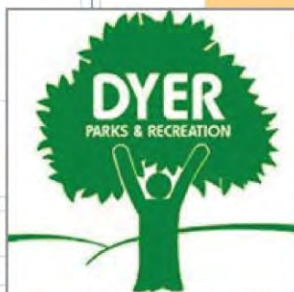


Town of Dyer, Indiana Parks and Recreation Department 5 YEAR PLAN | 2017 TO 2021



Prepared by: Land Design Collaborative, Inc.
in collaboration with
The Town of Dyer Parks and Recreation Department
April 1, 2017



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Dyer 2017-2021 Update

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SECTION I

MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES AND OVERVIEW



Town of Dyer Parks and Recreation Department

- Mission
- Vision
- Core Values

Mission

To enhance the quality of life through recreation, parks, natural areas and strive to inspire exceptional experiences for the physical, social and emotional well-being of participants.

Vision

To be committed to tradition while enhancing our future by providing resources to revolutionize recreation.

Core Values

Restore - Committed to stay true to our roots while building a future that empowers individuals.

Explore – Optimizing results by discovering more efficient processes.

Valiant - Empowering staff to take risks, grow and learn.

Revitalize - To encourage healthy lifestyles and be mindful of our natural resources.

Everlasting - Continue to provide recreation, parks and facilities that will create opportunities and encourage camaraderie that will last forever.

Community - Providing an environment where all participants feel socially, physically, and emotionally secure.

Master Plan Overview

The last Master Plan conducted by the Town of Dyer Parks and Recreation Department was facilitated and designed by the Park Board. At this time the current Park Board felt it was in the best interest of the residents of Dyer to do the Master Plan update utilizing a consultant to provide direction for prioritization of projects and to identify sources of funding from public and private sources.

The primary goal of this plan is to enhance the Town of Dyer by providing additional recreational programs and developing current recreational programs for all ages. This plan identifies achievable goals over the next 5 years and places the Town of Dyer Parks and Recreation Department in a position where the department can grow at a continuous rate. The Town of Dyer has grown in size and with growth comes greater expectation of recreational services and acceptable parks appearance. Within this plan, the Parks and Recreation Department lays out a path of how to reach each goal and be prepared for continuous growth.

The Park Board started the planning process by seeking resident input with a survey that was mailed to all the residents of Dyer. Following the survey, the board held a series of 3 public input meetings with one specifically inviting local youth sports group leaders. The public input meetings, although advertised in local papers, on the town website, using Facebook and by publishing dates in a town mailing sent to resident homes, were not highly attended.



Goals of the Plan/Overview

The intent of the Park Board is to make both the current parks and Central Park a priority. Further, within each park, develop a plan that is consistent with maintenance operations, and future development and community desires.

The three goal statements that were generated to guide the process are:

1. Develop efficient communication with surrounding community organizations to work together to better serve the Town of Dyer.
2. To enhance the overall quality of life for residents through recreation.
3. Further expand and develop recreational opportunities to provide quality experiences to attract more participants.

These are important to consider as the plan is molded to reflect many of the public's ideas for the future direction of the department. Several administrative goals are included in the following sections that have the power to transform the agency.

The plan needs to be clear, concise and focused on common sense solutions that can be implemented with notable improvements.

The plan also needs to have the voice of the public and it needs to be creative in steps to maximize revenue sources to allow reinvestment into the agency, which will allow for growth within the department. This is how to measure success for the future of parks and recreation in Dyer.

Four key recommendations include:

1. Look for ways that Dyer Park facilities can be self-supporting financially yet affordable.
2. Look to auction/sale park property that does not serve reasonable purpose to fund other park capital projects.
3. Find alternative solutions, other than recreational programming, to generate additional revenue.
4. Reorganize within the department to allow staff to reach their full potential.





Park Board/Department Information

Town of Dyer Town Council:

Jeff Dekker, President
Joseph Cinko, Vice President
Mary Tanis, Member
Debbie Astor, Member
Cathy Lareau, Member

Town of Dyer Park & Recreation Board:

Dane Huebner, *President*
Maria Gurtler, *Vice President*
Mike Kapitan, *Executive Secretary*
Zara Fagen, *Member*
Cathy Lareau, *Town Council Liaison*
William T. Enslen, *Attorney to the Board*

Department Administrative Staff:

Michael O'Shea, CPRP, *Director of Parks and Recreation*
Andrea Daliege, *Recreation Supervisor*
Lorraine Copenhagen, *Clerk*

Dyer Parks & Recreation Department:

1 Town Square
Dyer, IN 46311
Phone: 219-865-2505
Fax: 219-440-3754
E-mail: parks@townofdyer.com
www.townofdyer.com/parks

The Park Board

The Board of Parks and Recreation is composed of four members, each appointed by the Dyer Town Council for a 4 year term. The terms are staggered with one seat expiring every year. The Park Board meets monthly on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Dyer Town Hall in the Town Hall Main Meeting Room.

The Board also conducts a study session on the fourth Wednesday of each

month at 6:00 pm at the Dyer Town Hall in the Town Hall Main Meeting Room.

At its monthly meeting, the Board approves claims and payments, makes policy and operation decisions, approves requests for use of parks facilities and receives an update from the director on day to day department activity. The meetings are open to the public and the public is encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback.

Park Board Goals and Objectives

The Dyer Park Board has been created under Indiana statute to, among other items, exercise general supervision of and make rules for the department along with establishing rules governing the use of the parks and facilities by the public.

Currently there is not a cooperative agreement between the Dyer School District and the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department. In addition to pursuing an agreement with the School District, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department is considering pursuing a joint agreement with the Franciscan Hospital, which is one of the largest owners of open land in the Town of Dyer.



Planning Area

Location

The Town of Dyer is located in northwest Indiana in the western portion of St. John Township in Lake County. Dyer borders the Illinois communities of Lynwood, Sauk Village and Crete. The Dyer service area consists of the Illinois border to the west, the Town of Schererville to the east, the Town of Munster to the north and unincorporated St. John Township to the south. U.S. Route 30 traverses the Town from east to west. In recent years, Sheffield Avenue/Hart Street has become a secondary north-south corridor through Dyer. The long awaited Calumet Avenue extension (from Main Street on the north end of Dyer to Route 30 in the middle of Dyer) has become the main north-south corridor with high traffic counts.

