

City of Spanish Fork

Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan



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Table of Contents

	Page
Chapter 1 Introduction	
City of Spanish Fork Demographics	1-1
Population	1-1
Household Characteristics	1-1
Age	1-2
Household Size	1-2
Income	1-2
Education	1-3
Rent Vs. Own	1-3
Economic Base	1-3
City of Spanish Fork Resident Profile – Survey Respondents	1-4
Public Involvement in the Planning Process	1-4
Steering Committee	1-4
Resident Survey	1-4
Public Scoping Meeting	1-5
Draft Plan Open House	1-5
Plan Adoption	1-5
Organization of the Document	1-5
Chapter 2 Parks	
Resident Survey Responses Regarding Parks and Park Use	2-1
Park Use by Residents	2-1
Desired Park Improvements	2-2
Most-Needed Types of Park Land	2-3
Proximity of Park Land to Home	2-4
Importance of Facilities and Performance in Providing Facilities	2-4
Summary of Survey Results Related to Parks	2-4
Existing Spanish Fork Parks	2-5
Existing Mini-Parks	2-5
Existing Neighborhood Parks	2-6
Existing Community Parks	2-7
Specialty Parks and Open Spaces	2-8
School Fields	2-9
Park Needs Analysis	2-9
Park Distribution and Service Area Analysis	2-10
Existing Neighborhoods Not Served by Parks	2-10
Future Parks and Existing Undeveloped Park Land	2-11
Proposed Priorities	2-11
Goals and Policies	2-12
Chapter 3 Recreation Programs and Facilities	
Resident Survey Responses Regarding Recreation Programs and Facilities	3-1

Resident Recreation Participation	3-1
Most-Used Facilities	3-1
Most-Desired Activities and Facilities	3-2
Importance of Facilities and Performance in Providing Facilities	3-4
Funding Facilities and Priorities	3-4
Summary	3-5
Existing Recreation Facilities	3-6
Spanish Fork City Fair Grounds	3-6
Water Park	3-6
Golf Course	3-6
Gun Club	3-7
Spanish Oaks Reservoir	3-7
Sports Park	3-7
Russell Swenson Baseball Complex	3-7
Existing Recreation Programs	3-8
Swimming	3-8
Baseball and Softball Programs	3-8
Football Programs for Children and Youth	3-10
Football Programs for Adults	3-10
Soccer Programs for Children and Youth	3-10
Soccer Programs for Adults	3-10
Basketball Programs for Children and Youth	3-11
Basketball Programs for Adults	3-11
Volleyball Programs for Children and Youth	3-11
Volleyball Programs for Adults	3-11
Wrestling Programs for Children and Youth	3-12
Track and Field Programs for Children and Youth	3-12
Tennis	3-12
Urban Fishing	3-12
Special Events and Activities	3-12
Recommended Recreation Programs and Facilities Priorities	3-13
Indoor Aquatic Center/Recreation Center	3-13
Walking, Jogging, and Biking Trails	3-13
Cultural/Performing Arts Center	3-14
Non-Competitive Programs and Activities	3-14
Goals and Policies	3-14
Chapter 4 Trails	
Resident Survey Responses Regarding Trails	4-1
Resident Use of Trails	4-1
Desired Trail Improvements and Trail Types	4-1
Importance of Facilities and Performance in Providing Facilities	4-1
Existing Spanish Fork Trails	4-2
Proposed Spanish Fork Trails	4-3

Goals and Policies	4-3
Chapter 5 Funding Options and Opportunities	
Funding Needed	5-1
Funding Options and Opportunities for Large Projects	5-3
General Obligation Bonds	5-3
Sales Tax Revenue Bonds	5-4
SAA (Special Assessment Areas)	5-5
Lease Revenue Bonds	5-6
Creation of Special Service District	5-6
“Creative Financing”	5-7
Funding Options and Opportunities for Smaller Projects	5-7
Private Funds	5-7
Local Funding Sources	5-8
State and Federal Programs	5-9
In-Kind and Donated Services or Funds	5-11

Executive Summary

Early in 2007, the City of Spanish Fork initiated development of a Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan. The purpose of the plan is to guide decision-making as the city grows and continues to provide facilities, activities, and services for its residents. The process involved a city-wide resident survey, establishment of a steering committee to oversee the process, and public meetings to gather information and to receive comment on the developing plan. The City of Spanish Fork Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan was adopted by the City Council on April 15, 2008.

City Parks

Results of the city-wide resident survey indicate that Spanish Fork City parks are highly desired and highly used; that more trees, walking/jogging paths, and lighting are desired in parks; that community and neighborhood parks are most-highly desired by the community as a whole; that specialty parks are most-highly desired by younger age groups; and that residents parks to be located close to residential neighborhoods.

There are a total of 163.35 acres of Neighborhood and Community Parks, and a 2007 population of 30,404. In order to maintain the current standard, Spanish Fork City will need to add about 16 acres of park land as soon as possible. In 2025, when the population reaches about 69,200, the City will have a deficit of just over 81-acres. Additionally there are gaps where residents do not have close-by access to parks.

Park Land Needs Analysis

YEAR	POPULATION	PARK ACRES*	PARK ACRES PER 1000 POPULATION	NEEDED TO MEET STANDARD	OVERAGE OR DEFICITE
2007	30,404	163.35	5.37	179.38	-16.03
2025	69,176	163.35	2.36	244.79	-81.44
*Includes Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks.					

However, the City owns or controls 128 acres of land that is planned for parks, thus it can easily maintain the standard once those parks are developed.

Park Development Priorities

Upgrading Existing Parks

Many of the existing Neighborhood and Community Parks do not currently meet the definitions included in the plan. Some of them, because of their small size may not be able to be upgraded to meet the new standard; however, they should include as many amenities as possible. Those that are larger should be upgraded to include all of the elements and facilities desired in Neighborhood and Community Parks.

Developing Existing City-Owned or Controlled Park Land

The existing city-owned park land and land that is, or will be dedicated to the city for parks, amounts to 123 acres. To meet the immediate need, at least 16 acres of land needs to be developed, and should be a priority to maintain the current standard and level of service within the City.

Developing New Parks in Undeveloped Areas

As undeveloped areas of the city are developed with residential uses, neighborhood and community parks should be included in any required master plans. The dedication of park land for Neighborhood Parks should be required as a condition of development approval; park development and the completion of Community Parks are an appropriate use for Park and Recreation Impact Fees.

Recreation Programs and Facilities

Responses to the community-wide survey indicate that Fiesta Days is the event in which most residents participate; swimming and baseball/soft ball are the activities in which most residents participate; the swimming pool (water park), reservoir, fairgrounds, and sports parks/ball parks are the most-used facilities; an indoor pool/aquatic center, recreation center, and more walking/jogging/biking trails are the most desired facilities; year-round swimming and activities that take place in recreation centers (racquetball, water aerobics, and yoga) and programs for toddlers and youngsters were most-desired; City residents are willing to pay more taxes to fund a recreation center/aquatic center; and they believe that operations and maintenance of a recreation center/aquatic center should come from a combination of taxes and mid-range fees.

Recreation Program and Facilities Priorities

The City of Spanish Fork is doing an excellent job with sports programs and facilities; some are among the best in the region. And with the completion of the Sports Park fields, competition for practice space and sporting events should be lessened, though there will always be demand. It is time however, for the City to focus on other opportunities in facilities and programs, and provide for a broader variety of recreation opportunities.

Indoor Aquatic Center/Recreation Center

The aquatic center/recreation center could include additional facilities that provide space for non-competitive recreational activities such as special interest classes and programs, acting, dance, and art classes, meeting rooms for groups and clubs, a gathering place for youth and teens, a running track, after-school programs, exercise and weight rooms, and other facilities and programs that will provide additional options for leisure and recreation, and encourage healthy lifestyles. This will require a large expenditure of resources, some of which can come from willing residents; the rest of which may need to come from other sources and possibly other communities.

Walking, Jogging, and Biking Trails

Walking, jogging, and biking are extremely popular. Given the small number of trails currently available to residents, the fact that 25 percent of survey respondents want more walking, jogging, and biking trails is an indication of their growing popularity. More resources will need to be directed toward trails in the future.

Cultural/Performing Arts Center

Ten percent of survey respondents indicated a need for a cultural arts/performing arts center as an alternative to facilities at the High School, and to provide additional opportunities. Write-in comments mentioned an amphitheater-type facility; others assumed a building. Regardless, the feelings expressed in those comments suggest it is time for a cultural arts center or a performing arts center that is specifically designated and designed for a broad range of arts and cultural activities. A feasibility study is needed to determine space requirements, costs and funding, location criteria, potential partnerships, fundraising, and revenue projections.

Non-Competitive Programs and Activities

While sports participation in Spanish Fork is large and growing, there is a segment of the population interested in programs and activities for children and adults that are not competitive or necessarily team-related. Suggestions found in some of the write-in comments on the survey suggest classes for children and adults, classes that are held in the evenings, more activities for smaller children, rock climbing, an enlarged and improved skate park, after-school programs and programs that parents can participate in with their children, and just more options that are not team or sports related.

Trails

The City of Spanish Fork includes just 7.3 miles of designated trails. These include off-street multipurpose trails, on-street bike lanes, and park trails (off-street trails within parks). The most-desired trail improvements are connecting gaps; linking neighborhoods, and increasing trail miles. The preferred trail types are asphalt, which are likely to be multi-purpose, and natural surface trails for use by hikers and bikers; few survey respondents appear to be aware of the need for additional equestrian trails.

Trail Priorities

The City and its Trails Committee have identified just over 82 miles of future and proposed trails including 49.73 miles of off-street multipurpose trails and 31.63 miles of on-street bike routes and lanes. This is a very significant increase in the amount of trails available for residents and responds appropriately to the community's expressed desire for more trails and trail facilities.

Funding Parks, Recreation, and Trails

A great deal of the feasibility of funding is the willingness of taxpayers to influence the allocation of tax monies toward that kind of priority, or their willingness to pay additional

City of Spanish Fork Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan

taxes in one form or another. Spanish Fork residents have indicated that they are willing to pay more taxes, specifically for an indoor aquatic/recreation center.

Funding Needed

In order to understand what the actual funding needs are for the City of Spanish Fork as it moves to implement the priorities established in this Master Plan, capital costs for park development, recreation facilities, and trail develops have been estimated. Table A identifies the costs for land and development for Parks; Table B identifies costs for land and development of a Recreation Center/Aquatic Center; and Table C identifies the costs associated with Trails Development. Total costs for each category are summarized below, and total \$58,439,800 in 2008 dollars.

Park Development Capital Costs	\$19,715,000
Recreation Center/Aquatic Center Costs	\$26,000,000
Trails Development Costs	\$12,724,800

Table A – Park Development Capital Costs

	Approx. Park Size	Approx. Land Cost	Approx. Devel. Cost	Approx. Total Cost	Comments
Neighborhood Park Upgrades					
East Park	3.5	\$0	\$126,000	\$126,000	Pavilion (1), picnic tables (4), play structure, walking paths (.25 mi.)
Parkside Estates	2	\$0	\$33,000	\$33,000	Walking paths (.25 mi.)
Abbie Court	3.5	\$0	\$33,000	\$33,000	Walking paths (.25 mi.)
Whispering Willows	1.5	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000	Pavilion (1)
Total Neighborhood Park Upgrades				\$222,000	
Community Park Upgrades					
Centennial*	11.5	\$0	\$130,500	\$130,500	Pavilions (1), picnic tables (10), walking paths (.5 mi)
North Park (Redeveloped)	12	\$0	\$0	\$0	Funded at \$4.2 million and in design.
Russell Swenson Baseball Complex	17	\$0	\$90,000	\$90,000	Pavilion (1), play structure
Total Community Park Upgrades				\$193,500	
Future Neighborhood and Community Parks					
Community Park A	47.5	\$0	\$7,125,000	\$7,125,000	City-owned property
Community Park B	67.5	\$0	\$10,125,000	\$10,125,000	City-owned property
Neighborhood Park a	5.3	\$0	\$795,000	\$795,000	Developer property dedication
Neighborhood Park b	2.8	\$0	\$420,000	\$420,000	Developer property dedication
Neighborhood Park c	5	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$1,250,000	New Neighborhood Park
Total New Park Development				\$19,715,000	

Table B – Recreation Center/Aquatic Center Capital Costs

	Approx. Park Size	Approx. Land Cost	Approx. Devel. Cost	Approx. Total Cost	Comments
Recreation Facilities					
Indoor Aquatic/Recreation Center	10	\$1,000,000	\$25,000,000	\$26,000,000	Average cost in Salt Lake County - \$20-\$25 million

Table 5C – Trail Development Costs

	Approx. Miles	Approx. Land Cost	Approx. Devel. Cost	Approx. Total Cost	Comments
Trails					
Off-Street Multipurpose Trails	50	\$0	\$11,880,000	\$11,880,000	Assumes easement or property will be donated.
On-Street Bike Routes	32	\$0	\$844,800	\$844,800	Assumes striping only.
Total New Trail Development				\$12,724,800	

Chapter 1

Introduction

Early in 2007, the City of Spanish Fork initiated development of a Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan. The purpose of the plan is to guide decision-making as the city grows and continues to provide facilities, activities, and services for its residents. The process involved a city-wide resident survey, establishment of a steering committee to oversee the process, and public meetings to gather information and to receive comment on the developing plan.

This Chapter provides a brief demographic view of the City of Spanish Fork, a brief profile of the persons who responded to the city-wide survey, and it summarizes the master planning process.

City of Spanish Fork Demographics

Population

The City of Spanish Fork is a rapidly growing community in central Utah County. Its current population is 30,404 (2007) and is expected to grow to nearly 70,000 in the year 2025. From 2000 to 2007, the City grew at an average annual rate of five percent per year – somewhat more rapidly than the overall Utah County rate of four percent per year over the same time period, and increased its population by 42 percent over the entire seven-year period. This rapid population growth has resulted in increased demand on existing parks, recreation and trail facilities and programs.

