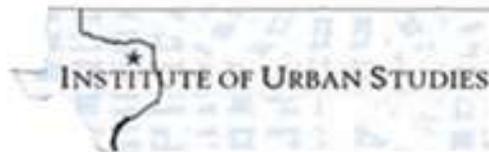




Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

“Quality for a Lifetime”



Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'



The Purpose of the PROS Plan

It is the intention of this Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master (PROS) Plan to inspire and communicate a visionary, yet achievable blueprint for the future of Saginaw. It recognizes the critical role that parks, open spaces, and trails play in creating a vibrant, thriving community in the interest of public health and economic strength. This Plan emphasizes the needs of citizens to have opportunities to walk, bike, and explore the natural world; and work, plan, and play together in public spaces to create community.

The result of these efforts is a collaboration of citizens, Parks Board, City Council, City staff and consultants to create a plan that incorporates local knowledge and institutional history for the betterment of Saginaw. It includes an inventory of assets, a demographic profile, the needs and desires of its citizens, as well as an analysis of deficiencies, constraints, and opportunity's. From this, a vision and a set of goals and recommendations were established, along with a list of potential funding sources to implement this Plan.

"The proper hierarchy of planning is life, space, and buildings, not buildings, space, life." - Jan Gehl 1987

Vision for the PROS Plan

The vision for the City of Saginaw's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space's is "Quality for a Lifetime." To achieve that vision, the following goals and strategies were developed.

Overarching Strategies and Goals

There are four overarching strategies that the Plan addresses.

Strategies for Success - City Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Policy and Operations Procedures.

Goals:

- Community Partnering
- Environmental Leadership
- Park Land Dedication
- Riparian Corridor Protection
- Establish regional Identity
- Connectivity and Hike and Bike Trails
- Operations and Maintenance

Strategies for Growth - Land Acquisition – Acquire land for park expansion, future parks, new recreation facilities, and open space including habitat protection where possible.

Goals:

- Park Land Acquisition
- Gateways and City Image
- Dog Park
- Spraygrounds
- Skatepark
- Indoor Pool and Exercise Rooms
- Fishing Ponds
- Community Gardens
- Community Events
- Parking
- Project Dream Play

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'

Strategies for Connectivity – Implement the system of non-vehicular trail recommendations.

Goals:

- Connect parks, schools, neighborhoods, and business centers
- Develop streetscapes, lane markings, signage, benches and bike racks
- Connect to other cities' trail systems
- Start a bike-share program

Strategies for Park, Recreation, and Open Space

Upgrades and Conceptual Designs– Develop parks through a prioritization of needs and implement key improvements to existing individual parks, providing needed recreational facilities for a growing population and outreach to other communities and organizations.

Goals:

- Minor upgrades to existing parks
- Major Redevelopment of existing parks
- New Investments:
 - Skatepark
 - Indoor Pool
 - Gateway Beautification

Implementation and Overall Parks and Recreation Priorities:

The implementation section of the Plan contains prioritization suggestions and timelines. Implementation of specific items will vary depending on economic conditions, and opportunities for funding and organization of citizens. The following is the suggested order of investment for the PROS Plan in Saginaw.

Priorities:

- Park Land Acquisition
- Park Lighting, Security, and Restroom and Accessibility
- Hike and Bike Trails
- More Trees
- Dog Park
- Splash Parks
- Parking
- Lighted Practice/Play Fields
- More Recreational Facilities and an Indoor Swimming Pool
- Community Programming

Conclusion

Saginaw's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan is designed to be informative yet flexible enough to help the City make important decisions for its future. The conceptual plans are meant to inspire, as is the information in this document. Through continued collaboration and energy of its citizens, Saginaw can achieve its vision of having "Quality of a Lifetime."

Acknowledgments

City Council

Mayor –	Gary Brinkley
Mayor Pro Tem-	David Flory
Council Member -	Ed Larson
Council Member -	Todd Flippo
Council Member -	Delbert Sedberry
Council Member -	Chris Barngrover
Council Member -	Jackie D. Nethery

Recreation and Parks Board

Chairman -	Charles Beasley
Vice Chairman -	Charles Tucker
Member -	Danny Delgado
Member -	Paul Worsham
Member -	Brack St Clair
Member -	Ronda Nyberg
Member -	Deanna Bird
Alternate Member -	Randall Martin
Alternate Member -	Ronald Rorie, Jr.

City Staff

City Manager -	Nan Stanford
Director of Public Works/ Economic Development -	Mark White
Operations Superintendent -	Randy Newsom
Director of Recreation and Community Services -	Keith Rinehart
Streets and Parks Manager	Rick Johnson
Public Works Admin	Mary Ragle

Institute of Urban Studies

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Jason Aprill –	Public Meeting Facilitator
Kiranmayi Raparthi –	Public Meeting Facilitator

“The more successfully a city mingles everyday diversity of uses and users in its everyday streets, the more successfully, casually (and economically) its people thereby enliven and support well-located parks that can thus give back grace and delight to their neighborhoods instead of vacuity.”

Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities

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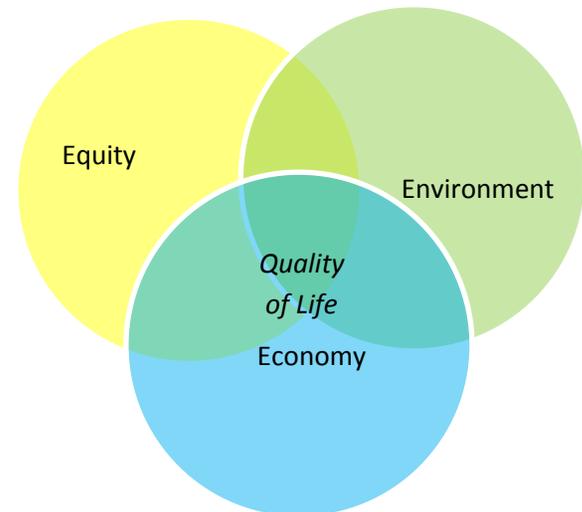
1.1 Why Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Planning

"Quality for a Lifetime." This is the statement found in the City of Saginaw's Economic Development Plan. Found in this document is an emphasis on the value that the community places on its environmental advantage, as well as its parks, recreation, and community centers, recognizing that it is these things working in conjunction with the economy that create the stated vision of enduring quality. This belief is supported by current research in urban design and planning. The diagram (Fig 1:1) at the right is used throughout the planning industry to illustrate this relationship.

"The proper hierarchy of planning is life, space, and buildings, not buildings, space, life." - Jan Gehl 1987

The American Planning Association (APA) states that the purpose of open space planning is to protect natural resources; provide places for recreation and neighborhood gathering; support economic development opportunities; promote public health; and provide cultural and civic infrastructure. Parks and open spaces are defined as any land that is free of residential, institutional, commercial, or industrial use. The quality of life in a community relies on the careful balance between equity, environment, and economy.

More than any other single item, the overarching aesthetic value and recreational options of a City's parks, recreation and open spaces (PROS) contribute to the City's enduring brand and promotes its image to visitors and residents alike. As well as being a place to gather as family and community, and to exercise and relax, parks, recreation and open spaces are a source of pride and identity to its citizens as they express the City's roots and wings.



Three-E Venn Diagram

1.2 Study Partnership

In recognition of the importance of the PROS Plan, the City of Saginaw has partnered with the Institute of Urban Studies (the Institute) to complete the Plan. The Institute is an urban research and practical application department within the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) that consists of master's and PhD students with diverse backgrounds within the School of Urban Studies.

The City of Saginaw is the primary responsible governmental body for providing and ensuring the quality of parks, recreation, and open space. Other parties involved in providing these components are Saginaw Independent School District, various homeowner associations, Tarrant County, and the State of Texas through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The study for the plan involved researching the City and regional ecological, economic, and demographic aspects for Saginaw. It also included interviews and surveys of the residents and other stakeholders within the City. The design of this process aims to deliver a final product that achieves the goals of the citizens and considers the broader reach and ability of the city and region.

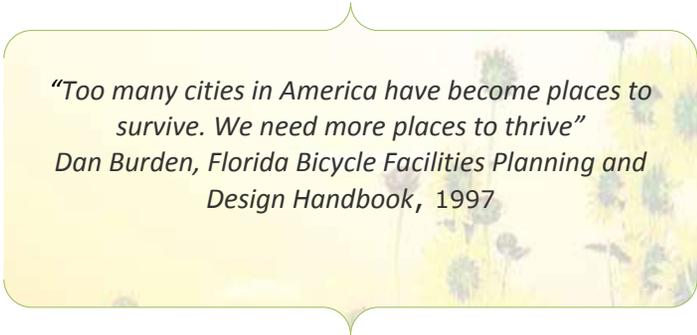
1.3 The Purpose of the PROS Plan

The purpose of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan for the City of Saginaw is to provide visionary guidance and strategic management for future parks and recreation development. The plan will address present conditions, community needs and wishes, and future parks

recreation and open space plans for the next 10 to 20 years. The Vision 2025 Parks Plan is a tool to:

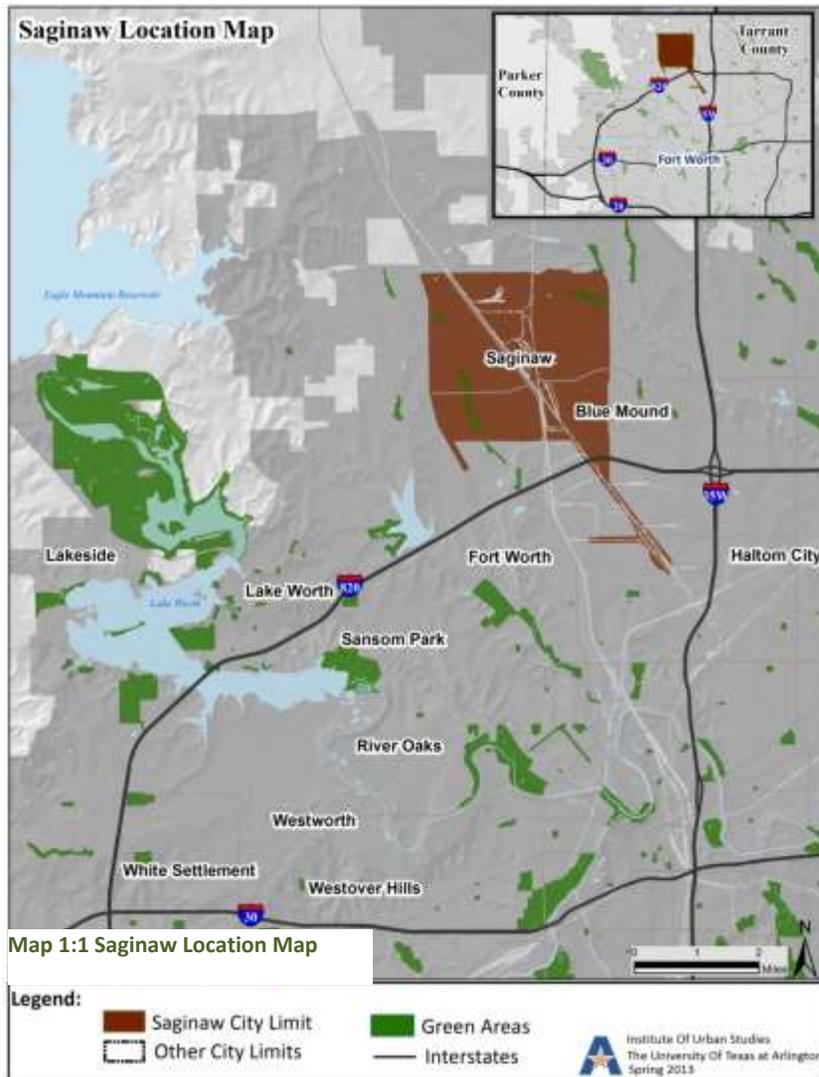
- Provide the framework for consistent planning and development
- Provide detailed research and facts concerning the community and the roles of parks and recreation
- Establish fact-based priorities and direction, which point out opportunities for park development as a catalyst to other opportunities
- Provide information for needed land acquisition
- Prioritize key recommendations
- Develop a plan pursuant to requirements of the Texas and National Recreation and Parks Administrations.

This document outlines the methods, results, and recommendations of the Master Plan intended to be used as a guide for the City of Saginaw in developing its parks and recreation program.



"Too many cities in America have become places to survive. We need more places to thrive"
Dan Burden, *Florida Bicycle Facilities Planning and Design Handbook*, 1997

1.4 The Study Area



The City of Saginaw is located adjacent to the City of Fort Worth, north of NE Loop 820 and west of Interstate 35.

1.5 The PROS Plan Components

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision Plan (PROS) for the City of Saginaw follows the guidelines established for the Texas Parks and Wildlife. In addition to being a working document for planning purposes, this PROS Plan includes all components to meet the requirements of a Park Master Plan as established by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department grant program (see box on following page). This plan also respects the guidelines established through the Trust for Public Land, as well as the National Recreation and Parks Association. These resources provide guidance and some types of grants and funding opportunities to communities.



City of Saginaw Depot; Office of Saginaw Area Chamber of Commerce

Parks Master Plan Components as required by TPWD

1. Introduction
2. Goals and Objectives
3. Plan Development Process
4. Area and Facility Concepts and Standards
5. Inventory of Areas and Facilities
6. Needs Assessment and Identification
7. Plan Implementation and Prioritization of Needs
8. Supporting Illustrations, Maps, Surveys, Etc.

1.6 The PROS Plan Timeframe

The timeframe for the Saginaw PROS Plan is 2013-2025. It is recommended that the PROS Plan be updated every 10 years, but it may require minor adjustments before that time given the rapid growth and change in the City of Saginaw and surrounding communities. Keeping a long-range vision with incremental public input and adjustments helps ensure the PROS Plan is still a viable component of the overall planning intentions of the City.

1.7 The PROS Plan Process

The plan was prepared in a two-phase process. Phase 1 involved base map preparation, park inventory, and population analysis, standards, analysis, and community input process. Phase 2 involved prioritizing needs, making

recommendations, presentation to the City, and the final report.

1.7.1 Introduction

Parks and recreation planning is an ongoing process, but periodically a more formalized process of creating a master plan for the parks system is required. In general, the Park Master Plan should be formally updated every 10 years, or sooner, if major changes occur in or around the City. The City of Saginaw's Parks Master Plan was last updated in 1996, and many changes have occurred since that time that warrant reassessing the parks and recreation for Saginaw.

To create a parks and recreation master plan, it is important to evaluate the past, analyze the present, and make informed predictions about the future. While part of the process relies on statistical, economic, and census data, the real heart and soul of the community lies in its people.

The following process was followed to ensure a high quality of information. Details are recorded in the appendix.



1.7.2 Phase I

- **Initial team meeting:** Discussed the scope and expectations of the Parks Master Plan with the Saginaw Public Works department.
- **Base map preparation:** The team prepared computer generated base maps to illustrate information such as topography, streets, buildings, trails, park sites, school sites, municipal facilities, and land uses.
- **Population and Community Analysis:** Data gathering and analysis to determine the population characteristics of the community. This includes factors of age, income, gender, education, ethnicity, and projected population growth and changes. Communities adjacent to Saginaw were also looked at to assess the impact of those communities on Saginaw's parks and recreation.
- **Physical inventory:** The team toured the parks and recreation facilities with City staff, and then prepared an inventory based on information provided by the staff and the physical inspection by the team. All parks facilities owned by the City, parks within homeowner associations, and public school grounds were looked at, as well as access points for adjacent cities trails and parks.
- **Standards analysis:** The team developed park classifications and acreage guidelines based on National Parks and Recreation standards. The existing facilities were compared against standards to determine gaps, overages, and shortfalls of services and access.
- **Stakeholder group meetings/discussions:** The team carried out a series of focused interviews with groups identified by the City of Saginaw as having interest in the

parks and recreation plan. The questions focused on specific ideas and impressions of the park system and perceived needs and wishes. Also discussed were assets and obstacles that may not be readily identifiable through other means

- **Public Input Survey:** The team developed a survey to gather as many responses concerning parks and recreation from the community as possible. This survey was administered through the City's web page and advertised throughout the City and ran for two weeks.
- **Public input/ visioning:** The team developed a series of activities and facilitated a public input meeting organized by the City of Saginaw. This one evening event focused on face-to-face information gathering to address the assets, visions, and community interactions with the parks and recreation system.

1.7.3 Phase 2

- **Development of preliminary master plan:** The team compiled the information into a report to include findings and conceptual drawings for the City of Saginaw's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- **Prioritization of Needs/Recommendations:** The team ranked the priorities for future parks facilities using input from the public survey and stakeholder input. Recommendations were then developed to guide the actions toward future parks and recreation process.
- **Review with City of Saginaw:** The team developed and presented the preliminary plan to the City and solicited feedback.

- **Revision, Implementation, and final report:** Revisions were made by the team based on the City feedback and the final Plan was produced. The final Plan includes the framework and methods for public officials to use in the implementation of the Plan. Policies, ordinances, and sources of funding are recommended to move from the planning to the action stage.

1.8 Chapters

The PROS Plan is as much a journey as a destination. The synthesis of the analysis from the above information culminates into a final report that reflects that journey. The report is broken down into four basic sections, and includes an introduction, a conclusion, an appendix, and a list of resources.

The first section is “The Journey to the Current Point,” and includes information and a brief analysis of the City image through the environmental and historical growth and development of Saginaw. Also included is information and assessment of the current demographics of Saginaw, as well as predictions about future growth areas. This is chapter two in the PROS Plan.

The second section is “The Current Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Conditions,” and includes chapter three. Chapter three is a physical inventory of the current parks, recreation, and open spaces of the City.

The third major section of the PROS Plan is “Public Expressions of the Journey.” This is chapter four, and reviews the public input process and findings for the interviews and

survey. This chapter sets the stage for future recommendations.

The final section, section four, is “Strategies for the Journey Forward.” This section includes chapter five on recommendations, and chapter six on the implementation plan. For more extensive and detailed information, we have included a large appendix and information resources page.



Saginaw Recreation Center



2. Image, Background, and Demographics

'Quality for a Lifetime'

2.1 Introduction

The citizens of Saginaw value the rural image portrayed by their City. The opportunities for enjoyment of the parks, recreation, and open spaces, which contribute enormously to this image, are shaped by many things. The physical characteristics of the City, its history, demographics, as well as the expectations and economics of the community can provide opportunities to enhance the image when balanced with the constraints these things can impose.

Being sensitive to the natural and cultural history can help build a PROS system that is ecologically sound and economically sustainable, giving the citizens places of enduring beauty and functionality. The PROS journey creates a sense of place in the community, and understanding the environmental, historical, and demographic components helps to realize the greater City image.

2.2 Environmental Background

Saginaw lies within the Lower West Fork Trinity Sub-basin in the Big Fossil Creek Watershed, which empties into the nearby Trinity River. Three main riparian corridors run through Saginaw, of which one is in a concrete channel with development on both sides.

The City exists in the Fort Worth Prairie Ecological sub-region of North Central Texas. The native terrain is characterized by mostly treeless vegetation on gently sloping flat surface with thin clay soil over hard layers of resistant limestone.



Natural Prairie, City of Saginaw

Only remnants of the tall native grass prairie remains, and urban sprawl and development have had long-lasting consequences for wildlife and habitat.



Natural Riparian Corridor, City of Saginaw

2.3 Historic Background

The City was founded before the Civil War in 1833 as an agricultural community named Dido and, by the mid 1800's, the famous Chisholm Trail passed through the region. A marker and plaque was placed on the site of the trail in 2009.



Figure 2.3 Historic Chisholm Trail Markers

In the 1880's the City of Saginaw prospered as a railroad transportation hub with three railroads running through town - Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad, and the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway -in service to the grain storage and milling industry.



Historic Steam Train at Saginaw Depot

The town was renamed in 1882 by Jarvis J. Green, a landowner who had lived on Saginaw Street in Pontiac, Michigan. Saginaw comes from the Ojibwe language and means 'to flow out.' In 1888 the post office was opened, and as of the 1896-1897 school year 30 students attended school.



Saginaw Historic Grain Elevators

By 1908 the City of Saginaw contained five homes, a school, a church, a lumberyard and a train depot, which served all three railroads. The City remains home to the largest grain storage facility in the world.

In 1936 the population of Saginaw was 103, and reportedly had 11 businesses. The Burrus Mill and Elevator Company opened in Saginaw, building a grain elevator that was the largest in Texas and the second largest in the nation.

With 561 residents and 25 businesses, the City of Saginaw incorporated in the 1950's, becoming a residential suburb of

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'

Fort Worth. By late 1960 the City had 1,200 people, doubling in size by late 1970. By 1990 the City had a population of 8,551, increasing to 12,374 by 2000 (Brian Hart, "SAGINAW, TX," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hfs01>), accessed July 14, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.)

While the City has retained its small, rural character, it is currently experiencing rapid growth due to its convenient proximity north of Fort Worth, Texas and south of Alliance Airport, as well as its excellent schools and family orientation. When residents are asked to describe Saginaw, they invariably state the quiet small-town feel, good school system, and strong community connection.



Gazebo in Willow Creek Park: Saginaw



1999 Aerial Source: NCTCOG



2011 Aerial Source: NCTCOG

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'

2.4 Demographics

2.4.1 Population Profile

Understanding the demographics and socioeconomics of a city is a key aspect in creating a master parks plan. The design of services is based in part on the activities and characteristics of its current and future residents. Good planning requires the analysis of the size and location of parks, schools, and public or private services and their relation to the population density and condition. To aid in forecasting parks and recreation needs for the City of Saginaw, this section provides an analysis of trends and projections using the 2010 US Census Data.

2.4.2 Population Projections

As of 2010, the population of Saginaw was approximately 19,806. Two scenarios are presented in Table 2:1. According to the Texas Water Development Board, the projected 2020 population is to be between 22,000 and 27,000 or 11%-36%.

Population projections based on Saginaw's growth over the past 10 years shows a much larger population. Additionally, the communities around Saginaw are growing. With this in mind, it is important to focus on green connections and open park and recreation space, as well as park land acquisition. Building a strong foundation now will ensure the quality and connectivity that the community desires, as seen in the section on public input in this document.

The map on the following page shows the current population density of Saginaw. The map in Chapter 5 of this document illustrates the changes in population density predicted from

2005 to 2035. As can be seen, the population will grow in and around Saginaw.