Accessibility

Dyer is located 20 miles southeast of Chicago, Illinois. Illinois Route 394 is two miles to the west, Interstate 80/94 is 9 miles to the north and Interstate 65 is ten miles to the east. There is no public bus system in Dyer except for a commuter bus system from a park and ride lot that goes to Chicago twice a day. The St. John Township does offer a transportation program for senior citizens. Triple A Express is an available taxi service to Dyer residents. Air transportation is available from Gary (IN) Regional Airport, Lansing (IL) Regional Airport, Midway International and O'Hare International Airports (Chicago). Dyer is located approximately 15 miles south of Lake Michigan. Amtrak trains from Indianapolis to Chicago stop twice daily in Dyer utilizing the north-south CSX railroad line. Dyer also is crossed by the Canadian National line which runs from east to west.

Customers

Dyer's Parks and Recreation Department's main consumer base are the residents within the Town of Dyer's corporate limits. The parks and programs offered by Dyer also serves non-residents from surrounding communities and unincorporated areas of St. John Township making Dyer a regional destination for recreation. Residents in unincorporated St. John Township with a Dyer, Indiana zip code are mailed the seasonal activity guides since they are not within any other municipal parks and recreation area.

Nonresidents are encouraged to register for participation in recreational program offerings and are needed in order to provide some recreational programs to the Dyer residents. Recreation programs, such as summer camps and general interest, may not be able to be offered without nonresident participation. To encourage the participation of the nonresidents and continue to build new and current programs for current residents, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department now offers all programs at one price, and no longer charges a higher nonresident fee.





History

In approximately 1830, permanent settlers came to Northwest Indiana, which at that time was home to the Pottawatomie Indians under Chief Pokagon. These early settlers were primarily Prussian farmers, but also included carpenters, millers, masons, shoemakers, saloon keepers and a doctor.

Between 1830 and 1910, the Dyer community remained unincorporated. On January 24, 1910, citizens of Dyer decided by a vote of 57 to 35 to incorporate as a town under the laws of the State of Indiana. The Town of Dyer was formally incorporated on February 8, 1910. The town was divided into three districts or wards so that a trustee might be elected from each of the wards.

In 1915, the Municipal Water Utility was established, and the Fire Department was established shortly thereafter. The first Town Meeting was held on March 10, 1919 in a store building at 229 Joliet Street. Population of the town has steadily increased.

In 1893, it is reported that the town had a population of 250 people. In 1910, it had 500; and by 1950 it reached 1,556. Growth of the town by 1960 reached 3,993. The Schilling's Subdivision brought the count to 4,496 in a special census in 1968, and by 1970 there were 4,778 residents.

By 1975, there were 7,396; the 1980 census listed the town at 9,555; the 1990 census listed the town at 10,923; the 2000 census listed the town at 13,895; the 2010 census, 16,390 and as of the July 1, 2015 Census Estimate there are 16,051 Dyer Residents. In 1972, the Parks and Recreation Department for the Town of Dyer was created by Ordinance 819 which is contained in this plan.

Ordinance 819 created a board of parks and recreation comprised of four members who were deemed to be residents of the Town of Dyer for at least three years prior to becoming members.

The responsibilities of the Board delineated in Ordinance 819 were specified as performing "all acts necessary to acquire and develop sites and facilities and to such programs as are generally understood to be park and recreation functions."

Between 1972 and 2000, the new parks and recreation board began its mission of providing services by acquiring and developing Northgate, Pheasant Hills, Autumn Chase, Sandy Ridge, Green Meadows, Sheffield Estates, Cottonwood, Veterans and Elmer Miller Park.

In the past 16 years, the Parks and Recreation Department has accepted donations of park land and now maintains Mallard Cove Park (on a lease from the Gary Diocese), the Hearthstone/Village Circle park property and Eberly Park. The largest new piece of property is Central Park, which was purchased in 2006 by the Redevelopment Commission of Dyer for use as a park. The board also hired a full time Director of Parks and Recreation to administer the department. Additionally in 2006 a full time Recreation Supervisor was added to oversee all activities.

Recreation grew as facilities permitted, largely utilizing space in parks open space, athletic fields and The Plum Creek Center. Additional space is needed for the Parks and Recreation Department to accommodate this continuous growth. Working with the local school districts to share resources is desired and important to continue to maximize potential.



In 2001, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department adopted a five year Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a guide to determine and shape the future of the department. The 2001 Board members were Pat Schwoegler, Mary McShane, Susan Grelewicz, and Don Schultz. In February of 2007, a new Park Board, Tim Ring, Gary Sprigg, Kelly Jackson, and Sheri Gill approved the 2nd plan from 2007- 2011. The 3rd Master Plan was approved once again by Joe Eagan, Mike Kapitan, Theresa Scherzinger and Cathy Lareau.

In addition, local communities surrounding Dyer had advanced their parks and recreation services to a position where if the quality of life in Dyer were to remain competitive with other Northwest Indiana communities, a new master plan would need to be developed. The 2001-2005 master plan was the spark for acquiring additional parks land and for doing the first ever bond issues strictly for park system capital improvements.

A huge step for the Town's park system came when the Redevelopment Commission purchased a 77 acre property that would become Central Park and the Park Board obtaining a \$4.5 million bond. The bond was obtained in large part to make initial improvements at Central Park and included smaller improvements in other Dyer parks. A variety of delays in the development of Central Park led to monies being allocated to a variety of parks in Dyer. The bond issue funds were spent on much needed improvements at Northgate Park, Pheasant Hill Park, Veterans Park and Plum Creek Center (a small indoor recreational facility).

System wide improvements were made by purchasing a mobile stage, a recreation program registration system and technological equipment upgrades.

Preparations for development of Central Park also occurred which included demolition of the former house, barn, other farm structures and the initial seeding of the 77 acre property. That work was followed by construction of a drainage swale along the east and north ends of the park and then followed by development of a 120 space parking lot and three ball fields.

In 2016, the current Park Board once again has engaged a consultant to expand the park development program framing the master plan with the goals of prioritizing improvements for existing parks, and the developing Eberly Park and Hearthstone Park sites. Further, in 2015 a new master plan for Central Park was prepared and approved. Featuring new recreational facilities in Central Park is a priority. Consultants are working with the Park Board in aggressively seeking public and private funding for the park improvements. The complete Park inventory on pages 34-82 depicts the current status of every park in the system, including information on recent park improvements and future goals.