Household Characteristics

Household characteristics play an important role in the demand for park and recreation facilities, with families with young children and teenagers having different needs than empty-nester or retired households. Utah demographics are distinct from the rest of the nation, with significantly larger household sizes (3.13 persons per household in Utah compared to an average of 2.59 nationwide) and a substantially lower median age (27.1 years in Utah compared to 35.3 years in the US). Further, Utah County, home to Spanish Fork, is one of the youngest areas in the country, with some of the largest household sizes (median age of 24.1 years and average household size of 3.59 persons), as shown in the following table. The young median age and large household size suggests that there will be an increased demand for family-oriented recreation facilities, programs and activities in comparison with other municipalities across the nation. Table 1A summarizes household characteristics in the City of Spanish Fork.

Table 1A – Household Characteristics

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS						
	Median Age	Household Size	Average Income	Percent of Population over 65	High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Elk Ridge	20.7	4.45	\$ 65,511	4.7%	95.9%	39.2%
Goshen	26.2	3.21	\$ 41,458	7.9%	82.0%	6.5%
Mapleton	24.9	4.02	\$ 60,985	7.8%	92.4%	25.9%
Payson	24.4	3.47	\$ 43,539	8.2%	85.1%	16.0%
Provo	22.9	3.34	\$ 34,313	5.7%	89.4%	35.7%
Salem	24.2	3.86	\$ 54,813	7.8%	91.1%	24.4%
Santaquin	22.9	3.71	\$ 44,531	4.9%	84.6%	12.1%
Spanish Fork City	24.1	3.59	\$ 48,705	6.3%	91.2%	21.9%
Springville	25.0	3.41	\$ 46,472	7.9%	91.7%	28.5%
Woodland Hills	22.3	4.28	\$ 80,854	7.0%	98.2%	45.6%
Utah County	23.3	3.59	\$ 45,833	6.4%	90.9%	31.5%
State of Utah	27.1	3.13	\$ 45,726	8.5%	87.7%	26.1%
United States	35.3	2.59	\$ 41,994	12.4%	80.3%	24.4%

Source: Census Data 2000

Age

Spanish Fork’s median age, 24.1 years, is slightly higher than the Utah County average of 23.3 years, but is well below the State average of 27.1 years and the United States average of 35.3 years. With this large proportion of young families (52 percent of the population is younger than 24 years and 82 percent is younger than 44 years), recreation facilities in Spanish Fork must focus on meeting the demands of families. In comparison, only 6.3 percent of the population is age 65 and older – roughly half the national average for this age group.

Household Size

Households in Spanish Fork, with an average size of 3.59 persons, are one additional person larger in size than are households nationwide (with an average of 2.59 persons). This is also a reflection of the relatively young age in Spanish Fork, which is largely composed of young families.

Income

Household incomes in Spanish Fork are slightly higher than incomes countywide (which are somewhat lowered by the large college student population in Utah County) and nationwide. However, incomes in Spanish Fork must be spread over larger household sizes, reducing the per capita income in Spanish Fork in comparison to per capita incomes across the country. This suggests that households in Spanish Fork will be somewhat price sensitive, and that fees for recreational programs and activities must be priced accordingly.

Education

Nearly 90 percent of the residents over the age of 25 in Spanish Fork have graduated from high school. This compares extremely favorably to the 80 percent average nationwide, and suggests that there may be increased demand for educational/recreational programs. The higher educational attainment of the community is also reflected in the relatively higher household incomes.

Rent Vs. Own

Spanish Fork has a relatively high percentage (78.5 percent) of owner-occupied housing to renter-occupied housing (21.5 percent). Generally, homeowners have more commitment to their communities and are more likely to be willing to pay for new, renovated or expanded recreation facilities than are renters. Housing characteristics for southern Utah County are provided in Table 1B below.

Table 1B – Housing Characteristics

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS		
	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied
Elk Ridge	95.6%	4.4%
Goshen	89.7%	10.3%
Mapleton	92.6%	7.4%
Payson	77.6%	22.4%
Provo	42.6%	57.4%
Salem	87.4%	12.6%
Santaquin	86.0%	14.0%
Spanish Fork City	78.5%	21.5%
Springville	73.8%	26.2%
Woodland Hills	98.6%	1.4%
Utah County	66.8%	33.2%
State of Utah	71.5%	28.5%
<i>Source: Census Data 2000</i>		

Economic Base

Spanish Fork has a good economic base, centered in the North Park industrial area. There are several manufacturing businesses in the City, including Natures Sunshine (health care products), Provo Craft (craft products), Mountain Country Foods (pet treats), Longview Fibre (paper packaging), Sapa (aluminum), and Banta (printing). Good recreational opportunities will be an economic advantage to the City in continuing to attract strong businesses that create quality jobs within the community.

The industrial area is served by the Spanish Fork/Springville Municipal Airport, with a runway length of 5,700 feet. In addition, the City has good transportation access from I-15, US 6 and US 89, and is rail-served by the Union Pacific Railroad.

City of Spanish Fork Resident Profile – Survey Respondents

The resident survey was designed to gather information about existing park and recreation programs and facilities, and desired park and recreation programs and facilities. Persons who responded to the survey can generally be characterized as:

- Seventy percent of respondents to the survey were female.
- Sixty percent were between the ages of 25 and 44 years.
- Over 50 percent of the population has lived in Spanish Fork for less than 10 years.
- Seventy-one percent have children in the home, aged 0-17 years.
- Ninety-three percent own their own homes; 7 percent rent.
- Fifty-three percent earn household incomes between \$40,000 and \$79,999 annually; 18 percent earn less and 30 percent earn more.
- Nine percent own or ride horses.
- Thirty-eight percent have a dog in the household.
- Ten percent identify themselves as college students.

Public Involvement in the Planning Process

The public involvement process is multi-faceted and designed to provide multiple opportunities for residents to participate in the process. It includes a steering committee, the resident survey, a public scoping meeting, a draft plan open house meeting, and public hearings through the adoption process.

Steering committee

A Steering Committee was organized to give guidance to development of the Master Plan. It consisted of members of the Recreation Advisory Committee and interested citizens. Their role was to provide valuable experience and information regarding parks, recreation, and trails, to assist the consultant in understanding the community and its needs, and to review and recommend changes to the document as it developed.

Resident Survey

The Spanish Fork Survey was designed to help the City of Spanish Fork prepare a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan that is tailored to community needs and desires. The survey information contained in this document reflects community input regarding the use and need for parks, recreation, and trails. Over 9,000 surveys were mailed to households in the City; 1,691 were received and analyzed representing a response rate of 18.6 percent, which results in a margin of error of plus or minus 2.3 percent. This impressive response rate demonstrates how invested and interested Spanish Fork residents are in their community, and how important parks, recreation, and trails are to resident's quality of life.

Public Scoping Meeting

A Public Scoping Meeting was held on Monday, June 4, 2007 in the High Chaparral Room at the Fairgrounds. Eleven members of the community and members of the Recreation Advisory Commission attended the meeting to express their views and concerns. Their primary comments are summarized here and the full notes from the meeting are contained in the Appendix. Generally, attendees identified the following needs:

- More trails, uniformly designed, and better trail maintenance.
- An indoor swimming pool in conjunction with a recreation center.
- More diversity in park and recreation facilities.
- More cultural/arts facilities such as children's museum, historic museum, and performing arts.
- Upgrades and improvements in existing parks.
- Preservation of open space.

Draft Plan Open House

A Draft Plan Open House was held on March 25, 2008 in the City Council Chambers at Spanish Fork City Hall.

Plan Adoption

A Public Hearing before the Planning Commission was held on April 2, 2008, in which comments were received and recorded from the Planning Commission and one resident. The Planning Commission unanimously forwarded the Plan onto the City Council with a positive recommendation.

A Public Hearing before the City Council was held on April 15, 2008. Comments were received from the public expressing support for the plan. The City Council unanimously adopted the Plan as an Element of the City's General Plan.

Organization of the Document

The document addresses each of the three principal components separately, and includes a concluding chapter that identifies options and opportunities for funding and implementing parks, recreation facilities and programs, and trails. An appendix contains summary information from meetings and the survey.

Chapter 2

Parks

This Chapter summarizes the information received from the resident survey about parks, identifies and discusses existing parks and park categories, conducts a park needs analysis to determine the future need for parks, analyzes the proximity of parks to neighborhoods, recommends priorities, and establishes goals, policies, and implementation measures to facilitate implementation.

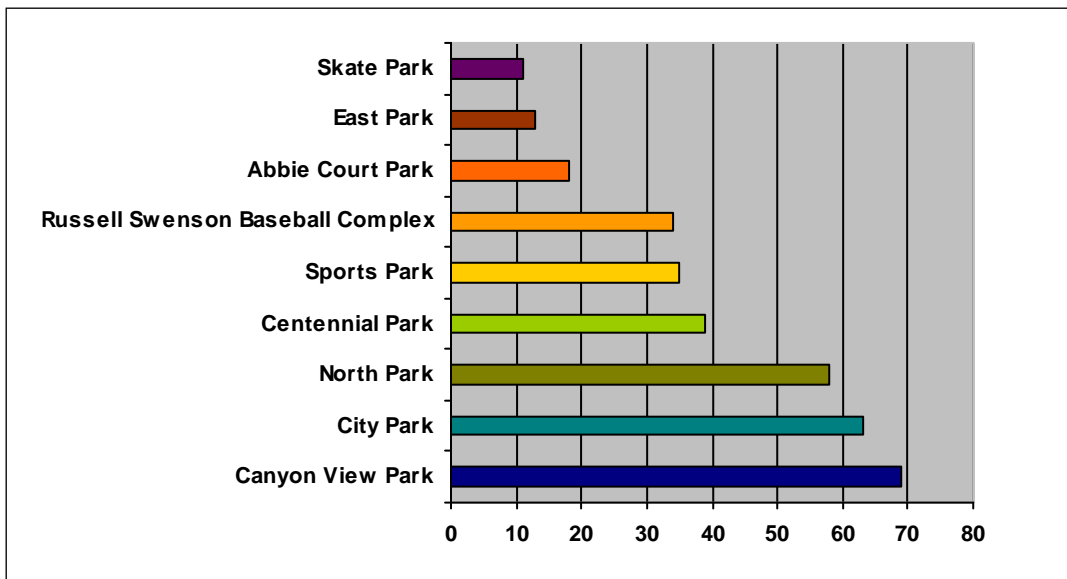
Resident Survey Responses Regarding Parks and Park Use

Park Use by Residents

Residents of Spanish Fork use city parks regularly and frequently. When asked how City residents meet their leisure and recreation needs, city park and recreation programs were selected as a first or second choice by over 50 percent of survey respondents. Facilities and programs provided in churches are the primary source of leisure and recreation needs when just the first choice is considered, but comes in second at 46 percent when the first and second choices are combined. Public lands are used by thirty-nine percent, school programs (19 percent), and several other sources were selected by less than 15 percent of respondents. Only two percent indicated that their recreation and leisure needs are not being met.

As illustrated in Table 2A, Canyon View Park is the most-often-used park in the city (67 percent) followed by City Park (63 percent) and North Park (58 percent), and the overall use of these parks does not appear to be influenced heavily by the age of respondents. All age groups appear to use City parks, though as discussed below frequency of use is affected by age. Centennial Park, Sports Park, and Russell Swenson Baseball Park are also well-used by more than 30 percent of the residents.

Table 2A: Household Park Usage



Survey respondents also report that they not only use parks, they are frequent users of City parks; sixty percent of respondents use city parks more than ten times per year. While all age groups report that they use parks, older respondents use them less. Twenty-five percent of respondents' 65-years of age or older use parks more than 10 times per year. However, 73 percent of 25-34 year olds and 70 percent of 35-44 year olds use city parks more than 10 times per year. The popularity of city parks clearly illustrates Spanish Fork's involvement in parks and recreation programs, and their value to the community.

Most respondents (56 percent) use parks that are close to home, but playground equipment (50 percent), trees and atmosphere (44 percent), picnic facilities (36 percent), and sports fields/courts (27 percent) are also attractants.

Desired Park Improvements

Considering all parks in Spanish Fork, the park improvements most-desired were trees/atmosphere (32 percent), measured walk/jog paths (31 percent), and lighting/safety features (22 percent). These concerns were consistently the highest-desired, even among the most-used parks. Table 2B below illustrates how desired improvements were ranked among parks.

