
- ⌋ 67% of the respondents believe Raytown should have a community center.
- ⌋ User fees were identified as a the preferred method, 85% of respondents agreed to be used to finance a community center.
- ⌋ 55% of survey respondents agreed that Raytown should join forces with the YMCA for a community center.
- ⌋ 46% of respondents indicated a desire to purchase the 1st Baptist Church for the Community Center.
- ⌋ 89% of the respondents agreed that Raytown’s parks are well maintained.
- ⌋ Green open space is included in the “Park System” according to 75% of those responding to the survey.
- ⌋ 46% of the respondents agreed that Raytown offers adequate recreational programs.
- ⌋ 77% of respondents believe that the Raytown Park Board should pursue cooperative projects.
- ⌋ Of those responding, 82% indicated a belief that the Park Board should be autonomous.

Other important citizen issues that were expressed through the citizen input process included:

- ⌋ More shelters and picnic tables
- ⌋ More signage (park entrance, curfew)
- ⌋ Additional trash cans near recreational fields, not merely around picnic areas

Lighting was also an important issue for many citizens who felt that nighttime lighting on the basketball courts should be eliminated. Light from other areas (tennis courts, softball fields, streetlights, etc.) should also be carefully planned so as to ensure minimal light would spill onto the basketball court (preventing usage) or into neighboring back yards (to ensure privacy).

Planning Implication

The Raytown Park Board should utilize standards -- whether national or state / regional -- as guidelines but must consider them in light of public input specific to the City of Raytown. Issues, such as accessibility, safety and quality, are not always quantifiable or factual, but they can be perceptual yet very real. Citizen input may verify or question standards that point to deficits and can assist in prioritizing deficits based upon the unique qualities and desires of the community. Does the City need to have three amphitheaters, an ice rink, or some other expensive facility? Standards may indicate a statistical need but citizens may or may not use such a facility because of the unique values and choices available within or around the community.

These values and choices are generally expressed through observation and public input. Critical park and facility development issues will need to be discussed within a public forum in the future. This will allow the Master Plan to be questioned by the Park Board and citizens, and will allow the plan and the system to evolve in a responsive and effective manner. The vision and implementation recommendations that are in the following section are based upon an understanding of existing conditions in Raytown, existing park and recreation services, and projected need and demand through standards analysis and citizen input. These conditions will change as the community changes and to be effective, with limited resources, the Park Board and Department will need to be responsive to the public and proactive in implementation to the greatest extent possible given limited powers and resources.

FUTURE SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS

The Raytown Park Board and Department has stipulated a set of goals for the future park and recreation system. These goals were outlined previously and serve as a general decision-making framework from which a vision of the system and the strategies for implementation can be developed. This section of the Master Plan is intended to present a vision of the physical aspects of parks, recreation and open space a set of strategies that serve to implement the Master Plan.