The Parks and Recreation Department currently has 22 parks covering 204 acres. In 2006, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department acquired Central Park which currently holds 3 ball fields, soccer fields, a Dog Park, walking path, pavilion, and open space. The acquisition of Central Park has become the cornerstone for developing the Town Park system to enhance recreational opportunities and improve the quality of life. This park was purchased for over five million dollars with assistance from the Town of Dyer Redevelopment Commission, which issued a bond to pay for this acquisition.

In order to develop planning initiatives to meet the future recreational requirements of Dyer, it is pivotal to study these future and existing parks and facilities. For this plan, the developer donation sites are treated as already being part of the Dyer park inventory. An inventory and analysis provides the framework for reinvestment into the spaces and the need to add additional park land for future development.

It is the essential first step to determine the constraining influences which will affect the overall park system. The planning area was broken down into two sub-sections, North and South with US Route 30 as the dividing line. In many ways, this is both a physical boundary as well as cultural boundary for the town.

The southern portion of town, which was more recently developed, has a lack of

parkland and amenities compared to the northern, or older, portion of the town. The parks in the inventory were arranged into different classifications. The Park System Level of Service is included in this section which illustrates these classifications and the service radius they cover in town.

Current programming and events, such as the Summer Concert Series, tend to get more North side participants due to the closer proximity to Town Hall and the Parks Department. Currently there is a major outdoor programmed event on each side of town every year. A Park Department goal is to develop each park with a unique feature to further enhance the opportunities for both the North and South side residents.

Dyer, like many communities, has been negatively impacted by the prioritization of traffic circulation and highway design standards for state highways. State Route 30 has been a force in Dyer before it was rebuilt by bisecting the Town. Land use, access, and development trends caused the north side of Town to develop first with the south side of Route 30 following. There is a need to provide parks north and south of Route 30 in response to the Town's development.

The Central Park improvements will serve the entire community and provide a central place for special activities and festivals, farmers markets, and community/sub-regional attractions.



Location



Location Map

Dyer is located along the Illinois state line in Lake County, Indiana, 15 miles south of Lake Michigan and 30 miles southeast of downtown Chicago. The town covers approximately six square miles.

Neighboring communities include Munster to the north, Schererville to the east, and unincorporated St. John Township to the south. The Illinois state line comprises Dyer's entire western border. Two of Dyer's subdivisions, Briar Ridge and Briar Cove, both span Dyer and adjacent Schererville.

U.S. Highway 30 is the main east-west thoroughfare through town. Calumet

Avenue is the main north-south thoroughfare. Dyer is within minutes of I-80/94, I-294, I-90 (the Indiana Toll Road), I-65, and Illinois 394.

Commuter rail service is provided in nearby communities by Metra and the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (South Shore Rail). Within Dyer, Amtrak provides daily service to Chicago and Indianapolis. Freight rail service is provided through town. Bus service is available to both O'Hare and Midway airports at a stop in Highland, Indiana which is approximately 4 miles away.



Natural Features and Landscape

The oldest parts of Dyer are located along US Route 30 also known as Lincoln Highway. This roadway is built upon one of the oldest trails crossing northwest Indiana, Sauk Trail. The trail was used by Native Americans and early settlers to travel east-west across Indiana and Illinois. Any remnants of Sauk Trail were built over long ago when US Route 30 was originally paved and then widened in the 1990's as an alternative east-west corridor to Interstate 80.

The topography of Dyer is generally level to gently sloping with an average elevation of 640 feet above sea level. The soil classification for Dyer lies in the Valparaiso Moraine section in Lake County, Indiana.

The Town of Dyer drains to the Little Calumet River leading to the Des Plaines River in Illinois and eventually into the Mississippi River. There are few bodies of standing water in town. Plum Creek runs North-South through town and there is potential to provide access to it or alongside it. The largest body of water is in Pheasant Hills Park. It functions as a retention pond that absorbs offsite flow through the adjacent neighborhood.

There are no significant geological features known to date. The natural features found throughout the town could be classified as having neutral to no impact on the recreational properties associated with this plan.

The natural tree canopy of the town has been varied through the years due to many different types of development, including agricultural. The remaining trees are mostly mixed hardwood shade trees with a variety of volunteer and structured plantings throughout town.

Two new park implementation projects are slated for 2017; Hearthstone and Eberly Parks. Hearthstone Park is just north of Route 30 and serves a new neighborhood PUD in its final stages of build out. By comparison Eberly Park is at the extreme south end of Dyer and serves a newer single family neighborhood in an early stage of construction.

Both Parks are slated for a 2017 first phase of improvements including grading and drainage, primary paths, parking and sports fields. These parks are adjacent to new residential communities that are continuing to build out both north and south of Route 30. Opportunities for physical links connecting the Town's north and south area parks across Route 30 are limited due to the "engineered" roadway design and land uses adjacent to the State Route. The Plum Creek Bridge may offer separated exclusive pedestrian access as well as water access for kayak or canoes under Route 30. However, as mentioned, this access is subject to review and approval by storm water agencies. Further, a separate feasibility study would be required to evaluate creation of safe access way improvements. Connections at grade across Route 30 occur at signalized intersections, which are not well coordinated with desired routes accessing recreational facilities.

The Franciscan Hospital has extensive grounds, including Plum Creek meandering through open space to a retention pond and natural area. The use of these areas as a formal extension of the Town's Park facilities may be difficult to achieve, but informal links along Plum Creek may be possible with a pedestrian and water link from Elmer Miller Park, with the same Route 30 Bridge restraints plus the need for approval from the hospital. The Town of Dyer has initiated contact with the Hospital to investigate potential opportunities to provide joint programming for recreational and rehabilitation.



A possible joint effort may include development of a “Miracle Field” facility that would complement Hospital services and Town park user's needs.

Constructed Features

There are several major constructed features that have affected the town. The largest of these is the Lincoln Highway. By the 1920's significant attention was focused on Dyer when an experimental model highway was constructed stretching three miles, traveling east-west from Dyer to Schererville.

It was dubbed the “Ideal Section of Lincoln Highway”. Currently, U.S. Route 30 traverses the United States and is known as the Lincoln Highway. Dyer is the entranceway to Indiana on this historic highway.