Table 2B: Desired Park Improvements

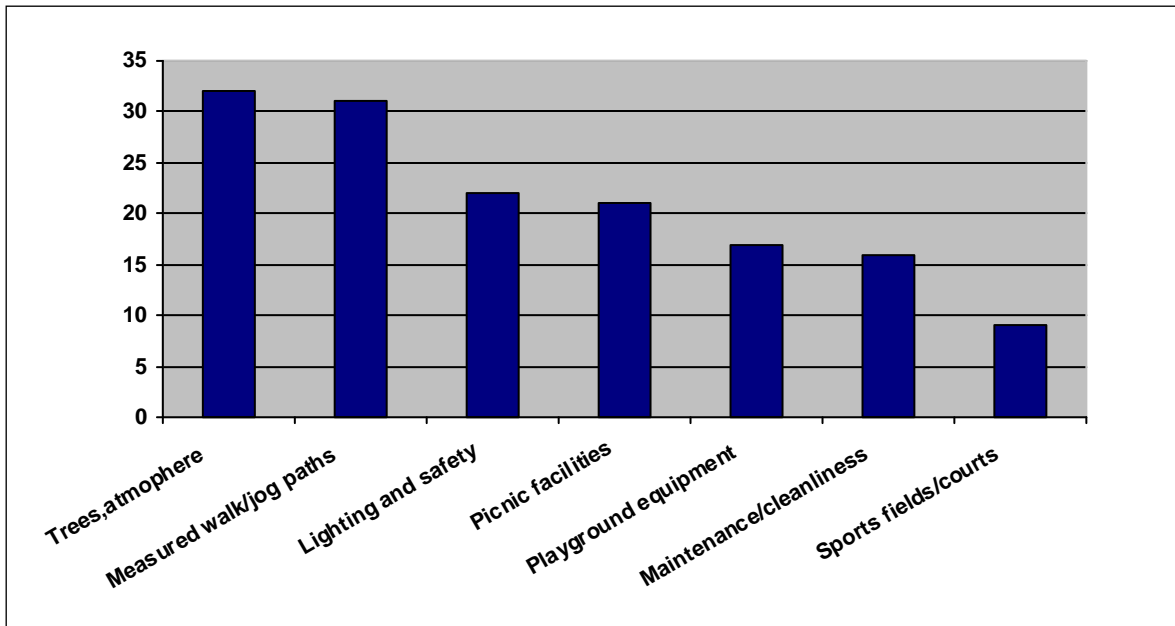


Table 2C illustrates the kind of specific improvements desired for each park in the existing system. Canyon View Park, the most widely used park in Spanish Fork, was evaluated as needing improved maintenance/cleanliness by 71 percent of respondents, followed by measured walking/jogging paths (32 percent), and trees/atmosphere (30 percent). To help identify priorities, the highest three scores relating to needed

improvement for each park are highlighted in yellow on the chart; if there was a tie each cell was highlighted.

Overall the chart appears to corroborate the finding shown in Table 2B; there are more yellow highlights in trees/atmosphere, measured walking/jogging paths, and additional lighting/safety features indicating these are needed improvements. Some parks received very high percentages where respondents selected the category of “Other”; however, the comments were often broad and unrelated to the question, and were not helpful in this analysis. Neighborhood residents surrounding those parks that received a high percentage of responses defined as “Other” should be surveyed or contacted in some other way to specifically define what improvements are actually needed and desired.

Table 2C: Specific Improvements for Each Park

	Playground Equipment	Sports fields/courts	Improved maintenance/cleanliness	Add lighting, safety features	Measured walk/jog paths	Picnic facilities	Trees, atmosphere	Other
Abbie	15%	13%	51%	20%	34%	18%	41%	27%
Canyon View	19%	10%	71%	21%	32%	22%	30%	24%
Canyon RV	38%	12%	26%	33%	26%	36%	36%	21%
Centennial	18%	11%	16%	20%	30%	26%	38%	26%
City	19%	9%	9%	23%	30%	23%	33%	26%
East	56%	40%	60%	62%	69%	62%	73%	65%
North	18%	8%	9%	22%	30%	22%	33%	27%
Parkside	20%	0%	22%	20%	0%	0%	20%	30%
Russell S.	20%	13%	57%	22%	24%	22%	33%	27%
Whispering	33%	13%	31%	27%	33%	27%	20%	7%
Skate	22%	15%	19%	35%	30%	25%	35%	26%
Sports	16%	14%	12%	25%	29%	21%	36%	25%

In making decisions about how available resources should be allocated, the information in Table 2C will be valuable in assisting the Parks Department administration and staff identify what improvements are desired by survey respondents who are actual users of the parks. Additionally, and as mentioned previously, it may also be necessary to survey nearby residents for more specific information.

Most-Needed Types of Park Land

Survey respondents identified the most-needed types of park land as large community parks for multi-use (53 percent) and neighborhood parks (50 percent). Responses

between various age groups regarding large community parks and neighborhood parks were fairly consistent; however, the 25-44 year old group considered specialty parks (i.e. dog, skate, BMX...) to be the most-needed type of park land in the City (51 percent of 25-34 year olds and 44 percent of 35-44 year olds), and 76 percent of them responded they were students. Though these adult age groups identified specialty parks as a need, they did not identify the specific kinds of specialty parks. Again, this may be an opportunity for additional questions and/or focus groups to determine what they envision as a specialty park.

One specific category of specialty parks is dog parks. Thirty-nine percent of households who responded to the survey have a dog. Of those, 57 percent indicated they would use or might use a dog park, while 42 percent indicated that they would not.

Proximity of Park Land to Home

It is clear from responses that parks close to home are highly desired, just how close is unclear. Between 41 and 49 percent of respondents feel it is very important to have parks within one-quarter mile to one mile from neighborhoods; and between 33 and 44 percent believe it is somewhat important. While respondents were not sure how close-by parks should be they do generally agree they should be close and apparently one mile is not considered too far. On another question, respondents indicated that the reason they use a particular park is that it is closest to home (56 percent). In making recommendations regarding the location of parks in relation to residential neighborhoods, the recommendations of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) will be considered.

Importance of Facilities and Performance in Providing Facilities

Survey respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of certain facilities to them and their households and then to evaluate how the City was performing in providing those services. With most facilities, respondents felt that the relative importance of a facility and their expectations were either equal or were exceeded. However, there were areas identified where facilities are rated as very important, but are not being provided. They are included in the following list where those identified with an asterisk (*) showed the largest difference in importance and performance, suggesting that they should be higher priorities when resources are allocated. Some facilities listed will be addressed in either the Recreation or Parks Chapters.

- Indoor exercise and fitness facilities*
- Indoor gyms for basketball/volleyball*
- Indoor aquatic center*
- Recreation center*
- Trails - linking the City, along the river bottoms, and walking and biking trails in general*
- Outdoor ice skating rink
- Performing arts center

- Picnic shelters/areas
- Playgrounds
- Preservation of open space
- Small neighborhood parks

Summary of Survey Results Related to Parks

- Spanish Fork City parks are highly desired and highly used.
- More trees, walking/jogging paths, and lighting are desired in parks.
- Community and neighborhood parks are most-highly desired by the community as a whole.
- Specialty parks are most-highly desired by younger age groups.
- Parks should be located relatively close to residential neighborhoods.

Existing Spanish Fork City Parks

Several categories of parks occur in Spanish Fork, and each category has a different function and varying characteristics. In determining the future need for parks, survey respondents indicated that Neighborhood and Community parks are more highly desired; thus definitions of these particular kinds of parks must be established.

Existing Mini-Parks

Mini-Parks are typically less than one-acre in size, and include a variety of elements such as features that commemorate community events or people, neighborhood gateway features, and historic elements; or they function as small storm water detention structures. They typically include a small, lawn open space; but are not large enough to provide space for sports events or practices. They are important community points-of-interest, but do not function as neighborhood or community parks and do not provide the amenities and elements typically found in such parks. There are just under 5-acres of Mini-Parks, as shown in Table 2D – below, and are located on Map 2-1. Mini-Parks are not included in the analysis of park need because of the limitations.

Table 2D – Existing Mini-Parks

Park	Acres
Mini-Parks	
Little Chicago	0.50
Little Cleveland	0.50
Icelandic Monument	0.10
East Park Triangle	0.10
Canyon Road Detention Basin	1.00
11th South and 11th East Detention Basin	0.25
4th North and 1400 East Detention Basin	1.00
Pioneer Cemetery Garden	0.75
Wildflower Detention Basin	0.75
Total Mini-Parks	4.95



Icelandic Monument



Left Access to Little Chicago Mini-Park (located on the interior of a residential block)

Right Little Chicago Mini-Park

Existing Neighborhood Parks

The City of Spanish Fork definition for Neighborhood Park is as follows:

Neighborhood Parks are developed recreation areas owned and maintained as public parks by the City of Spanish Fork. Neighborhood Parks should be located within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods or developments, and provide service to an area of one-half mile radius. The most desirable size for a neighborhood park is 4-10 acres, but they may be smaller or larger depending on land availability. Neighborhood parks are deliberately close to residential areas so they are easily accessed by walking or biking; have limited automobile parking, and no lighted athletic fields. Neighborhood park development includes the following minimum facilities and elements: pavilion, picnic tables, play ground structure, open grass areas, walking/jogging paths, and shaded areas. Neighborhood parks should also include at least one additional amenity such as a basketball court, tennis court, volleyball court, sport court, climbing wall, baseball/softball diamond, restroom, or other neighborhood-desired facility. Whenever possible, neighborhood residents will be consulted regarding the kind of additional facilities desired.

There are currently 12.85 acres of Neighborhood Parks in the City of Spanish Fork. They range in size from 1.5 acres to 3.5 acres which is smaller than the recommended size, and all of them do not currently include the minimum facilities and elements included in the definition. Three of the four neighborhood parks include one or more of the additional facilities described in the definition; however, all existing neighborhood parks will need some up-grading in order to meet the definition. Table 2E identifies Existing Neighborhood Parks, their size, and amenities. The areas shaded in tan are the amenities required in Neighborhood Parks. Existing Neighborhood Parks are located on Map 2-1.



Parkside Estates



Abbie Court



East Park

Table 2E - Existing Neighborhood Parks

Park	Acres	Pavilion	Open Fields	Picnic Tables	Play Structure	Walking Paths	Basketball	Baseball Fields	Parking
Neighborhood Parks									
Canyon Elementary	2.35		X		1				
East Park	3.50			6				1	Gravel
Parkside Estates	2.00	1	X	4	1		1		Curbside
Abbie Court	3.50	1	X	6	1		1		35 & Curbside
Whispering Willows	1.50			2	1	X			Curbside
Total Neighborhood Parks	12.85								

Existing Community Parks

There are currently 150.5 acres of Community Parks in Spanish Fork, which range in size from 4 acres in City Park to 80 acres at the Sports Park. Community Parks also serve as Neighborhood Parks, and should include the same basic facilities and elements.

Currently, some existing Community Parks do not include all of the basic facilities desired (pavilion, open fields, picnic tables, restroom, walking trails, and play structure); thus some will require upgrading. All Community Parks include other attractions available to neighborhoods and the community at-large. Table 2F identifies the range of Community Parks, their sizes, and amenities; the areas shaded in tan are the amenities required in Community Parks. Following is the definition for Community Parks in Spanish Fork City; their locations are shown on Map 2-1.

Community Parks are developed recreation areas owned and maintained as public parks by the City of Spanish Fork. Community parks may be much larger especially if they contain undeveloped open lands, or they may be smaller depending on land availability, but generally range in size from 11-50 acres. They serve several neighborhoods with a service area radius of one mile. Community Parks accommodate special events and gatherings, and can provide for a broad variety of activities and recreation opportunities. Community Parks should provide the amenities and elements required for neighborhood parks and a restroom, as well as additional facilities which may include sports fields for competitive play, group picnic shelters, swimming pools and recreation centers, tennis complexes, or other opportunities for recreational activity that involve larger groups, competitions, and community gathering areas.



City Park



Canyon View Park



Sports Park

Table 2F – Existing Community Parks

Park	Acres	Pavilion	Open Fields	Picnic Tables	Play Structure	Restroom	Walking Paths	Volleyball	Tennis Courts	Baseball Fields	Softball Fields	Football Fields	Soccer Fields	Pond/Water Element	Parking
Community Parks															
City Park	4.00		X	25	1	1									Curbside
Canyon View Park/RV Park	26.00	3	X	52	2	2		3		1				X	155/10 campsites
Centennial*	11.50		X	1	1	1							4		156
North Park (Redeveloped)	12.00	1	X	18	1	1	X	2						X	246
Russell Swenson Baseball Complex	17.00			10	1	1	X			5	1				200
Sports Park**	80.00	2	X	36	1	4	X		6	1	7	1	8		832
Total Community Parks	150.50														

*1 large and 3 small soccer fields.

**5 large and 3 small soccer fields.

Note: North Park is in the process of being developed with the amenities shown above and many more, and is considered an existing park.

Specialty Parks and Open Spaces

Specialty Facilities occupy 422 acres of land in the City, provide for additional recreation opportunities, and may serve as a regional attraction. Specialty Facilities include the Water Park, RV parks/campgrounds, skate park, reservoir park, gun club, and city-owned open space. These facilities are owned and maintained by the City of Spanish Fork, and are available for use by persons with special interests typically not provided in Neighborhood or Community Parks, but they are also regional, and in some cases have state-wide and national attraction. Specialty Parks and Open Spaces are not included in the analysis of park need. Table 2G below identifies the Specialty Parks and Open Spaces including, their sizes, and amenities found in them.

Table 2G – Existing Specialty Parks and Open Spaces

Park	Acres	Pavilion	Open Fields	Picnic Tables	Restroom	Volleyball	Basketball	Horseshoes	Swimming Pool	Overnight Camping	Day Use Areas	Pond/Water Element	Walking Paths	Parking
Specialty Parks and Open Space														
Reservoir Park, Campground, and Open Space	163.00	1		31	2			3		8	3	X	X	8
Water Park	4.00	1		24	1	3	1	1	1			X	X	113
Skate Park	5.00		X											Curbside
Gun Club/RV Park	16.00				4					7	1			300
Urban Forest Open Space	16.00												X	Curbside
Golf Course	180.00				3									75
City Cemetery	38.00				1									77
Total Specialty Parks	422.00													



**Reservoir Park.
Campground, and
Open Space**



Water Park



Left: Gun Club

Right: Golf Course

School Fields

Schools provide open space and recreational opportunities for residents, and often include not only open fields for informal play, but also play structures and other facilities typical of elementary schools. Spanish Fork High School and the Junior High School also provide recreation opportunities and are used by residents who enjoy the tracks, fields, and courts. These facilities are an asset to the community, but they are not city-owned facilities and are not included in the Park Needs Analysis.

One city-owned field is immediately adjacent to Canyon Elementary School. This is considered a park, included in the Park Needs Analysis, and is shown on the maps and in the Park Distribution and Service Area Analysis. It shares facilities with the school and functions as a public neighborhood park for the nearby residential neighborhood.