Population Projection		
Year	Texas Water Development	Based on 2000-2010 Linear Growth
2000	12,374	12,374
2010	19,806	19,806
2020	22,803	27,395
2030	25,711	34,666
2040	27,829	42,096

Population Projection

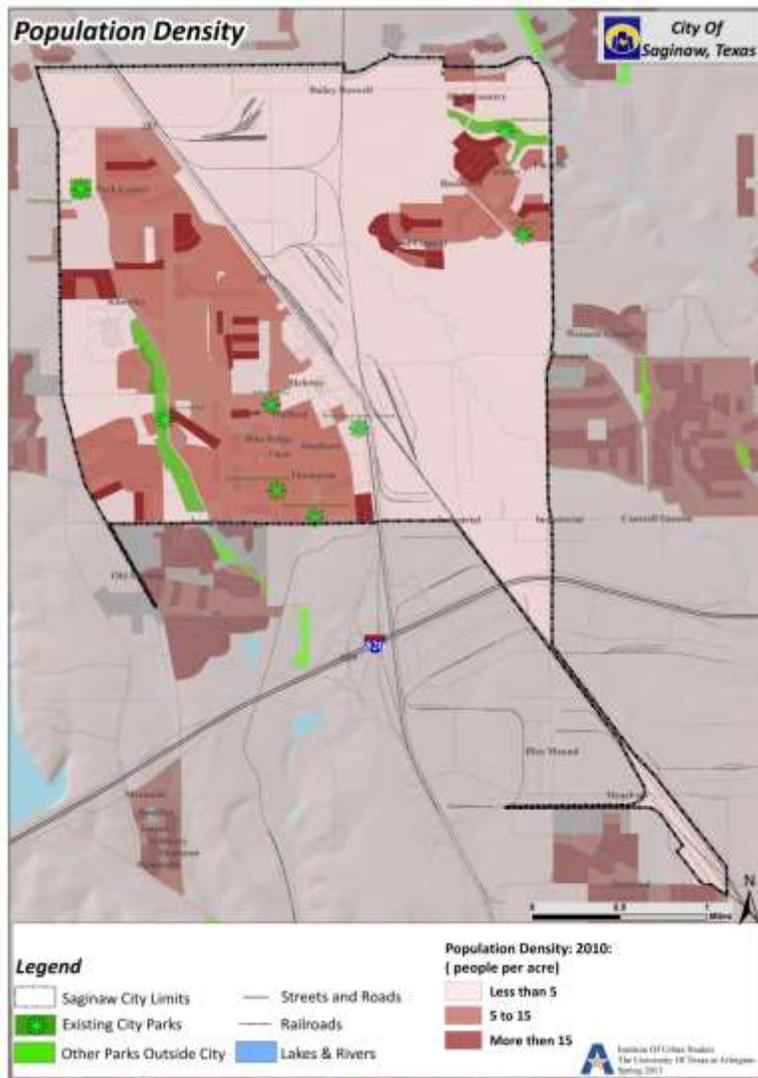
Source: Texas Water Development Board and In-house linear progression analysis



Example of open space connection

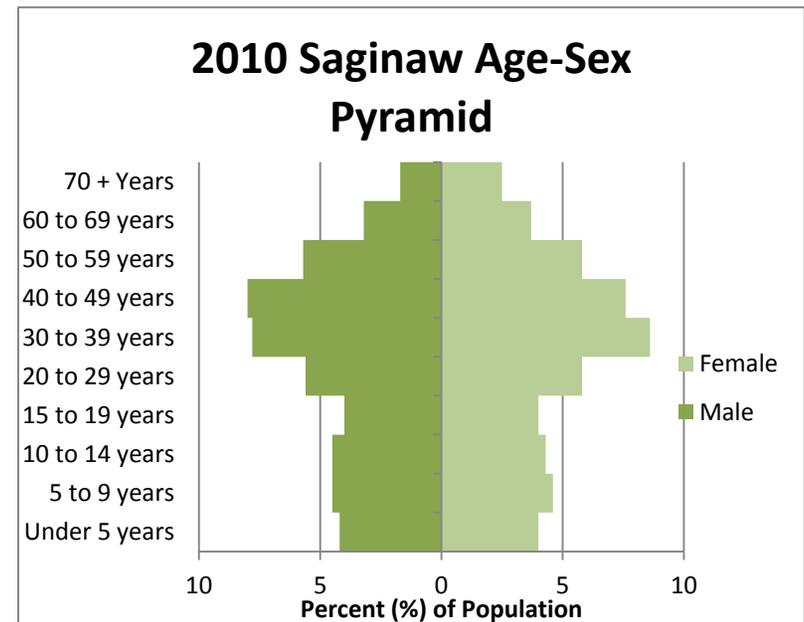
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2.4.3 Age and Gender

In 2010, the age-sex pyramid for the City of Saginaw illustrates that 8.2% of the population is under the age of five, 18% are grade and middle school aged and 7.8% high school age. It also illustrates the smaller population of college-age residence and large number of 30-50 year olds. This would indicate that the population of families with children is growing and would be the chief potential users of parks and recreation.



Age-Sex Pyramid

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000, 2010

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'

2.4.5 Household Profile

The total number of housing units in Saginaw has increased significantly since the year 2000. In 2000, the City had 4,339 housing units; in 2010, the City had 6,680 housing units, an increase of 2,341 housing units.

The vacancy rate in the City of Saginaw has decreased significantly since the year 2000. Additionally, the occupied housing rate has risen significantly. Less than 1% of all housing units in Saginaw are currently vacant, therefore the demand for new housing will rise with population growth.

	2000	2010
Total Housing Units	4,339	6,680
Occupied Housing Units	97.5%	99.2%
Vacant Housing Units	2.5%	0.8%

Housing Vacancy Rate

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000, 2010



Housing Type: Saginaw



Housing Type: Saginaw



Multi-Family Housing Type: Saginaw

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'



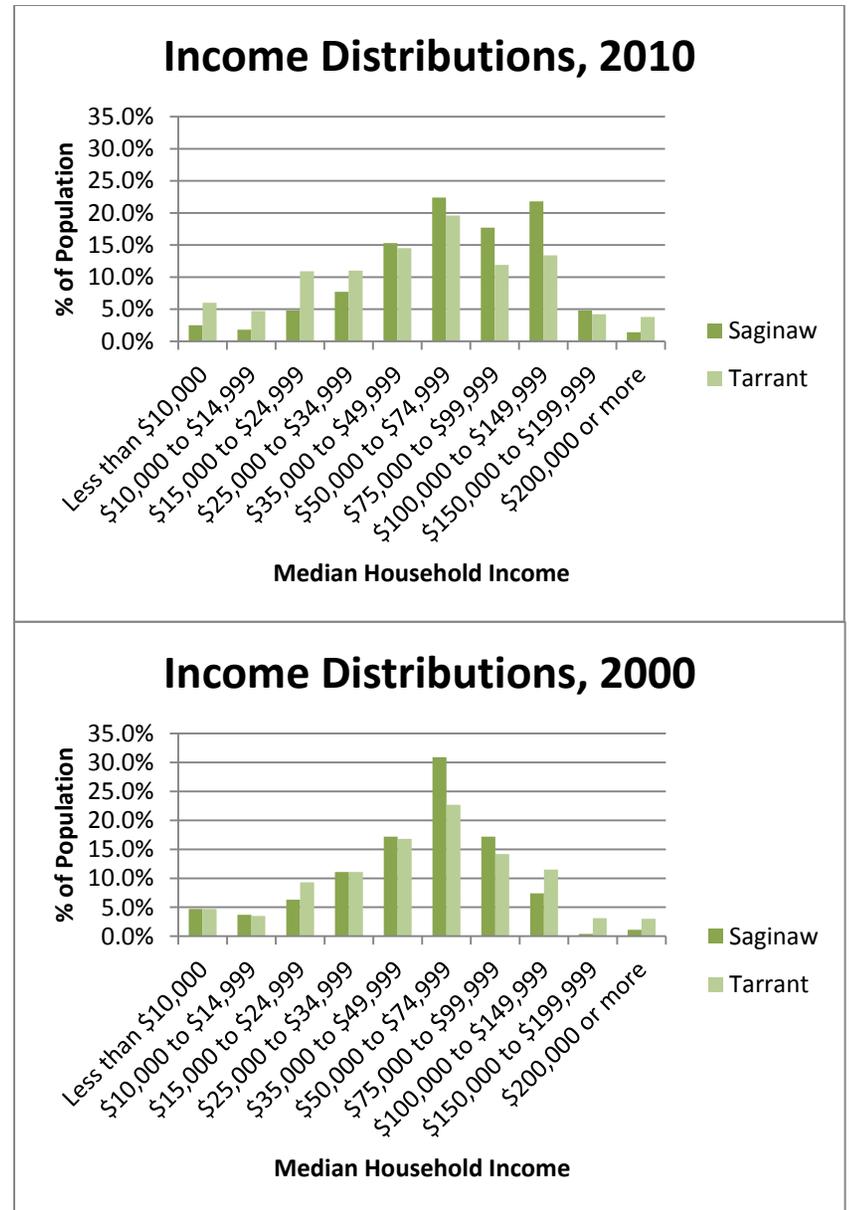
Riparian Corridor: Saginaw

2.4.6 Household Income

The average household income in the City of Saginaw has increased substantially in the past decade. In 2000, the average household income in Saginaw was \$55,549. In 2010, the average household income in Saginaw was \$70,764. This growth income is concentrated to the far north and west of the City where new housing has been established.

In general, Tarrant County as a whole experiences a higher percentage difference between low-income residents and high-income residence. Saginaw's differences are smaller, with residents earning from \$35,000 and \$149,999 per year.

The income data suggests that Saginaw is becoming a more affluent community. As the income in the City of Saginaw increases, it can be assumed that residents will demand greater natural and recreational amenities, such as parks with increasing levels of service and quality. This can be achieved through community parks, outdoor pavilions, and a variety of other recreation opportunities.



Household Income Comparison

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000, 2010

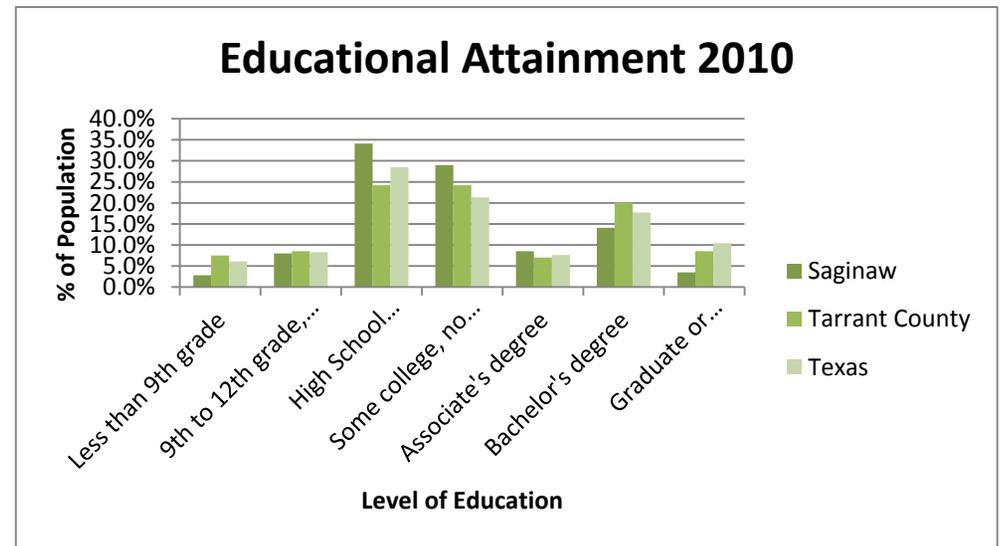
Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'

2.4.7 Educational Attainment

When compared to Tarrant County or the State of Texas, the City of Saginaw has a higher level of residents who have graduated high school or have earned an associate's degree. Saginaw is currently below the Tarrant County and State of Texas averages for attaining a bachelor's or master's degree. If the educational attainment level continues to rise, residents may have more time to spend at community parks.

It should be noted from previous sections that the manufacturing industry segment was a large source of jobs in both 2000 and 2010 for the City of Saginaw.



2.5 Summary

In summary, the City of Saginaw is a fast-growing suburban community in terms of both population and income. This growth brings with it changes in demographics and demands for parks, recreation and open space facilities and services. The community parks in Saginaw should be designed to service the expanding population that is interested in aging in place. Parks in Saginaw should be of high quality, safe, well maintained, and conveniently placed for residents of all ages, abilities, and incomes to enjoy over a lifetime.

	Educational Attainment (2010)					
	Saginaw		Tarrant		Texas	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than 9th grade	343	2.8%	85,548	7.5	12,452,952	6.10%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	966	8.0%	96,361	8.50%	17,010,063	8.30%
High School graduate	4,137	34.1%	274,677	24.20%	58,225,602	28.50%
Some college, no degree	3,521	29.0%	274,981	24.20%	43,469,168	21.30%
Associate's degree	1,034	8.5%	78,994	7.00%	15,553,106	7.60%
Bachelor's degree	1,717	14.1%	227,602	20.10%	36,244,474	17.70%
Graduate or professional degree	421	3.5%	96,901	8.50%	21,333,568	10.40%

Education Attainment

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000, 2010



3. Existing Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces

'Quality for a Lifetime'

3.1 Introduction

A key part of the PROS planning process is to understand the condition, availability, and accessibility of existing areas and facilities. During Phase 1 of the Master Plan process, a complete inventory of all the existing parks and recreation facilities within the City of Saginaw was compiled. The Institute of Urban Studies team toured all the park sites, including some of the schools and all the parks owned by homeowner associations.

The City provided information on acreage and facility inventories for each park, as well as an idea of recreation associations and organizations throughout the City. Other facilities examined throughout the study included school outdoor facilities, homeowner association parks, and sports organizations. In order to fulfill the vision of "Quality for a Lifetime," it is important to assess the existing quality.



Highland Station Park, Saginaw

Inventory Considerations

- **Classification:** What is the purpose of each park? Who does it serve? How many people can it serve?
- **Location:** Is the park close enough to the population it is intended to serve, and accessible for all abilities?
- **Service Area:** What are the physical barriers and limitations of the area?
- **Size of the Park:** Is it adequate for its purpose?
- **Amenities:** What does the park contain, and is it appropriate for the park type?
- **Layout:** Is the arrangement of facilities appropriate?
- **Condition:** What is the general condition of parks and their equipment?
- **Natural Areas/Sustainable Measures:** Are natural areas maintained in a fashion conducive to support and reinforce the naturalness, (low water, native plants, and no-mow)?
- **Special Considerations:** Does the park provide facilities for all abilities (ADA)?

3.2 Park Classification

National and state guidelines outline three broad types of parks, differentiated by size, means of access, and features. These types include local, close to home spaces; unique spaces which reflect cultural, natural, or other features; and regional space which typically serves a number of surrounding communities. Each typology serves a unique function and contributes to the overall quality of the PROS. The following gives a description of the park types and which of Saginaw's public parks falls under the category.

3.2.1 Pocket/Mini Parks

Pocket parks are typically 1/8 – 1 acre and do not usually provide parking. They are typically tucked between existing houses or on the corners of residential neighborhoods. Accessed by pedestrian and bicycle, these parks usually provide benches, fountains, landscaping, play equipment and local features.

The City of Saginaw currently has three parks classified as Pocket or Mini Parks: *Brian Schwengler Memorial Park*, *Opal Jo Jennings Memorial Park*, and *Sagewood Park*.

3.2.2 Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks provide the foundation for day-to-day recreation. Ideally, they provide amenities and recreation space for the entire family and are within easy walking or cycling distance for the people they serve.

The neighborhood park typically serves one large or several smaller neighborhoods. Ideally, the park should be between 5 to 10 acres and serve 3,000 to 4,000 residents.

These parks should be accessible to residents who live in a one-quarter mile of the park. They are typically adjacent to elementary

schools as to share acquisition and development costs with the school district. This allows for joint use and shared facilities, building partnerships between the school and community it serves and increasing the quality of life for everyone.

While it is preferred that residents use non-vehicular means to access these parks, often parking is required. Parking for these parks should be based on park size and use, but should have a minimum of seven standard spaces and two additional handicapped spaces. This is based on the recommended 5 spaces for the first 3 acres, and one space for each additional acre.

William Houston Park is currently the only park classified as a neighborhood park in the City of Saginaw.

3.2.3 Community Parks

Community parks are larger parks, usually between 16 to 99 acres, that serve a larger portion of the City and are usually reached by automobile. Those that live close typically use it as a neighborhood park. A variety of recreational facilities are provided, including lighted playing fields, hike/bike trails and sufficient parking to accommodate large community events, sport spectators, and other park users.

These parks should be located near a major thoroughfare for easy access and be buffered from adjacent residential areas due to noise and bright lights. Parking should be provided at the rate of 5 spaces per active programmed acre, plus additional parking for facilities such as pools or ball fields.

Currently, the 65 acre *Willow Creek Park* is the only park in the City of Saginaw classified as a community park, but Highland Station serves as both a community and a linear park.

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

‘Quality for a Lifetime’

3.2.4 Linear Parks

Linear parks are open park areas that generally follow some natural or man-made feature that is linear in nature, such as creeks, abandoned railroad rights-of-way or power or utility corridor easements.

These parks, when properly developed, can serve as vital non-vehicular connections to parks, shopping, other neighborhoods, and larger multi-modal transportation systems.

Saginaw has begun a system of trails throughout the City using greenbelts between neighborhoods and a network of sidewalks. Currently, *Highland Station Park* is a linear park. A portion of this park is adjacent to a neighborhood and contains a small play set. It also has tennis and basketball courts, making it both a linear park and a neighborhood park. Its size, over 26 acres, also classifies it as a community park.

3.2.5 Special Purpose Parks

Special purpose parks can be used to develop a city’s image, memorialize a group or individual, or provide other uses outside the other park designations. These parks can range from very small to very large and include any number of amenities.

Special purpose parks in the City of Saginaw include the *Kiwanis Veteran’s Memorial Park* and the *Meditation Park* behind the new library and City Hall.

3.2.6 Home Owner Association Parks

Home Owners Associations (HOA’s) are encouraged to develop and maintain pocket parks, which often give favorable image to the neighborhood and save the City maintenance expenses. It

allows residents to maintain control of the amenities and quality of their parks.

Home Owner Association parks are not included in the PROS Plan, as they are not available for public use and are typically smaller than the NRPS’s recommended 5-10 acres. They are, however, an important element that makes up the City’s image and the residents’ sense of place.

Homeowners Associations:	Contact
Courts of Willow Creek H.O.A	www.courtsofwillowcreekhoa.com
The Commons at Willow Creek H.O.A.	www.commonsatwillowcreek.com
Creekwood H.O.A.	www.creekwoodhoa.com
Heather Ridge Estates H.O.A.	www.heatherridgehoa.org
Spring Creek H.O.A.	www.scstx.com
Willow Vista Estates H.O.A.	www.willowvisa.com

Home Owners Associations, Saginaw

The City of Saginaw currently has six Home Owner Association parks. With more development coming into the area, these parks will continue to provide a vital day-to-day amenity for the neighborhood it serves.

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'

3.3 Park, Recreation and Open Space Inventory

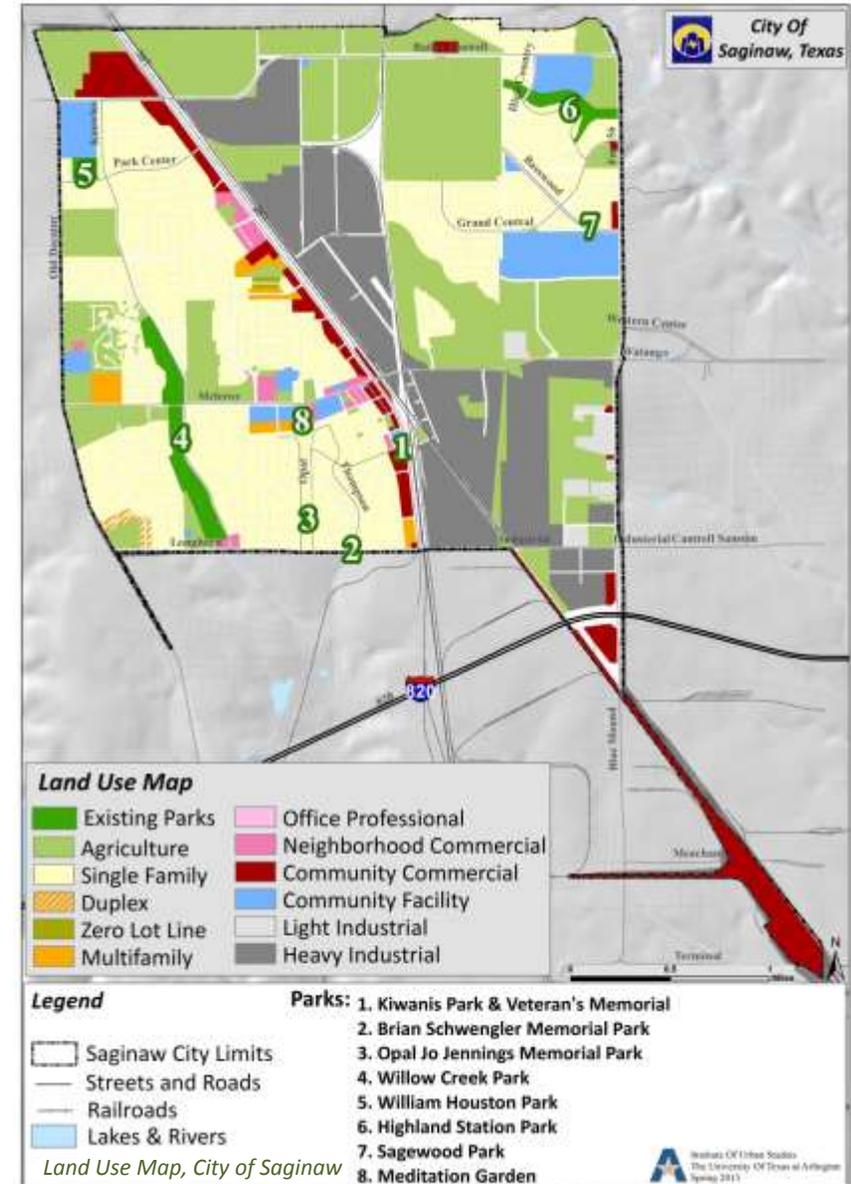
The City of Saginaw has seven public parks totaling 112 acres. These parks range from small ¼ acre pocket parks to the 65 acre Willow Creek Park. There are also six private homeowner association parks, and 5 organizations that provide fitness and recreation facilities and programs. In addition, the Eagle Mountain-Saginaw Independent School District has sports programs and facilities that are used by students and the public.