The remaining features include the Amoco Pipeline, Calumet Avenue Extension, Railroads and St. Margaret Mercy Healthcare System.

The following is a short description of each:

1. *Amoco Pipeline:* A petroleum pipeline traverses the northwest corner of Dyer and could be a corridor for future trail development.
2. *Calumet Avenue Extension:* Calumet Avenue is the major thoroughfare traveling north-south. It has had a significant impact to the town in all aspects of town life from transportation to economic development.

3. *Railroads:* There are two sets of active tracks that cross Dyer and one vacated set which has been targeted for a possible rails-to-trails corridor. The east-west vacated line is included on the NIRPC priority corridor system as a potential tie in to the Old Plank Road trail in Illinois.
4. *St. Margaret Mercy Healthcare Center–South Campus:* The hospital located in Dyer is a major employer and land holder in the town.
5. *The Holiday Shopping Spree:* is a special event held by the Parks and Recreation Department. This is held in a local school where 114 vendors are able to sell a variety of craft items. The benefit the Parks receives is revenue to cover cost of event and revenue to help support other programs. The Town benefits by being put on display to show how valuable Dyer is and the quality of programs being offered to its residents. This event brings many outside families from surrounding areas.



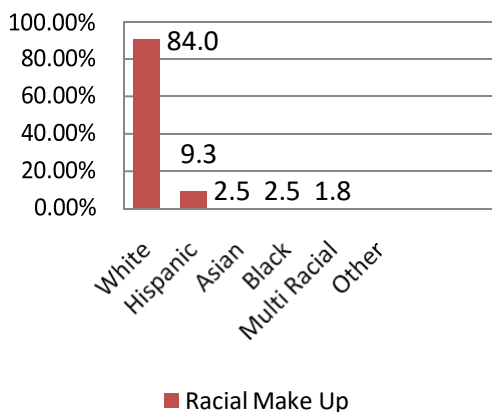
Demographics – Social/Economic

According to the Census estimate of July 1, 2015 there are 16,051 people residing in the town of Dyer, making the population density of 2,685.10 people per square mile.

There are 6,125 housing units at an average density of 1,020.83 per square mile. The median value of owner occupied housing units is \$190,100.

The racial makeup of Dyer, considered a bedroom community in the Chicago Metropolitan area, is made up primarily of Caucasian residents.

Racial MakeUp

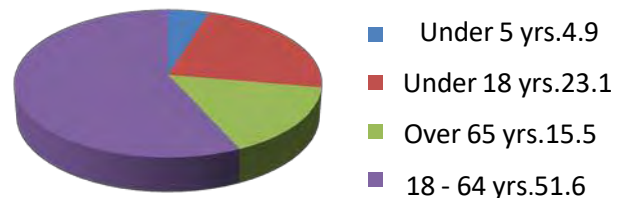


As of 2014, the median income for a household in the town was \$79,859. The estimated per capita income for the town was \$38,299. Both figures are higher than the average for the state of Indiana.

Of the population 3.0% were estimated to be below the poverty line.

In 2014 there were 8,008 males and 8,161 females and the median resident age was 44 years.

Population Age



The average persons per household is 2.77, which is slightly higher than the 2.49 average for the state of Indiana.

The education level for persons 25 years of age and older shows 91.7% hold at least a high school diploma while 30.3% hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

Analysis of Demographics

From a programming standpoint, the direction of the Parks and Recreation Department has changed over the past decade. Previously the priority was to concentrate on youth programs. However, through community needs assessment surveys and home building being slowed over the past decade, the new direction is to program for both youths and adults. There is more of a desire for adult programs, general programs, trips, fitness and athletic leagues now than ever before. The Parks and Recreation Department is discovering new and better ways to generate these programs for adults and at the same time further develop current youth programs. All programs are offered by participant fees that cover the cost associated with the programs. Fees are determined based on the type of programs, location, administration services and any contractual services that are required.



As for facilities, Dyer has seen a growth in population and median income level over the last 20+ years. This change along with the desire for more and improved park and recreation facilities has led the Town to make big strides in the last 10 years. In 2006, the first ever bond issue strictly for parks was approved. That bond issue amount was for the maximum allowed by the State statute. Since then the town has invested approximately \$4.5 million in the Dyer parks system. This capital funding helped update a number of parks, as well as initial improvements, at a few of the newer park properties in Dyer.

Over the past decade, the Parks and Recreation Department has undergone massive improvements to upgrade the community parks. In order to keep the upgrades consistent and developed, this master plan is an effort to define those continued community needs to support the required funding needed. To enhance recreational opportunities and improve the quality of life, additional resources will be needed to provide the Town of Dyer the best opportunities.

Dyer has long desired a Community Center as a facility to act as a “community gathering place”. Within such a facility, there is a desire for activity space for all ages including possible fitness, aquatic, early childhood, senior, gymnasium and associated office space. Space for such a community gathering place has been set aside at the Central Park property and will need to be more than just a community center to make it survive.

A ‘Town Center’ with all of the amenities of a community center and a Town Hall might be an even better facility. Such a facility would help meet the need for programming space and the desire for a community center. In the current needs assessment survey for the 2017-2021 Master Plan, desires were noted by residents, such as, indoor basketball courts volleyball courts and indoor track to use in all seasons.





Master Plan Development

The Town of Dyer advocated a process of public participation that was central to the development of the individual park site plans that make up the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan.

This master plan process included the following steps:

1. Information Gathering & Project Start-Up
2. Community Input and Public Stakeholder Involvement. This featured specific questions from a community survey for the park system as well as three public meetings to gather ideas at the beginning of the process.
3. Analysis of existing conditions through a site inventory study and discussions with staff.
4. Extensive study sessions by the Park Board were held to take survey results, public input meeting results, and park board representative input to create an action plan for park improvements.
5. Development of preliminary recommendations.
6. Development of final site plans with recommendations, cost and implementation strategy.
7. Park Board approval of master plan report.

The intent of the Park Board is to make both the current parks and Central Park a priority. A site plan should be developed for each park that is consistent with maintenance, development and community input.

The three vision statements that were generated early on in the process which continue to hold true are as follows:

1. Develop efficient communication with surrounding community organization to work together to better serve the Town of Dyer.
2. To enhance the overall quality of life for residents through recreation.
3. Further expand and develop recreational opportunities to provide quality experiences to attract more participants.