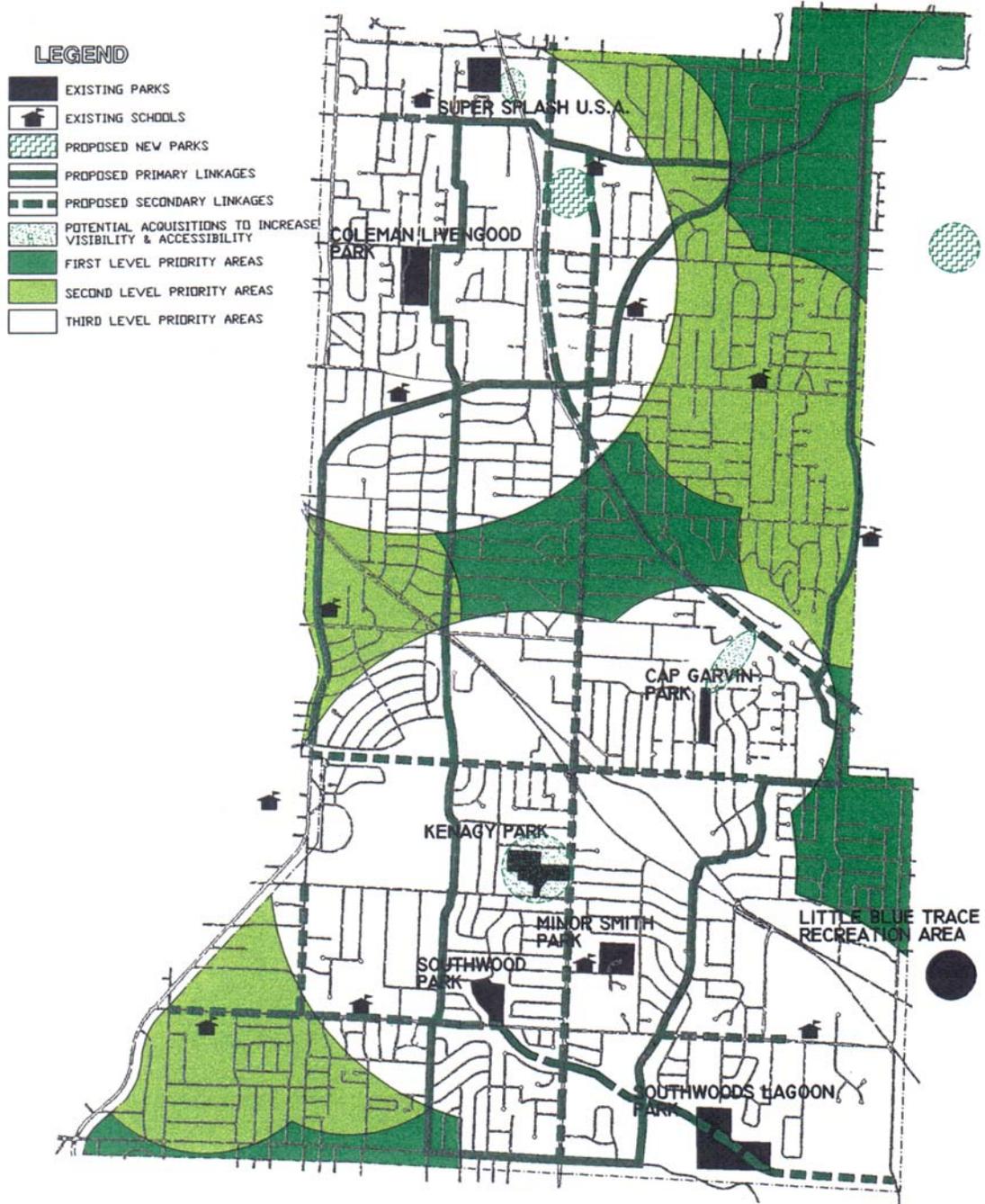
System Vision

The physical framework for the future provision of services is based upon a system of traditional parks and linkages. In addition to strategic land acquisition and development within Raytown this system recognizes the need to mesh with the existing park and recreation resources, and proposed plans for the immediate metropolitan area. Such a premise requires Raytown to be proactive in implementation and develop a high level of coordination with other system and service providers, and planning agencies.

Figure 4 reveals the overall system by showing both existing and proposed parks, as well as a proposed system of linkages within the context of the community. In the case of existing parks routine maintenance and periodic capital improvement efforts to replace or rehabilitate aging facilities will be critical. In several instances existing parks need to be afforded greater visibility and accessibility by way of the linkage system or acquisition of adjacent land. Proposed new parks should focus upon the development of areas that help to create a identity for Raytown or are strategically located. Two new areas are proposed one just north of City Hall and the other is the 297 acres located east of Raytown and owned by the City. The “civic park” located near City Hall may include an open air amphitheater, trail and a lake all intended to function as a community gathering place for special events, as well as a passive recreation area. The City owned property east of Raytown, may be best suited for sports fields and other associated activities. Such fields may serve to accommodate the need for practice area, as well as possible tournament play on a periodic basis. In either case specific master plans should be developed prior to facility development.

As a secondary aspect of future park land acquisition, the Park Board and Department should set priority areas for future parks. Additionally, Figure 4 provides geographically based priority areas. Areas that are not within the service area of existing parks or schools would have the highest priority for future land acquisition while areas served by existing schools, but not by existing parks would have the next priority and finally land within existing service areas would have the lowest priority unless a specific community function or priority special use facility need is to be met.

FIGURE 4: FUTURE PARK SYSTEM PLAN



Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

In addition to traditional park areas the proposed linkage system is an important concept for establishing an identity for Raytown and meeting the specified need for trails and other facilities that can accommodate biking, walking, jogging and other pedestrian oriented activity. As discussed and shown in the comprehensive plan, linkages are a means to connect various areas and destinations.