In general, the existing Saginaw parks are well maintained and relatively new. The City has sidewalks in most of the areas, and the parks have concrete trails. While there are no barrier-free playgrounds or equipment, the relative flat topography and the inclusion of concrete trails makes it easier for accessibility.

To the south of town, there exists a rodeo ground and sports complex in the unincorporated part of Tarrant County, which is heavily used. The City of Fort Worth is planning a large park expansion (see appendix) to the north of Saginaw, and the Old Decatur Road expansion to the west will include bicycle lanes. There are plans to connect the VeloWeb¹ with the railroad tracks to the east, and there is no activity in the small section of the City inside Loop 820, which is heavily industrialized.

Two of the main concerns for the existing parks are their lack of adequate landscaping and, in some cases, serious violation of prospect-refuge principles. Together this makes the parks unbearably hot in the summer and uncomfortably open so residents are reluctant to use them. While they have ample

sidewalks, there is no real sense of connectedness to other parks, schools, or civic centers.



¹ The VeloWeb is a network of non-vehicular trails throughout DFW

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'Quality for a Lifetime'

There are a number of small neighborhood parks owned and controlled by homeowner associations. These parks have amenities such as pools, fishing ponds, and playground equipment but are not open to outside residents.

Finally, the City boasts a nice recreation and aquatic center. This is a well-used citywide amenity, and as the City has grown, the need for larger exercise and programming areas are needed. There is also no indoor pool in the City, and the recreation center is separated from the eastern residents by the railroad track.

The City seems to have done a fair job of lighting some of the parks, providing walkways, water fountains, and bathrooms. There does not seem to be any evidence of graffiti in any of the parks we visited, and none of the neighborhoods seem run-down or in ill repair. One of the developers has even provided a channel with bridges and spray fountains as water features. The City, though small, has great potential.



Willow Vista Homeowners Association

3.4 Pocket/Mini Parks

The City of Saginaw has three pocket or mini parks. These are located primarily in the south-west part of town in the older neighborhoods of the city. The facilities in these parks are currently appropriate for young children and their caregivers, with the exception of Brian Schwengler, which has a half-court basketball court. There is ample space in these parks for additional amenities for older children.

3.4.1 Brian Schwengler Memorial Park:

This park, named after a city employee who passed away while performing his duty in 1982, is a small neighborhood park that opens to the south onto Longhorn Rd and is across from a pipe manufacturing company. The west side includes a concrete channelized water drainage ditch, and the surrounding homes are modest c.1980's single-family homes. The park and equipment are well maintained, and features swings, a merry-go-round and a new playground set, 4 picnic tables with bbq grills (two are covered) and 2 benches.

The vegetation is in good shape, and there is a basketball ½ court and a drinking fountain. The park is fenced, there are 4 parking spaces, and it seems well used. However, this park would benefit from a better sense of enclosure through vegetation and the addition of a few more canopy trees.



Brian Schwengler Memorial Park, City of Saginaw

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'Quality for a Lifetime'

3.4.2 Opal Jo Jennings Memorial Park

This small (approx. '100 x 100') well used neighborhood park was renamed in memorial for Opal Jennings, a 6-year old girl who was abducted and killed in 1999. It is on a relatively quiet intersection surrounded by modest single family homes. This enclosed park features new playground equipment, 2 covered picnic tables with bbq grills, 3 benches, a drinking fountain, 2 sets of swings and a merry-go-round. There is only one tree, and a park user stated to us that the park was well used, but it was too hot in the summer.



Opal Jo Jennings Memorial Park, City of Saginaw

3.4.3 Sagewood Park

This small neighborhood park (approx. 100' x 50') sits along a quiet road in a newer single family housing development. It is across the street from a school and has a wrought iron fence erected to protect it from the busy adjacent street. Featured in the park are a covered picnic table with a bbq grill, a small play set with slides and swings, and a concrete sidewalk for riding tricycles, etc. The park lacks adequate landscaping and there is no lighting.



Sagewood Park, City of Saginaw

3.5 Neighborhood Parks

3.5.1 William Houston Park:

This 8-acre park is at the north-west border of town. Surrounded by modest single-family homes, it is used by the soccer association. It includes the Saginaw Community Center, soccer fields, playground and jungle gym equipment, a drinking fountain, and bathroom. Other features are a swing set with 6 swings, 8 covered picnic tables with 4 bbq grills, 1 pavilion, and about 40 parking spaces.

The landscape is poor, and though a few new trees have been planted, the park is in need of more. There are both a middle school and an elementary school close, which have a track, tennis courts and other amenities. There is more development close by, and this park could become much more than what it is now.



William Houston Park, City of Saginaw

3.6 Community Parks

3.6.1 Willow Creek Park

This 65 acre lighted linear park runs along the natural drainage system featuring a 2.4 mile concrete trail with exercise stations with Dogi-Pot pet waste disposal stations, and benches periodically. The trail is marked every 10th of a mile. The park is within ½ mile from the City recreation and aquatic center and is surrounded by modest single-family homes.

In addition to multiple areas of playground equipment, the park amenities include a lighted softball field with a concession stand, half and full court basketball courts, drinking fountains, restrooms, a pavilion, two tennis courts, two volleyball courts, and a nine hole disc golf course. There are approximately 30 picnic tables with bbq grills throughout the park, of which at least ¾ were covered in some way. There are 2 medium sized and one large pavilion on site with picnic tables, and the large pavilion features two very large bbq grills.

An interesting feature on the site is a train caboose. Unfortunately, there is no signage or meaning attached to the feature. The site lacks good prospect-refuge, and the trees are old and ragged. The park is nestled at the west end of Saginaw and is used by both Fort Worth and Saginaw residents, but it lacks any kind of enclosure and is hot and uninviting in the summer according to one resident. There is a creek that runs through it with crisscrossing bridges, which could be enhanced to make inviting water features in the future.



Willow Creek Park, City of Saginaw

3.7 Linear Parks

3.7.1 Highland Station Park:

This 24.6-acre lighted linear park runs along a natural water drainage system and backs up to both High Country Elementary and Highland Middle Schools surrounded by newer home developments, which also has one homeowner's association containing a small park and pool. The trails for this park have exercise equipment and connect to other trails, and will eventually connect to the new park that Fort Worth is building to the north. Many school parents use the park with their children when they pick them up from school. The school uses the park for activities such as geo-caching and outdoor education opportunities.

The park has ample parking, a restroom, benches, 7 picnic tables (6 covered), a swing set with 6 swings, 4 horseshoe pitches, a basketball full court, a concrete pad, a pavilion, jungle gym, exercise bench, and play equipment. The adjacent schools have tennis courts and a track, which can be used during off-school hours.

This park is along the same creek system as Buffalo Ridge Park (Fossil Creek) in Haltom City, which may afford some long connectivity between the two. It already connects to a secondary street system that leads from the newer single-family homes to the schools. While the vegetation is natural, the addition of well-spaced canopy trees and installation of additional native plantings would both enhance the park and the learning opportunities for the students.



Highland Station Park, City of Saginaw

3.8 Special Purpose Parks

3.8.1 Kiwanis Veteran's Memorial Park:

This small (roughly 100' x 100'), city owned military memorial park is located next to the senior center and Fire Station No1. Site amenities include a gazebo and 3 benches, along with a small stage area used for presentations and holiday festivals. The vegetation is in good shape, the park is well maintained, and there is more than ample parking.

However, the park is underused and lacks good prospect refuge, being open to a busy intersection and adjacent to the Saginaw-Boulevard. Views beyond the park include the gas station to the south and grain silos to the east.



Veterans Memorial, Kiwanis Park, City of Saginaw

3.8.2 Meditation Park

The Meditation Park is tucked behind the civic building which fronts McLeroy Blvd. This small quarter-acre park includes an access trail, a small lecture area, a picnic table and four benches. The landscaping consists of turf and fence-row trees.

As the new facilities become occupied this space has the potential to serve city employees, library patrons and others in search of a quiet place away from busy streets and noise. With access opened to parking and adjacent churches, and adequate lighting, this park could become a popular destination.



Meditation Park Construction, City of Saginaw

3.8.3 Saginaw Cemetery

Located along McLeroy Blvd, this small privately-owned cemetery is considered a special purpose park due to its historical and cultural significance. Saginaw Cemetery has residential on the west and north edges, is fronted with a decorative wrought iron fence along McLeroy. An access road runs through the center and is accessed straight off McLeroy.



Saginaw Cemetery, City of Saginaw

3.9 Recreation

3.9.1 Senior Center

The Senior Center is housed in a nicely landscaped, log-style cabin adjacent to the Kiwanis Veterans Memorial Park. This very active center provides services and programs, including classes, games, and luncheons, which can be prepared in the on-site kitchen. The Tarrant County Transportation for Senior Citizens is available for Saginaw residents on Mondays, and there is ample parking on both sides of the building and the street.



Senior Center, City of Saginaw

3.9.2 Community Center

The Community Center is located on the east side of William Houston Park. The brick building is available to rent by the hour for residents and non-residents alike. A large parking lot fronts the building, and there are benches along the front of the building but there is no shade on this east-facing wall.

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Community Center, William Houston Park, City of Saginaw

3.9.3 Recreation and Aquatic Center

The recreation and aquatic center is part of the Municipal Complex along McLeroy Blvd. This heavily used facility includes 4 multi-purpose rooms, children's play area, a small fitness center, a full-sized gymnasium, a racquetball court, shower facilities, and lockers.



Aquatic Center, City of Saginaw

The aquatic center includes an outdoor pool with train-themed play structures and a large water slide. It houses a concession stand, leisure pool, shade and seating, a picnic area with tables, and several spray and splash features. It also has two group pavilions, and offers swim lessons, water aerobics, and other programs.

While the complex is in good shape, it is currently near capacity in use. Public comment expressed the need for larger exercise and fitness spaces, and programming is limited due to challenges of space.

3.10 Open Space Preservation/Natural Areas

While the City of Saginaw does not have any areas designated as natural areas or open space preserves, it does have places within the City limits that could be designated as such. Parts of Highland Station, the riparian corridors that transect the City, and open fields of undeveloped land could advantageously be considered for this designation.



Open Space Examples, City of Saginaw



4. Public Input Findings

‘Quality for a Lifetime’

4.1 Introduction

Public involvement is key to the process of developing the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. To ensure the Parks Master Plan included elements desirable to the residents of Saginaw, three types of public input meetings were held. The first consisted of targeted groups of individuals representing differing organizations. The second was in the form of Public Online Survey, and the third was a face-to-face public meeting with activities to address the community vision for their parks and recreation.

4.2 Selected Stakeholder Meeting

The Institute of Urban Studies (the Institute) worked with the City officials to meet with several diverse groups of stakeholders. A series of interviews were conducted with the various groups to help guide further research into the community’s desires for their future parks, recreation, and open spaces.

For the series of meetings, over 80 individuals were invited from many different areas and age groups including: representatives from the Senior Center, a class of middle school children from Wayside Middle school, representatives from the Police Department, representatives from the Recreation and Aquatic Center, the business community and Project Dream Play, Homeowners Associations, City Council, the Park Board, and the Beautification Committee all participated (Appendix A) in the stakeholder meetings held in March.

4.2.1 Senior Center

Saginaw’s senior citizens provided a wealth of insight and information about the community and the desired services. Seniors generally have more time to spend enjoying the amenities which parks and open spaces bring to a community, and in particular, value quality over quantity. Representatives also communicated the importance of trails, suggesting that future developers connect trails to City parks and neighboring municipalities. Safety was also a concern, and recommended improvements include signage, crosswalks, and sidewalks.

“Quality over Quantity.”

4.2.2 Wayside Middle School Engineering Class

Since many park users are children, it was important to include Saginaw’s youth in the public input process. The feedback from the Wayside Middle School students shows the desires and typical park use patterns of Saginaw’s youth. Most of the survey participants use Willow Creek Park, the field behind and Wayside Middle School regularly in the spring, summer, and fall months, normally once a week to once a month. Evening is the most popular outing time in the summer, and year-round visits usually last 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours. When asked what they would like to see in Saginaw parks, the children reported a lengthy list. Highlights include a skate park, additional water fountains, large trees, more amenities for older children, bike/walk paths to parks, a dog park, big slides that stay

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cool, and a connected wooden playground structure. When asked what they disliked in Saginaw’s parks, broken equipment, non-functioning fountains, and maintenance were cited as concerns.

Finally, students were asked to list appealing features located in other municipal parks. Spinning chairs, places to “hang out,” a playground megaphone, a swinging bar, and festivals were all mentioned as draws to parks in the larger region.

*“More stuff to hide behind for hide-and-
seek, more shade, and more stuff for older
kids.”*

4.2.3 Police Department

In order for a parks system to be successful, users and the public must feel that the open spaces and amenities are safe. The Saginaw Police Department was interviewed to document Saginaw’s strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and park needs from a law enforcement perspective. Strengths include a great school district, a small community, regional accessibility, an available police department, and dispersed parks. Points of concern or weaknesses for the park system involve use by non-residents, emergency vehicle accessibility for Highland Station Park, inadequate lighting and illegal activity at Highland Station Park, and parking issues at Willow Creek Park. Maintenance, personnel, land acquisition, and connectivity across the trail tracks were cited as future challenges.

The Saginaw Police Department offered valuable suggestions to improve the safety and use of the City’s parks, particularly for connectivity and development. Many of the suggestions focus on the need for safe walking and biking connections between

neighborhoods, parks, and adjacent municipalities. These can take the form of sidewalks within the neighborhoods or other surfaces within the parks. Ideas for park growth and expansion were also offered, such as ballpark and field expansion, developer park land dedication, park impact fees, and increased parking facilities.

4.2.4 Public Works Department

Maintenance of parks is key to the longevity of use. Many issues with parks and recreation property and equipment can be addressed long before they become an issue; thus, input from the Public Works Department was critical to the development of the PROS. Their comments regarding the strengths of the City mirror the comments made by other groups: small city atmosphere, neighborly, peaceful, low crime, and kid-friendly. In order to build upon Saginaw’s many strengths, the Public Works Department made suggestions for additions and improvements to the park system. They cited the most pressing needs as safer biking and walking trails and lighting for sand volleyball at Willow Creek Park. Additional suggestions include disc golf expansion, more workout facilities, more softball fields, a community garden, a skatepark, a dog park, fishing, an amphitheater, ADA accessibility, a splash pad, and more security. When discussing challenges, funding, property acquisition, maintenance, and adequate manpower were discussed as future potential difficulties.

*“Connectivity and more community events
to bring people together.”*

During the interview, Public Works Department representatives also mentioned past, current, and possible events held in the City of

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Saginaw. The Train and Grain Festival once held at Willow Creek Park, Taste of Northwest Food Festival, the Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas activities at the Recreation Center, Concert in the Park, and 4th of July Fireworks could all benefit from additional park improvements and amenities.

4.2.5 Business and Project Dream Play

Representatives from the business community and Project Dream Play also contributed information and suggestions to the PROS public input. Like other groups, the business representatives and Project Dream Play listed Saginaw's schools and sense of community as strengths, but they also added affordability, proximity to Eagle Mountain Lake, and arts and sports to the list. Moreover, they identified the train tracks, funding, and park land acquisition as potential challenges to the PROS. Ideas for additional facilities and amenities include ADA accessible playgrounds, sensory stations, a skate park, more trails, and safe crossing for north end of Willow Creek. Also suggested were more sidewalks in older areas of Saginaw, soft surfaces for playgrounds, more ball fields, a central gathering pavilion, and more parking. The business community also mentioned business development in the southwest area of Saginaw as a desire for the PROS.

Since Project Dream Play participated in the interview, it is important to underscore their mission and the play needs that have inspired that mission. Project Dream Play's website describes the group as a "non-profit initiative focused on eliminating social stigmas by creating play environments that inspire diverse interaction at the earliest stages of social development." More specifically, Project Dream Play advocates for play areas that can accommodate children of all abilities and encourage diverse groups to play together. According to Project Dream Play, 9% of children in Chapter 4: Public Input Findings

the Saginaw ISD have a disability. With that in mind, including accessible playgrounds will ensure inclusion and the opportunity for learning and connecting for children of all abilities.

4.2.6 Kiwanis

The Kiwanis Club of Saginaw was interviewed by the Institute for the PROS. They felt that Saginaw's small-town family values, good school system, closeness to Eagle Mountain Lake and larger cities, library, and park distribution and accessibility are all assets to the community. According to their input, the parks have a significant role in home purchase decisions, and they felt that the City was using its resources effectively, but they had ideas for improvements. The Kiwanis Club suggested more basketball and tennis facilities, additional playground equipment, an amphitheater and gazebo, picnic areas, landscaping, parking, Veteran's Memorial signage and most importantly, more ball fields and regional bike/walk trail connections. Their concerns included substandard homeowner's association parks and a lack of sidewalks and bike paths in the City.

4.2.7 Home Owners Association

Finally, representatives from Saginaw's many homeowner's associations were interviewed. They liked the laid back, small town feeling of Saginaw while being able to enjoy big town amenities. They like Willow Park and enjoy the many parks and playgrounds, especially Willow Creek Park with its basketball courts. They would like to see William Houston's community center be more multi-functional like Willow Creek Park.

Concerns this group expressed were parking, vandalism, and speeding traffic near parks. They would like to see larger parks and more activities for middle school aged children, such as basketball, disc golf, and a BMX track. Other concerns the HOA's have are in

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liability, especially where parks, drainage ditches, pond areas, and storm water were concerned. They would like to explore ways to help mitigate some of the liability.

The HOA representatives desire water features (like Amber Fountain) and splash parks. They would like to see more walking trails and better connection on sidewalks, especially on Knowles, and span the dry creek between the church and parkland.

4.3 Public Online Survey

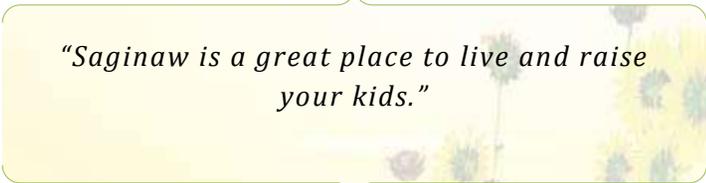
To better our understanding of community needs and desires, a survey was administered on-line through the City of Saginaw's website. To ensure broad participation, it was advertised by the City through the water bill and on billboards at various locations.

The online survey was available to the public for 14 days ending on May 10th, with a total of 747 individuals responding from an adult population of 13,320, which totals a solid 5%.

The following is a summary of the survey results, with the details of the survey in Appendix B.

- 47% of respondents use parks, recreation spaces, and trail services in the City of Saginaw daily or weekly
- Most parks in the City of Saginaw were used frequently
- *"Lighting"* and *"Bathrooms"* were the number one improvements that respondents wanted in the existing parks
- 42 % of respondents use bicycles.

- Respondents identified *"Sports Fields/ Facilities"* and *"Hike/Bike Trails"* as being most wanted.
- *"Special Events"* and *"Exercise/Fitness Classes"* were programs and services that respondents use in the City of Saginaw Parks, and 44% of respondents who used these programs and services rated them as *"Good"*



"Saginaw is a great place to live and raise your kids."

- *"Pet Areas/Parks Facilities"* were identified by respondents as *"Desirable"*
- 36% of respondents use the Saginaw Aquatic and Recreation Center *"Seasonally"*, and the *"Pool"* was identified as being used most frequently
- Respondents used trails in the City of Saginaw for the purposes of *"Exercise"* and *"Exercise pet"*
- 56% of respondents in the City of Saginaw use the parks/outdoor facilities in other nearby cities
- There is a demand for hike and bike trails and sports facilities in the City.

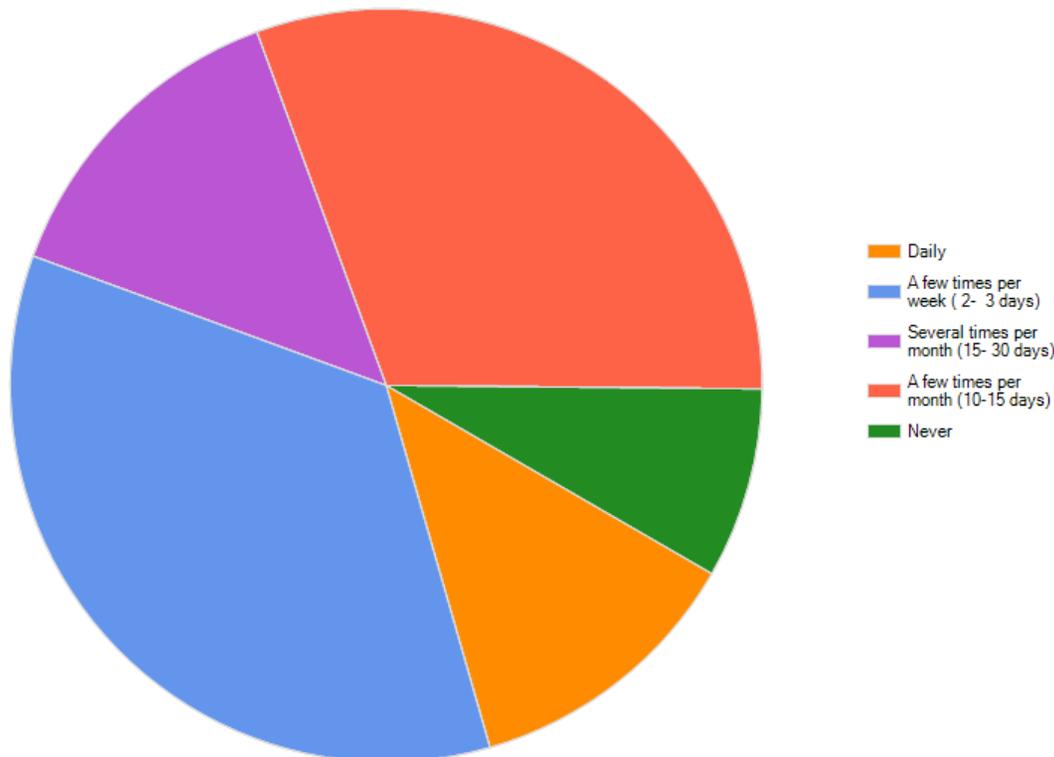
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- Natural areas were identified as being needed, with riparian corridors, wildlife habitat and large open spaces being identified as needed most.