On the following pages are charts and tables of information gathered through the public survey portion of the planning process.

The public input survey was mailed to all Town of Dyer residents in June of 2016. Residents were also given the opportunity to complete the survey online by going to the Town of Dyer website. Of 6,600 utility bills mailed with the survey attached 602 were returned by mail or via online using the Town's website survey provided on-line.





SECTION II

COMMUNITY NEEDS



Public Participation Meetings

The Park Board also held a series of public input meetings in the main meeting room at Town Hall which were publicized in the monthly town newsletter, in the local newspapers and on the town website urging resident participation.

One of these meetings was geared specifically to the local sports organizations with personal invitations being sent to each group encouraging their input. Invitation letters were emailed to local special interest groups including Dyer Kickers Soccer Club, Dyer Little League Baseball, Dyer Babe Ruth Baseball and Dyer Girls Softball.

The first meeting, on July 26, 2016 was attended by approximately 20 residents. The attendees were asked to fill out a questionnaire similar to the Community Needs Assessment Survey that was sent through the utility bill and available online. An open discussion followed with all in attendance sharing their comments. The questionnaire was collected at the end of the meeting. During the meeting, the recent community survey responses were presented and discussed, and the inventory of all parks in the system was presented along with the status of Eberly, Hearthstone and Central Parks. The presentation was followed by an open discussion with responses from those attending regarding the questionnaire.

The second meeting, held September 12, 2016 was with the local sports organizations mentioned above. The five representatives attending from organizations were asked to share their current needs, as well as projections, for the future in terms of players and facility needs.

Additionally they were asked how the Town of Dyer Parks and Recreation Department can be more involved so that both the Parks and Recreation Department and the youth sports organization can improve through working together.

A third meeting was held on October 25, 2016 with two residence in attendance, to review the draft findings of the study with the public and allow public input into the process of completing the Comprehensive Plan update.

The meetings were not heavily attended. However, the smaller groups allowed for a dynamic dialogue between the residents and those involved in creating this plan. The discussions typically involved updating people regarding the future master plan for various parks. The development of Central Park interested everyone. Central Park is considered to be a central community meeting place as the Town of Dyer fully develops in the years to come.

A total of 602 written surveys were returned. This shows a definite interest in the parks program in Dyer, as it is approximately a 9 % response rate. Compilation results show that residents are reasonably happy with the current state of parks in Dyer, however; they did include ideas of ways to improve/expand the park system.



At a time when current economic conditions provide a more optimistic setting across the state of Indiana and especially in Lake County, Dyer residents continue to understand the importance of a strong parks and recreation department to the quality of life in a community.

If the town leadership, along with the Park Board, adopt the ideas within this plan and more importantly continue to make parks and recreation a priority by funding it at higher levels, just as recommended in the prior plan (2012 to 2015), this and future plans can succeed. It is only with adequate budgeting that the park and recreation agency envisioned by the public, with enhanced and expanded park and recreation systems, can happen. Although some progress is being made, the Town of Dyer is still below comparable towns in per capita recreational expenditures for the size of its community. This is an area that should continue to be addressed if continued progress is desired.

A key component to this plan is the development of a long term master plan for the new 77 acre Central Park off of 213th Street. The development of a detailed Master Plan and implementation strategy has been completed under the 2012 to 2015 Plan. The Master Plan is currently in the stage of prioritizing a sequence of implementation based on engineering and recreation needs and trade-offs. This plan was adopted by the Town Council in February 10, 2015 with the first stage of improvements scheduled for 2016.

This new park site has the potential to be the unifying force for the Town and can help to define the town in the region.

To date the town leadership has shown its desire to support and develop the parks by their support for and creation of a joint agreement between the Dyer Redevelopment Commission and the Dyer Park Board. Central Park development to date features a Dog Park, access road and parking lots, bike paths, and ball diamonds. A shelter with restrooms is also included in the initial phase of Central Park development.



Park and Recreation Goals



Previous Planning Efforts

The Dyer Parks and Recreation Department was created by Ordinance 819 on May 9, 1972. The ordinance assigned the duties of performing “all acts necessary to acquire and develop sites and facilities and to conduct such programs as are generally understood to be park (and) recreation functions.”

In addition, the ordinance stated that the board had “the power and duty to: Prepare a plan for parks and recreation purposes in the Town of Dyer.” Several attempts have been made over the past two decades at master planning by the park board, some of which were fruitful and others which were not.

The most recent planning efforts included the Five Year Parks & Recreation Master Plan update to the 2006-2011 and current 2012 – 2016 Master Plans.

That plan identified a number of ambitious goals and objectives, as noted below:

Park and Recreation Goals

Administrative Goals

- Develop a user agreement with local athletic groups for use of park property.
- Update computer software to include online registration.
- Develop a rotating maintenance replacement schedule on all park playgrounds.
- Fund the addition of an exclusive park maintenance/ inspector worker.
- Work with school district to form some sort of intergovernmental agreement.
- Develop all Dyer parks with each featuring a main recreation attraction.
- Continue to make each park and park activities ADA accessible.



Recreation Goals

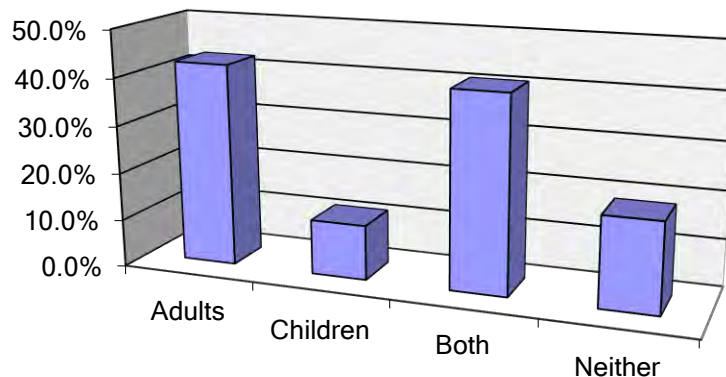
- Seek alternative revenue sources for necessary park capital dollars.
- Establish new recreation programs such as, adult athletic leagues, after school programs, before and after school child care, day care, and Pre-School.
- Fund a bus to transport participants to and from camps, programs or events.
- Birthday party room rental/packages.
- Offer additional special events such as races, bike rides, and camping in the parks.
- Hire part-time staff to work programs and events throughout the year.
- Provide accessible facilities by providing poured-in-place surfaces in playgrounds.
- Provide a Boundless Playground and a Miracle Ball field in future park improvements.