Park Needs Analysis

In determining the need for park land in Spanish Fork City, two park categories are included – Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks. Mini-Parks, and Specialty Parks and Open Space are valuable resources to the community; however, they do not serve neighborhoods with nearby park and recreation facilities, nor do they provide the space and amenities desired in neighborhoods.

There are a total of 163.35 acres of Neighborhood and Community Parks, and a 2007 population of 30,404¹. The current Spanish Fork City Standard or level of service determined for the calculation of park impact fees is 5.9 acres of park land per 1000 residents. Table 2H below establishes the current year, population, park acres, and calculates the current ratio between population and park land, which is 5.4 acres per 1000 resident. This is less than the current standard of 5.9 acres/1000 population. In order to meet the current standard, Spanish Fork City will need to add about 16 acres of park land as soon as possible.

The table also illustrates a future condition in 2025 when the population reaches about 69,200.² If no additional park acres are added between 2008 and 2025, the City will have a deficit of just over 81-acres, and the ratio between park land and population will have fallen to 2.4 acres per 1000 population. In summary, in order to achieve the standard for park land in Spanish Fork City, the City needs to acquire and develop a minimum of 16 acres in 2007 or as soon as possible, and an additional 65-acres (65.41 actual) between 2008 and 2025, for a total of about 82 new park land acres.

Table 2H – Park Land Needs Analysis

YEAR	POPULATION	PARK ACRES*	PARK ACRES PER 1000 POPULATION	NEEDED TO MEET STANDARD	OVERAGE OR DEFICITE
2007	30,404	163.35	5.37	179.38	-16.03
2025	69,176	163.35	2.36	244.79	-81.44
*Includes Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks.					

Park Distribution and Service Area Analysis

It is important to have adequate park acreage, but it is also important for residents to have convenient access to parks. Map 2-2 uses the National Park and Recreation Associations (NRPA) smallest recommended service area radii to identify resulting gaps in access to parks. The service areas shown on the map include a one-half mile service area for Neighborhood Parks and a one-mile service area for Community Parks. Major barriers such as Highway 6 and Interstate 15 must also be taken into consideration when identifying gaps.

Existing Neighborhoods Not Served by Parks

Map 2-2 illustrates that there are gaps that will need to be filled in order to provide Spanish Fork City residents with adequate access to parks. Those areas that are planned

¹ Current population is based on estimates of 6 percent growth between 2004 and 2007. Estimates are taken from the Spanish Fork City Website.

² Estimated 2025 population is projected from 2007 based on building permit history over the past years, which nets 2154 new residents each year. Projected to 2025, the population will increase by 38,772 persons to 69,176.

for residential development as per the General Plan Map, and in which a gap occurs are as follows; other areas are planned for either industrial or light industrial uses.

- The area north of Utah State (US) Highway 6 bounded by US 89 on the northeast, and adjacent to Mapleton.
- The area just south of Highway 6 between Dover Drive and Canyon Road approximately.
- The southwest corner area of the City, south and east of I-15.

Areas outside of the current City boundary are also planned for residential development and may be annexed into the city. When this occurs, additional park land may be required.

Future Parks and Existing Undeveloped Park Land

Map 2-3 shows existing park land that is not currently developed, which amounts to about 128 acres. Community Parks “A” and “B”, and Neighborhood Parks “a” and “b” are already either owned by the City, or will be dedicated to the City through negotiations with a developer. These already planned parks amount to 123 acres, which easily meets the current park need, as well as the future. Neighborhood Park “c” will need to be accommodated in the future when the community grows and additional park land is needed. Future parks are shown on Map 2-3 and their sizes are shown in Table 2I below.

Future parks are shown in yellow on the Map 2-3, with their appropriately-sized service areas. Development of these parks does not fill the gap north of Highway 6 or the gap south of Highway 6. As these areas develop additional parks will be needed. The gap in the southwest corner of the City is also not filled, and any future residential development west of I-15 will need additional parks.

Table 2I – Future Community and Neighborhood Parks

Future parks	
Community Park A	47.5
Community Park B	67.5
Neighborhood Park a	5.3
Neighborhood Park b	2.8
Neighborhood Park c	5
Total New Park Development	128.1

Proposed Priorities

Upgrading Existing Parks

As mentioned previously, many of the existing Neighborhood and Community Parks do not currently meet the definitions included in this plan. Some of them, because of their small size may not be able to be upgraded to meet the new standard; however, they should include as many amenities as possible. Those that are larger should be upgraded to include all of the elements and facilities desired in Neighborhood and Community Parks.

Tables 2E and 2F identify all of the existing Neighborhood and Community Parks; those park elements and amenity categories that are shaded are now required in parks. Each park which shows a lack of park elements and amenities should be evaluated carefully to

determine if it is feasible to add elements and amenities to upgrade the parks to the current standard.

Developing Existing City-Owned or Controlled Park Land

The existing city-owned park land and land that is, or will be dedicated to the city for parks, amounts to 123 acres. To meet the immediate need, at least 16 acres of land needs to be developed, and should be a priority to maintain the current standard and level of service within the City.

Developing New Parks in Undeveloped Areas

As undeveloped areas of the city are developed with residential uses, neighborhood and community parks should be included in any required master plans. Two possible general locations for a new Community Park and a new Neighborhood Park are shown on Map 2-3 as yellow stars. The dedication of park land for Neighborhood Parks should be required as a condition of development approval; park development and the completion of Community Parks are an appropriate use for Park and Recreation Impact Fees.

Goals and Policies

Goal: Assure that residents of Spanish Fork have access to parks and park facilities.

Policy: Maintain the following standards, guidelines, and definitions for Neighborhood Park and Community Park development.

1. Park land per 1000 city residents is 5.9 acres: The standard shall be based on total acres of Spanish City Parks classified as either Neighborhood Parks or Community Parks.

2. Neighborhood Parks shall be defined as:
Neighborhood Parks are developed recreation areas owned and maintained as public parks by the City of Spanish Fork. Neighborhood Parks should be located within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods or developments, and provide service to an area of one-half mile radius. The most desirable size for a neighborhood park is 4-10 acres, but they may be smaller or larger depending on land availability. Neighborhood parks are deliberately close to residential areas so they are easily accessed by walking or biking; have limited automobile parking, and no lighted athletic fields. Neighborhood park development includes the following minimum facilities and elements: pavilion, picnic tables, play ground structure, open grass areas, walking/jogging paths and shaded areas. Neighborhood parks should also include at least one additional amenity such as a basketball court, tennis court, volleyball court, sport court, climbing wall, baseball/softball diamond, restroom, or other neighborhood-desired facility. Whenever possible, neighborhood residents will be consulted regarding the kind of additional facilities desired.

3. Community Parks shall be defined as:

Community Parks are developed recreation areas owned and maintained as public parks by the City of Spanish Fork. Community parks may be much larger especially if they contain undeveloped open lands, or they may be smaller depending on land availability, but generally range in size from 11-50 acres. They serve several neighborhoods with a service area radius of one mile.

Community Parks accommodate special events and gatherings, and can provide for a broad variety of activities and recreation opportunities. Community Parks should provide the amenities and elements required for neighborhood parks and a restroom, as well as additional facilities which may include sports fields for competitive play, group picnic shelters, swimming pools and recreation centers, tennis complexes, or other opportunities for recreational activity that involve larger groups, competitions, and community gathering areas.

Implementation Measure: Acquire and develop additional park land to meet the standard as the community grows into the future.

Implementation Measure: Upgrade those existing Neighborhood and Community parks that do not currently meet the definitions and requirements to include the minimum required facilities.

Implementation Measure: Develop a minimum of 16 acres of existing park land to accommodate the current need.

Implementation Measure: Develop the remaining city-owned and controlled dedicated park land as soon as funds are available and residential development as those areas occur.

Goal: To provide adequate park acreage in new development areas.

Policy: Require new development projects of large size (20 acres and larger) to be fully master planned to include the location of neighborhood or community parks, at a minimum.

Implementation Measure: Require as a condition of development approval the location of park land in the site development master plan.

Implementation Measure: Enact, as part of the zoning ordinance the provision for inclusion of park land.

Implementation Measure: Whenever possible, require the donation of the Neighborhood Park land as a condition of development approval.

Goal: To provide adequate park acreage in developing areas currently underserved by public parks.

Policy: Acquire property in developed areas of the community that are underserved by public parks, and/or develop city owned park land.

Implementation Measure: Actively pursue the identification of undeveloped property in the appropriate areas, determine ownership, and pursue acquisition by some means.

Implementation Measure: Develop city-owned or controlled park land in new development areas.

Goal: Improve maintenance and operations in parks.

Policy: Allocate adequate funding and resources to improve maintenance in park restrooms.

Implementation Measure: Refer to the Table 2C which summarizes resident survey results pertaining to specific improvements needed in existing parks.

Chapter 3

Recreation Programs and Facilities

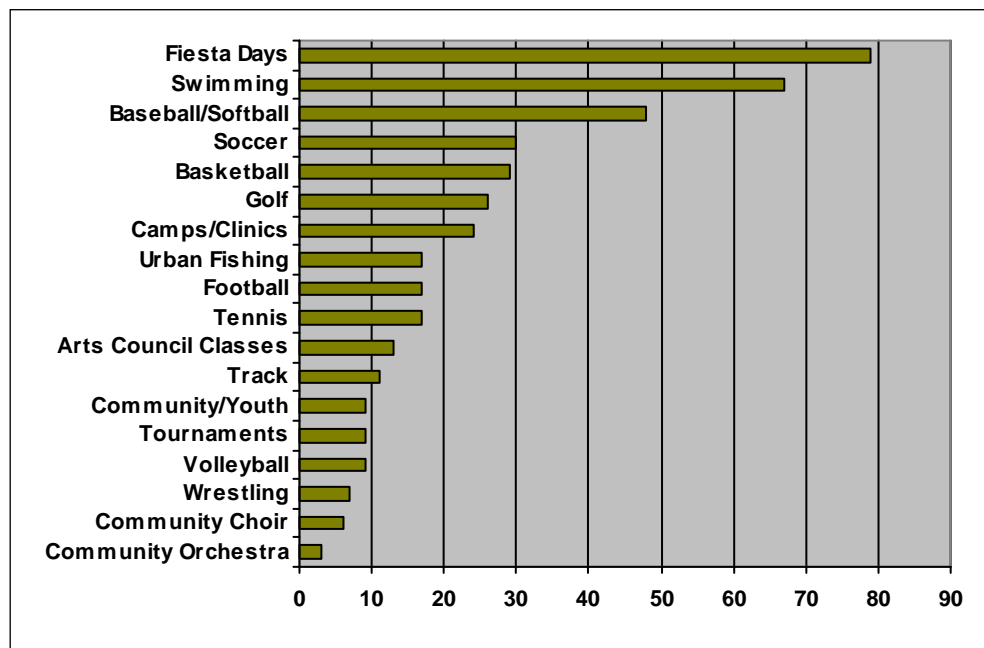
This Chapter addresses resident survey responses to questions regarding recreation programs and facilities, existing recreation facilities and programs, and recommendations for additional facilities and programs.

Resident Survey Responses Regarding Recreation Programs and Facilities

Resident Recreation Participation

The most popular city-sponsored events or programs are Fiesta Days, swimming, and baseball/softball. Fiesta Days ranked highest at 80 percent, followed by swimming (68 percent), and baseball/softball (49 percent). Thirty percent of respondents prefer soccer, 29 percent prefer basketball, and 27 percent prefer golf. Community orchestra and choir, volleyball, and wrestling were the least popular programs. Participation in these programs or events varied little among age groups, although those over the age of 65 appear to participate less often, with the exception of Fiesta Days. Table 3A illustrates responses for all programs listed in the survey.

Table 3A – Resident Recreation Participation

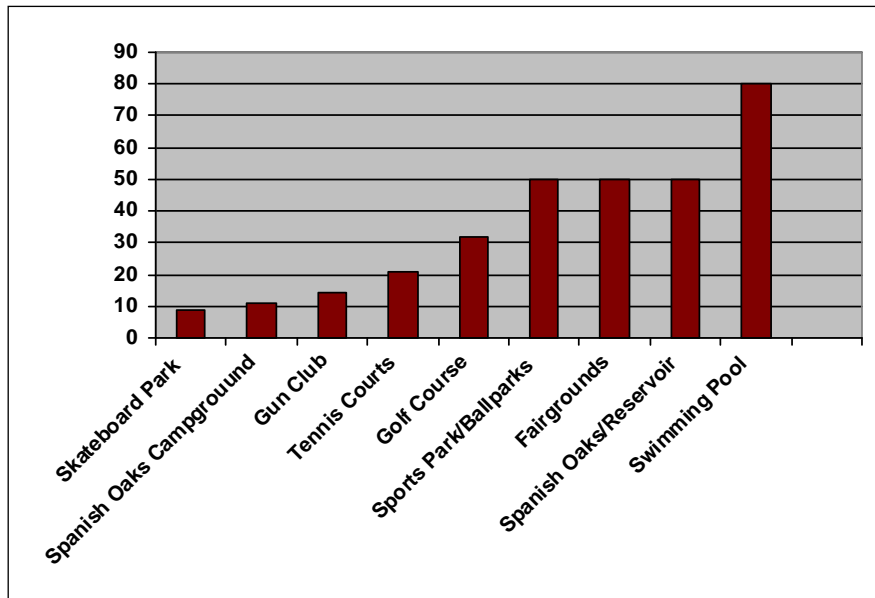


Most-Used Facilities

In support of the participation discussion above, it is not surprising to find that the most-used facilities in Spanish Fork are the pool, Spanish Oaks Reservoir, fairgrounds and sports parks/ballparks. Eighty percent of survey respondents use the swimming pool,

followed by 49 percent who use the reservoir, and 48 percent who use both the fairgrounds and the sports parks/ball parks. Specialty facilities such as the skateboard park, Spanish Oaks Campground, and the Gun Club are used least often. Table 3B illustrates responses for all facilities listed in the survey.