As can be seen, the citizens of Saginaw desire good quality, well connected parks, recreation, and open spaces. There is also a need for community activities and places for interconnectedness and social interactions.

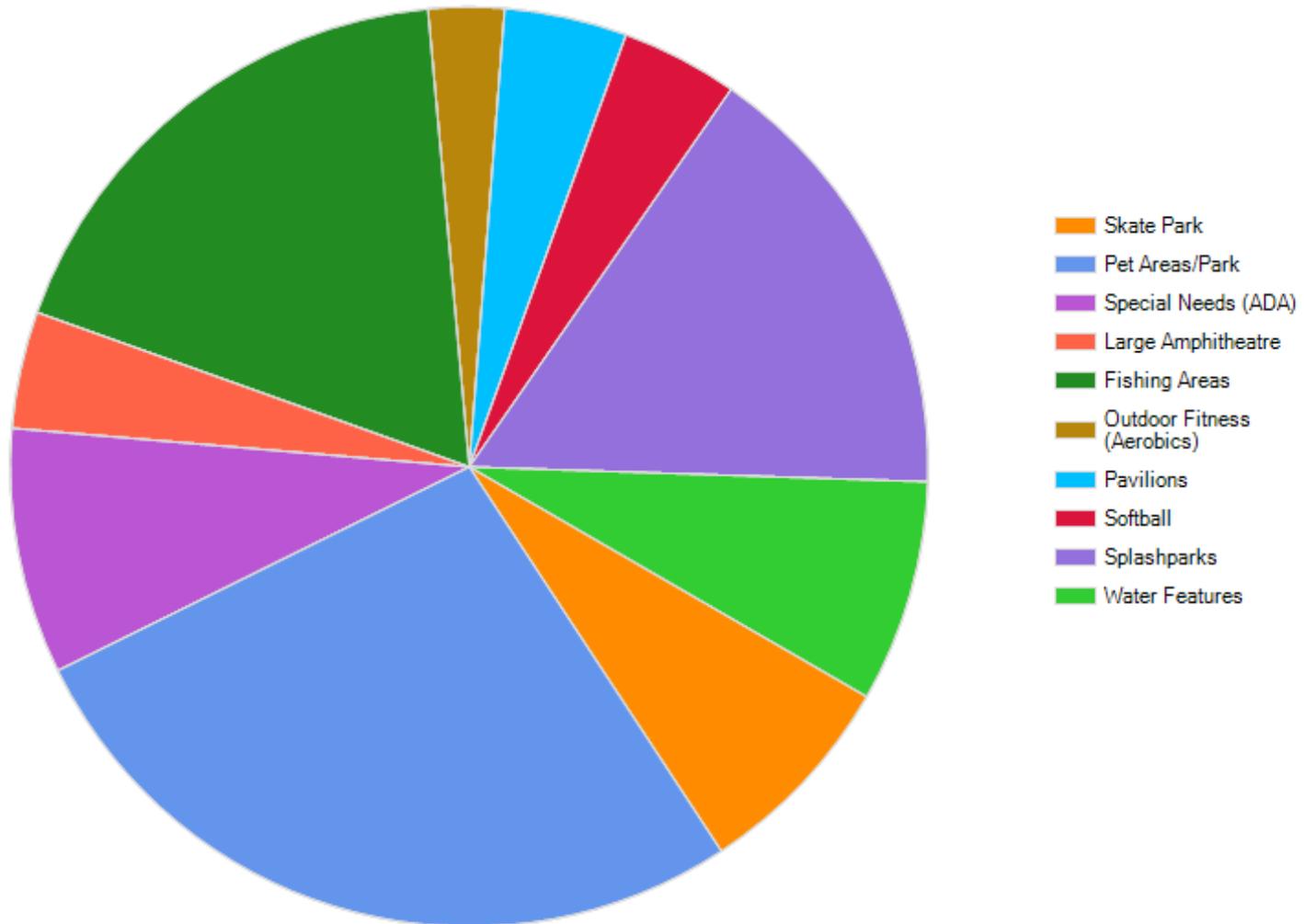
How often do you or members of your household use any of the parks and recreation or trails services in the City of Saginaw?



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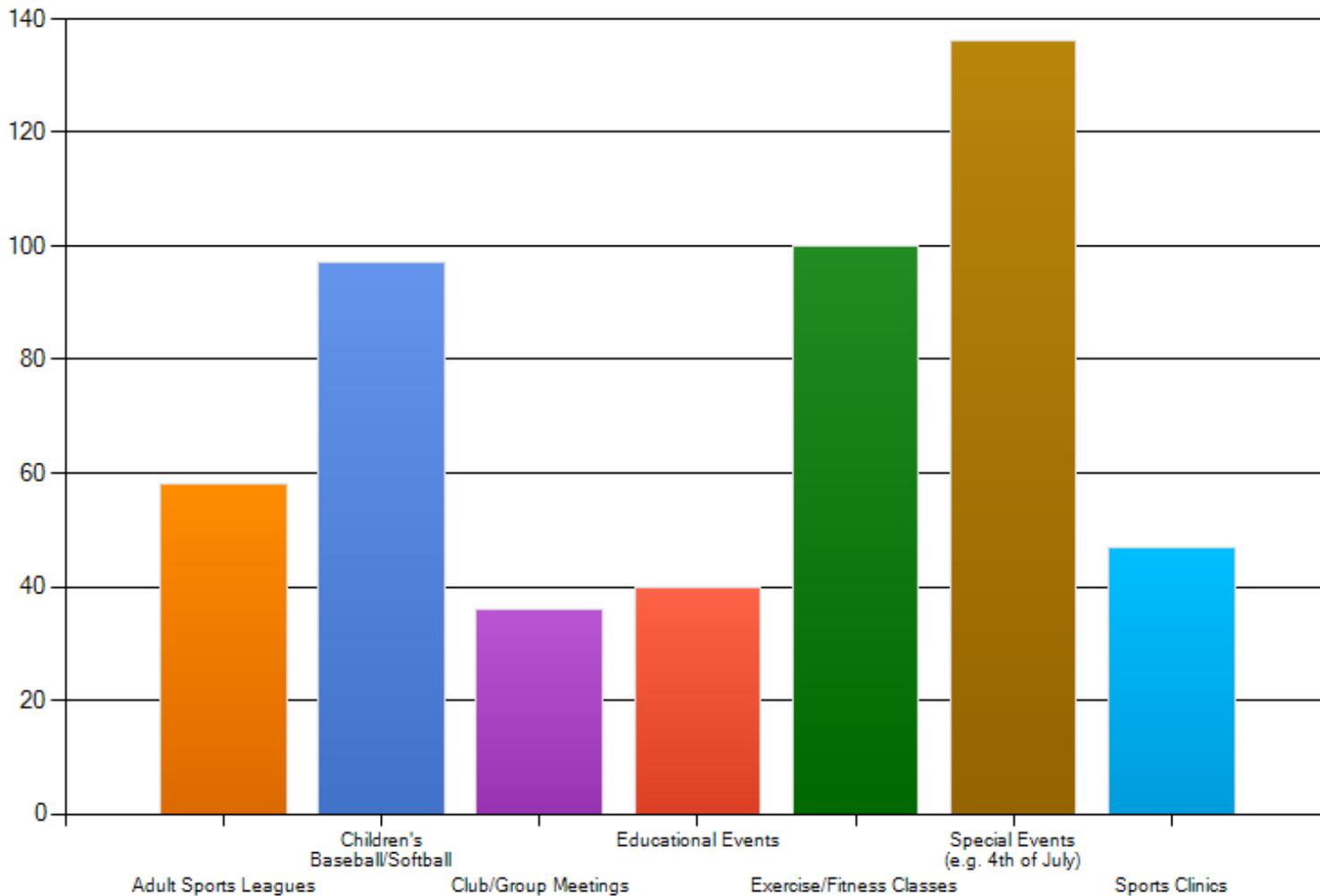
Which of the following specialized facilities do you feel is needed most in the City of Saginaw?



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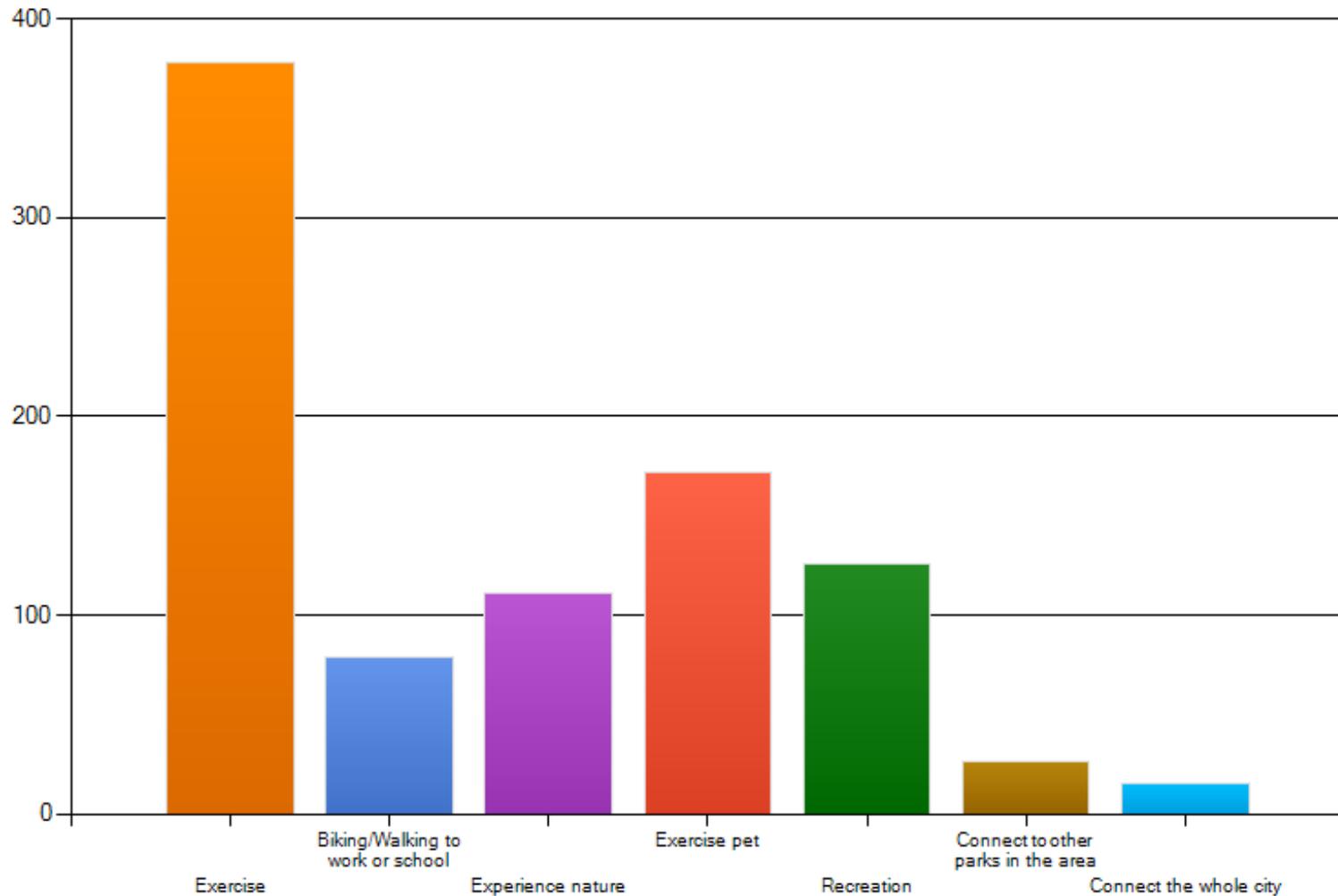
Which City of Saginaw parks and recreation programs or services do you or your household members regularly use? Please check all that apply.



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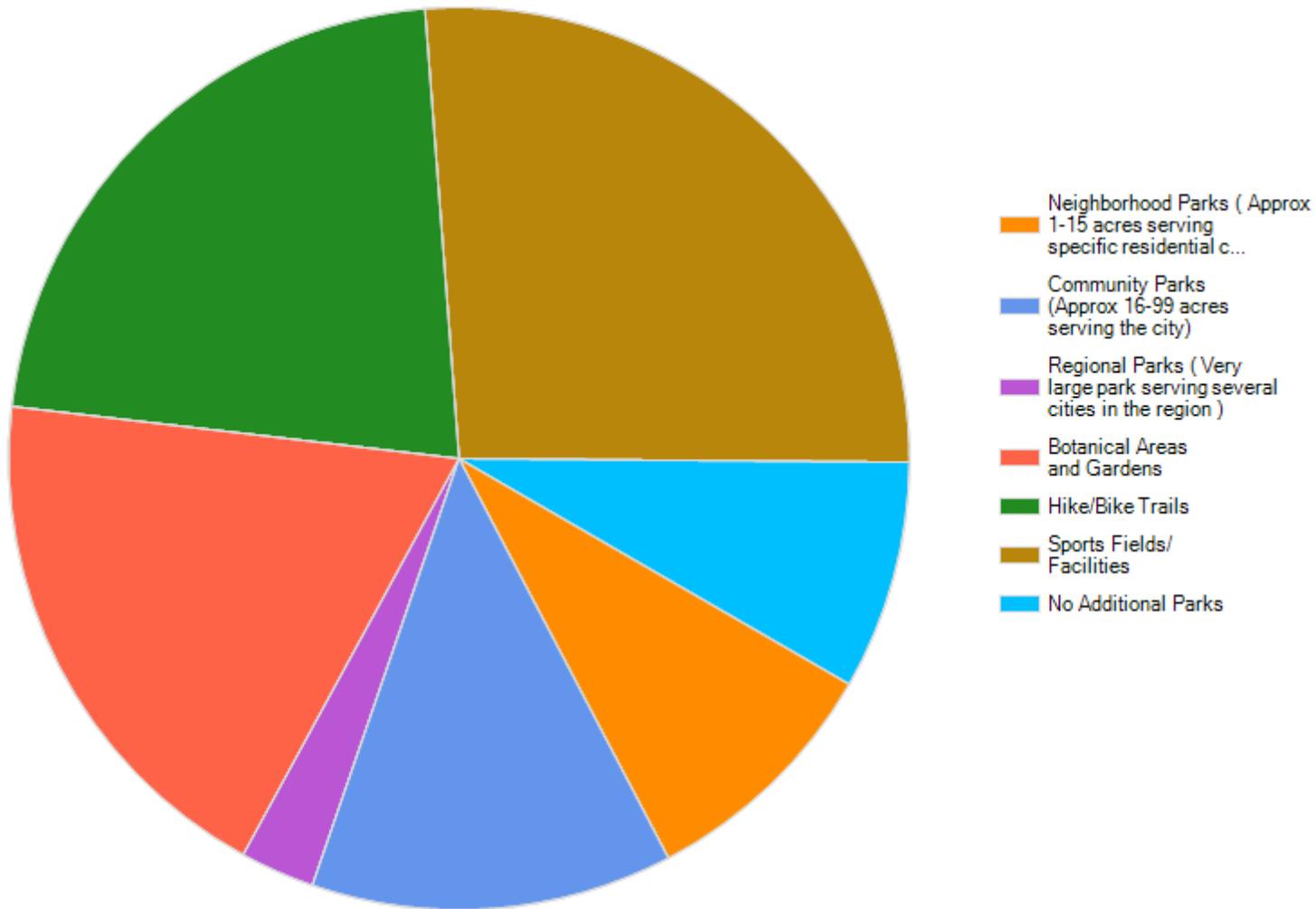
If you or members of your household currently use the trails in Saginaw, what is your primary reason for doing so?



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'Quality for a Lifetime'

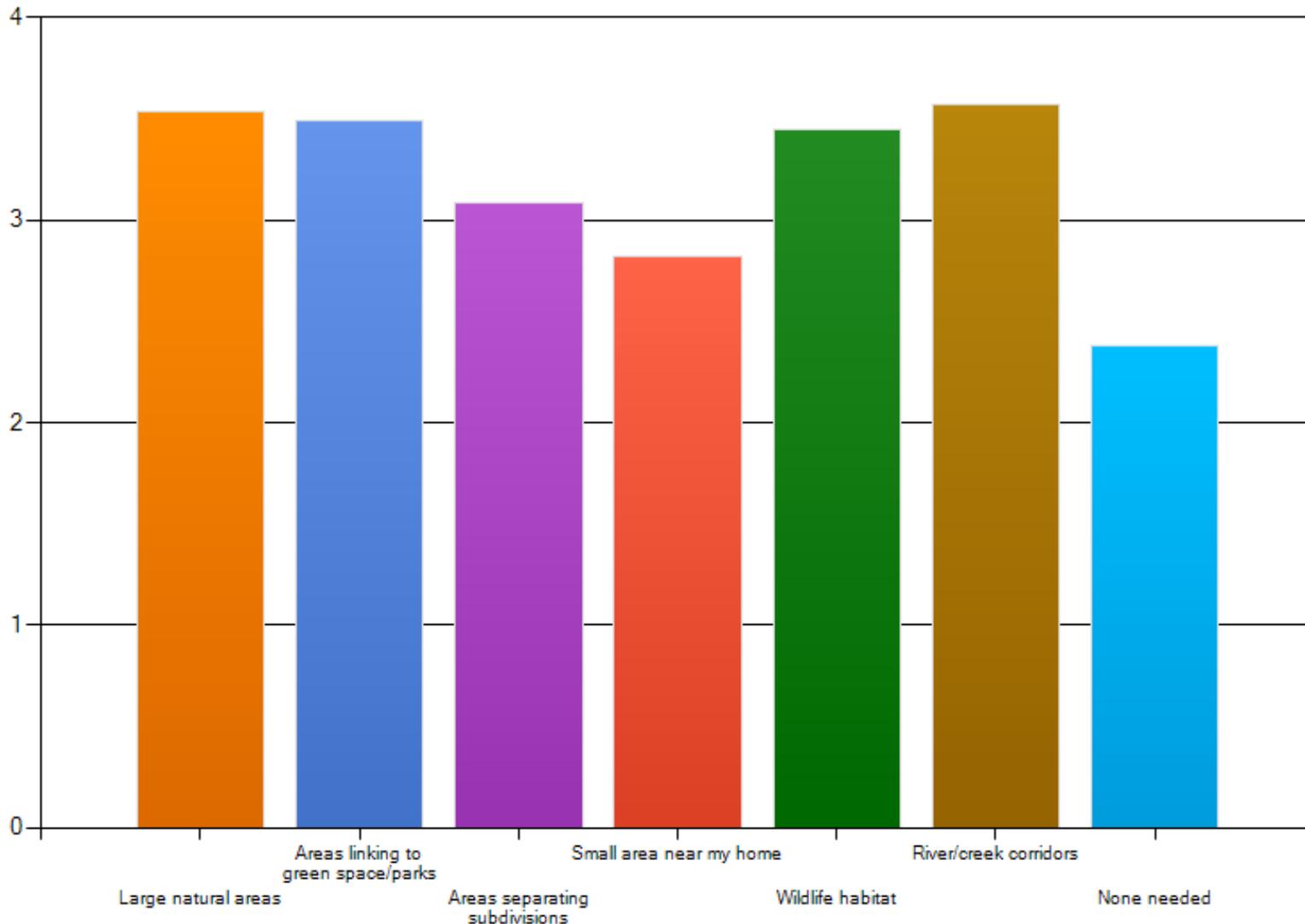
**What types of parks are needed most in the City of Saginaw?
(please check one only).**



Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

'Quality for a Lifetime'

Rate the following types of natural areas that are needed in Saginaw.



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4.4 Public Input Meeting

On May 16, 2013, the Institute of Urban Studies conducted a Public Input meeting at Saginaw’s Senior Center. The meeting worked to balance between what the City has, what residents would like to have, and what can be achieved over the next 10 years. The activities were designed to collect further public input beyond the discussions with focused stakeholders. Participants also advised the Institute on the community’s vision for Saginaw’s park system and detailed park assets, opportunities, and issues. Please reference the Appendix for detailed meeting documentation.

4.4.1 Activity: Park System Vision

As an ongoing activity, participants completed a series of statements concerning their personal vision for the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Meeting facilitators hung boards containing the beginning of a statement on the wall. Throughout the evening, participants were given opportunities to complete these sentences by either writing them on the board or using the Post-it notes.

From this activity and stakeholder meetings, the public constructed the vision for Saginaw’s PROS: The mission of the City of Saginaw Parks and Recreation Department is to provide quality, affordable, well-connected facilities, and services that can be logically maintained for the growing community. The system relies on community support and is sustained with a focus on partnerships, innovation, and environmental sensitivity.

4.4.2 Activity: Park Issues and Assets

For this activity, aerial maps of each park were used to assist the participants in answering questions about the physical characteristics of each park. Questions included what each park

could keep, maintain, or add, and attendants were encouraged to make notes and suggestions on the maps.

In general, comments were positive—Saginaw residents enjoy their parks—but suggestions for improvements were made. Highland Station Park, Saginaw Recreational Center, and Opal Jo Jennings Park were singled out for a lack of visibility and/or signage.

Garden areas were proposed for Sagewood Park and Meditation Park due to their smaller size. The Saginaw Recreational Center received many positive comments, for example, “Great facility. Great staff;” however, a larger weight room and pool were both mentioned as something that could be added. More trees, shade, drinking facilities, parking, and a dog park were identified as possible additions to Willow Creek. A full listing of all comments is included in the Appendix.



Public Input, City of Saginaw 2013

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4.4.3 Activity: Places, Routes, & Connections

Important points of activity and the potential best routes for moving between these areas were identified in this activity. Public input acknowledged the need for more sidewalks between points of activity, separation between pedestrians and bicyclists, and greater concern for safety of pedestrians.



Public Input, City of Saginaw 2013

4.4.4 Activity: Park Facility Character Board

Participants were asked to think about what they need in parks, what their children or grandparents need in a park, and what park assets might make a good impression on new residents or businesses. Twenty five pictures, including types of equipment, parks, trails, and facilities were printed on boards, and each

participant was given a limited number of dots with which to indicate which facilities should be emphasized in the PROS. The facilities most desired included a splash plaza, pond, dog parks, and concrete trails. The least desired elements included public art, football fields, and designated bike lanes. For skate-parks, opinions ranged from being highly desirable to undesirable.