Community Needs Assessment Results

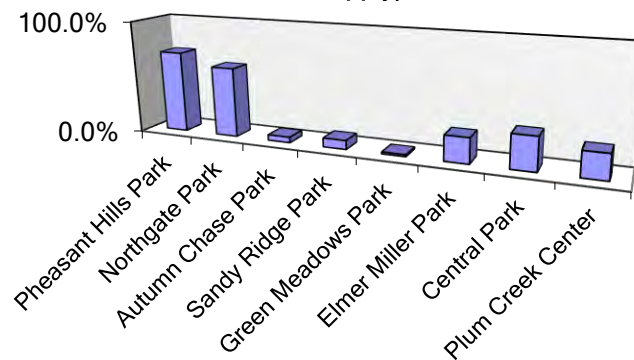
The Town of Dyer Parks and Recreation Department Community Needs Assessment survey was mailed to all residents in June 2016 in the monthly newsletter which accompanies each Town utility bill. In addition, the Needs Assessment survey was available for all residents online. Approximately 6,600 utility bills were mailed out and there were a total of 602 questionnaires returned for a response rate of 9%. The following is a summary of the needs assessment results.

What members of your household have visited or used Dyer parks within the past year? (Please check all that apply)



When asked what family members visit the parks, 42% of adult residents frequented the parks followed by 40% of both adults and children (families). Those that visited the parks were asked which parks or buildings they visited. As expected, the community level parks were the most visited parks in the last 12 months. Pheasant Hills Park (71%) and Northgate Park (61%) are the more popular parks. Central Park (29%), while underdeveloped, held the third highest level visited among the residents.

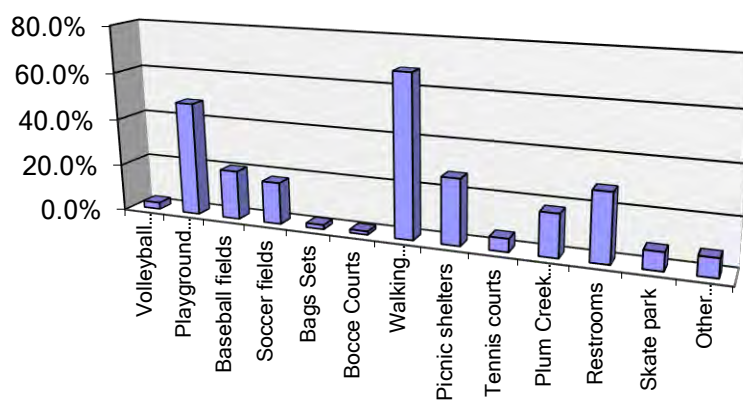
If you have visited a Dyer Park or facility, which of the following parks or facility have you or other members of your household used in the past 12 months? (Please check all that apply)





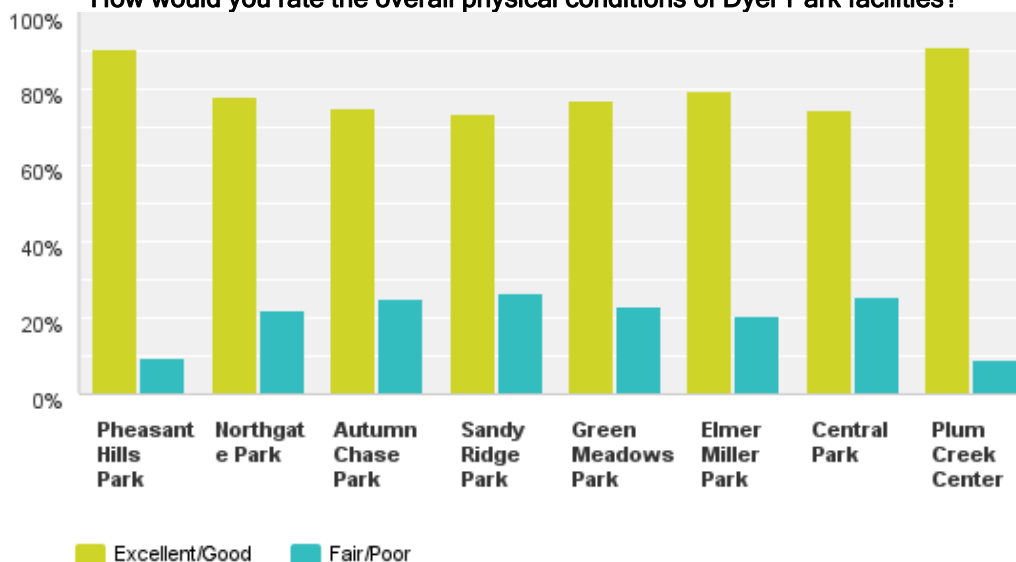
Once at the parks, the top amenity used by residents was walking paths at 67% followed by playground equipment at 48%. This shows that fitness and quality family time are a main attraction for households when using the parks. Restrooms, 28%, and picnic shelters, 27%, were the next highest amenities used. Picnic shelter rentals are very common and residents expressed a need for more permanent restroom facilities.

Which of the following park amenities has your household visited during the past 12 months? (Please check all that apply)



The needs assessment asked how patrons rated the overall general condition of park facilities. The majority of parks and facilities were rated excellent/good with Pheasant Hills and Plum Creek Center having the highest rating and Sandy Ridge and Central Park rated the lowest.

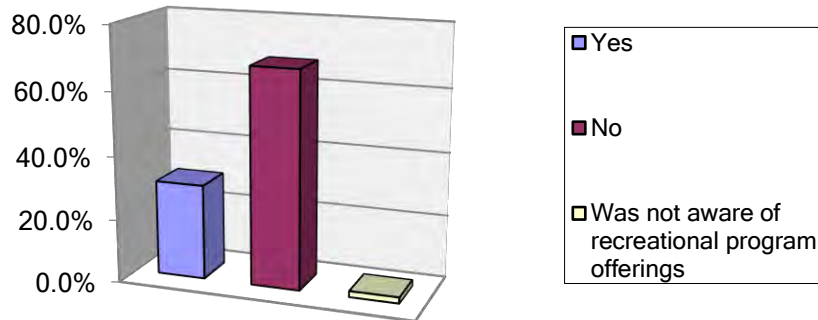
How would you rate the overall physical conditions of Dyer Park facilities?