The proposed system of linkages attempts to connect community oriented facilities and provide access between neighborhoods. In Raytown, a primary linkage is recommended that runs in a continuous circuit. This primary linkage runs through or near most neighborhoods and by major community facilities. Secondary linkages connect portions of Raytown and facilities to the primary linkage. The primary linkage system needs to be established prior to the implementation of the secondary linkage segments. Implementation of this concept is discussed further streetscape improvements in the Plan Implementation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Figure 5 indicates how such linkages may look within a variety of locations.

The proposed system of traditional parks and linkages extends beyond the need to support physical recreation. It also recognizes the need to establish a strong community identity within the metropolitan context and addresses the value of open space as a contributor to the “quality of life” in Raytown. Educating the public in regard to this value and achieving public support and acceptance of this system vision is an inherent part of this plan.

As important as future land acquisition and system development is in Raytown a key for true success will be the ability of the Park Department to continue a high level of maintenance throughout the system (both new and existing elements). In addition to incremental and timely capital improvements, adequate funding levels will need to be assigned to future maintenance efforts. Along with expanded system elements and responsibilities, the inflationary impacts on maintenance materials and activities will require that annual budgets be reviewed and adjusted to preserve quality park facilities and aesthetic improvements. Poor maintenance will create a negative image for Raytown and budget stagnation or cuts may quickly impact maintenance efforts. Joint partnerships and shared responsibilities may allow for creative methods to support maintenance activities in the future without necessarily impacting budget resources in a significant manner.

Beyond the physical system addressed above two key aspects of the system will be the development of a community / recreation center and the role of the Park Department in recreation and leisure activity coordination . The saga of the need and ability to develop a community / recreation center in Raytown has been well documented in recent years. While proposed centers have failed to capture public approval for various reasons, the topic and need was indicated frequently through the public planning process. As stated in the comprehensive plan the concept of a community center is challenged for a variety of reasons including:

- Ⓟ Current revenue streams can not support the development and ongoing need of a new community center.
- Ⓟ Residents have stated that they will not support increased taxation to cover the costs involved in setting up a community center, and prefer user fees.

FIGURE 5: LINKAGE TYPES



NATURAL AREAS



RESIDENTIAL STREET



RESIDENTIAL AREA



NON-RESIDENTIAL STREET

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

- ⓑ There is general disagreement regarding the definition and uses intended for the community center.
- ⓑ A number of traditional community center programs and activities are currently provided by independent service providers.

Given these reasons, it is still generally agreed that a community / recreation facility would help meet the leisure and recreation needs of the residents of Raytown. In 1989, a five million dollar multiuse recreation and aquatic facility was proposed for the community. The facility would have provided a wide range of activities for all residents, including: basketball, volleyball, racquetball, fitness and multipurpose rooms, kitchen facilities, senior activities, an aquatic center and Parks Department offices. A ten-year, one-half cent sales tax was defeated in 1990.

Since that time, the need for this type of facility has continued to be debated in the community. With opinions on both sides of the issue, several alternatives should be fully explored prior to a community decision. These alternatives are outlined below:

1. The Park Department should investigate existing partnering opportunities with another provider, such as the YMCA, the Raytown School District or others to jointly develop a facility.
2. Adaptive reuse of an existing structure in the community, such as the current YMCA facility, should be considered for potential development of a community facility.
3. The Park Department should again explore the development of a new freestanding community recreation center within the community. Possible locations for such a facility include: the CBD area, a 350 Highway location, or a location in one of the community's existing parks near a proposed linkage.
4. The Park Department should continue to provide leisure and recreation opportunities at current levels and should not develop a community / recreation center.

These alternatives appear as recommended priorities for investigating the feasibility of a community / recreation center. Each alternative is problematic, yet given financial limitations, it is important to investigate each alternative fully prior to moving to the next alternative. Such a facility may begin as a modest opportunity or facility with expansion being justified through future use and public support. Phasing in various elements initially through a partnership may encourage community activity and desire, to a level where support and greater need for a new facility would overcome current hurdles blocking community commitment to such a facility. Additionally, a central location in the CBD is desirable to bring activity and a public presence to Downtown Raytown, but such a location is not essential if other advantages allow for a successful center to be developed.