4.5 Summary

Providing a PROS Plan that is supported by the citizens it serves can only be accomplished through public participation. Based on the public input, the citizens of Saginaw are very supportive of a well-connected, well designed PROS system that is assessable to all ages and abilities. The following recommendations are based on this understanding.



Public Input, City of Saginaw 2013



5.1 Introduction

The City of Saginaw's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025 adopts the vision statement from the City's economic plan, "Quality for a Lifetime." It encompasses a holistic, citywide approach that embraces and enhances the cities beauty, image, history, culture, and community spirit. Ensuring that the City fulfills this goal as envisioned by its residents in an affordable, sustainable way is essential in achieving all the Cities goals.

To ensure the quality of this PROS Plan, it is essential that the master planning efforts are measured against known and practiced standards to determine deficiencies. Action steps resulting from this needs assessment, along with prioritization, will follow in the next section of this document on implementation.

5.2 Method of Needs Assessment

In order to assess Saginaw's parks, recreation and open space needs, three approaches were implemented. This methodology follows those accepted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Departments for local parks master planning.

5.2.1 Standard-Based Approach

This approach uses established standards to determine the level of services needed. It is usually based on available PROS per 1,000 citizens.

5.2.2 Demand-Based Approach

This approach uses information gathered during public meeting and surveys, as well as site observation to evaluate the current use of parks, recreation and open space. Chapter 4 of this document covers this information.

5.2.3 Resource-Based Approach

This approach evaluates the current physical resources of the City, such as natural drainage systems, available land, and current trails, to build the desired PROS system. This is especially important for sustainability and long-term quality, as recommendations work with the natural systems and not against them.

All three of the assessment methods are important to get a whole picture. Like the balance between economics, environment, and equity, looking at the PROS Plan from three different angles creates a system that is needed, desired, affordable, and looks to the future.

5.3 Standards and Guidelines

The adequacy of existing parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces is determined by comparing the needs of the present and forecasted populations of Saginaw to specific goals and guidelines. This Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan includes the guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The NRPA guidelines have generally been the most widely accepted and used guidelines of their type, especially by local governments. This section includes a comparison of Saginaw to NRPA guidelines based upon park acreage per population.

5.3.1 Criteria for Guidelines

The most common standards for park planning guidelines, as recognized by park and recreation professionals, are the published guidelines by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).

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The NRPA recognizes the importance of establishing and using park and recreation guidelines as:

1. A national expression of minimum acceptable facilities for the citizens of urban and rural communities.
2. A guideline to determine land requirements for various kinds of park and recreation areas and facilities.
3. A basis for relating recreation needs to spatial analysis within a community wide system of parks and open space areas.
4. One of the major structuring elements that can be used to guide and assist regional development.
5. A means to justify the need for parks and open space within the overall land use pattern of a region or community.

The purpose of this section is to present park and recreation space guidelines that are applicable for planning, acquisition, and development of parks, recreation, and open space lands, at the community level. These are the minimum guidelines, not maximum. The guidelines are to be coupled with conventional wisdom and judgment relating to the particular situation to which they are applied and specific local needs.

TEXAS RECREATION AND PARKS GRANT SCORING CRITERIA

- Increase recreational diversity of facilities provided
- Equitable geographic distribution of parks and recreation opportunities
- Conservation of significant natural resources through acquisition and stewardship of land to protect the environment
- Renovation of existing, obsolete park and recreation areas and facilities
- Judicious use of natural resources
- Linear greenbelt linkages between parks and recreation areas, neighborhoods and public facilities through trails
- Appreciation and preservation of cultural resources as part of parks and recreation
- Allocation of funds to further parks and recreation opportunities
- Opportunities for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, minorities, and youth at risk
- Intergovernmental and departmental cooperation
- Partnership with the private sector
- Performance on active and previous grants from local agencies

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

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5.3.2 Park Classification System

When evaluating existing or future parks in Saginaw, it is necessary to classify each park by type, size, service area, and acres per 1,000 population. The chart to the right shows the standard of size and service area and compares the City of Saginaw's parks, recreation, and open space to the standard at the bottom.

5.4 Park Acreage Guidelines Applied to Saginaw Park and Recreation Inventory

For Saginaw's current population, there is a deficit of 119 acres of park land. Not counted as Saginaw's current park acres are any parks and open spaces held by schools or private homeowner's associations. Park, recreation, and open spaces are held by schools for the specific use of the communities school-aged children and are an essential part of the overall PROS health in a community. Chapter 3 contains a list of schools in the community.

Likewise, homeowners associations hold areas for the specific use of their residents. While they benefit only those within the association, they provide services that would otherwise be the responsibility of the City. These parks often contain pools, playground equipment, tennis and basketball courts, and walking trails within adjacent greenbelts, which adds to the overall appeal of the neighborhood and thus the City. The list on the next page contains the current homeowner associations and a sample of features they offer. These serve as what is classified as neighborhood parks, with the disadvantage being the general public does not have access to them.

NRPA PARK ACREAGE GUIDELINES			
Park Categories	Size/Acre	Service Area	Acres per 1000 Residents
Mini Parks	2500 sf-1 Acre	> 1/4 mile from residential Setting	Variable
Neighborhood	1-15 Acres	1/4 - 1/2 mile from neighborhood	1-2 Acres
Community	16-99 Acres	2 mile radius serving several neighborhoods	5-8 Acres
Special Use	-----	No applicable standard	Variable
Linear	Sufficient width to protect the natural resource and provide maximum use	No applicable standard	Variable
Natural Area	Resource availability and opportunity	Variable	Variable
		Total	11-20 Acres per 1000 Residents
		Required Acreage for Saginaw Population	218
		Existing Acres in Saginaw	112
		Current Deficiency	-106 Acres

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Homeowners Associations:	Sample Features
Courts of Willow Creek H.O.A.	Pool, tennis, basketball, playground
The Commons at Willow Creek H.O.A.	Pool, picnic tables, grills
Creekwood H.O.A.	Adult and kid pools, hike/bike trails, 50 acre green space
Heather Ridge Estates H.O.A.	Pool and jogging trails
Spring Creek H.O.A.	Community park, playgrounds, ponds
Willow Vista Estates H.O.A.	Private playground, swimming pool

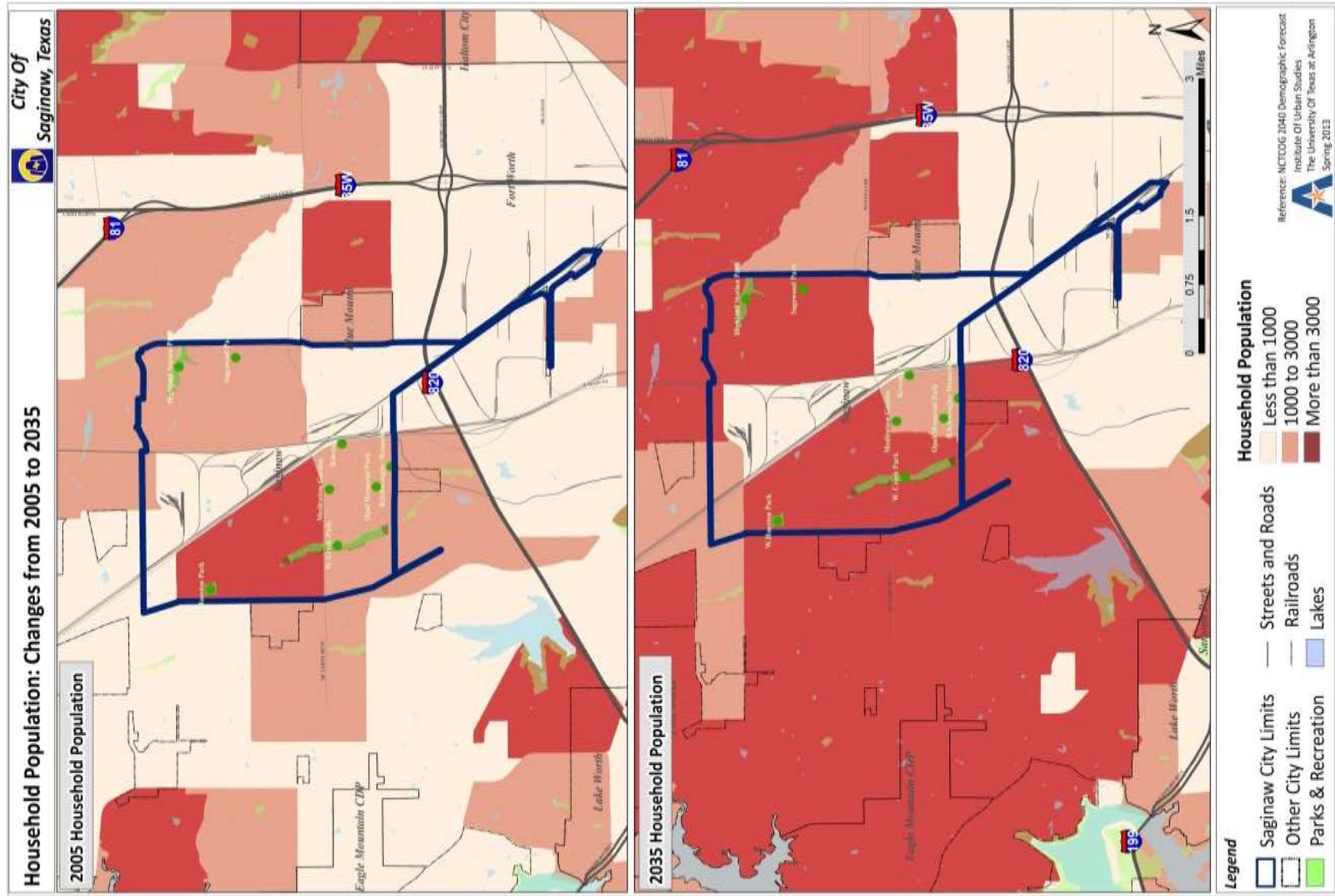
Population projections are based on information provided by the City of Saginaw. The map on page 5:5 shows the projected population growth from 2005 to 2035 and provides further insight into the coming demand for parks, recreation and open space. The maps on page 5:6 illustrates the current service areas for existing parks. Options for addressing the park shortages based on service area are found in Chapter 7 of this document.

PARK ACREAGE GUIDELINES APPLIED TO SAGINAW PARK INVENTORY

Park Facility	Existing Acreage	Acreage Guidelines for Current Population of 19806	Shortage Between Current Inventory and Standard Guideline	Acreage Guidelines for 2020 Population of 22803	Shortage Between Current Inventory and Standard Guideline	Acreage Guidelines for 2030 Population of 25711	Shortage Between Current Inventory and Standard Guideline
Mini Parks	0	---		---		---	
Neighborhood Parks	0.75	19.8 - 39.6	19.05 - 38.5	22.8 - 45.6	22.05 - 44.85	25.7 - 51.4	24.95 - 50.65
Community Parks	73	99 - 158.4	26 - 85.4	114 - 182.4	41 - 109.4	128.5 - 205.6	55.5 - 132.6
Special Use Parks	0.5	---		---		---	
Linear Parks	24.6	---		---		---	
Natural Parks	0	---		---		---	
TOTALS	98.85	118.8 - 198	19.95 - 124.25	136.8 - 228	63.05 - 154.25	154.2 - 257	80.45 - 183.25
Population projections based on information provided by City of Saginaw							

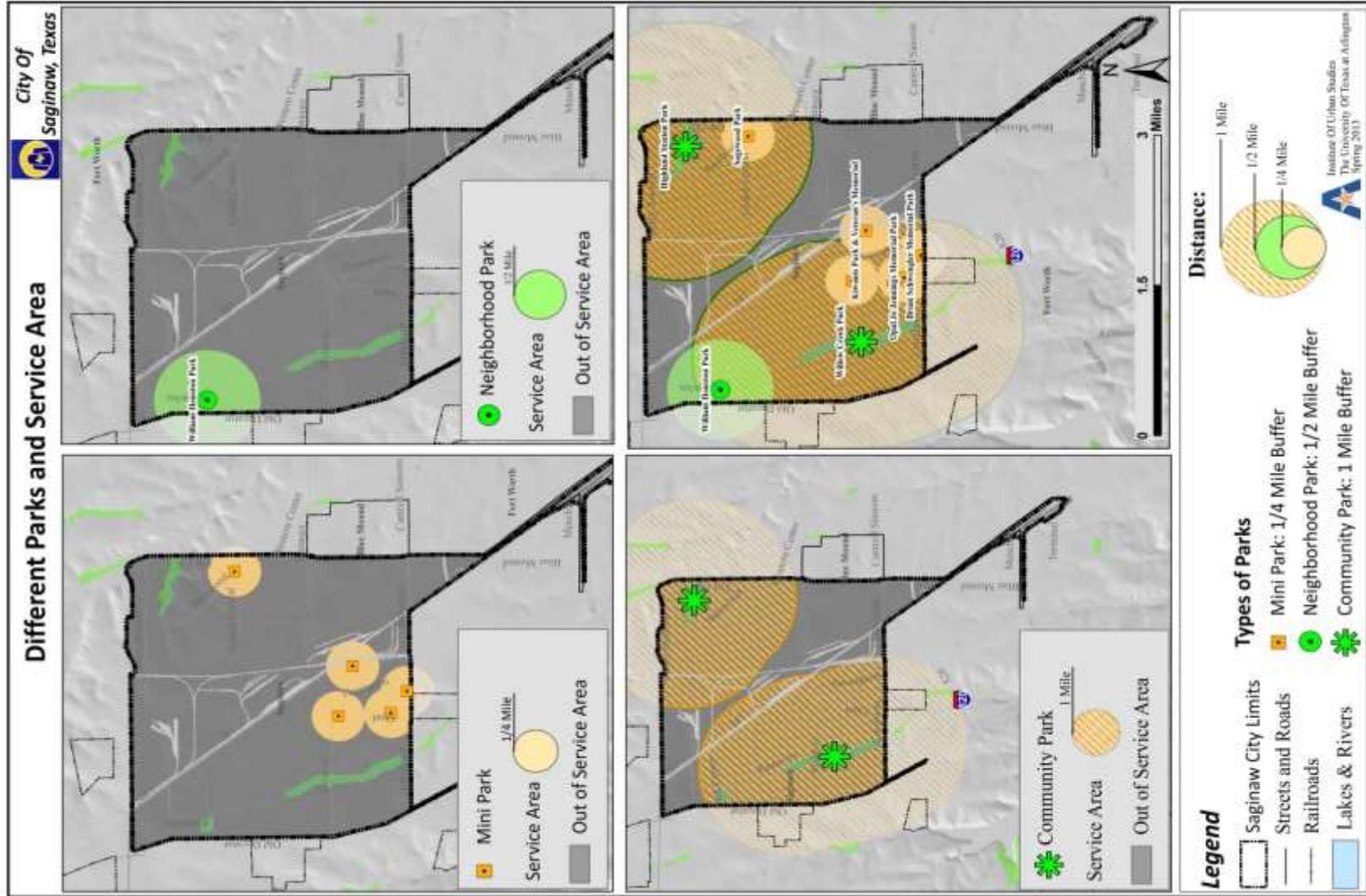
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Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

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5.5 Benchmarking for Saginaw's Parks Systems

As in all communities, there is competition and cooperation among Cities for both people and businesses. It is important to understand how Saginaw compares to cities of similar size, income, population and location. The following spreadsheet contains a comparison of municipalities that are close in proximity or similar in other ways to the City of Saginaw. This comparison allows Saginaw to gauge its current park dedication to other comparable places in the DFW area. As seen below, Saginaw has the lowest percent of park acres per city area, as well as the second lowest park area per 1,000 residents. With the rate at which Saginaw is growing, additional parkland needs to be acquired so that Saginaw can fulfill its commitment to quality for a lifetime.



Bear Creek Park, Keller Texas

PARK LAND COMPARISON 2012							
CITY	POPULATION	AREA SQ MILES	ACRES PER 1000 RESIDENTS	PARK ACRES	ACRES AS A % OF CITY AREA	PARK ACRES PER 1000 PERSON	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Saginaw	19,806	7.5	1,690	99	2.1%	4.99	67,797
White Settlement	16,116	4.9	1,375	203	6.5%	12.60	40,748
Haltom City	42,409	12.4	3,619	184	2.3%	4.34	43,676
Farmers Branch	28,616	12	2,442	259	3.4%	9.05	60,638
Keller	39,627	18.4	3,382	426	3.6%	10.75	115,228

5.6 Needs Assessment and Prioritization

Conclusion

The recommendations and priorities for this plan were developed from the analysis of the inventory, demographics, standards, and needs assessment in combination with public input. For planning purposes the recommendations in Chapter 7 and prioritization in Chapter 8 of this document are based upon an existing population of 19,806 and a projected population of 25,000 by 2025. It will be even more critical if the population grows at the rate it has grown over the past ten years, meaning that by 2030 the City of Saginaw will need to service 34,666 people. Without adequate facilities and services, this population growth and increase in density will likely force citizens to support services outside of the City of Saginaw.

"The nation behaves well if it treats its natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value."

Theodore Roosevelt



Willow Creek Park, Saginaw Texas



Project Dream Play, Saginaw Texas

6. Parks Recreation, and Open Space Vision and Goals

‘Quality for a Lifetime’

6.1 Introduction

For any journey undertaken, it is important to have a set of goals from which to build. For the PROS Plan, these goals provide the framework from which policies are designed, needs are assessed, and implementation is derived. As the City Council and staff change over time, these goals are the steady guide-points for the continuous improvement of the PROS system for the City of Saginaw.

6.2 Definitions

The following terms as defined below are used in the PROS Plan:

Vision: The vision is the overarching dreams and aspirations of the community which provides a guiding light toward the future.

Goals: Goals address the desired quality of life as general statements concerning an aspect of the City’s desired ultimate physical, social, and economic environment.

Objectives: Objectives express the measureable actions or approach that is necessary to achieve the stated goals without assigning responsibility to a specific action.

Policies: Planning policies are for the PROS Plan and are specific to the actions and ordinances created by the City of Saginaw to implement the goals established in this document.

PROS Parks Plan Goals:

1. *Provide parkland and a variety of recreational facilities and programs to meet the changing recreational needs and desires of the City of Saginaw as it grows.*
2. *Create a park system that will improve and enhance the physical form and image of the City of Saginaw.*
3. *Preserve and protect open space, cultural landscapes and natural resources, especially in areas with indigenous tree cover and land prone to flooding within the city.*
4. *Provide a system that links parks, schools, greenbelts, neighborhoods, business areas, traditional gathering spaces, natural areas and cultural landscapes.*
5. *Coordinate multi-jurisdictional efforts with the relevant county, adjacent cities and the local school district with respect to issues that affect recreational opportunities in the community.*
6. *Continue to maintain all of the City of Saginaw’s parks and recreational facilities*
7. *Develop other funding mechanisms to help supplement the City’s limited funding resources*

6.3 Purpose of Saginaw's 2013 PROS Plan

The purpose of the 2013 City of Saginaw's 2013 Parks Recreation and Open Space Vision 2025 is as follows:

- Contribute to the unique image and character of the City of Saginaw
- Provide a framework for orderly and consistent planning, development and improvement of the park system
- Establish priorities based on community desire, known standards, and needs analysis
- Guide in the acquisition and development of park land to meet current and future park, recreation, and open space needs
- Guide in determining where and how parks funding should be allocated over the next five to ten years
- Conform to guidelines for local Master Planning as laid out in the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in preparation for grants programs.

6.4 Vision Statement

Lifetime quality in a community embraces all facets of the City. From parks and recreation, to preservation, housing, and economic development this simple statement reflects the City's desire to be a place where families move to and stay for generations. Providing for this unique focus requires long-range visionary leadership.

6.5 Uniquely Saginaw

Quality for a lifetime embraces the idea that Saginaw's unique position and feel is created through a population that experiences the whole human lifecycle in place. The following ideas are fundamental to reinforcing this worthy vision for the City of Saginaw:

- Non-vehicular connections throughout the City to connect schools, parks, and neighborhoods
- Preserve existing natural areas and rural character of Saginaw
- Acquire additional parkland in growth areas for future residents
- Upgrading current parks and recreation opportunities and facilities
- Enhance City image through the historic railroad and take advantage of grain elevator landmarks

The City of Saginaw is set to embrace the rapid growth happening in and around it while maintaining its unique rural identity. This identity is reinforced through its parks, recreation, and open space, which brings beauty, economic development potential, and imageability to the City of Saginaw.

Through visionary leadership, the implementation of these ideas will have the direct and long-term result of higher, sustainable property values, city beautification, and maintaining the rural character for a greater quality of life for all the City's citizens.

6.6 Goals and Objectives

The goal and objectives for the City of Saginaw PROS Vision Plan center on the following:

Goal 1

Provide parkland and a variety of recreational facilities and programs to meet the changing recreational needs and desires of the City of Saginaw as it grows:

- 1.1 Acquire park land in anticipation and recognition of the future lack of currently available vacant land and open space.
- 1.2 Develop short and long-range programs for development, expansion, and upgrading of Saginaw's parks system.
- 1.3 Provide recreational facilities that address the needs of all age groups, and abilities.
- 1.4 Identify the greatest need for park facilities and pursue the acquisition and development of facilities in those areas.
- 1.5 Use diverse and reasonable criteria to identify park needs, reasonable calculations of potential level of use, but also the ability of each facility to respond to citywide needs in a cost effective manner.
- 1.6 Develop land acquired and dedicated to future parks in a consistent and focused manner as the population grows.
- 1.7 Balance the distribution of park facilities, including neighborhood parks, community parks, athletic facilities, and trail corridors throughout the City.

Saginaw Parks 2025 Vision:

Saginaw is a quiet, family-oriented city near a vibrant urban center giving it the best of both worlds. Saginaw enjoys a high quality of life through great neighborhood and community parks and all-inclusive recreational opportunities. These services promote community and civic pride and contribute to a foundation for the physical, social, economic, and environmental well-being of the city, embracing **"Quality for a Lifetime."**

Parks Mission:

The mission of the City of Saginaw Parks and Recreation Department is to provide quality, affordable, well-connected facilities, and services that can be logically maintained for the growing community. The system relies on community support and is sustained with a focus on partnerships, innovation, and environmental sensitivity.

