

Prairie Village Parks and Recreation Master Plan  
**Surveys and Public Input Summary**

In the early stages of the master planning process, two survey strategies were used to gain insight into the needs and desires of the public in relation to parks and recreation facilities and services. These two survey methods included:

- A statistically-valid mailed survey, sent to 2,100 Prairie Village households
- In-park surveys in each park, designed to reach out to the actual daily park visitors.

**Mailed Citizen Survey**

The mailed survey was mailed out to 2,100 randomly selected households in early September 2008. The recipients were given approximately two weeks to fill out and return the survey. However, most of the surveys received after the initial cut-off were retained and included in the final results. The final tabulated response figures for the survey were as follows:

Mailed surveys	2,100 households
Undeliverable surveys	31
Returned, useable surveys	791 (37.6% of initial mailings)

**Response Summary**

A full compilation of the results from this survey are included in the Appendix. Highlights of the findings from the survey include:

- **Response level:** The 37.6 % response rate is considered to be exceptional for most public surveys of this type. A normally expected rate is in the vicinity of 20%, so the citizens of Prairie Village can feel very good about their participation in this survey and the master plan process as a whole.
- **Statistic Validity:** This response rate assures at least a 95% confidence level in the initial survey.
- **Age of Survey Respondents as compared to age of all residents.** The chart below was developed to summarize how the survey responses compare to the actual demographic age groups of the population of Prairie Village. In general, the age percentages align well, with the note that the 20-29 age group did not respond as well as the 50-59 and 60-69 groups, who exceeded their actual demographic portion.

Survey Results		Actual Demographics of City	
Age of Respondent	% of All Respondents	% of Total Population*	% of Total Population, excluding 0-19* **
20-29	5%	9.95%	13.00%
30-39	16%	12.40%	16.15%
40-49	17%	14.30%	18.75%
50-59	24%	14.65%	19.10%
60-69	16%	9.65%	12.60%
70+	22%	15.65%	20.40%
<b>Totals</b>	100%	76.60%	100.00%
		* These figures have been adapted to correspond with the age group categories used in the survey	
		* This category was created to account for the fact that no respondents below the age of 20 were a part of the survey results	

## Surveys and Public Input Summary

- 64 % of the respondents have lived in Prairie Village for 10 years or more, and 93 % were homeowners as opposed to renters.
- 39% of the respondents have children under 18 in the household.
- The majority (61%) visit PV parks at least monthly, while 40% visit daily or weekly.
- The most common noted activities that the respondents are currently participating in while in the parks are walking/jogging, dog walking, visiting gardens, using the playgrounds, and swimming. In general, most of the parks are used for non-sports activities. As well, many of the write-in comments noted that the shelters are heavily used for family/group gatherings and the parks do accommodate bicycle riding, especially for families with children (in spite of the fact that proper trails for such activities are quite limited).
- 42% of the respondents visit the pool, with 18% going daily or weekly. The various pool features are used on a very even basis, indicating that the pool is well-matched to it's patrons.
- The ratings for the parks and recreation facilities were high, indicating a strong satisfaction with parks. As well, the majority of respondents felt safe in the parks.
- When asked to rate potential new features for the park system, the most favorable item by a significant margin was for nature walks. The next highest group of items included a dog park, amphitheater, sculpture garden, play village, and a climbing wall/challenge course. Write-in comments for this question were notably focused on bike trails and public golf opportunities, among many others.
- Two questions focused on the idea of a community center, with the first question generating a 66% favorable response to the concept of developing a Prairie Village community center (which was defined as including meeting rooms, exercise and weight equipment, running track, gym space, indoor pool, and recreation programs). The second question asked there general support for the concept of the City partnering with another entity to help achieve a community center. This question received a 60% response in favor of partnerships.
- A follow-up question to the community center concept asked the willingness to help fund such an effort. 47% were willing to very willing, while another 17% were somewhat willing to help fund.
- The survey also captured a general understanding that many of the residents are currently making use of the public and private recreation facilities and community centers in neighboring cities.
- Similarly, residents make good use of the many recreation program offerings of Johnson County and nearby communities, a well as sports clubs/organizations, and the YMCA.
- Regarding the development of a trail system, 79% were in favor of this idea to increase access to parks, schools, shopping, and other public areas. The majority of those in favor of trail development would prefer to see off-street, greenway trails, with bike lanes and widened sidewalks evenly preferred behind greenways.
- A follow-up question to the trail system concept asked the willingness to help fund such an effort. 54% were willing to very willing, while another 16% were somewhat willing to help fund.

- 61% of the respondents regularly or occasionally walk or bike to the parks.
- 87% are satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of park land in the city.
- 90% are satisfied or very satisfied with access to the existing parks.
- Regarding the willingness to help fund new park facilities (as opposed to the prior questions on a community center or trail system) 41% were willing or very willing, while another 20% were somewhat willing to help with these potential projects. Write-in comments regarding what they were specifically willing to help fund included several comments in favor of a golf course and a dog park, among others.