Table 3B – Most-Used Facilities



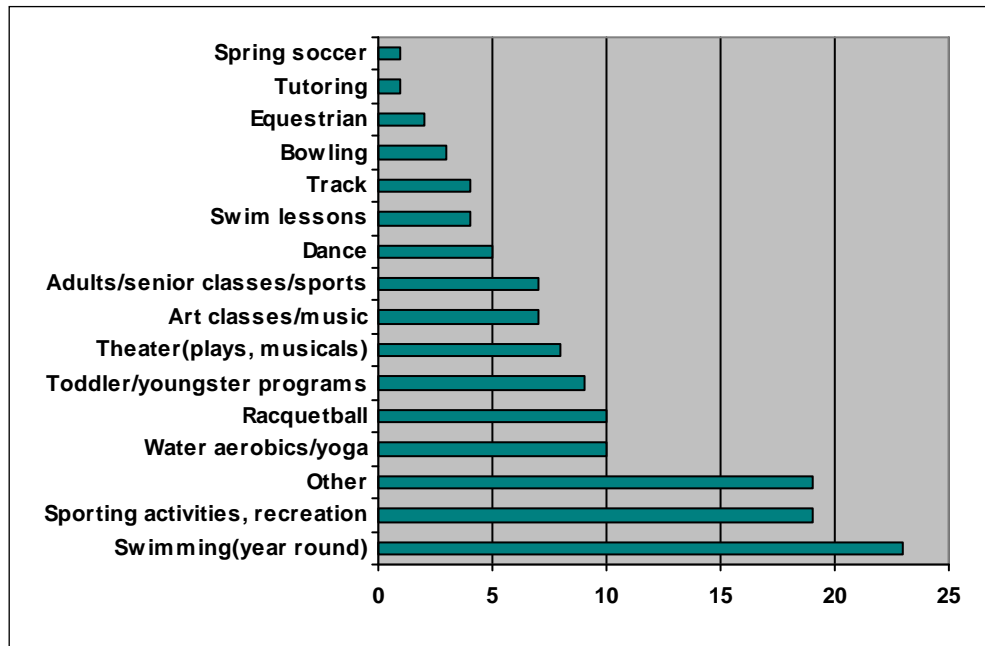
Survey respondents who do not participate in activities or use facilities cite a lack of time (24 percent), age (17 percent), or indicate that there are no activities of interest (15 percent). Those who responded that age was keeping them from participating were most likely to be over the age of 65. Fees and programs that are perceived to be expensive are of most concern to people aged 24-54 years old. Safety and transportation were the least important factors in deterring participation.

Most-Desired Activities and Facilities

Year-round swimming is the most desired activity of survey respondents (23 percent of all respondents), and 40 percent of those were over 65 years of age. Nineteen percent of respondents chose sports activities/recreation; racquetball and water aerobics/yoga were each mentioned by 10 percent of respondents, followed by toddler/youngster programs at 9 percent. Table 3C illustrates all of the new activities on the survey and the percent of responses.

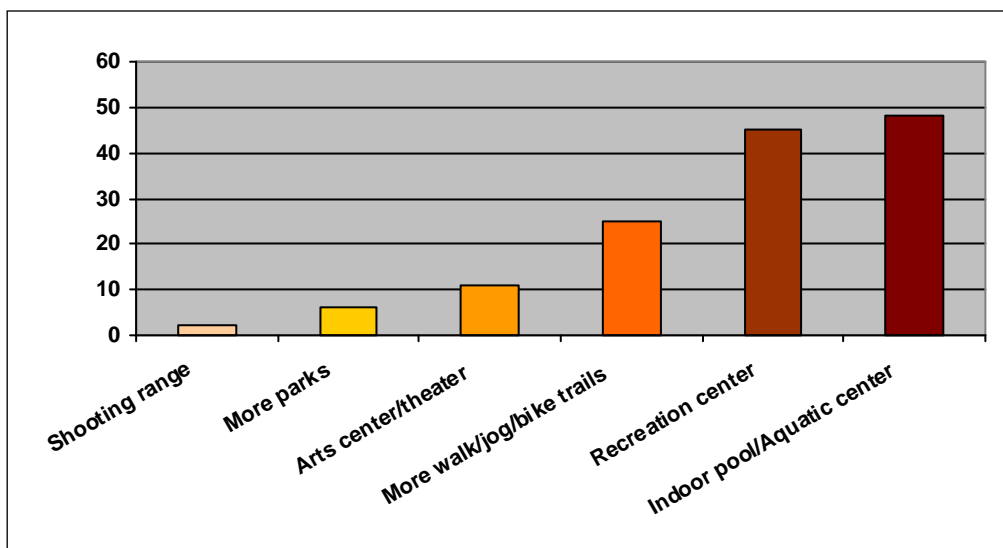
In response to this question about desired activities and facilities, 19 percent of respondents chose “other”, which is relatively high. The question asked respondents to choose up to three activities and facilities, of which “other” was one choice; however, the question did not provide a follow-up which identified what “other” might be. This is an area where additional information may be needed from focus groups or other sources of community input.

Table 3C – Most-Desired Activities



Responses to the survey about facilities, corroborate responses about activities; an indoor pool/aquatic center is most-desired (50 percent), followed by a recreation center (46 percent). The most desired activities, year-round swimming, racquetball, and water aerobics/yoga are most likely to take place in a recreation center/swimming pool facility. More walking/jogging/biking trails are desired by 25 percent of respondents. Given the limited number of existing trails in Spanish Fork, this is an important finding. Table 3D illustrates all of the facilities on the survey and the percent of responses for each.

Table 3D – Most-Desired Facilities



Importance of Facilities and Performance in Providing Facilities

Survey respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of certain facilities to them and their households and then to evaluate how the City was performing in providing those services. With most facilities, respondents felt that the relative importance of a facility and their expectations were either equal or were exceeded. However, there were areas identified where facilities are very important, but are not being provided. Those identified in the list that follows with an asterisk (*) showed the largest difference in importance and performance. These findings are consistent with those in Table 3D, where indoor facilities (aquatic and recreation) and trails are most-desired. Some facilities listed are addressed in either the Parks or Trails Chapters.

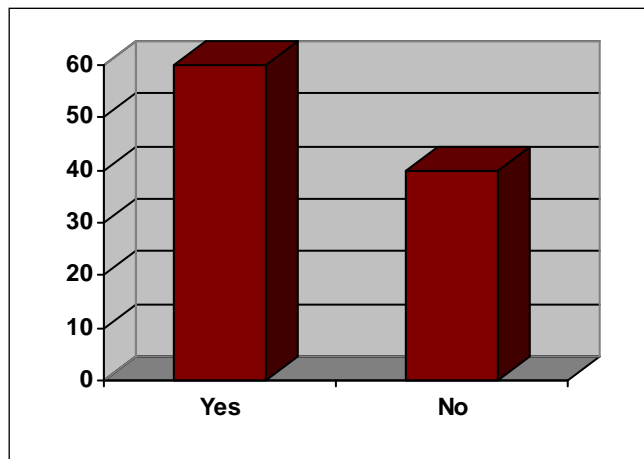
- Indoor exercise and fitness facilities*
- Indoor gyms for basketball/volleyball*
- Indoor aquatic center*
- Recreation center*
- Trails - linking the City, along the river bottoms, and walking and biking trails in general*
- Outdoor ice skating rink
- Performing arts center
- Picnic shelters/areas
- Playgrounds
- Preservation of open space
- Small neighborhood parks

Funding Facilities and Priorities

Sixty percent of all residents expressed willingness to pay additional property taxes or utility fees to construct a recreation center or indoor aquatic center (see Table 2E). These findings corroborate similar findings from other questions where an indoor aquatic center/recreation center complex is highly desired.

Respondents aged 65 years and above were the least willing to pay additional property or utility taxes (38 percent); however, the range of responses for all other age groups was fairly close and ranged between 51 percent and 66 percent, where 25 to 44 year olds are the most willing.

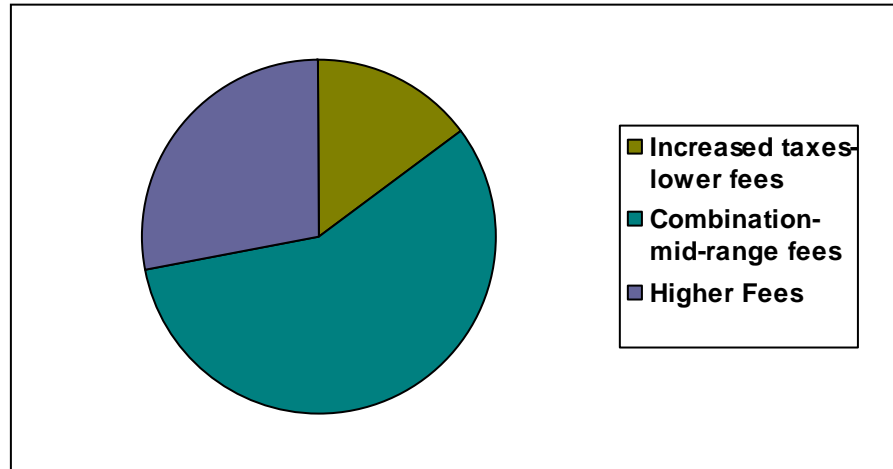
Table 2E: Willingness to Fund a Recreation/Aquatic Center



Though the majority of survey respondents are willing to pay higher property taxes, they are less willing to use the increased taxes for operating and maintaining facilities, nor are they willing to fund operations and maintenance exclusively through higher fees. The

most favorable funding source for operations and maintenance of facilities is a mid-range fee increase combined with an increase in taxes. Table 2F illustrates graphically the preferences for funding operations and maintenance of the desired indoor aquatic/recreation center.

Table 2F: Preferred Funding Sources for Maintenance and Operations of New Facilities



As a means of further refining community-desired improvements and priorities, survey participants were asked to allocate \$100 to various recreational facilities. Nearly one-third elected to spend the money on an indoor aquatic center, followed by just over 20 percent who would spend the money on a recreation center, and almost 18 percent who would spend the money on walking and bike trails.

Summary

- Fiesta Days is the event in which most residents participate.
- Swimming and baseball/soft ball are the activities in which most residents participate.
- The swimming pool (water park), reservoir, fairgrounds, and sports parks/ball parks are the most-used facilities.
- An indoor pool/aquatic center, recreation center, and more walking/jogging/biking trails are the most desired facilities.
- Year-round swimming and activities that take place in recreation centers (racquetball, water aerobics, and yoga) and programs for toddlers and youngsters were most-desired.
- Residents are willing to pay more taxes to fund a recreation center/aquatic center.
- Operations and maintenance of a recreation center/aquatic center should come from a combination of taxes and mid-range fees.

Existing Recreation Facilities

In addition to parks, Spanish Fork includes several very impressive recreation facilities, many of which are regional and even national attractions. These add greatly to the range of opportunities available to residents. The facilities are described briefly here, more information can be found in the *Spanish Fork Parks and Recreation 2007 Annual Report* (January 2008)

Spanish Fork City Fair Grounds

This 20-acre site is the home of a Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) event during Fiesta Days in July, as well as many other smaller equestrian and agriculture-related events and activities throughout the year. Fiesta Days is among the most popular events in the City and the fairgrounds serves as one of the most visited facilities. The High Chaparral room is a popular location for family gatherings and wedding receptions, as well. In 2007, total revenue reached a five-year high and the third highest revenue total recorded in Fairgrounds history. The competition for horse shows has increased in recent years due to new facilities throughout the state. With the return of the Utah County Fair in 2008 and additional planned improvements, the future looks to be promising.



Water Park

The Water Park opened summer 1994 and was the first water park of its kind in Utah; in 2004 the splash pad was added. Since opening, the Water Park has been very heavily used for lessons, open swim, swim meets, special events, and private pool and pavilion rentals by schools, churches, families, and business/civic groups. In 2007, 114 groups reserved the Water Park and pavilion amounting to 16,792 participants. Swimming is the second most participated-in activity for respondents to the city-wide resident survey, and the most-used facility in the City. Additional opportunities for swimming, particularly year-round, are highly desired by the community – year-round swimming was the most-desired activity identified on the survey and an aquatic center/indoor pool was the most desired facility. Senior citizens represented the largest age group desiring year-round swimming and facilities.



Golf Course

This 18-hole course sits on 180-acres at the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon. Recent improvements to the club house and renewed efforts to improve customer service were goals for 2007. Marketing efforts, the addition of flags on putting greens and driving ranges, more yardage signs and new Geographic Positioning System (GPS) units for customers to use while they play were among the noticeable changes that increased

customer satisfaction. The City feels it is on the right “course” to reclaim its share of dedicated golfers.

The golf course staff also assists with the annual Festival of Lights, which occurs in adjacent Canyon View Park each Christmas season and attracts upwards of 800 to 1000 cars on peak evenings. In 2007, 12,752 cars drove through Canyon View Park to enjoy the lights, generating added revenue for the City.



Gun Club

The Spanish Fork Gun Club is considered the most popular gun club in Utah, and a regional and national attraction that has hosted the Utah State Shoot for six years in a row. In addition to hosting eight major shoots in 2007 with shooters from throughout the country and Canada, the club hosts activities for corporations, church and scout groups, and other events that attract shooters of all ages and skill levels year-round. The club also sponsors local youth through the Scholastic Clay Target Program, a national program that offers children in school the opportunity to compete at the state and national level where every year Spanish Fork youth have qualified and competed at the national finals. The Gun Club is adjacent to Spanish Oaks Reservoir and includes approximately 16 acres, which features a 71-site RV park.

