

Parks and Trails



The Parks and Trails section of comprehensive plan will create a tool for the city to use in developing priorities regarding the improvement of existing facilities and the expansion of the parks and trail system.

An approximate 40 acres of land within six different locations in Springfield are currently used for parks and recreational complexes. This acreage also includes the playground at Springfield Elementary School and the Springfield Soccer Complex, neither of which are maintained by the city. Based on the 2010 Census population of 1,529, the current park land slightly exceeds the planning standard of two acres per 100 people. However, throughout the public input process, a desire was expressed for the expansion of the parks and trails system.

The MoPac Trail, a well-known and heavily used multi-purpose trail in the region, currently runs through the City of Springfield. The MoPac is a significant trail because it is proposed to connect Lincoln and Omaha in the near future. During the public input process, much desire was expressed for the expansion of the trail system in Springfield. Community trails which would connect to the MoPac Trail have immense potential to draw numerous users, including Springfield residents, regional residents, and tourists.

Efforts to improve existing recreational facilities as well as expand the current recreational system should be increased during the next 20-30 year planning period and should especially be considered in conjunction with population increases. Community trails are included within recreational facilities and should be expanded to better connect parks, public facilities, and residential areas within the community.

This Parks and Trails section was developed under the direction of the Steering Committee, with the assistance of a special recreation and tourism focus group made up of local athletic and recreation organizations, as well as the ideas and comments that came out of the Town Hall meetings, a charrette process, and other various focus groups.

Based upon public input, current conditions, notable deficiencies, and future growth projections of Springfield, a Park Service Area Map and Parks and Trails Map have been created. A list of recommendations for each existing and proposed park and recreational facility can be found in the Achieve Chapter as well.

EXISTING PARK AND FACILITY CONDITIONS

The City of Springfield manages four park facilities, including the splash pad, which is in Buffalo Park and the sections of the MoPac Trail located within the city limits. Two other facilities, the Springfield Soccer Complex and the Springfield Elementary School Playground will be included in the Parks and Recreation Component although they are not maintained by the city. Each park will list the condition and capacity of numerous park elements and will include maps and photographs of each park. Table 2 lists the nationally accepted standard criteria for how the various types of parks and recreation facilities in Springfield are classified.

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

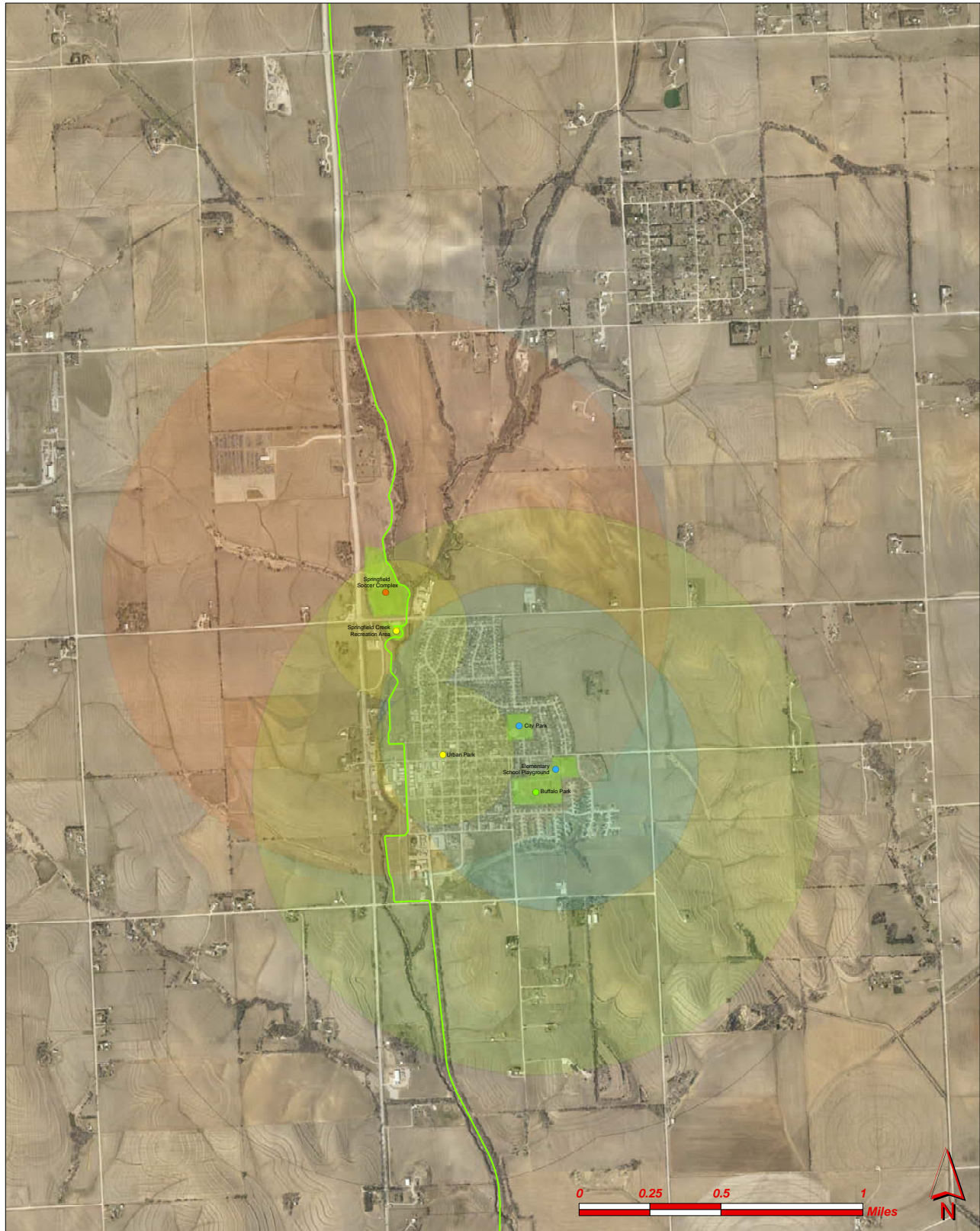
Classifications

Table 2 Parks and Open Space Classifications

CLASSIFICATION	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	LOCATION CRITERIA/ SERVICE AREA	SIZE CRITERIA
Mini Park	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Less than a ¼ mile distance in residential setting.	Between 2500 sq. ft. and one acre in size.
Neighborhood Park	Basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	¼ to ½ mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal.
School Park	Depending on circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as neighborhood, community, sports complex, and special use.	Determined by location of school district property.	Variable – depends on function.
Community Park	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhood and ½ to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.
Large Urban Park	Serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves the entire community.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually a minimum of 50 acres, with 75 or more acres being optimal.
Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Greenways	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal.
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.	Variable – dependent on specific use.	Variable.
Private Park/ Recreation Facility	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreation system.	Variable – dependent on specific use.	Variable.

Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. A Project of the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. A Publication of the National Recreation and Park Association. James D. Mertes, Ph.D., CLP and James R. Hall, CLP

Figure 21 Existing Park Service Areas



Parks	Trails	Park Service Area	Boundaries
● Mini Park	— MoPac Trail	● 1/4 mile Mini Park Service Area	▭ Springfield Corporate Limits
● Neighborhood Park		● 1/2 mile Neighborhood Park Service Area	▭ Springfield ETJ
● Community Park		● 1 mile Community Park Service Area	
● Sports Complex		● 1 mile Sports Complex Service Area	
■ Parks			

Springfield, Nebraska

Existing Park Service Area

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