Saginaw Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Vision 2025

‘Quality for a Lifetime’

- 1.8 Periodically, generally 3 to 5 years, update the long-range plan and standards to reflect changing conditions in the City and to provide a forum for citizen input.

Goal 2

Create a park system that will improve and enhance the physical form and image of the City of Saginaw:

- 2.1 Acquire park and open space sites that are prominent and highly visible in the neighborhoods that surround them.
- 2.2 Utilize landscape design at key City entryways and along selected street medians to create a positive and attractive image of the City.
- 2.3 Encourage tree planting in parks.
- 2.4 Encourage funding, design, and development of existing and new parks to take them to the next level of high quality design and materials.

Goal 3

Preserve and protect open space, cultural landscapes, and natural resources, especially in areas with indigenous tree cover and land prone to flooding within the City:

- 3.1 Establish criteria to identify key open space areas, cultural landscapes and natural areas worthy of preservation throughout the City.
- 3.2 Protect areas and landscapes of cultural value.
- 3.3 Protect areas with significant indigenous tree cover. Preserve habitat with natural vegetation.
- 3.4 Acquire and preserve suitable channels and natural floodplain areas as public open space and possible future trail corridors.

- 3.5 Acquire and preserve publicly accessible greenbelts along the edges of all riparian corridors.
- 3.6 Protect and maintain existing creek riparian zones.
- 3.7 Establish funding mechanisms to acquire lands for protection through acquisition, purchase of easements, or outright dedication of floodplain lands where these are deemed to have open space and conservation value. Focus on high quality natural or opens space areas that are likely to be developed with incompatible uses in the near future.
- 3.8 Provide funding to renovate existing riparian corridors in order to preserve and protect them from degradation caused by changes in development upstream.
- 3.9 Educate the public about preservation and protection of creek corridors and nature areas in order to maintain and protect natural resources.

Goal 4

Provide a system that links parks, schools, greenbelts, neighborhoods, business areas, traditional gathering spaces, natural areas and cultural landscapes:

- 4.1 Foster the development of a hike and bike/jogging trail system throughout the City that will provide opportunity for recreation as well as alternative modes of transport e.g. cycling, skating, jogging and hiking.
- 4.2 Upgrade existing trail facilities as needed or by demand.
- 4.3 Research the use of utility easements, sidewalks within the street right-of-way, and drainage ways as potential trail connections.
- 4.4 Develop an Inter-Cities Trail System, connecting the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Veloweb, incorporating all cities that border Saginaw including the Cities of Blue Mound and Fort Worth as well as the Eagle Mountain area.

Goal 5

Coordinate multi-jurisdictional efforts with the relevant county, adjacent cities and the local school district with respect to issues that affect recreational opportunities in the community:

- 5.1 Emphasize a multi-jurisdictional approach to the provision of recreation programs, including Tarrant County and the Cities of Blue Mound and Fort Worth, and the Eagle Mountain area.
- 5.2 Examine the opportunity to create a comprehensive hike and bike/jogging trail system incorporating all adjacent cities that are connected along creeks, utility corridors and streets.
- 5.3 Establish a relationship between the City of Saginaw and the Eagle Mountain-Saginaw Independent School District that supports facility sharing for various programs and events.

Goal 6

Continue to maintain all of the City of Saginaw’s parks and recreational facilities

- 6.1 Provide City parks staff with the manpower and funding resources to maintain all parklands and facilities in a superior manner. Provide additional operations and maintenance resources as new recreational facilities are developed and added to the Saginaw parks system.
- 6.2 Provide the Parks Department with the necessary knowledge and skills to observe and maintain natural areas and habitat by training city staff and/or partnering with adjacent cities or North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to hire individual with such skills.
- 6.3 Continue to improve the quality of operations and maintenance through continued evaluation of the Parks Department’s current operations.

- 6.4 Implement renovation/improvement plans for each park as they age over time and identify a tentative schedule for phasing in improvements.
- 6.5 Address key safety and accessibility needs as quickly as possible.
- 6.6 Promote the use of native plant materials to reduce maintenance and irrigation costs in existing and future parks and on City properties.
- 6.7 Research and consider an organic landscape maintenance program for City property to decrease and/or eliminate the use of potentially harmful chemicals and to invigorate the planted landscape.
- 6.8 Explore and implement innovative techniques to partner with other governmental, non-profit or private organizations to reduce the City’s park maintenance burden.
- 6.9 Actively promote beautification of key corridors in the City.

Goal 7

Develop other funding mechanisms to help supplement the City’s limited funding resources:

- 7.1 Review and update the Park Dedication and Park Development Ordinance to help fund land acquisition and park development accordingly.
- 7.2 Work to create partnerships with Eagle Mountain-Saginaw Independent School District and Tarrant County to actively and aggressively pursue grant funding from local, state and federal sources.
- 7.3 Encourage private cooperation through donations of parkland, labor, and financial contributions.
- 7.4 Establish a program where community and business groups and neighborhood associations can help improve and maintain parks and open space areas.

- 7.5 Continue to encourage the assistance of the private sector in providing landscaping along private and public properties including public rights-of way and medians.
- 7.6 Encourage the establishment of local organizations that can assist with providing park and recreation facilities and programs for the residents of Saginaw.
- 7.7 Encourage the establishment 'Friends of the Parks' to participate in the upkeep and maintenance of relevant park land and landscape features.
- 7.8 Continue to encourage City Council and citizens to increase financial support and promotional support for the Parks and Recreation Department programs and facilities for the park system development and maintenance.

6.7 Summary of Vision, Goals and Objectives

The above goals and objectives provide a continuous loop of park and recreation improvement through public input and fact-based research. Parks, recreation, and open space are elements within the City that affect the long-term image, aspirations, and ultimate sustainability of economics, environmental and cultural quality. The stated goals and objectives provide a clear guideline to achieving the ultimate goal of quality for a lifetime.

"Parks provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic, and recreation benefits to our cities. They are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue, bring in homebuyers and workers, and attract retirees.

At the bottom line, parks are a good financial investment for a community. Understanding the economic impacts of parks can help decision makers better evaluate the creation and maintenance of urban parks."

"How Cities use Parks for Economic Development" City Park Forum
Briefing Paper 3: American Planning Association

7. “Quality for a Lifetime” Plan Recommendations

‘Quality for a Lifetime’

needed recreational facilities for a growing population and outreach to other communities and organizations.

7.1 Parks and Recreation Recommendation

This chapter summarizes the findings of the needs assessment and recommends a series of actions and policies to preserve, create and sustain the quality lifestyle and image of Saginaw through its parks, recreation, and open spaces. These recommendations address City policy concerning parks and recreation, the acquisition of land, and the expansion and improvement of current parks and recreation programs and facilities, as well as operations and maintenance provisions.

While the following recommendations are geared toward the next five to ten years, other long range recommendations are added. These are designed to bridge where Saginaw is now and where the City would like to be in the future, with an eye toward a thriving parks system for all ages. The prioritization and implementation of the following recommendations are in the next chapter.

There are four general strategies for the recommendations:

- **Strategies for Success** - City Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Policy and Operations Procedures.
- **Strategies for Growth** - Land Acquisition – Acquire land for future parks, park expansion, new recreation facilities, and open space including habitat protection where possible.
- **Strategies for Connectivity** – Implement the system of non-vehicular trail recommendations.
- **Strategies for Park, Recreation, and Open Space Upgrades and Conceptual Designs** – Develop parks through a prioritization of needs and implement key improvements to existing individual parks, providing



Park Fishing Pond Example

Strategies for Success

7.2 Policies

All systems within the City must work in unison toward a common vision. Through public participation a vision has been established for the City of Saginaw’s parks, recreation, open space, setting the stage for its physical and cultural image. The following describes policies essential to making and retaining the vision, “Quality for a Lifetime,” a reality for Saginaw.

Policy and Ordinance Issues:

- Community Partnering
- Environmental Leadership
- Park Land Dedication
- Riparian Corridor Protection
- Establish regional Identity
- Connectivity and Hike and Bike Trails
- Operations and Maintenance

7.2.1 Community Partnering

It is recommended that the City of Saginaw seek opportunities to partner with the community, school district, and adjacent cities to improve and renovate the parks and park facilities, increase connectivity, and coordinate the use of space for various programs.

Internal Communications. Continue efforts to coordinate communications between the Park and Recreation Board, City Staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, Public Works, and Recreation Departments. Establish specific action items for recommendations and a timeline for completion. It would be wise to form teams from these departments to ensure all interest and expertise is involved.

Adjacent Municipalities. Continue efforts to coordinate with adjacent municipalities and Tarrant County to increase trail connectivity, open space connections, facility use cooperation’s, and drainage and water issues that arise. Sharing facilities was a concern of some residents of the Eagle Mountain area, since their children attends schools in Saginaw.

School Districts. Because the City of Saginaw and the School District serve many of the same citizens and perform similar tasks, a Joint Use agreement between the City of Saginaw and the EMSISD should be established for jointly utilizing facilities. A joint program of cooperation between the City and School District saves taxpayers money, maximizes local resources, and utilizes land more efficiently.

This agreement should include the use of school district athletic fields and practice fields, detail maintenance and construction and

liability issues, and set up a committee to plan for new joint facilities.

Citizens. The citizens of Saginaw have shown a deep interest in being involved in this PROS Plan. One key way the citizens stay engaged is through various sports and activity associations. These types of associations have a vested interest in the PROS system and can support its implementation through volunteering for maintenance and recreation programs. They can also provide unified support for fund raising activities, bond issues, and park issues that come before the City Council. It is recommended that the City develop specific working agreements for each of the associations.

7.2.1.1 Cooperative Agreements

To establish the legal framework for implementation, a comprehensive joint use agreement should be developed for more and better quality facilities. This agreement should cover a ten-year span with a five year capital improvement plan and would provide guidance for determining the need for development of land, facilities, maintenance and program.

7.2.2 Environmental Stewardship

It is recommended that the City of Saginaw adopt the following environmental policies to enhance their parks and recreations activities.

Refine "No Mow" Policy. Allow park properties designated as Natural Areas, Linear Parks, or Undeveloped land to remain in their natural state. Mowing and other vegetative management practices

will be limited to areas immediately adjacent to developed portions of these parks as parking lots, trail edges, public roads, and private property.

Chemical Application Policy. Promote environmental sensitive vegetation management practices by phasing out the use of hazardous pesticides and reducing overall pesticide use in favor of a more comprehensive and less chemical-dependent approach.

Resources Conservation. Promote maintenance practices and new technology that reduce water and electricity use in order to minimize dependence on these important and costly resources.

Sustainable Design Policy. Consider and incorporate sustainable design materials and construction methods where feasible, including the use of renewable or recycled materials, in all new projects.

Natural Area Park Classification Policy. Include Natural Areas as part of the park classifications, which recognizes the continuing interest in opportunities to experience nature and to relax in natural settings. This will include floodplains to develop into nature trails, etc.

7.2.2.1 Landscape/Tree Ordinance

As part of environmental stewardship, the City of Saginaw should implement a landscape and tree ordinance which helps to promote preservation, protection and enhancement of ecological and aesthetic attributes of the City, thus protecting and preserving the native vegetative species. (see appendix for ordinance example and suggested plant list)

7.2.3 Parkland Dedication

The existing development combined with current pace of proposed development in the City of Saginaw will lead to inadequate parkland acreage and shortage of services for recreation and open space.

With the limited vacant land available and the amount of that land slated for residential and other development there may not be another time to purchase land. These parks may stay undeveloped for several years but the land must be secured now.

7.2.3.1 Parkland Dedication Ordinance

A Parkland Dedication Ordinance should be written to include the following (See Appendix for example):

- Encourage Home Owners Associations to protect and maintain natural and riparian corridors that run through their shared properties and involve a variety of Conservation Trusts in Texas that have as their aim the conservation of open space (see www.texaslandtrusts.org).
- Provide unimpeded public access to these identified and protected site features through a combination of trails, single loaded roads, and dedicated easements.
- Open space, parks and recreational areas required by the park dedication ordinance should be open to both private and public use and enjoyment of the citizens of Saginaw.
- Drainage areas and easements can be accepted as part, but not in whole, of land dedicated for parks and should be made available for park and trail use where needed.
- Utility easements can be accepted as part, but not in whole, as land dedicated for parks and should be made available for park and trail use where needed.

- In addition to the requirement that each park must have ready access to a public street, it is required that single loaded roads be established between a subdivision or part thereof and land set aside for park land and/or open space protected areas.
- Create Park Dedication and Park Improvement Fees for future development

7.2.4 Riparian Corridor Protection

Riparian corridors provide opportunities for recreation in conjunction with flood control and animal habitat. From an economic point of view, these corridors, when designed appropriately, provide aesthetic value along with mechanisms to prevent flooding, which increases property values and make desirable areas for businesses and residents alike. The corridors also establish uninterrupted wildlife linkages, as well as excellent trail connections with minimum disturbance to the land. Native plants above and below the 100 year floodplain boundary acts as biofilters, removing sediments and pollutants from the surface runoff. Small fishing ponds are also a benefit of well-designed corridors.

As a first step it is recommended that the City initiates a Riparian Corridor Study to establish an integrated riparian corridor system that connects to adjacent cities and runs throughout the City of Saginaw. The following aspects should be among the contents of the study:

- Flood management
- Effects of floodplain at build-out conditions
- Corridor bank stability
- Flow velocities, valley storage and water quality

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- Environmental inventory including riparian vegetation, wildlife, cultural and scenic value

Creating a linear greenbelt along riparian corridors has been shown to help optimize protection and corridor use that ensures the quality of life of citizens and opens opportunities for regional interest.²

The City of Saginaw would benefit from a Riparian Corridor Study to identify sensitive areas along the creek and explore options for sight protection. Some options could be:

- Clustered or Conservation Development to balance protection and economic development through reduced infrastructure costs, as well as providing for communal open space.
- Secure land gifts from developers who understand how the value of open space increases the value of individual units.
- Involvement of a Land Trust to assist with acquisition.
- Development of parks along targeted portions of the corridor to encourage outdoor activity and add natural and designed aesthetic value to the City.

7.2.5 Establish Regional Identity

The City of Saginaw has a unique identity centered on the railroad and the grain industry. It was noted in the stakeholder interviews that visitors come from miles around to see the railroad working. The historic grain elevators can be seen for miles in every direction, making them a distinction in the skyline. It is recommended that the

City of Saginaw capitalize on these assets through the design of an overlay district to capture and reinforce this history and image. This will provide a comprehensive plan to provide identity, increase out-of-town patronage, and establish a center and plaza for the City of Saginaw. It is recommended that the City of Saginaw look at the area in the following terms:

- Use existing trains, caboose, Veterans Memorial, train depot, Senior Center, and old City Hall to create an area of intense use with a train and grain focus
- Maximize pedestrian and multi-modal potential
- Creatively build on existing Kiwanis park and adjacent area to provide additional draw to the area
- Repurpose other surrounding buildings to be on line with the theme

7.2.6 Connectivity through Hike and Bike Trails

The influence and interest in the recreational and health benefits of hiking and biking, along with the knowledge of the environmental impact of automobiles have driven this generation's demand for more transportation options. As part of this demand, connectivity and hike and bike systems are becoming desirable attractants for businesses and residents alike. With this in mind, it is recommended that the City of Saginaw develop a Citywide Connectivity and Hike and Bike Trails Plan. The Plan should focus on Smart Growth and balance vehicular and bicycle travel, transportation and recreational travel, connecting neighborhoods, parks, schools, and shopping for the safe travel of all citizens. Some considerations are as follows:

- Well marked bike lanes on road and signage

² City of Allen, Texas 1986

- Hike and bike trails lit and visible at all times
- Off street trails should be 10' wide to allow multiple user and provide space for maintenance and police
- Installation of street trees for comfortable walking
- Benches and bike racks installed appropriately
- Public awareness campaigns of bike/car policy
- Training for the safe operation of bicycles
- Enforcement of traffic laws of bicycles on streets

This policy should include provisions for development land dedication and donation and cash requirements for developers in lieu of donations, etc. A walkable/bike-able Saginaw will help maintain the rural, small-town community feel that its residents love.

7.2.7 Operations and Maintenance

A beautiful, well maintained PROS system is an asset to the City and can only be sustained through adequate staff, training, and equipment. So integral a part does this play, that no park facility should be developed without the means to adequately support it. As the City and its PROS system grows with the population, the following recommendations should be considered.

1. Develop a plan to implement native plant material with low water requirements as much as possible. The Appendix gives a list of plants suited to the City of Saginaw's climate, moisture, and soil.
2. Implement an annual tree-planting program in all parks. This strategy phases the cost of trees for shade, as well as

- ensures good forestry practices by mixing the age of the trees and giving parks a more natural look and feel.
3. City maintenance staff should be trained in low impact maintenance and operations. This can often be done through local agencies, such as master gardeners or master naturalist at little or no cost to the City.
4. The City of Saginaw should consider starting a City tree farm that could be adopted by schools and civic groups. This would provide trees at potentially lower rate, which are adapted to the climate and soils of Saginaw.
5. Implement a City composting program where citizens of Saginaw can dispose of tree and plant clippings can be chipped into mulch and composting can be used on projects across the City. This is part of an organic maintenance system to reduce the need for chemicals and pesticides.
6. Automated irrigation systems should be considered in all parks, controlled by a central computerized system. This increases the health of the parks and controls the cost of water to the City.

Strategies for Growth

7.3. PROS Growth

It has been said that if you aren't growing, you are dying. The City of Saginaw is growing, and with it so is the demand for its parks, recreation, and open spaces. The following recommendations address the recommendations for the PROS system in dealing with this growth.

7.3.1 Park Land Acquisition

With the rapid rate of growth and diminishing vacant land, the cost and availability of land rising and diminishing respectively. In order to meet the future demands of residents and businesses it is necessary for the City of Saginaw to acquire new parkland. The map on page 7:8 shows where future residential development is most likely to occur based on existing zoning. The need to acquire parkland as shown in the Parks Suitability Analysis on the next page helps to demonstrate where future parks may be needed and recognizes that a concerted, targeted effort be made toward this end.

Based on the current population, Saginaw is 119 acres below the recommended target. As the population grows, this deficit will rise to 200 by 2020 and 350 by 2030 (based on population projections).

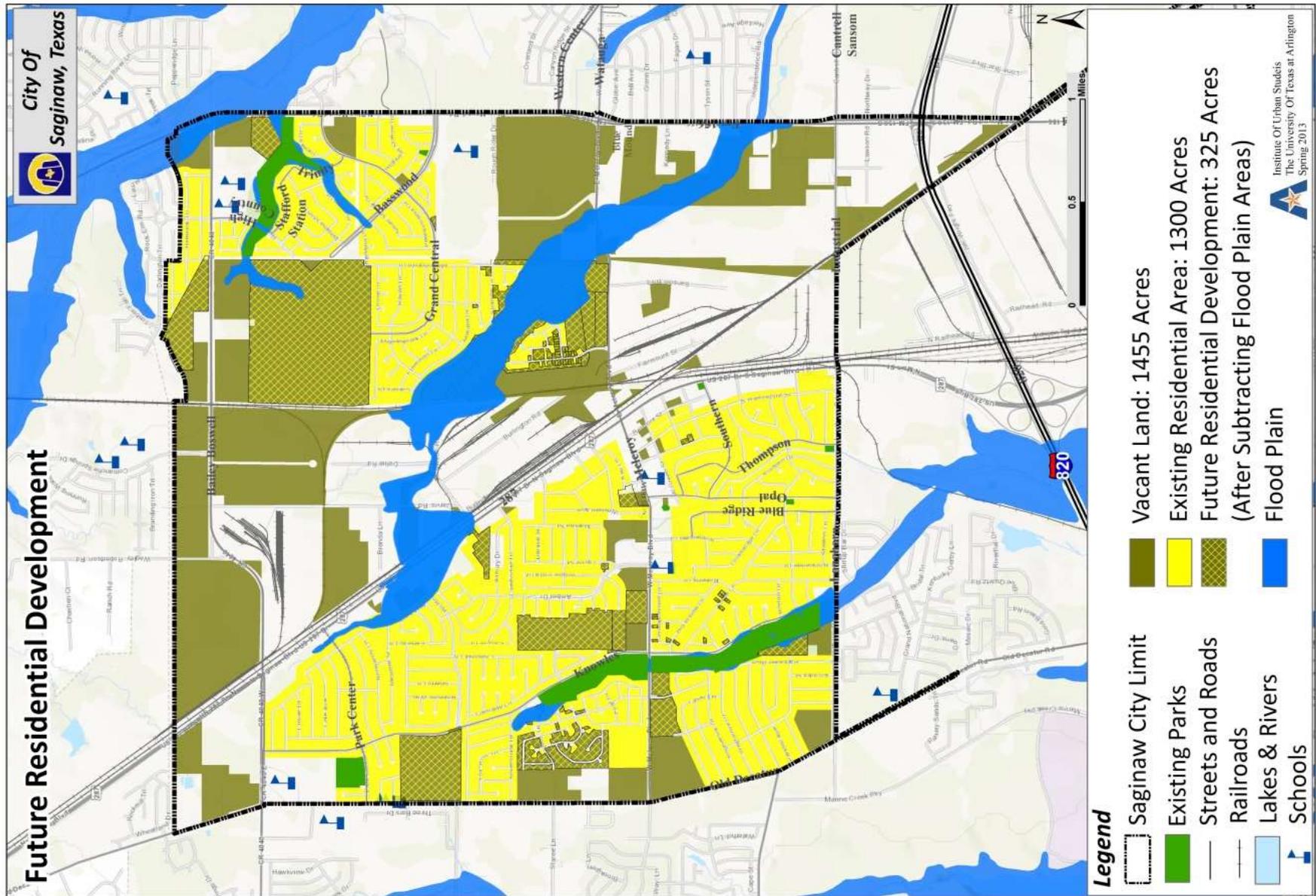
The Park Suitability Map on page 7.9 shows areas that are acceptable for future parks (solid tan color), and those that are desirable (solid maroon color). These reflect developed areas that

are currently underserved, as well as future areas designated as residential that will need parks. It is advantageous to look at areas that have a large degree of natural interest, such as riparian corridors, hilly terrain, or natural stands of trees. Future development should be a combination of public/private partnerships to ensure city-wide connectivity and multi-user open access.