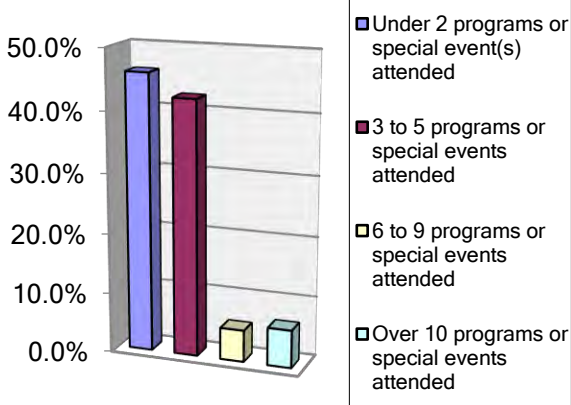


The next question asked whether anyone participated in a recreational program in the last 12 months and a follow up question depending on their reply. The answers to these questions implied there are not many people (68%) who participate in Dyer Parks programs. There are many factors as to why there are not many participants, with the main reason being the time frame at 34%. This is dictated by availability of facilities. A Community Center can allow the Town to offer programs at times/days that more people find convenient.

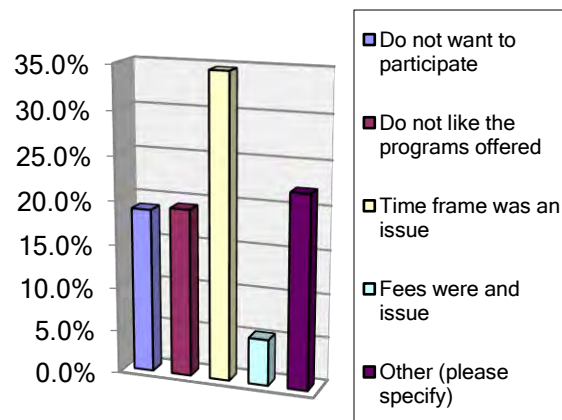
Has anyone in your household participated in any Dyer Parks and Recreation department programs within the last 12 months?



If you answered YES, how many different programs or special events have you attended within the past 12 months:

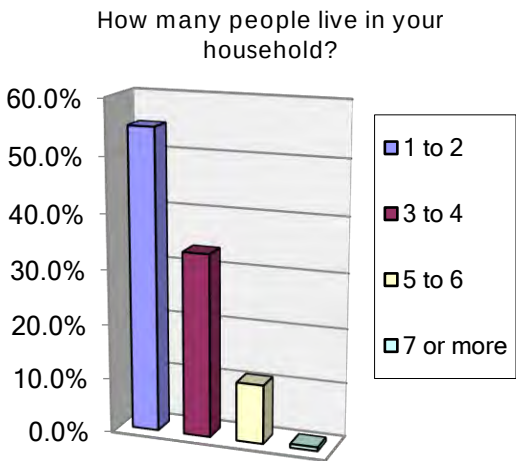
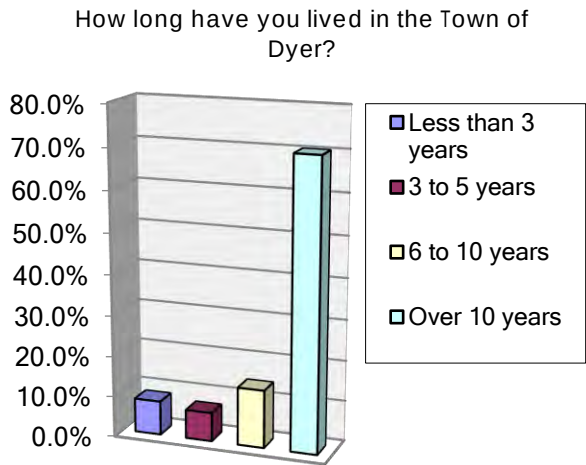
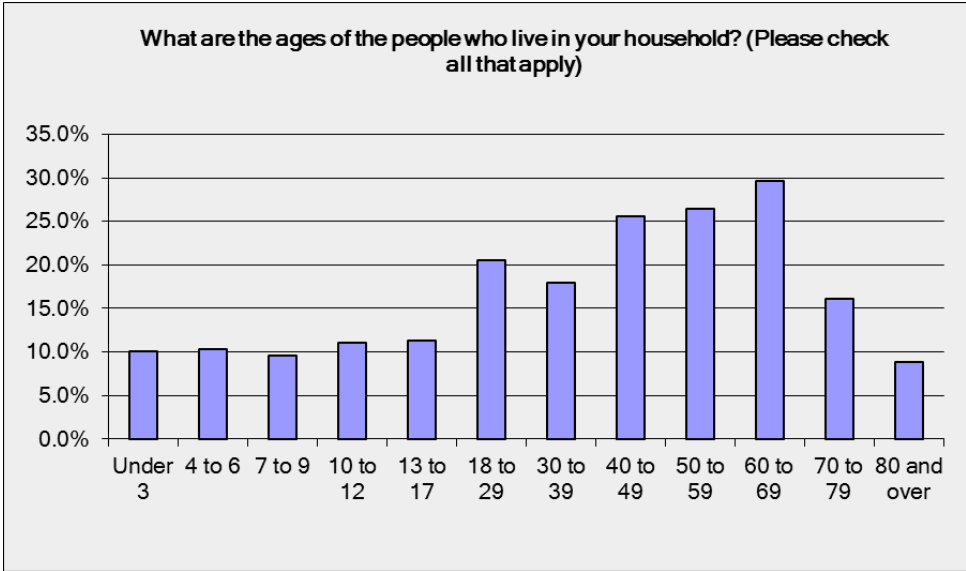


If you answered NO, why did you not participate in any programs or special events?