Spanish Oaks Reservoir

The Spanish Oaks Reservoir area is the second most-used facility in the City, and occupies approximately 163 acres including the reservoir and beach area, eight overnight campsites, and acres of open space on the hillside. With the addition of the new Mt. Country Pavilion which can accommodate 150 persons seated at picnic tables, it will continue to be a popular location for swimming, sunbathing, and gathering.



Sports Park

The Sports Park has grown to 80 acres and includes lighted baseball/softball diamonds, as well as soccer and football fields. It serves as a Community Park because of its many other attractions (picnicking, tennis, play structure, trails), but is one of the most important sports complexes in the region.



Russell Swenson Baseball Complex

The Complex includes five baseball fields and a

softball field. It too serves as a Community Park, occupying 17 acres. The paved parking lot was recently improved and enlarged, and nearly one and one-half acres of overflow parking was added. The Complex includes Dons Field, which is used by the Spanish Fork High School baseball team for home games and practices.



Existing Recreation Programs

The City offers a broad range of sports-related recreational programs for all age groups and skill levels. Existing Recreation Programs are described briefly here, more information can be found in the *Spanish Fork Parks and Recreation 2007 Annual Report* (January 2008)

Swimming

For the past five years, swimming classes have filled almost immediately leaving a demand for more that cannot be accommodated in the current facility. Classes include private, semi-private, and group swim lessons, diving, parent and me classes, and water aerobics. Between swimming lessons, classes for boy scouts seeking their swimming and life saving badges are offered. In 2007, 1,598 individuals participated in classes at the Water Park of which 4.68% were non-residents.

The Spanish Fork Parks and Recreation Swim Team trains at the Water Park and competes with other Utah County swim teams. The Team included 195 swimmers in 2007, which is the highest number of participants in history.

Baseball and Softball Programs

Programs are offered for boys and girls beginning at age 4 and continuing through high school grade 12. In 2007, 2,525 children and youth participated in these programs, which have growth steadily over the years. The City also manages the Grand Slam Batting Cages which it leases from private owners and operates at a small profit.

Several special events related to baseball and softball are sponsored by the city, including Boys Pizza Factory Baseball, Girl's Big Slam Softball Tournament, Men's Summer Baseball Tournament, and Individual Adult Softball Tournaments. All of these events attract people from outside of the City who contribute to the local economy. Ball fields are also rented to organizations and tournaments – an additional source of revenue to the City of Spanish Fork.

Start Smart Baseball accommodates children 4-5 years of age and develops the skills needed for organized T-Ball teams. It is a parent-child participatory program intended to

be non-threatening and instructional. Participation in the program expanded in 2007 to include 128 boys and girls.

Girls and Boys T-Ball, Coach Pitch and Machine Pitch takes children from kindergarten through second grade. T-Ball accommodates kindergarten children and some first grade children. In 2006, the program included 18 boys' teams and 10 girls' teams. Children then move into Coach Pitch for girls and Machine Pitch for boys, where they start hitting from a pitched ball rather than a stationary ball. 2007 included 30 boys' teams and 16 girls' teams.

Boys Baseball takes boys through the Mustang League (3rd and 4th grade), Pinto League (5th and 6th grade), and Pony League (7th and 8th grade). All leagues are part of the Utah Boys Baseball Association, where both the Mustang League (22 teams) and Pinto League (15 teams) in the City of Spanish Fork were the largest in Utah County.

Girls Softball is associated with the Utah Girls Softball Association and offers girls in the same age ranges an opportunity to play in the Falcon League, Filly League, and Fox League through the 9th grade. All three leagues play fast-pitch softball, and include 13, 12 and 9 teams respectively.

Colt League and Phoenix League offers high school-aged boys (Colt) and girls (Phoenix) opportunities to play league baseball and fast-pitch softball. The leagues are small as high school-aged youth have many other activities competing for their time, but those who are interested in participating have that opportunity. In 2007, Spanish Fork sponsored five Colt teams and three Phoenix teams.

Accelerated Baseball & Softball Leagues were added in 2007. Monday Night Baseball had four age divisions with 24 teams. Monday Night Softball had just one division with seven teams.

Men's Softball is one of the largest adult programs offered in the City. In 2007, 60 teams played spring/summer and 24 teams played in the fall league. Four different divisions accommodate all skill levels from competitive play to recreational play.

Women's Softball included 22 teams in 2007, with two divisions -- competitive and recreational.

Co-Ed Softball is offered in the fall and in 2007 included 39 teams divided into divisions based on skill level.

Men's Roy Hobbs Baseball was new in 2007 and included 123 participants on ten teams. Previously this program was sponsored by Provo City and they rented Spanish Fork fields. When Provo City decided to drop the administration of this program, the City of Spanish Fork picked it up.

Growth in adult programs is usually smaller than that of youth programs, however, in 2007, many adult programs showed significant growth. The combined growth in Men's, Women's and Co-ed softball was 11 teams. Adult programs include both residents and non-residents. Non-residents may play on teams but are charged slightly higher fees.

Football Programs for Children and Youth

Flag Football continues to grow in popularity and includes a 3rd and 4th Grade League and a 5th and 6th Grade League for a total of 23 teams. This is an increase of five teams over 2006. The City Parks and Recreation Department has reported a shortage of available football fields for practices and for play during the fall months. New fields available at the Sports Park will be used for these programs.

Tackle Football includes three age groups - 6th, 7th, and 8th/9th grade Leagues. The 7th and 8th/9th grade teams play in the Nebo League, which includes teams from Spanish Fork, Salem, and Payson. Participation in this program has varied in the last few years, seeming to be more affected by the parents' league teams that have been formed outside of programs provided by Spanish Fork.

Football Programs for Adults

Men's Flag Football included 108 participants on ten different teams in 2007.

Soccer Programs for Children and Youth

Little Kicker's Soccer is a beginning program for 4-5 year old boys and girls, which focus on skills development. Parents are encouraged to participate. The program grew to 80 participants in 2007.

Youth Soccer is offered for children kindergarten through 9th grade each fall. It is the second largest youth sports program offered in Spanish Fork, and in 2007 the program grew by 12 teams for a total of 134 teams or 1,490 individuals. With the new fields added to the Sports Park in 2007, the City will be able to fulfill citizen requests and begin to offer a spring season of soccer in 2008.

Soccer Programs for Adults

Men's Outdoor Soccer is growing in popularity and because Spanish Fork is the only community in Utah County to offer men's soccer, which includes a large percentage of non-resident participants. In previous years, Men's teams have played in both spring and fall leagues, however, due to sportsmanship issues in the spring, the fall season was canceled. The spring season had 10 teams with 105 participants, 73 percent of which were non-residents. Serious evaluation is underway as to whether this program will be continued.

Women's Outdoor Soccer is offered both spring and fall, and included 12 teams in spring and 14 teams in the fall.

Basketball Programs for Children and Youth

Little Hoopsters is an introductory program for girls and boys in the 1st and 2nd grades. The program began in 2002 and has grown rapidly causing additional sessions to be offered. In 2007, 24 teams (capacity) played in the fall and an additional 20 teams were accommodated with the winter program. A total of 351 participants were accommodated between the two sessions.

Youth Basketball Association (YBA) Basketball Leagues are available to boys and girls from 3rd grade through high school. Participation increases in this program every year. In 2007, there were a total of 133 teams which is an increase of eight teams over 2006. The YBA works closely with the Mountain West Conference, and local colleges and universities to promote youth basketball on the local level.

Basketball Programs for Adults

Men's Basketball included 46 teams during the 2007-2008 season, playing in seven leagues. The leagues use locally trained officials, and participate in the Nebo Tournament that is jointly sponsored by Spanish Fork, Springville, and Payson. The summer league added in 2006, doubled in size to 16 teams. Offering basketball during the summer is easily accommodated, as there are fewer demands on facilities during the summer months.

Women's Basketball includes resident and non-resident players, with 12 teams playing. Overall Men's and Women's Basketball teams increased to 16 teams and 120 participants.

Volleyball Programs for Children and Youth

Girls Volleyball Training began fall 2006 and is offered to 5th through 9th grade girls. This program was developed at citizen request, and doubled in size from 46 to 92 participants.

Volleyball Programs for Adults

Women's Volleyball League included 36 teams in 2007-08, an increase of five teams. The season culminates with city-wide tournaments and an Invitational Nebo Tournament which includes teams from other communities.

Coed Volleyball League included 16 teams in 2007, an increase of six teams. After experiencing a lapse from 1999-2004, the program is again up and running and is offered in the spring. Since it was revived and changed to spring beginning in 2005, the number of teams participating has doubled.

Wrestling Programs for Children and Youth

Junior Wrestling is available to kindergarten through 6th grade children, with two leagues – kindergarten and 1st grade, and 2nd through 5th grade. Participation has remained steady with six teams participating. The season culminates in the annual Nebo Wrestling Tournament held in Spanish Fork, which draws wrestlers from the region.

Intermediate Wrestling for 6th through 9th grade youth was not sponsored by the City in 2007-08. This program will return to the jurisdiction of Nebo School District with the formation of Jr. High Athletics under the direction of the Community School Director.

Track and Field Programs for Children and Youth

Youth Track Team includes youth from 8 to 14 years of age, and is affiliated with the Central Utah Track and Field Association (CUTFA). Affiliation with CUTFA allows participants to be involved with local track and field events, as well as county-wide competitive meets. This program has grown dramatically in the few years, growing from 24 participants to 111.

Hershey Track and Field Program includes youth from 3rd to 8th grade. Participation in 2007 averaged 969 individuals in each of three elementary track meets and over 100 boys and girls in the Intermediate Meet. This program is valued for its encouragement of physical fitness and active lifestyles for youth.

Tennis

Indoor Tennis is played on courts at the fairgrounds. Resident and non-resident memberships are sold to individuals and families for the use of the facilities. A large number of non-residents have tennis memberships; 80 percent for Individual Memberships and almost 64 percent for Family Memberships. Coed youth tennis programs are also offered, and lessons are taught on city courts during the summer.

Urban Fishing

Fishing classes are held at Canyon View Park and at Spanish Oaks Reservoir through a program designed by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) and taught locally. It is a non-sports related program that has been very successful, with classes filled to capacity instructing 150 youth between 6 and 13 years of age. The City's relationship with DWR has resulted in a large grant which was used to make improvements at Spanish Oaks Reservoir.

Special Events and Activities

Fiesta Days enjoys the most participation of any other city-sponsored activity. Eighty percent of respondents to the community-wide parks and recreation survey participate in Fiesta Days. The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of events including a

tennis tournament, softball tournament, a Fiesta Days Kickball event, an Annual Speedy Spaniard Fun Run on the 24th of July, and a Mile Run open to youth 12 years of age or younger. All of these events and activities have enjoyed increased participation and are highly valued in the community.

The Thanksgiving Dodgeball Tournament is held the Tuesday before Thanksgiving and in 2007 included 13 teams of twelve players each.

Recommended Recreation Programs and Facilities Priorities

The City of Spanish Fork is doing an excellent job with sports programs and facilities; some are among the best in the region. And with the completion of the Sports Park fields, competition for practice space and sporting events should be lessened, though there will always be demand. It is time however, for the City to focus on other opportunities in facilities and programs and provide for a broader variety of recreation opportunities.

Indoor Aquatic Center/Recreation Center

An indoor aquatic/recreation center is the most-desired facility in the community – 50 percent of survey respondents identified an indoor pool and 46 percent identified a recreation center. The City's current water park is highly used (80 percent of survey respondents use the facility); swimming lessons are full with people being turned away, and residents (many senior citizens) want options for exercise and recreation during the winter months.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA, 1987) once developed a guideline for swimming pools that recommended one swimming pool for every 20,000 residents. The City's current population is 30,404 and is anticipated to grow to nearly 70,000 in the year 2025. The City should be planning to develop an indoor pool that is associated with a recreation center within the next five years.

The recreation center could include additional facilities that provide space for non-competitive recreational activities such as special interest classes and programs, acting, dance, and art classes, meeting rooms for groups and clubs, a gathering place for youth and teens, a running track, after-school programs, exercise and weight rooms, and other facilities and programs that will provide additional options for leisure and recreation, and encourage healthy lifestyles. This will require a large expenditure of resources, some of which can come from willing residents; the rest of which may need to come from other sources and possibly other communities. Chapter 5 addresses a range of funding options and opportunities.

Walking, Jogging, and Biking Trails

This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4; however, walking, jogging, and biking are extremely popular. Given the small number of trails currently available to residents, the fact that 25 percent of survey respondents want more walking, jogging, and biking trails

is an indication of their growing popularity. More resources will need to be directed toward trails in the future.

Cultural/Performing Arts Center

Ten percent of survey respondents indicated a need for a cultural arts/performing arts center as an alternative to facilities at the High School, and to provide additional opportunities. Write-in comments mentioned an amphitheater-type facility; others assumed a building. Regardless, the feelings expressed in those comments suggest it is time for a cultural arts center or a performing arts center that is specifically designated and designed for a broad range of arts and cultural activities. A feasibility study is needed to determine space requirements, costs and funding, location criteria, potential partnerships, fundraising, and revenue projections.

Non-Competitive Programs and Activities

While sports participation in Spanish Fork is large and growing, there is a segment of the population interested in programs and activities for children and adults that are not competitive or necessarily team-related. Suggestions found in some of the write-in comments on the survey suggest classes for children and adults, classes that are held in the evenings, more activities for smaller children, rock climbing, an enlarged and improved skate park, after-school programs and programs that parents can participate in with their children, and just more options that are not team or sports related.

Goals and Policies

Goal **Provide and maintain a broad variety of recreation programs and facilities to serve the diversity of City residents.**

Policy Provide a recreation center/indoor aquatic center facility to serve residents.

Implementation Measure: Develop a program for and conduct a Recreation Center/Indoor Aquatic Center feasibility Study that looks at funding, management, operations, financial implications, and site selection.