The park types will be several small, neighborhood parks of 1-2 acres within a 5 minute walk (1/4 mile), two community parks of 5-8 acres minimum, and the creation of linear parks that connect the natural corridors and provide access to nature. The linear parks could be left in primarily in their natural state to reduce maintenance and preserve the rural feel of Saginaw.

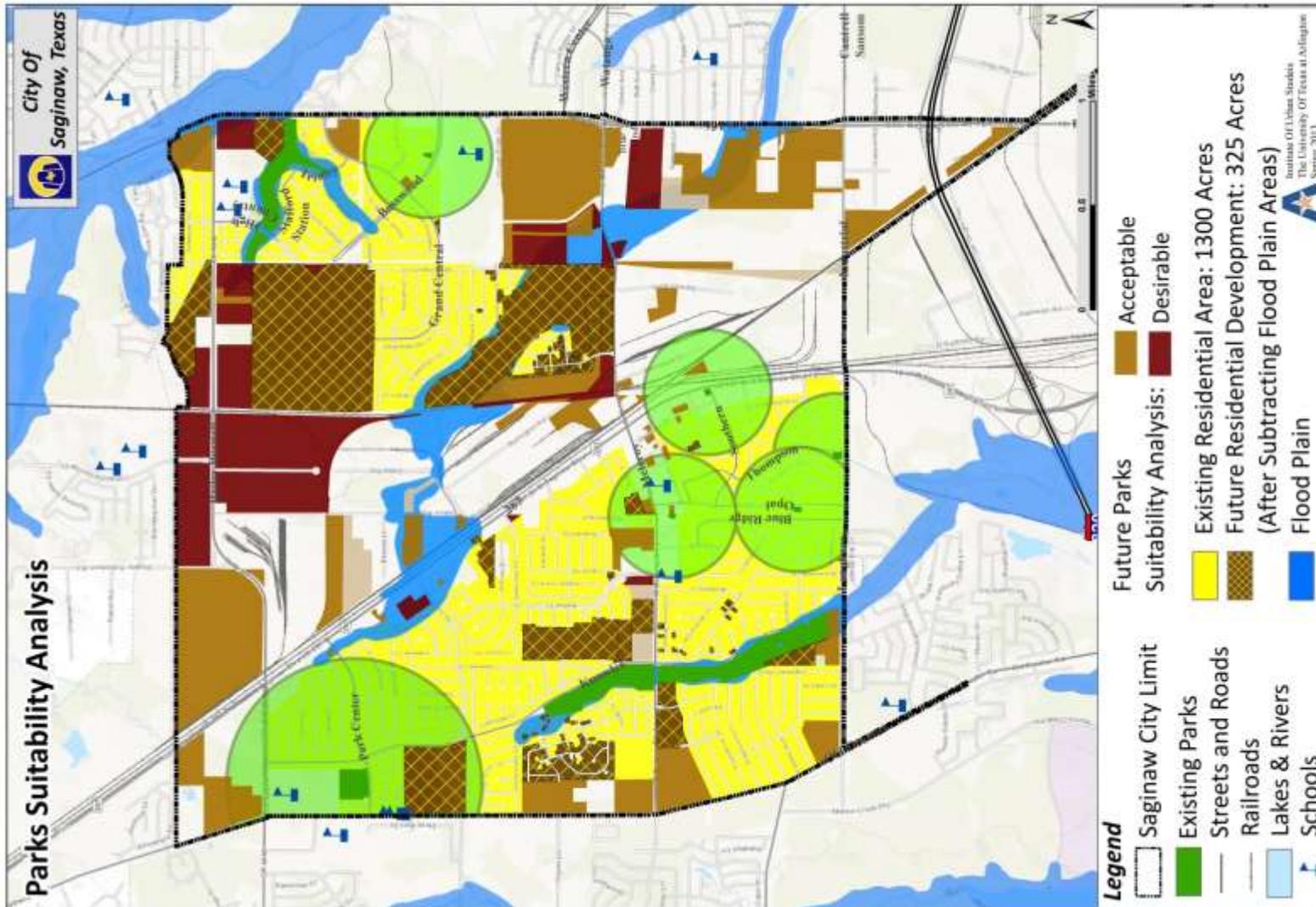
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While newly acquired parklands are left largely undeveloped until the needs arise, opportunities exist to develop soft surface trails through the site for the public to increase personal connections so it becomes part of their City image map.

The acquisition of land should focus on the provision of sports fields, recreation centers, neighborhood parks, community parks, linear parks, and the protection of habitat and open spaces. Land acquisition may include direct purchasing, parkland dedication, the establishment of recreation and/or parkland easements, purchasing of development rights (purchasing of the right to develop from a property owner, with the intent of never developing the land but to place it in a conservation easement forever), and the involvement of organizations such as Conservation Trusts (www.texaslandtrusts.org).

The Parks Suitability Analysis Map to the left shows the desirable locations for parkland area to be acquired. The map includes existing and proposed locations of Neighborhood, Community, and Linear parks and their relationship to schools.

7.3.2 Gateways and City Image

A key component of a City's image lies in what people see when they first enter a city. Good design of these important gateways helps the City establish and reinforce its uniqueness, establishes a sense of community, and promotes a healthy walk/bike feel.

Therefore, the following recommendations are made:

1. Establish unique identifiers for entrance markers at the ends of Saginaw Main, Bailey Boswell, Old Decatur Road, Longhorn Avenue, and Blue Mound Road.
2. Reinforce the entrances with street tree plantings and consistent street/pedestrian lighting.
3. Use streetlights to display banners for City of Saginaw image, annual events, and special places.



Light Post and Banner Example

7.3.3 Dog Park

One of the most sought after items that emerged from the public input meeting was the need for dog parks. Many Saginaw residents use the current parks and trails to walk their dogs. Dog parks

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provide places for exercise for both people and their dogs, while providing an avenue for socializing with others in the neighborhood.

With the growing population and shrinking personal yards, the demand for these types of spaces will continue to grow. The recommendation for the City of Saginaw concerning dog parks is to put them in three areas; two in Highland Station Park, one for small dogs and one for large; and one in Willow Creek Park.

Some considerations should be made along trails to ensure that dogs have places for water and their caretakers have places in which to dispose of dog waste. The appendix contains research from UC Davis concerning dog parks, and the AKC has a manual for the design and considerations for building them at

<http://classic.akc.org/pdfs/GLEG01.pdf>.



Dog Park Example

7.3.4 Spraygrounds

Splash pads are a growing favorite amongst many City residents, including Saginaw's. They provide refreshing play in our hot climate, children flock to them, and parents are provided a place for water play without the risk of children drowning. Joggers and other trail users also enjoy a brief spray when they are located near trails.

The design of these types of places varies from simple sprays to elaborate choreographed displays that are lit at night for an added aesthetic in a park. The City of Haltom City has recently installed two such spraygrounds, and these parks are full from morning until evening. Consideration should be made as to shaded seating, restroom facilities, and covered picnic areas for family enjoyment.

While no recommendation has been made as to the style or size of spraygrounds, three existing parks would greatly benefit from medium to large splash pads; William Houston, Highland Station, and Willow Creek. In addition, the three small neighborhood parks could install simple splash pads.



Sprayground Example

7.3.5 Skateparks

Many of those who contributed to the public input process were interested in a skatepark for the City of Saginaw. This is a growing trend, and these parks have a long history of success in many places, including many European countries. The sport of skateboarding has moved from marginal participant to main-line activities, bringing in tournament fees and interest for those parks that are well designed and maintained. The USA Skatepark Association counts over 12 million skateboarders and 3 million BMX riders in the United States, a group that is gradually making skateparks a destination in the City park systems. However, this growth is not without controversy.

Some Saginaw residents expressed concern that the addition of a skatepark could bring crime and vandalism to the community's parks. This is a common fear, and many municipalities have initially resisted the push for skatepark construction. However, research by the Institute shows that when properly executed, skateparks rarely attract illegal behavior. Skateboarding advocacy groups such as the Tony Hawk Foundation suggest that the sport can bolster youth, building self-esteem and promoting cooperation, social skills, and friendship. Anecdotal evidence indicates skateboarding youth avoid drugs, alcohol, and tobacco because of the physical and technical nature of the maneuvers they perform.

The recommendation for the City of Saginaw is to find a space for a skatepark that would be easily accessible, well lit, and part of other recreational activities. The skatepark location could also be used for competitions and tournaments, providing some funding for the

upkeep. The Appendix has additional information and research concerning skateparks.



Skatepark Example

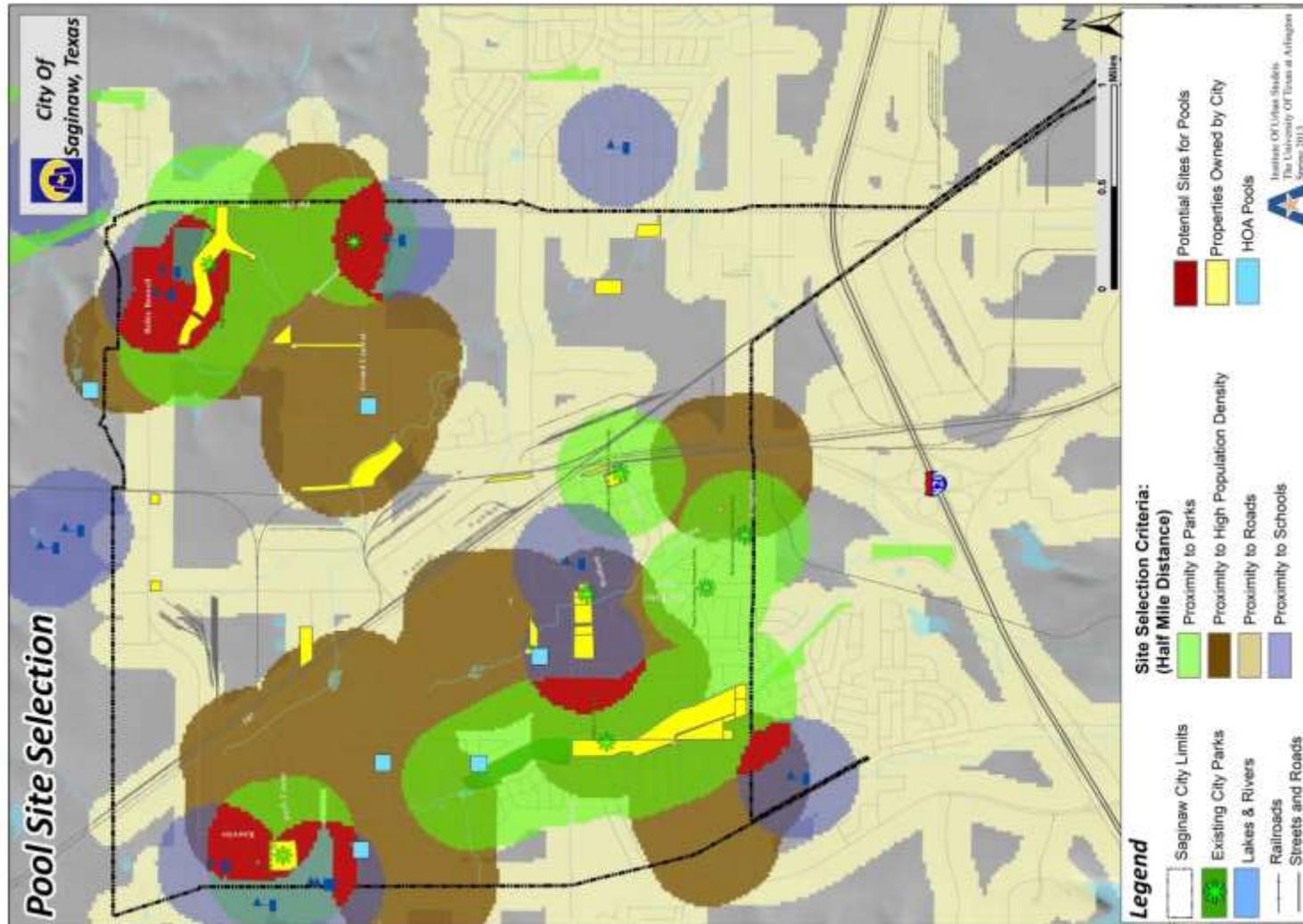
“City parks offer children a sense of place, self-identity, and belonging as an antidote to social alienation, vandalism, and violence.”

City Parks Forum Paper 06: Help Children Learn, American Planning Association

7.3.6 Indoor Pool and Exercise Rooms

The City of Saginaw enjoys the benefit of having a strong school system. One of the activities that many of the students participate in is the swim team. Public input expressed the desire and need to have an indoor swimming pool that would accommodate year-round practice and competition. Currently, students have to be bussed to other cities in order to practice, which ties them up for long periods of time and interferes with study and other activity time, not to mention family time.

In addition to public input, the evaluation of distance between pools recommended by the National Parks and Recreation Department suggests that Saginaw is lacking in this facility. There are two possible recommendations for an indoor pool in the City of Saginaw. The first is to build one next to the community center in William Houston Park. This has the advantage of being close to both Saginaw and Eagle Mountain, who share the school district. The map on the following page shows an evaluation of population and pool location based on recommendations from the Texas Recreation and Parks Association.



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The second possibility would work in conjunction with another item residents have voiced that they need, and that is a larger exercise and workout space. The current recreation facility is very nice, but public input suggests that it is not large enough. It is recommended that the City build an indoor pool facility and an additional exercise gym and weight room on the growing east end of Saginaw. Saginaw should also consider working in conjunction with the school district and the YMCA to help fund and maintain the facility, as the entire community would benefit. This space could also be used as a workout facility for police and fire fighters in the surrounding area.

7.3.7 Fishing Ponds

In response to the community wishing to keep their small, rural feel, fishing ponds were suggested in the stakeholder and public meetings. Fishing ponds provide a relaxed atmosphere, a natural, ecologically sound area that supports important habitat, cleans water, and slows runoff. Keeping them stocked with fish limits mosquitoes and provides a fun family time for all ages.

Because the City of Saginaw has three main water drainage systems running through it, there are a number of places to put ponds. The recommendation has several parts. The first would be to develop a fishing pond at Willow Creek Park. This would be part of the central section, which is shown on the conceptual design in the next section of this chapter. This pond would have more of a small botanical garden feel.

The second place that is perfect for fishing ponds is along Highland Station Park. With its linear stretch it is recommended that a series of small ponds be installed.



Pond Suggestion from Farmer's Branch

In addition to these, the two existing ponds which currently are part of a homeowners association on the east side of the city could be negotiated with the City. These two ponds are included on the Highland Station conceptual design in the next section of this chapter, and could provide the sought after image of a rural community.

7.3.8 Community Gardens

In communities across America there is a growing trend for community gardens. These gardens provide a place to grow fresh produce, provides education for all ages concerning gardening, organic methods, and water-saving practices. The gardeners get exercise, contribute to local food banks, and become part of a strong, working social group. Many cities have incorporated these gardens into the city's everyday life. They have the added benefit of being relatively low cost to install and the gardeners do most of the

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care and maintenance. The Appendix has more details and research regarding community gardens.

The recommendation is for the City of Saginaw, with the help of its citizens, established a terraced community garden on the south west side of Highland Station Park. This placement is close to schools and neighborhoods, takes advantage of a steeper terrain, has a pavilion and restroom facility, parking and easy access.

7.3.9 Community Events

Community events provide more than just something to do in a city. The hallmark of small towns everywhere is the many community events that bring citizens together, provide a place for celebration, commerce and connections, and reinforce a positive community image.

Many residents in the public input process made mention of bringing back the community Train and Grain celebration event. With the improvements in the parks systems, the City of Saginaw will be able to host many activities in collaboration with the school district and surrounding communities.

Along with great community building, these events bring in additional economic activity and fees to help establish and maintain facilities. Some ideas for community events include concerts at Willow Creek's proposed amphitheater; walk, run, bicycle events for charity along the newly developed trails system; Easter Egg Hunts, Halloween Carnival and Harvest festival, and Fourth of July Parade and Fair. Other ideas are community group sponsored Christmas tree Wonderland in the park, a Railroad enthusiast-based event, and an event to celebrate the historic Chisholm Trail. It is

Chapter 7: "Quality for a Lifetime" Plan Recommendations

recommended that a committee is established specifically to develop community events.

7.3.10 Parking

Parking at several of the parks was identified by Saginaw's residents as being an issue at some of the parks. While we seek to increase the walkability in the City of Saginaw to help create a rural feel, it is important to include plans for automobiles. As can be seen in the conceptual designs, more parking has been included at various places in Willow Creek and William Houston Parks.

7.3.11 Project Dream Play

Many citizens expressed interest in parks, recreation, and open spaces that were accessible to all people and all abilities. A major addition to Willow Creek Park will be the development of a park specifically designed for people with special needs. In addition to this park, equipment should be added at other parks that are designed for people of all abilities and age groups. These can be as simple as a swing set with wheelchair access, to tactile and audio play equipment. This type of equipment can be enjoyed by everyone, and funding help is often available to help establish them. A national resource to find grants can be found at <http://rulesoftheparkground.com/83-playground-fundraising-and-grant-links/>

7.3.11.1 Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines

Recent changes in the rules regarding play structures and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require that play structures constructed or altered after March 15, 2012 must comply with the 2010 ADA Standards. With these rule changes, care must be taken

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to ensure that Saginaw's play structures meet the set standards and that all children can access and enjoy the equipment. Additionally, final designs of any playground areas should accommodate for integrated play among children of differing needs. For further information and clarification on specific standards for ground surface types, play components, and other accessibility rules, please consult the Americans with Disabilities Act, the 2010 ADA Standards, and the American Society for Testing and Materials.



Project Dream Play Proposed by City of Saginaw

Strategies for Connectivity

7.4 Pedestrian and Non-Vehicular Transportation.

Saginaw public input has shown that a large number of its citizens are interested in hike and bike connectivity throughout the City. To provide for all abilities and socio-economic abilities of its citizens, the City will actively promote pedestrian and non-vehicular linkages between parks, neighborhoods, and commercial centers throughout the City. A strong emphasis should be placed on the continued development of a well-connected hike and bike system both on and off the roads. Emphasis should also be placed on connectivity to the Veloweb, as well as pedestrian access improvements to and from commercial centers, schools, and neighborhoods. The following Hike and Bike Concept Map is an example of how a trail system throughout the City of Saginaw might develop. A Hike and Bike Trails Master Plan should be developed to aid in this process, with the following goals:

Goal 1: Connect parks, school, neighborhoods, and business centers.

Goal 2: Develop streetscapes, lane markings, signage, benches and bike racks.

Goal 3: Connect to other city’s trail systems.

Goal 4: Start a bike-share program.

7.4.1 Proposed Trail Features

The following trail features should be considered:

Trailheads: These should include location maps, bike racks, trashcans, and benches. Saginaw has several parks that could be used as trailheads or gathering spaces for non-vehicular stops.

Tree Canopy: A deciduous tree canopy provides protection from the sun and rain. It also brings the outside space down to a comfortable human scale. Canopy trees should be planted along the trails to encourage trail use and beautify the City.

Benches: Sturdy, durable perforated metal benches with shade at intervals allow for a wider range of uses and abilities.

Designated Open Space and Natural Areas: Trails through these areas reinforce the rural feel of the City and provide reinvigorating exercise.

Milepost Markers: Markers help in way-finding and in achieving distance goals of walkers, joggers and cyclists. These markers should be unique and consistent to the City, made of durable material and set in concrete or stone.

Trashcans: Provide for waste disposal throughout the City, especially along pedestrian corridors.

Dog Waste Stations: A large number of people on foot have their dogs with them. These stations should be placed throughout the City.

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Information Kiosks: Trailhead stations should provide users with information about rules and destinations. A sense of community is created through involving school and other organizations in the process of designing, building, and maintaining the kiosks.



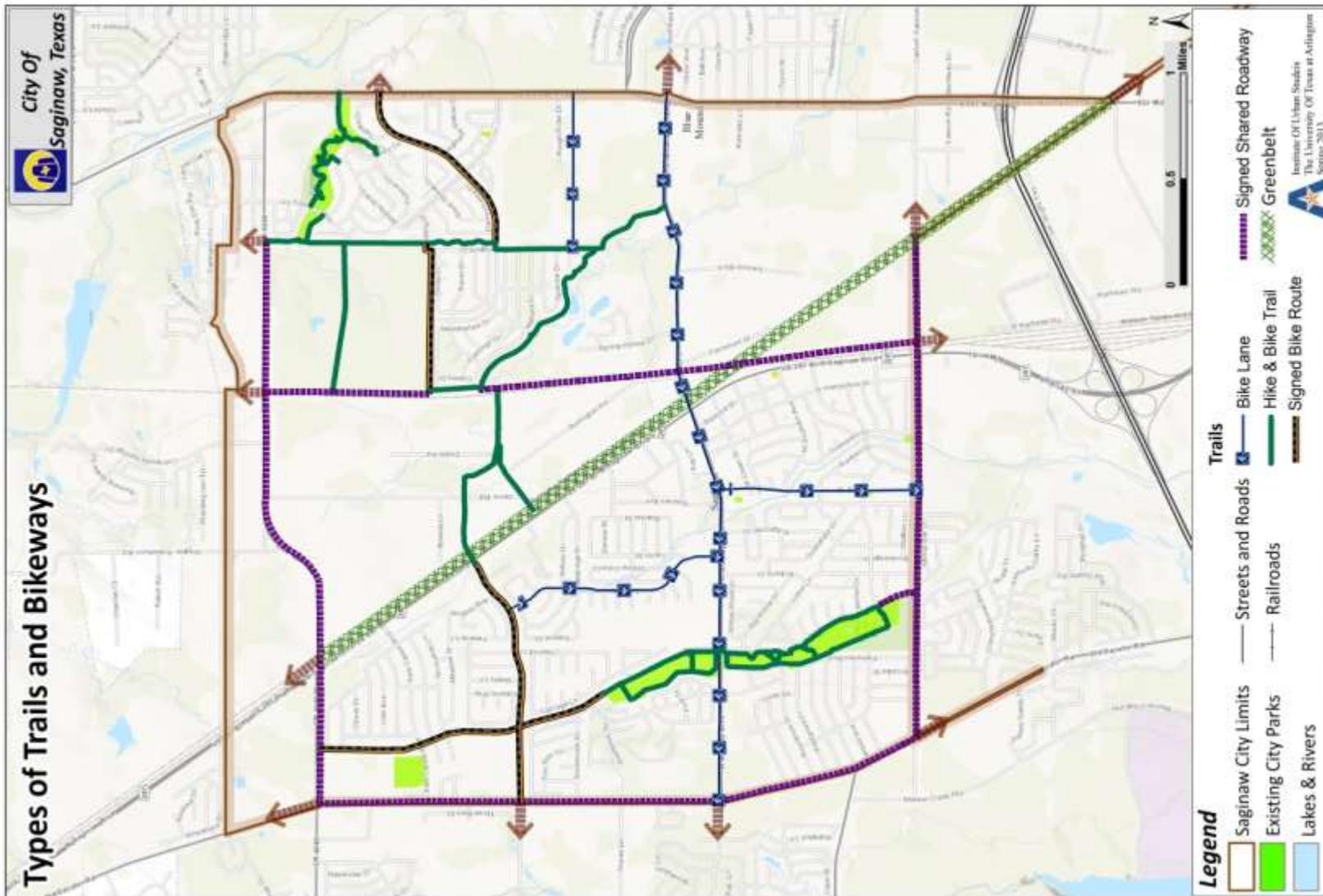
Bike Trail, North Richland Hills, Texas

“Cities need to provide all types of parks, to provide their various citizen groups with a range of health benefits.”