Finally, recreation and leisure program coordination will be essential if future programs in Raytown are going to be successful. In addition to the Raytown Park Department, there are at least nine recreation and leisure activity providers, as well as many senior citizen groups located in the community. Coordination of services and marketing could benefit all providers and the residents of Raytown. The Park Department should explore the feasibility of serving as an informational clearinghouse for local recreation providers. This activity may involve a referral system or the development of joint marketing brochures. Additionally, by taking a lead in this role

the Park Department would be able to help identify when a program and/ or provider is failing or succeeding. This would allow the providers and Park Department to act quickly to assist growing programs or fill service gaps that may occur. Ultimately, the level of cooperation and coordination would mean improved service delivery to the citizens of Raytown in a cost effective manner.

The brief description above provides an initial vision for the future parks and recreation system including new park land, a linkage system, a community center and a well coordinated set of providers working together to meet the needs and desires of citizens in a proactive manner. This vision seeks to maintain high quality park and recreation facilities through commitment to incremental capital improvements and ongoing maintenance.

Strategies and Actions

The vision above is only achievable through a commitment to implementing a series of strategies in a practical manner. The strategies and actions outlined below are meant to serve as guides for future implementation and decision making. These recommendations are based upon the issues raised through the planning process, as well as the recommendations and analysis provided by the Comprehensive Plan and previous sections of the Master Plan.

- Ⓟ Annually review and evaluate the Park Board mission statement and goals, and make appropriate adjustments.
- Ⓟ Focus recreation programming efforts, either as the lead agency or through partnerships in three areas: family oriented activities, active sports activities and senior citizen activities.
- Ⓟ Adopt the Park Master Plan as a long range vision and decision making guide.
- Ⓟ Develop a five year capital improvement program based on the Master Plan recommendations and specific park master plans, and ask the Board of Aldermen to incorporate select projects into the City capital improvement program and assist with financing.
- Ⓟ Annually review the Master Plan and capital improvement program to monitor necessary changes and accomplishments, and evaluate goals.
- Ⓟ Update the Master Plan every ten years.
- Ⓟ Conduct an up-to-date in-depth community needs assessment process and update it on a 10 year basis coinciding with Master Plan update activities.
- Ⓟ Schedule, through the CIP and proposed park improvement plans, and implement required ADA improvements.
- Ⓟ Continue the practice of reserving funds on an annual basis to develop a funding reserve for future capital improvement projects.
- Ⓟ Utilize a public involvement process to review proposed capital improvements and evaluate the effectiveness and viability of the Master Plan on an annual basis.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

- Ⓟ Continue to encourage citizen participation when planning, selecting and placing equipment and facilities in neighborhood parks.
- Ⓟ Continue to implement master plans for Kenagy, Colman-Livengood and Minor Smith Parks.
- Ⓟ Develop an Adopt-a-Park or similar program that encourages neighborhood and civic organizations / groups to aid in park maintenance and safety efforts.
- Ⓟ Through future park design and improvement efforts buildings and facilities should be located to enhance a safe environment by avoiding the isolation of users.
- Ⓟ Every two years conduct random user and non-user survey's in the community to capture new trends and concerns regarding demographic change and activity patterns in Raytown.
- Ⓟ Adjust recreation programming through a cooperative and coordinated effort to match trends indicated by user and non-user surveys.
- Ⓟ Serve as a coordination leader in the community by developing a forum to bring all providers together to share information, develop new programs, create partnerships, assess available resources and needs, and develop potential marketing efforts and community events.
- Ⓟ Work continually with MARC and other cities and agencies to ensure effective planning and implementation of a Raytown Park System which meshes with existing metropolitan area system plans and activities in adjacent areas. The Park Board may assign liaisons that would periodically contact these agencies and update the Board as to how Raytown efforts may be impacted.
- Ⓟ Promote not only Raytown events and resources but access to other regional resources near by.
- Ⓟ Create unique partnership programs between the Park Department and the Kansas City Zoo, and Truman Sports complex.
- Ⓟ Investigate available opportunities to acquire and/or manage land proposed for new parks (north of City Hall and east of Raytown).
- Ⓟ With the City of Raytown, develop master plans for both proposed parks in light of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the needs identified in the Park Master Plan.
- Ⓟ Investigate and acquire possible new park locations in the priority areas identified in the Future Park System Plan. First level priority areas would have the greatest priority and third level priority areas would have the least. Locations adjacent to or near proposed linkages would warrant a preferred status.
- Ⓟ Monitor and take advantage of land acquisition opportunities that would enhance the visibility, accessibility and image / development of Super Splash USA, Garvin Park and Kenagy Park.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