Policy Provide neighborhood and community parks where programs can be scheduled and coordinated.

Implementation Measure: Upgrade existing Neighborhood and Community Parks according to the recommendations in Chapter 2.

Implementation Measure: Identify appropriate funding strategies for new construction, upgraded facilities, and long term maintenance of facilities.

Policy Provide multipurpose trails for the health and enjoyment of residents.

Implementation Measure: Expand the existing trail system according to the recommendations in Chapter 4.

Policy Provide non-competitive recreation activities, classes, and programs to address the needs of individuals who do not or cannot participate in team related sports activities.

Implementation Measure: Conduct focus groups and other means of determining the kinds of classes, activities, and programs desired.

Implementation Measure: Work with local interest groups and others to identify partners and locations for a diverse range of classes.

Policy: Provide additional opportunities and facilities for cultural arts and performing arts programs.

Implementation Measure: Develop a program for and conduct a Cultural Arts/Performing Arts feasibility Study that looks at funding, management, operations, financial implications, and site selection.

Chapter 4

Trails

Resident Survey Responses Regarding Trails

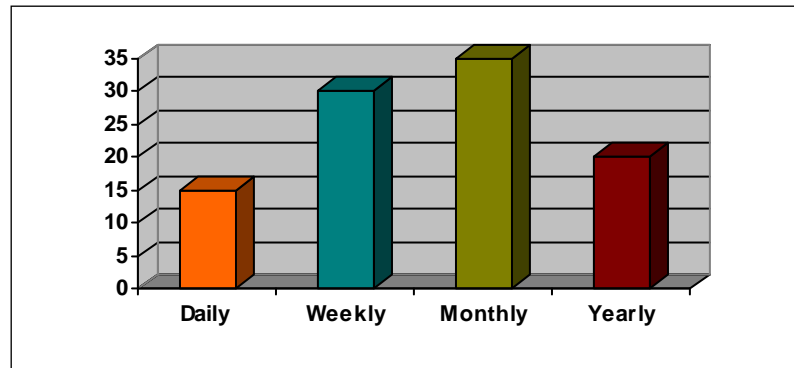
Resident Use of Trails

Nearly half of Spanish Fork citizens use the City's limited trails system (47 percent). Those who do not utilize the trail system stated that not knowing where trails are located is a major factor. Fifty-three percent of respondents do not use the trail system; in written responses, many people requested a trails map.

Of those who use trails, 30 percent do so weekly and 35 percent do so at least monthly. Fifteen percent of respondents use trails daily (at least 4 times a week), and all age groups use trails. (See Table 4A)

Respondents who use the trail system are primarily walking, jogging, or hiking (91 percent), while 46 percent bicycle along the trails for recreation. Few, use the trails to commute to work (2 percent).

Table 4A – Use of Trails



Desired Trail Improvements and Trail Types

The most recommended trail improvements are connecting gaps (41 percent), linking neighborhoods (39 percent), and increasing trail miles (37 percent); the desire for more trailheads was expressed by 29 percent of respondents, and more lighting along trails is desired by 24 percent of respondents. Business linkages for commuting and parking are of little concern.

The preferred trail types are asphalt, which are likely to be multi-purpose and natural surface trails for use by hikers and bikers. Fifty-eight percent of respondents would like to see an increased number of asphalt trails, and 45 percent would like to see an increase in natural surface hiking/biking trails. Few respondents appear to be aware of the need for additional equestrian trails; 61 percent reply that they do not know if additional equestrian trails are needed.

Importance of Facilities and Performance in Providing Facilities

Survey respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of certain facilities to them and their households and then to evaluate how the City is performing in providing those services. With most facilities, respondents felt that the relative importance of a facility and their expectations were either equal or were exceeded. However, there were areas identified where facilities are very important, but are not being provided including trails.

Trails linking the city and trails along the river bottoms were both rated 3.7 in importance on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, and walking and biking trails were rated at 4.0. However, all received a rating of 2.5 to 2.7 in performance. Despite the relatively few trail miles available to residents, these results provide clear evidence that the residents of Spanish Fork are currently using the trails, and would like to be even more avid trail users.

Existing Spanish Fork Trails

The City of Spanish Fork includes just 7.3 miles of designated trails. These include off-street multipurpose trails, on-street bike lanes, and park trails (off-street trails within parks). Table 4B identifies trail types and existing miles; trails are shown on Map 3-1.

Table 4B – Existing Spanish Fork City Trails

Trail Type	Miles
Off-street multipurpose trails	3.66
Off-street park trails	2.60
On-street bike lanes	1.03
<i>Total Existing Trails</i>	<i>7.29</i>



Upper row – River Trail

Lower row – Trail through Sports Park

The City has several trail standards that apply to off-street and on-streets facilities. For purposes of this plan, all off-street trail types have been combined and all on-street facility types have been combined. Additionally, trails that are primarily associated with parks are considered a separate category. The City’s design standards for trails are included in the Appendix.

Implementation Measure: Encourage new development patterns that provide for community services close to neighborhoods, and connect them with bicycle and pedestrian trails.

Implementation Measure: Make on-street bicycle paths and lanes a part of the City's Transportation Plan so that they are implemented as roadway improvements are made and become an integral part of the City's mobility plan.

Implementation Measure: Complete a sidewalk assessment to identify areas where sidewalks are incomplete in developed areas. Prioritize sidewalk development and repair in residential areas, and complete safe routes to schools, recreation areas, and city destinations. Where sidewalks function as a trail connection, they should meet the City's trail development standards.

Policy

Provide a safe, well maintained trail system.

Implementation Measure: Develop and post on all existing and proposed trails rules to maintain safety and reduce conflicts.

Implementation Measure: Cooperate with local bike shops and clubs and increase the amount of educational materials about trails and trail etiquette and safety at public events and festivals.

Implementation Measure: Initiate an "Adopt a Trail" program to engage users as care-takers of the trail system. Encourage participants to become involved in all aspects of trails planning, development, maintenance, and improvement.

Goal

Increase public access to trails and trails information.

Policy

Provide multiple means for residents to acquire information about trails.

Implementation Measure: Post a trails map on the city website.

Implementation Measure: Cooperate with local bike shops and clubs to provide information about city trails and trails development.

Chapter 5

Funding Options and Opportunities

Funding parks, recreation, and trails projects is the most challenging aspect of the plan. A great deal of the feasibility of funding is the willingness of taxpayers to influence the allocation of tax monies toward that kind of priority, or their willingness to pay additional taxes in one form or another. Spanish Fork residents have indicated that they are willing to pay more taxes, specifically for an indoor aquatic/recreation center, which should be very encouraging to city staff and administration charged with implementing the plan.

Aside from raising taxes or some sort of special assessment, there are a range of funding options and opportunities to be explored. Public funding is much more difficult to obtain in 2008, and many programs are either not being funded or have been substantially reduced by either Federal or State agencies. Money from foundations and other philanthropic organizations and groups is also difficult to acquire, in part because available funds are highly sought-after and very competitive. Nevertheless, there are sources and they should be explored to the fullest.

Funding Needed

In order to understand what the actual funding needs are for the City of Spanish Fork as it moves to implement the priorities established in this Master Plan, capital costs for park development, recreation facilities, and trail develops have been estimated. Table 5A identifies the costs for land and development for Parks; Table 5B identifies costs for land and development of a Recreation Center/Aquatic Center; and Table 5C identifies the costs associated with Trails Development. Total costs for each category are summarized below, and total \$63,439,800 in 2008 dollars.

Park Development Capital Costs	\$19,715,000
Recreation Center/Aquatic Center Costs	\$26,000,000
Trails Development Costs	\$12,724,800

Table 5A – Park Development Capital Costs

	Approx. Park Size	Approx. Land Cost	Approx. Devel. Cost	Approx. Total Cost	Comments
Neighborhood Park Upgrades					
East Park	3.5	\$0	\$126,000	\$126,000	Pavilion (1), picnic tables (4), play structure, walking paths (.25 mi.)
Parkside Estates	2	\$0	\$33,000	\$33,000	Walking paths (.25 mi.)
Abbie Court	3.5	\$0	\$33,000	\$33,000	Walking paths (.25 mi.)
Whispering Willows	1.5	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000	Pavilion (1)
Total Neighborhood Park Upgrades				\$222,000	
Community Park Upgrades					
Centennial*	11.5	\$0	\$130,500	\$130,500	Pavilions (1), picnic tables (10), walking paths (.5 mi)
North Park (Redeveloped)	12	\$0	\$0	\$0	Funded at \$4.2 million and in design.
Russell Swenson Baseball Complex	17	\$0	\$90,000	\$90,000	Pavilion (1), play structure
Total Community Park Upgrades				\$193,500	
Future Neighborhood and Community Parks					
Community Park A	47.5	\$0	\$7,125,000	\$7,125,000	City-owned property
Community Park B	67.5	\$0	\$10,125,000	\$10,125,000	City-owned property
Neighborhood Park a	5.3	\$0	\$795,000	\$795,000	Developer property dedication
Neighborhood Park b	2.8	\$0	\$420,000	\$420,000	Developer property dedication
Neighborhood Park c	5	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$1,250,000	New Neighborhood Park
Total New Park Development				\$19,715,000	

Table 5B – Recreation Center/Aquatic Center Capital Costs

	Approx. Park Size	Approx. Land Cost	Approx. Devel. Cost	Approx. Total Cost	Comments
Recreation Facilities					
Indoor Aquatic/Recreation Center	10	\$1,000,000	\$25,000,000	\$26,000,000	Average cost in Salt Lake County - \$20-\$25 million

Table 5C – Trail Development Costs

Trails	Approx. Miles	Approx. Land Cost	Approx. Devel. Cost	Approx. Total Cost	Comments
Off-Street Multipurpose Trails	50	\$0	\$11,880,000	\$11,880,000	Assumes easement or property will be donated.
On-Street Bike Routes	32	\$0	\$844,800	\$844,800	Assumes striping only.
Total New Trail Development				\$12,724,800	

In developing the costs shown in Tables 5A-5C, the following unit costs were used. Where costs for land are not included, it is assumed that the property is already owned by the City, or the required land will be dedicated as a condition of development approval. In the case of trails, land may be either dedicated or an easement may be provided allowing public access into perpetuity. Table 5D identifies the unit costs used in the development of the capital costs.

Table 5D – Assumptions and Unit Costs

Assumptions and Unit Costs		
Pavilion	\$30,000	each
Play Structure	\$60,000	each
Picnic Tables	\$750	each
Walking Paths	\$25	l.f.
Off-Street Multipurpose Trails	\$45	l.f.
On-Street Bike Routes	\$5	l.f.
Land costs	\$100,000	acre
Development costs	\$150,000	acre

The funding required to implement the proposed master plan improvements are daunting indeed. Decisions about what kind of funds to use for improvements depend on how long the community wishes to wait for available funds. Grants and many of the funding mechanisms identified in a following section of this Chapter are likely to be small and require several phases before projects are completed. Some of the options and opportunities are appropriate only for small projects like adding equipment to existing parks slated for upgrading or making trail improvements section by section. These kinds of funds are not appropriate for large projects like a recreation center/aquatic center, or if the community wishes to accomplish a great deal in a very short period of time. In these cases, more aggressive funding options are needed such as bonding, special taxes, special assessment areas, or perhaps a combination.

Funding Options and Opportunities for Large Projects

General Obligation Bonds

Overview of General Obligation Bonds

The lowest interest cost financing for any local government is typically through the levying of taxes through the issuance of General Obligation bonds. General Obligation bonds, commonly referred to as “G.O. bonds”, are secured by the unlimited pledge of the taxing ability of the District, sometimes called a “full faith and credit” pledge. Because G.O. bonds are secured by, and typically repaid from the property tax assessment, they are generally viewed as the lowest credit risk to bond investors. This low risk usually translates into the lowest interest rates of any municipal bond structure.

Under the Utah State Constitution, any bonded indebtedness secured by property tax levies must be approved by a majority of voters in a bond election called for that purpose. Currently, bond elections may only be held twice each year; either on the third Tuesday following the third Monday in June (the date of any primary elections) or on the November general election date.

If the recreation improvements being considered for funding through the G.O. bond have broad appeal to the public and proponents are willing to assist in the promotion efforts, G.O. bonds for recreation projects can meet with public approval but due to the fact that some constituents may not view them as essential purpose facilities for a local government or may view the government as competing with the private sector, obtaining positive voter approval may be a challenge.

Also, it should be noted that a G.O. election, if successful, would only cover the financing of capital expenditures for the facility. Either facility revenues or other City funds would still be needed to pay for the operational and maintenance expenses of the facility.

State law limitations on the amount of General Obligation indebtedness for this type of facility are quite high with the limit being 4% of a City’s taxable value. Pursuant to state law the debt must be structured to mature in forty years or less, but practically the City would not want to structure the debt to exceed the useful life of the facility.

Advantages of G.O. bonds:

- Lowest interest rates
- Lowest bond issuance costs
- If approved a new ‘revenue’ is identified to pay for the capital cost

Disadvantages of G.O. bonds:

- Timing issues; limited dates to hold required G.O. election
- Risk of a “no” vote while still incurring costs of holding a bond election

- Can only raise taxes through election process to pay for physical facilities, not ongoing or additional operation and maintenance expense. This would have to be done through a separate truth in taxation tax increase.