#### Summary of final write-in comments

When asked for any additional comments regarding parks and recreation in Prairie Village, the respondents offered 260+ comments. These written, open-ended comments cannot be statistically expressed, but are generally summarized as follows so that an understanding of their overall tone can be considered in the development of plans and recommendations:

- The vast majority appear to be pleased with the quality of the parks and expressed how much they value their existence in the city.
- Community Center: Many commented on their desire to see Prairie Village build a community center in the city, but there was also some opposition expressed due to taxes or feeling that the community centers in neighboring communities was adequate. These comments and their relative quantity fairly mirrored the statistical results of the survey in regards to this topic, with a majority expressing some positive desire pursue the possibility of a center.
- Trails: Numerous comments focused on the need and/or desire to have better trails and sidewalks in the city to make it easier and safer for walking or bicycling.
- Another frequent comment was in support of an off-leash dog park in the city.
- Close to the frequency of the dog park was the desire for the city to purchase the Meadowbrook Country Club for, at least in part, recreation and open space.
- There were also several comments regarding the general desire to obtain more green space, wherever possible.
- There were several comments regarding the need to provide recreation options for seniors, including cultural programs like theater trips.
- A number of comments expressed concern with any projects that would potentially raise taxes in any form.
- A few unique comments stood out and are noted here:
  - There is a need to repaint many of the crosswalks at intersections that lead into the parks.
  - A few noted that they did not care for the change to shredded rubber in the playgrounds.
  - The idea of a community garden for herbs and vegetables was proposed.
  - Also, the idea of more winter recreation options was brought forth, for both outdoor and indoor activities.

### **In-Park Surveys**

Over the course of three weeks, primarily on weekend days, the design team members spent time in the parks and pool complex, seeking comments and input through interviews with park/pool patrons and allowing them the opportunity to fill out an abbreviated survey form. The general intent of these efforts was to capture the thoughts of those who are truly using the facilities on a regular basis and to increase awareness of the parks master plan process in general.

While the comments received cannot be used in a statistically valid way - similar to write-in comments on the mailed survey - they were very valuable in gaining a sense of the desires, priorities, and general attitudes of those patrons. Among the comments are a few that will be highlighted here, due to their uniqueness or that they were not addressed by the mailed survey respondents. Thus:

- Bennett
  - Would like a pond with ducks (at another location, of course)
  - Need to mow more often
- Franklin
  - Many comments centered on the need for new and better restrooms with running water, and a shelter.
  - Need for extra bucket swings by the toddler play area.
  - More programming for kids, here and at the community center.
  - Wider walking trails.
  - Cultural events – music, etc.
  - More landscaping
  - Spray park
  - Dog drinking fountain
  - Nice BBQ pit
- Harmon
  - Tennis backboards need repair or replace with concrete
  - Concern with activities in/around large shelter
  - Lighted walking trails
  - Improve restrooms
  - More vending machines
  - Bigger skate park
- McCrum
  - New playground equipment
  - Height and openness of play equipment is a concern
  - Restrooms
- Meadowlake
  - Lights on tennis courts
  - Improve ball field
  - Spray park
  - Cleaner restrooms
  - Upgrade playground equipment, add monkey bars

- Porter
  - Full basketball court
  - Organized play groups
  - More interactive, educational play equipment
  - Improve baseball fields
  - Off-leash area for dogs
  - More rubber padding under play equipment
  - Add tennis courts (McCrum is busy)
  - More swings
  - Destination play area (special pieces)
  - Update distance markings on paths
- Windsor
  - Trash cans and bag dispensers around park, especially at entry for dogs.
  - Tire swing, more swings
  - Better lighting on paths
  - More shade around play areas
  - Better restrooms

### **Citizen Workshop**

An opportunity for the public to review and comment on the progress of the park master plan was held on October 27, 2008 at City Hall. The workshop was opened with a presentation of the various survey results and discussion of general recreation issues, followed by a look at initial concepts for a city-wide trail system and improvement plans for each park. There was brief mention of the possibility of partnerships in regard to a community center, as well.

Following the presentation of information, the attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas with the large group or in small break-out areas. Ideas included:

- Liked improving walking paths around the parks.
- Does not like parking concept for west side of Franklin Park.
- Quality of structures in parks need to be reflective of the surrounding property values.
- Would support green space acquisition, especially in some under-served areas of city.
- A place for weddings/receptions.
- Would like to see signage regarding the historical land use of the park sites.
- Protect, enhance, and expand urban forest.
- The parks are fine and there is no need to increase taxes for improvements.
- Look for gardening opportunities.
- Harmon tennis – could put grandstands on hill above lower courts.
- Idea of a Parks & Recreation director should be re-visited.
- Need a land acquisition strategy to purchase more park land.
- Look at possibilities with country clubs (for expansion of facilities, services).
- Trail from Porter Park to Village shops should happen.
- Would like to see more green space on 75<sup>th</sup> Street.
- North end of McCrum should be more useful.