- ⌋ Improve access to Southwood Lagoon Park through acquisition of portions of 100 year floodplain to create a segment of the linkage system.
- ⌋ Develop master plans for each existing park, with citizen involvement, to determine desired facility development levels and identify improvement needs, thus providing specific capital improvement items to include in the Park Department or City of Raytown Capital Improvement Program.
- ⌋ Continue to maintain and further develop Super Splash USA within the existing market niche as a regional attraction and positive element that draws people into Raytown.
- ⌋ Pursue and fully investigate community / recreation center options as outlined in the vision section of the Master Plan.
- ⌋ Approach future playground and small neighborhood park development through joint facility use, development commitments and potential maintenance agreements with the school district.
- ⌋ Investigate opportunities to purchase the YMCA property at 75th and Westridge.
- ⌋ Investigate the possibility of allowing private development of future major recreation facilities (tennis, soccer, or softball complexes, etc.) in larger parks through lease agreements and other financing and risk venture measures that ensure quality development but minimize exposure of the Park Department.
- ⌋ Adjust and develop the proposed linkage system in a manner which serves to connect most parks, institutions, and community activity areas through the use of existing right-of-way options first and land acquisition second.
- ⌋ Actively seek alternative revenue sources to fund acquisition and development of parks including corporate gifts, public and private grants and cooperative agreements.
- ⌋ Investigate acquisition of appropriate portions of the 100 year floodplain for “linkage” development purposes and preservation of unique or scarce open space with representative topography and vegetation.
- ⌋ When feasible incorporate playground facilities and passive recreation elements (benches, tables, etc.) into linkage segments as strategic resting
- ⌋ Develop a partnership with public and private entities (School District Local Historic Society, etc.) to develop a interpretive trail along the Santa Fe Trail remnant as part of the proposed linkage system. When possible, tie in other local historic resources.
- ⌋ Develop design standards for the various segments of the linkage system.
- ⌋ Pursue joint development of the linkage system with the City of Raytown. Park Department responsibilities may focus upon landscape improvements and maintenance, and the acquisition and development of linkage segment that are not located along right-of-way streets.
- ⌋ Work with the City of Raytown to develop a street tree program through the provision of adequate funding to plant and maintain trees. Such a program should recognize links and major arterials as priorities.

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- ↳ Continue to monitor and pursue the availability of railroad right-of-way for conversion as part of the rails to trails program.
- ↳ Pursue ISTEA funding to assist with the development of the proposed linkage system.

These strategies and actions are suggested to assist with future implementation of the plan. Ultimately, some of these items will help to achieve the vision of the future Raytown Park and Recreation System, yet others will not be successful. For that reason the real success of this plan will be the ability of the Park Board and Park Department to evaluate the applicability of strategies in the future as the community changes so that implementation is proactive and the plan evolves with the community.

APPENDIX

Adopted Park Land and Facility Standards

Land Acquisition

The Raytown Park Board had adopted the following standard as a guideline for the acquisition of public park land: 2 acres for every 100 residents.

- Current implication of this standard = 600 acres
- Currently owned / leased = 159 (33 acres leased)
- Percent of standard met = 26%

Standards for Development of Recreation Facilities

The Raytown Park Board has adopted the following standards for the development of recreation facilities within the Raytown Park System:

Facility	Standard
Football Field	1 field per 4,000 population
Soccer Field	1 field per 4,000 population
Picnic Shelter	1 shelter per 2,000 population
Picnic Table	1 table per 125 population
Ball Diamond	1 diamond per 1,500 population
Tennis Court	1 court per 1,500 population
Handball Court	1 court per 5,000 population
Playground	1 playground per 1,000 population
Swimming Pool	800 sq. Feet per 1,000 population
Ice Skating Rink	1 rink per 50,000 population
multiuse Courts	1 court per 3,000 population
Bicycle Trail	1 mile per 2,000 population
Jogging Trail	1 mile per 2,000 population
Exercise Trail	1 mile per 7,5000 population
Shuffleboard Court	1 court per 2,000 population
Horseshoe Court	1 site per 2,000 population
Volleyball Court	1 court per 3,000 population
Golf Course (9 or 18 holes)	1 course per 25,000 population
Amphitheater	1 amphitheater per 10,000 population