Sales Tax Revenue Bonds

Overview of Sales Tax Revenue Bonds

Several years ago Utah state law was amended to allow municipalities to issue debt secured by a pledge of their sales tax receipts. Sales tax revenue bonds have been well received in the markets and may be used for a wide variety of municipal capital projects, including recreation facilities. State law limits the amount of sales tax revenue bonds that may be issued by a community. Under current law, the total annual debt service on all sales tax revenue bonds issued by a City may not exceed 80 percent of the sales tax revenues received by the City in the preceding fiscal year.¹ Also, due to the facts that (i) most cities rely heavily on their sales tax revenues for their operations, and (ii) local governments have very little control over the sales tax revenue source; the financial markets will typically only allow an issuer to utilize approximately one-half of the revenues available as a pledge toward debt service as they require minimum debt service coverage covenants of two times. In the case of Spanish Fork, the upper limit on debt issuance secured by sales tax based on the practical limitations that would be imposed by the financial markets as noted above would be approximately \$23 million assuming that the City has no other sales tax debt outstanding and would be willing to issue bonds with a 25 year maturity.

Additionally, due to most City's reliance on sales tax revenues for general operations, unless the City has additional revenue sources that can be devoted to repayment of the bonds, or is anticipating a spike in sales tax revenues due to new large retail businesses locating in the City, existing sales tax revenues would have to be diverted to repay the bonds.

Utah local government sales tax revenue bonds are very well regarded in the bond market and will generally trade within five to fifteen basis points of where the City's General Obligation Bond debt would price.

Advantages of Sales Tax Revenue Bonds:

- Relatively low interest rates
- No vote required

Disadvantages of Sales Tax Revenue Bonds:

- Utilizes existing city funds with no new revenue source identified
- Somewhat higher financing costs than G.O. Bonds

¹ Spanish Fork estimated that it would receive approximately \$3.7 million in sales tax revenues in FY2007. Source: State of Utah Auditor's Office.

Special Assessment Areas

Overview of Special Assessment Areas (SAA)

Formerly known as Special Improvement Districts or (SIDs), a Special Assessment Area provides a means for a local government to designate an area as benefited by an improvement and levy an assessment to pay for the improvements. The assessment levy is then pledged to retire the debt incurred in constructing the project.

While not subject to a bond election as General Obligation bonds require, SAAs may not, as a matter of law, be created if 50 percent or more of the property owners subject to the assessment, weighted by method of assessment, within the proposed SAA protest its creation. Politically, most City Councils would find it difficult to create an SAA if even 20-30 percent of property owners oppose the SAA. If created, the City's ability to levy an assessment within the SAA provides a sound method of financing although it will be at interest rates higher than other types of debt that the City could consider issuing.

The underlying rationale of an SAA is that those who benefit from the improvements will be assessed for the costs. For a project such as a recreation facility, which by definition is intended to serve all residents of the community, and in this case possibly serve multiple communities, it would be difficult to make a case for excluding residential properties from being assessed, although commercial property would have to be evaluated with bond counsel. The ongoing annual administrative obligations related to an SAA would be formidable even though state law allows the City to assess a fee to cover such administrative costs. Special Assessment notices are mailed out by the entity creating the assessment area and are not included as part of the annual tax notice and collection process conducted by the County.

If an SAA is used, the City would have to decide on a method of assessment (i.e. per residence, per acre, by front-footage, etc.) which is fair and equitable to both residential and commercial property owners.

The ability to utilize this mechanism by cities joined together under an inter-local cooperative would need to be explored with legal counsel. There are a number of issues that would need to be considered such as ownership of the facility, and a local government can only assess property owners within its proper legal boundaries.

Advantages of SAA Bonds:

- Assessments provide a 'new' revenue source to pay for the capital expense
- No general vote required (but those assessed can challenge the creation)

Disadvantages of SAA Bonds:

- Higher Financing Costs
- Significant administration costs for a City Wide Assessment area

Note – Due to the costs of administering a City Wide SAA and given that special assessments cannot be deducted from income taxes, but property taxes can, it seems more rational to seek for GO election approval rather than form a City Wide SAA.

Lease Revenue Bonds

Overview of Lease Revenue Bonds

One financing option which, until the advent of sales tax revenue bonds, was frequently used to finance recreation facilities is a Lease Revenue Bond issued by the Municipal Building Authority of the City. This type of bond would be secured by the recreation center property and facility itself, not unlike real property serving as the security for a home mortgage. Lease revenue bonds are repaid by an annual appropriation of the lease payment by the City Council. Generally this financing method works best when used for an essential public facility such as city halls, police stations and fire stations. Interest rates on lease revenue bonds would likely be 15 to 30 basis points higher than on sales tax revenue bonds depending on the market's assessment of the "essentiality" of the facility.

Financial markets generally limit the final maturity on this type of issue to the useful life of the facility and state law limits the term of the debt to a maximum of forty years. As the City is responsible to make the lease payments, the financial markets determine the perceived willingness and ability of the City to make those payments by a thorough review of the City's General Fund monies.

As this type of bond financing does not generate any new revenue source, the City Council will still need to identify revenue sources sufficient to make the lease payments to cover the debt service.

Creative use of this option could be made with multiple local governments, each of which could finance their portion through different means – one could use sales tax, another could issue GO bonds, etc.

Advantages of Lease Revenue Bonds:

- No general vote required
- No specific revenue pledge required

Disadvantages of Lease Revenue Bonds:

- Higher financing costs than some other alternatives
- No 'new' revenue source identified to make up the use of general fund monies that will be utilized to make the debt service payment

Creation of a special Service District

Recreation Special Service District

A city, or several cities via inter-local agreement, can create a Recreation District charged with providing certain services to residents of the area covered by the District. A Special

District has the ability to levy a property tax assessment on residents of the District to pay for both the bond debt service and O&M. It should be noted that the City already has the ability to levy, subject to a bond election and/or the truth-in-taxation process, property taxes. The creation of a Recreation Special Service District serves to separate its designated functions from those of the City by creating a separate entity with its own governing body. However, an additional layer of government may not be the most cost effective.

“Creative Financings”

Non-traditional sources of funding may be used in order to minimize the amount that needs to be financed via the issuance of debt. The City’s approach should be to utilize community support for fund-raising efforts, innovative sources of grants, utilization of naming rights/donations, partnership opportunities involving other communities and the private sector, together with cost-sharing arrangements with school districts. To the extent debt must be incurred to complete the financing package, alternative bonding structures, as discussed above, should be evaluated in order to find the optimal structure based on the financial resources of the City.

Funding Options and Opportunities for Smaller Projects

Private Funds

Private and Public Partnerships

The Parks and Recreation Department or a group of communities acting cooperatively, and a private developer or other government or quasi-government agency may often cooperate on a facility that services the public, yet is also attractive to an entrepreneur or another partner. These partnerships can be effective funding opportunities for special use sports facilities like baseball complexes or soccer complexes; however, they generally are not feasible when the objective is to develop neighborhood and community parks that provide facilities such as playgrounds, informal playing fields, and other recreational opportunities that are generally available to the public free of charge. A recreation center, community center, or swimming/water park is also potentially attractive as a private or public partnership.

Private Fundraising

While not addressed as a specific strategy for individual recreation facilities, it is not uncommon for public monies to be leveraged with private donations. Private funds will most likely be attracted to high-profile facilities such as a swimming complex or sports complex, and generally require aggressive promotion and management on behalf of the park and recreation department or city administration.

Service Organization Partners

Many service organizations and corporations have funds available for park and recreation facilities. Local Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, and other service organization often combine

resources to develop park and recreation facilities. Other for-profit organizations such as Home Depot and Lowes are often willing to partner with local communities in the development of playground and other park and recreation equipment and facilities. Again, the key is a motivated individual or group who can garner the support and funding desired.

Joint Development Partnerships

Joint development opportunities may also occur between municipalities and among agencies or departments within a municipality. Cooperative relationships between cities and counties are not uncommon, nor are partnerships between cities and school districts, such as those that currently exist between Spanish Fork City and the school district. Often, small cities in a region are able to cooperate and pool resources for recreation projects. There may be other opportunities as well which should be explored whenever possible in order to maximize recreation opportunities and minimize costs. In order to make these kinds of opportunities happen, there must be on-going and constant communication between people, governments, business interests, and others.

Local Funding Sources

ZAP or RAP Taxes

Many communities have initiated **Z**oo, **A**rts, and **P**arks or **R**ecreation, **A**rts, and **P**arks taxes which have been very effective in raising funds to complete parks, recreation, trails, and arts projects. They are generally administered by a municipality or county.

Park and Recreation Impact Fees

Spanish Fork City has an impact fee program for park and recreation projects. In 2006, that impact fee program was reviewed and modified. Impact fees can be used by communities to offset the cost of public parks and facilities needed to serve future residents and new development.

Impact fees are especially useful in areas of rapid growth, such as Utah County and Spanish Fork. They help the community to maintain a specified level of service as new development puts strain on existing facilities. It assures that new development pays its fair share to maintain quality of life expectations for its residents.

Dedications

The dedication of land for parks has long been an accepted development requirement and is another valuable tool for implementing parks. The City can require the dedication of park land and/or park development. Spanish Fork has received park dedications and trails easements in the past and should continue the practice.

Special Taxes

Tax revenue collected for special purposes may be earmarked for park development. In Sandy City, for instance, the room tax applied to hotel and motel rooms in the city is earmarked for parks, recreation, and trails development.

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) can be used for park development in areas of the City that qualifies as low and moderate income areas. CDBG funds may be used to upgrade parks, purchase new park equipment, and improve accessibility (Americans With Disabilities Act). Additionally, CDBG funds may be used for projects that remove barriers to access for the elderly and for persons with severe disabilities.

User Fees

User fees may be charged for reserved rental on park pavilions and for recreation programs. Spanish Fork currently has a program for facility rentals and user fees. These fees should be evaluated to determine whether or not they are appropriate. A feasibility study may be needed to acquire the appropriate information before making decisions and changes.

Redevelopment Agency Funds

Generally, Redevelopment Agency (RDA) Funds are available for use in redevelopment areas. As new RDA areas are identified and developed, tax increment funds generated can, at the discretion of the city, be used to fund park acquisition and development.

State and Federal Programs

The availability of these funds may change annually depending on budget allocations at the state or federal level. It is important to check with local representatives and administering agencies to find out the current status of funding. Many of these programs are funded by the Federal government and administered by local State agencies.

Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR)

This program, administered by the National Park Service, provides grants for the rehabilitation and enhancement of existing parks and recreation areas in communities. The program provides matching funds and technical assistance to economically distressed urban communities for the rehabilitation of critically needed recreation facilities. It also encourages local funding and commitment to the operations and maintenance of recreation programs, sites, and facilities. Three types of programs are available. Rehabilitation Grants are used for remodeling, rebuilding, or expanding existing outdoor or indoor recreation areas. Innovation Grants are for projects that demonstrate innovative and cost-effective ways to enhance park and recreation opportunities. Planning Grants provide funds for the development of a Recovery Action Plan, which must be on file with the National Park Service in order to receive funds.

Although Spanish Fork City is not listed as an eligible jurisdiction – only Ogden and Provo are eligible in Utah, the program does allocate up to 15 percent of program funds annually to local governments that do not meet eligibility criteria. Salt Lake City for instance, which is not an eligible jurisdiction, has received \$435,000 in federal funds (not including city match) for park improvements.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

This Federal money is made available to States, and in Utah is administered by the Utah State Division of Parks and Recreation. Funds are matched with local funds for acquisition of park and recreation lands, redevelopment of older recreation facilities, trails, improvements to accessibility, and other recreation programs and facilities that provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for youth, adults, senior citizens, and persons with physical and mental disabilities.

SAFETEA-LU

In 2005, Congress passed and the President signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU establishes federal transportation policy and funding for the next five years. It continues programs, including transportation enhancements and recreation trails, and creates new ones, such as Safe Routes to Schools.

- Recreation Trails were funded at \$70 million in 2006, rising to \$85 million in 2009.
- Transportation Enhancements are funded at 3.5 billion over five years beginning in 2005. Three eligible activities include bicycle, pedestrian or shared use physical facilities; conversion of abandoned railroad corridors for trails; and safety and education programs for pedestrians and bicyclists. A local match is required to use Utah's TE funds
- Safe Routes To School is funded at \$100 million in 2006, rising to \$183 million in 2009. These funds are available for planning, design, and construction of infrastructure related to projects that improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. Funds may also be used for public education programs, bicycle safety classes, and other programs that encourage bicycling and walking to middle and elementary schools.

Federal Recreational Trails Program

The Utah Department of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Division administers these Federal funds. The funds are available for motorized and non-motorized trail development and maintenance projects, educational programs to promote trail safety, and trail related environmental protection projects. The match is 50 percent, and grants may range from \$10,000 to \$200,000. Projects are awarded in August.

Utah Trails and Pathways / Non-Motorized Trails Program

Funds are available for planning, acquisition, and development of recreational trails. The program is administered by the Board of Utah State Parks and Recreation, who awards grants at their fall meeting based on recommendations of the Recreation Trails Advisory Council and Utah State Parks and Recreation. The match is 50 percent, and grants may range from \$5,000 to \$100,000.

LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund

The fund is administered by the Utah Quality Growth Commission and provides funds each year to preserve or restore critical open or agricultural lands in Utah, and targets

lands deemed important to the community such as agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and other culturally or historically unique landscapes. Money from the fund must be used to preserve or restore agricultural lands. Applicants must provide matching funds equal to or greater than the amount of money received from the fund. Funds must be spent within one year from the date of the grant award. The size of parcels for a purchase is limited to 20 acres or less. Purchases of conservation easements or restoration projects are exempt from this restriction. Funds are available for 2007.

In-Kind and Donated Services or Funds

Several options for local initiatives are possible to further the implementation of the parks, recreation, and trails plan. These kinds of programs would require the City to implement a proactive recruiting initiative to generate interest and sponsorship, and may include:

- Adopt a park or trail, whereby a service organization or group either raises funds or constructs a given facility with in-kind services;
- Corporate sponsorships, whereby businesses or large corporations provide funding for a particular facility, similar to adopt-a-trail or adopt-a-park;
- Public trail and park facility construction programs, in which local citizens donate their time and effort to trail and park

Appendix

Survey Instrument

City Trail Standards