*City Parks Forum Paper 07: Improve Public Health,
American Planning Association*

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Strategies for Park, Recreation, and Open Space Upgrades and Conceptual Designs

7.5 Existing Parks

The following recommendations flow from the needs assessments found in chapter 3 of the PROS Plan. Based on the findings and benchmarking for best practices from other cities, the following recommendations and design concepts were devised. The following concerns upgrades and additions to existing PROS.

7.6 Minor Upgrades

7.6.1 Brian Schwengler Memorial Park

Park Type: Pocket Park

Immediate Needs:

Canopy trees and Landscaping
Screening from Longhorn Avenue

Intermediate Needs:

Upgraded signage with memorial plaque
Durable Playhouse

Long-Term Needs:

Lighting
Small splash pad

7.6.2 Opal Jo Jennings Memorial Park

Park Type: Pocket Park

Immediate Needs:

Canopy Trees and Landscaping

Needs:

Upgraded signage
Small community garden

Long-Term Needs:

Lighting
Sand Court for Bocce or Horseshoes

7.6.3 Sagewood Park

Park Type: Pocket Park

Immediate Needs:

Canopy Trees and Landscaping
Lighting

Intermediate Needs:

One additional covered picnic table
Upgraded signage
Small community garden

Long-Term Needs:

Versatile sand court for Bocce, Horseshoes, or Volleyball

7.7 Major Redevelopment

7.7.1 Meditation Park (Municipal Center)

Park Type: Special Use

Immediate Needs:

- Canopy Trees and Landscaping
- Irrigation
- Lunch seating for City Staff and Library

Intermediate Needs:

- Lighting

Long-Term Needs:

- Water Feature
- Walk Realignment

7.7.2 Kiwanas Park/Veterans Memorial

Park Type: Special Use

Create a Historic Community Plaza combining Senior Center, Chamber of Commerce, and moving caboose to park Railroad Depot Tourist Center

Immediate Needs:

- Improve Signage
- Create Design for entire plaza

Intermediate Needs:

- Move Caboose to area to draw attention to place

Long-Term Needs

- Implement Design to embrace heritage



See end of Appendix for larger park image

7.7.3 Highland Station Park

Park Type: Community Park

Immediate Needs:

- Install additional Lighting
- Widen walk to allow for patrol car access
- Create Dog Parks
- Install Community Garden
- Environmental Learning Center

Intermediate Needs:

- Create Ponds
- Spray Park
- Parking Spaces
- Lighted Practice Fields
- New Access Points for Automobiles

Long-Term Needs:

- Additional Pavilions
- Potential for future Olympic indoor pool



See end of Appendix for larger park image

7.7.4 William Houston Park

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Immediate Needs:

- Lighting
- Irrigation
- Practice Fields
- Parking

Intermediate Needs:

- Spray Park or Pool
- Jogging Trails



See end of Appendix for larger park image

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7.7.5 Willow Creek Park

Park Type: Community Park

Immediate Needs:

- DreamPlay
- Large Spray Park
- Dog Parks
- Parking

Intermediate Needs:

- Practice Fields

Long-Term Needs:

- Amphitheater/ Performing Arts and Cultural Center



7.8 New Investments

7.8.1 Saginaw Skatepark

Park Type: Community Park

Needs:

Establish budget and potential size needed
Create skate organization
Skatepark installation to be determined according to budget

7.8.2 Saginaw Recreation and Indoor Pool Center

Park Type: Community Center

Needs:

Establish budget and potential size needed
Create cooperative between school and city
Installation to be determined according to budget

7.8.3 City Gateway Beautification

Immediate Needs:

Establish Branding' Signage

Intermediate Needs:

Move Railroad Cars to More Visible Places

Long-Term Needs:

Create Large, Identifiable City Gates

8.1 Introduction

The PROS Plan is a roadmap to accomplishing the continual improvement of the park and recreation system. One of the most critical parts of the PROS Plan is the implementation to get the City of Saginaw where it wants and needs to be in the future. The recommendations in chapter 7 are prioritized here and potential funding recommendations are discussed.

The prioritizations for the level of needs expressed in the PROS Plan are based on the following criteria:

- Demand-based needs as expressed in the public input
- Standard-based needs as assessed through state and national standards compared to current and future growth of the City of Saginaw
- Resource based needs based on natural and cultural conditions

8.2 High Priority Facility Needs

To determine the highest priorities for facilities in the City of Saginaw, all the criteria above is taken together adding the weight of current local and regional trends in economics, environmental issues, and cultural considerations.

The following priorities express the citizens stated desires as well as emphasis on a future image that embraces the culture and climate of a rural city within an urban environment. This juxtaposition makes Saginaw a desirable place to raise a family and retire.

Overall Parks and Recreation Priorities:

- 1 Park Land Acquisition
- 2 Park Lighting, Security, and Restroom and Accessibility
- 3 Hike and Bike Trails
- 4 More Trees
- 5 Dog Park
- 6 Splash Parks
- 7 Parking
- 8 Lighted Practice/Play Fields
- 9 More Recreational Facilities and an Indoor Swimming Pool
- 10 Community Programming

8.3 Action Plans

In order to maintain a rural feel, park land acquisition is needed immediately. With the cost of land and the speed at which it is being developed in Saginaw, it is prudent to act on this first. A rural, country feel can only be accomplished with open space, which is quickly vanishing in the City. This protects the remaining natural environment, and provides for future parks and recreation development as the City grows.

According to current development patterns within Saginaw, land acquisition for parks will be most near new development. The Suitability map on page 7.9 of this document shows potential sites for parks. A number of acquisition options are available, including parkland dedication, municipal bond financing, land swap, and land bequests. More funding strategies are listed in this section.

The addition of park utilities in the form of lighting, security, restrooms and accessibility are second on the list. Creating an atmosphere of safety and security that everyone can enjoy is a hallmark of a quality lifestyle.

Hike and Bike trails were third on the priority list. The ability to connect the City within itself and to surrounding cities has many benefits. It allows all citizens to reduce the use of automobiles, enjoy the City at a slower pace, get much needed exercise, and allows children to have safe routes to schools and parks.

8.3.1 Ten Year Action Plan

The Ten-Year Action Plan responds to the priorities established in the Public Input and Needs Assessment portion of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

The following table prioritizes recommendations and gives some potential funding sources. The facilities listed are the minimum which are recommended to be provided.

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ACTION PLAN 2013-2023			
Time Frame	Action	Purpose	Responsible Entity
1-5 Years	Land acquisition	Retain rural feel and nature preservation to meet national park standards	City Council, Developers, Citizens
1-3 Years	Park dedication and subdivision policies implemented	Ensure continued expansion of park system to meet growing population	City Council, Citizens
1-5 Years	Trail system established	Non-vehicular connectivity and safe recreation for all ages	City Council, Private Organizations, Public Works, Recreation Dept
1-5 Years	Dog parks in Willow Creek and Highland Station	Accommodate many dog owner needs and increase park use throughout the day for safety and security	City Council, Private Organizations, Public Works, Recreation Dept
1-3 Years	Project Dream Plan implemented	Provide vital play area for all children	City Council, Project Dreamplay Organization, Public Works, Recreation Dept
1-5 Years	Lighting in Highland Station	Safety and increased park use	Public Works
1-5 Years	Spray parks installed	Provide popular amenity for all ages in parks to increase park use	City Council, Private Organizations, Public Works, Recreation Dept
Ongoing	Trees installed in all parks	Provide much needed shade and aesthetics	City Council, Private Organizations, Public Works, Recreation Dept
1-7 Years	Irrigation at all parks	Protect landscapes and make for pleasant experience	City Council, Private Organizations, Public Works, Recreation Dept
1-3 Years	Wider trail in Highland Station	Security and maintenance access for safety	City Council, Public Works

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Time Frame	Action	Purpose	Responsible Entity
1-5 Years	Lighted practice fields created and school partnerships	Increase ability for children to practice in Saginaw for organized leagues	Public/ Private Partnerships, Public Works, Schools, Recreation Department
1-7 Years	Installing more bathrooms and lighting in parks	Comfort and security of parks system	City Council, Public Works
1-5 Years	Parking lots, especially Willow Creek	Safety of community park users, better access for all abilities, facilitate practice fields use	City Council, Public Works
1-3 Years	Create gateways into City	Create a sense of arrival and beautification for Saginaw	City Council, Private Organizations, Public Works, Recreation Dept
3-7 Years	Indoor swimming pool	Provide much needed place for swimming competitions and practice	City Council, Public/Private Schools, Public Works, Recreation Dept
Ongoing	Community programming and events	Connect citizens to each other and provide a community feel and sense of belonging	City Council, Chamber of Commerce, Other Organizations
5-10 Years	Skate Park	Safe place for older children to skate and provide potential revenue to parks system	City Council, Public Works, Recreation Dept

8.4 Funding Strategies

The realization of the City PROS system can only happen if there is funding to support it. The following overarching philosophy for Saginaw parks helps to guide the financing position:

1. Quality over quantity
2. Re-investment
3. Leveraging resources
4. Responsible fiscal, social, and environmental stewardship

Most parks maintenance and upkeep are funded through the general fund. However, finding new and creative ways to fund and finance PROS and services can add a layer of certainty through a variety of funding options, involve more people creating a connection with the various places, and enhance the City's ability to provide higher quality places and more activities. The following is a list of potential funding sources to aid in the implementation of this PROS Plan.

8.4.1 Corporate Sponsorships

The City of Saginaw has a number of industries located within its city limits. With the growing concern for the environment many corporations desire to engage favorably in the local ecology. This funding source allows corporations to invest in the development and enhancement of new or existing facilities in the PROS system. This is done through direct donations or sponsorships and staffing of programs and events.

8.4.2 Partnerships

Partnerships help to share cost and risks, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths of each partner. Partnerships

can be developed between two government entities, a non-profit and a City department, or private businesses or organizations and a City agency. Development of a "friends of the park" advocacy organization for fundraising is a great way to engage citizens and create community.

8.4.3 Dedication/Development Fees

These fees are assessed for the development and upgrade of parks, recreational facilities open spaces and trails for residential and/or commercial properties. This is addressed in Chapter 7 under Park Land Dedication and an example is given in the appendix.

8.4.4 Foundation/Gift

Many tax-exempt, non-profit organizations offer a variety of means to fund and promote specific causes, activities or issues. These can be in the means of capital projects campaigns, fundraisers, endowments, etc.

8.4.5 Recreation Service Fees

These dedicated user fees allow participants the opportunity to contribute toward the upkeep of facilities they use and can apply to all organized activities which require a reservation of some type. Examples of activities are sports leagues, special interest classes, and other organized programs requiring exclusive or intense use of a facility. The funds are used to maintain existing facilities or constructing new ones.

8.4.6 Revised Intermodal Transportation and Efficiency Act (H.R. 2889)

This funding program was originally authorized by the Federal Government in 1991. Funds are distributed through the state. There

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are several million dollars in enhancement revenues available for transportation related projects, including bicycle and pedestrian trails, rail depot rehabilitation, landscaping, and beautification projects

8.4.7 Land and Water Conservation Fund

The LWCF Program provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities (as well as funding for shared federal land acquisition and conservation strategies). The program is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities and to stimulate non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the United States (<http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/>).

8.4.8 General Obligation Bonds

Used primarily for capital improvements and general public improvement, these bonds are issued with the approval of the electorate.

8.4.9 Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Tax

The tax based on gross receipts from charges and meals services can be used to build and operate sports fields, regional parks, pools and other special park and recreation facilities. With both Fort Worth and Alliance moving in toward the City of Saginaw there may be opportunity to increase and diverse these business types, which often glean a benefit from a city with a strong, positive image.

8.4.10 Grants

The following grant programs are potential sources of funding other than municipal sources:

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Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TRPA) Program - Texas Local Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Fund, administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Funds are available on a fifty percent (50%) cost share basis.

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/>

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) The Landscaping Cost Sharing Program, administered by TxDOT. Fifty percent (50%) cost sharing support is available for both highway and pedestrian landscape projects on routes within the designated permanent state highway system.

National Tree Trust Partnership Provides databases for a number of funding opportunities.

<http://meldi.snre.umich.edu/node/21529>

Texas Department of Forestry Urban and Community Forest Challenge Grant. Matching grants are available on a 50/50 cost share basis for a variety of projects including program development, beautification, staffing and training workshops. These are small grants of \$5,000 to \$15,000. In-kind services and/or private money can provide the matching funds. <http://www.fs.fed.us/ucf/nucfac>

CDBG Funding: Funding received in accordance with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs national objectives as established by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development. Funding may be applied to such programs as Infrastructure Improvements, Public Facility and Park Improvements, Human Service Enhancements, Lead-Based Paint Education and Reduction, Housing Education Assistance, and Economic Development and Anti-poverty strategies.

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8.4.11 Special Improvement District/Benefit District

Taxing districts established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, the erection of fountains, and acquisition of art, and supplemental services for improvement and promotion, including recreation and cultural enhancements.

8.4.12 Annual Appropriation/Leasehold Financing

This is a financing structure which requires use of a third party to act as issuer of the bonds, construct the facility and retain title until the bonds are retired. The City enters into a lease agreement with the third party, with annual lease payments equal to the debt service requirements. The bonds issued by the third party are considered less secure than general obligation bonds of the City, and therefore more costly. Since a separate corporation issues these bonds, they do not impact the City's debt limitations and do not require a vote. However, they also do not entitle the City to levy property taxes to service the debt. The annual lease payments must be appropriated from existing revenues.

8.4.13 Inter-local Agreements

Contractual relationships entered into between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.

8.4.14 Revenue Bonds

Bonds used for capital projects that will generate revenue for debt service where fees can be set aside to support repayment of the bond.

8.4.15 Private Concessionaires

Contract with a private business to provide and operate desirable recreational activities financed, constructed, and operated by the private sector with additional compensation paid to the City.

8.4.16 Fees/Charges

The City must position its fees and charges to be market-driven and based on both public and private facilities. The potential outcome of revenue generation is consistent with national trends relating to public park and recreation agencies, which generate an average 35% to 50% of operating expenditures.

8.4.17 Land Trust

Many counties have developed land trusts to help secure and fund the cost for acquiring land that needs to be preserved and protected for greenway purposes. This could be a good source to look to for acquisition of future lands.

8.4.18 Greenway Utility

Greenway utilities are used to finance acquisition of greenways and development of the greenways by selling the development rights underground for the fiber optic types of businesses.

8.4.19 Naming Rights

Many cities and counties sell the naming rights for new buildings or renovation of existing buildings and parks for the development cost associated with the improvement. These developers lease space from City-owned land through a subordinate lease that pays out a set dollar amount plus a percentage of gross dollars for recreation enhancements. These could include a golf course, marina,

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restaurants, driving ranges, sports complexes, equestrian facilities, and recreation centers and ice arenas.

8.4.20 Private Developers

These developers lease space from City-owned land through a subordinate lease that pays out a set dollar amount plus a percentage of gross dollars for recreation enhancements. These could include a golf course, marina, restaurants, driving ranges, sports complexes, equestrian facilities, and recreation centers and ice arenas.

8.4.21 Sales Tax

This revenue source has been very successful in funding park systems. This tax is very popular in high traffic tourism type cities and with counties and state parks.

8.4.22 Food and Beverage Tax

The tax is usually associated with convention and tourism bureaus. However, since parks and recreation agencies manage many of the tourism attractions, they receive a portion of this funding source for operational or capital expenses.

8.4.23 Capital Improvement Fees

These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as golf, recreation centers and pools to support capital improvements that benefit the user of the facility.

8.4.24 Concession Management

Concession management is from retail sales or rentals of soft goods, hard goods, or consumable items. The City either contracts for the service or receives a set of the gross percentage or the full revenue dollars that incorporates a profit after expenses.

8.4.25 Friends Associations

These groups are formed to raise money typically for a single focus purpose that could include a park facility or program that will better the community as a whole and their special interest.

8.4.26 Advertising Sales

This revenue source is for the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising on park and recreation related items such as in the City's program guide, on scoreboards, dasher boards and other visible products or services that are consumable or permanent that exposes the product or service to many people.

8.4.27 Easements

This revenue source is available when the City allows utility companies, businesses, or individuals to develop some type of an improvement above ground or below ground on their property for a set period of time and a set dollar amount to be received by the City on an annual basis.

8.4.28 Irrevocable Remainder Trusts

These trusts are set up with individuals who typically have more than a million dollars in wealth. They will leave a portion of their wealth to the City in a trust fund that allows the fund to grow over a period of time and then is available for the City to use a portion of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.

8.4.29 Volunteerism

The revenue source is an indirect revenue source in that persons donate time to assist the department in providing a product or service on an hourly basis. This reduces the City's cost in providing the service plus it builds advocacy into the system.

8.4.30 Public Improvement District (PID)

New developments can establish a Public Improvement District (PID) when authorized by the City Council and legally set up according to state law. This taxing district provides funds especially for the operation and maintenance of public amenities such as parks and major boulevards.

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8.5 Park Development Approximate Costs

The following table is a wide ballpark estimate of costs for certain types of parks. These figures are based on 2010 costs and are given here to help inform averages across a variety of facilities.

Facility/ Item	Unit Cost	Neighborhood Park		Community Park		Linear Park (per mile)	
		# Units	Cost	# Units	Cost	# Units	Cost
Mobilization/Bonds/General Conditions	\$100,000	1	\$100,000	2.5	\$250,000	0.75	\$75,000
Demolition/Preparation	\$30,000	1	\$30,000	2.5	\$75,000	1.75	\$52,500
Erosion Control/Pollution Prevention	\$12,000	1	\$12,000	1.5	\$18,000	1.5	\$18,000
Water/Electric Service	\$20,000	3	\$60,000	5	\$100,000		
Tree Protection	\$5,000	1	\$5,000	2	\$10,000	0.4	\$2,000
Roadways/Parking with lighting & curb	\$3,500	20	\$70,000	100	\$350,000		
Playground	\$150,000	1	\$150,000	2	\$300,000		
Trails (10' wide, per 0.5 mile)	\$125,000	1	\$125,000	3	\$375,000		
Basketball Court - w/o lights	\$40,000	1	\$40,000				
Basketball Court - lighted	\$70,000			1	\$70,000		
Picnic Facilities(table w/slab & grill)	\$5,000	5	\$25,000	20	\$100,000		
Practice Athletic Field (grading, irrigation, turf, equipment)	\$120,000	1	\$120,000				
ROW sidewalk (8' wide, per 1,000 ft)	\$30,000	1	\$30,000				
Pavilion - small	\$50,000	1	\$50,000				
Pavilion - large	\$120,000			1	\$120,000		
Site Landscaping/Irrigation	\$125,000	1	\$125,000	2	\$250,000	0.15	\$18,750
Site Lighting	\$65,000	1	\$65,000	1	\$115,000		
Split Rail (\$20/lf, for approximately 300 ft)	\$6,000	1	\$6,000				
Park Signage (entry, rules & informational signage)	\$23,000	1	\$23,000	1.5	\$34,500		
Amenities (Benches, trash receptacles & fountains)	\$30,000	1	\$30,000	2	\$60,000	1.25	\$37,500

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Athletic Fields (2-lighted)	\$545,000			1	\$545,000		
Tennis Courts (2-lighted)	\$150,000			1	\$150,000		
Volleyball Court (lighted)	\$30,000			1	\$30,000		
Automatic Gate	\$25,000			1	\$25,000		
Sprayground	\$250,000			1	\$250,000		
Restrooms	\$200,000			1	\$200,000		
Pond/Dock	\$75,000			1	\$75,000		
Miscellaneous Paving (12 foot trail)	\$275,000			1	\$275,000	1	\$275,000
Grading	\$60,000					1	\$60,000
Bridges	\$80,000					1	\$80,000
Crossings/Culverts	\$150,000					1	\$150,000
Markings/Striping	\$2,000					1	\$2,000
Developer Roadway (50% of 38' street)	\$350,000					1	\$350,000
Contingency		15%	\$159,900	10%	\$377,750	15%	\$168,113
Design, Surveys, Platting, Testing, Administration		20%	\$213,200	20%	\$755,500	20%	\$224,150

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8.6 Plan Updates

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department states that PROS Plans must cover at least a ten year period, be updated every two years, and completely redone every 10 years. Updates should include a summary of accomplishments, new public input, an evaluation of inventory and additional needs, priorities and implementation plans be organized. In addition, it is possible that the plan would need major revisions in the face of significant changes to demographics, population, facility use, and pressures from other factors outside the city limits. A set of action plans should be created and reviewed annually with the budget. This will help the City of Saginaw build a promise of Quality for a Lifetime.

Goals:

1. Re-invest in existing parks to address maintain and enhance appeal and usage, reflecting the uniqueness of the place in which it exists.
2. Improve quality of park, school, and business connectivity through enhancing path and trail networks for non-automotive movement throughout the city.
3. Emphasize linear park acquisition and development to preserve valuable and sensitive floodplains and open space.
4. Invest in athletic centers to enhance the cities sports interests and attract visitors.
5. Promote a healthy and well connected community through programming of parks as fun, safe, engaging places for people of all ages and abilities.

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