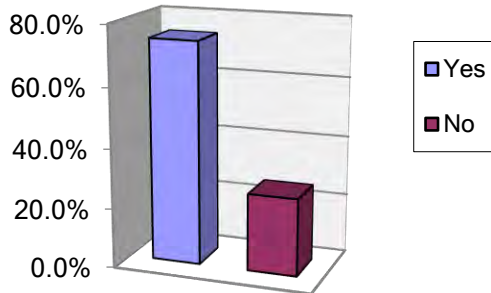
The household age demographic for the residents who submitted a Needs Assessment survey shows ages 60-69 (29%) and 50-59 (26%) as the highest age range for adults and 10 to 12 (11%) and 13 to 17 (11%) the top highest age range for youth. A majority of households consist of 1-2 people and residents who have lived in Dyer for over 10 years. This breakdown shows diversity in the age populations of Dyer, because of this the department should keep in mind all ages when planning parks, facilities and programs.



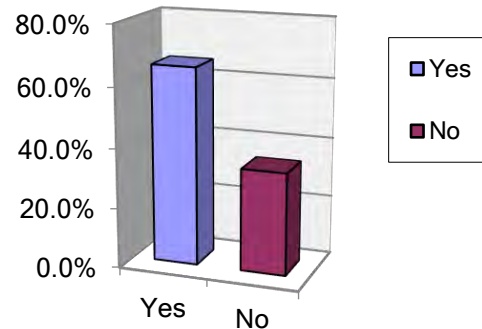


When asked if there were enough program offerings, the residents were satisfied (74%) with what was currently offered, but had a desire to see more special events. The top events residents want are races, both competitive and non-competitive, and additional concerts.

Do you think the Dyer Parks and Recreation department offers a wide enough variety of recreation programs?

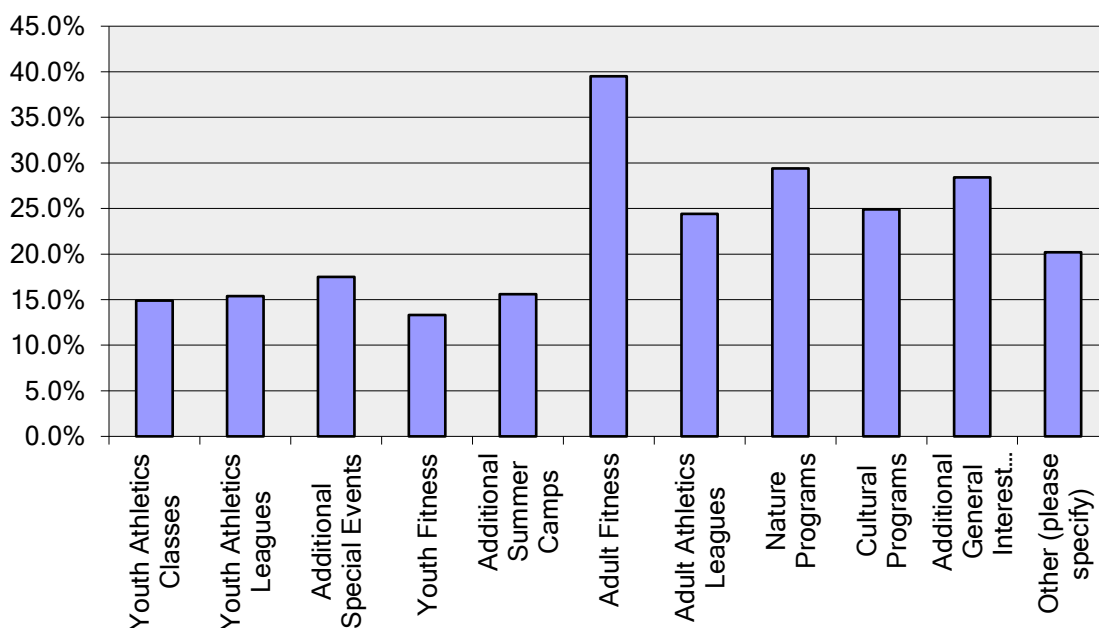


Would you want Dyer Parks and Recreation to provide additional special events?



The Parks and Recreation department is always looking to offer new services to the residents. When asked, adult fitness programs (39%) was the top request, followed by nature programs at 29%. Additionally, youth athletic leagues had the highest rate for youth activities with 15%.

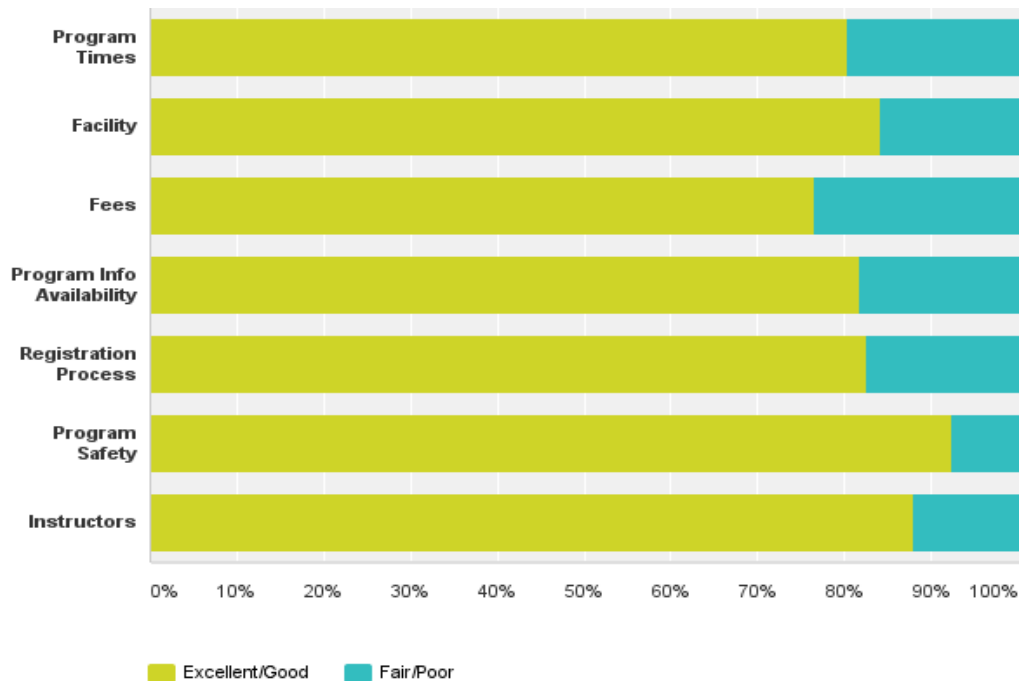
What additional programs or services should the Dyer Parks and Recreation department offer to better serve the Town of Dyer?





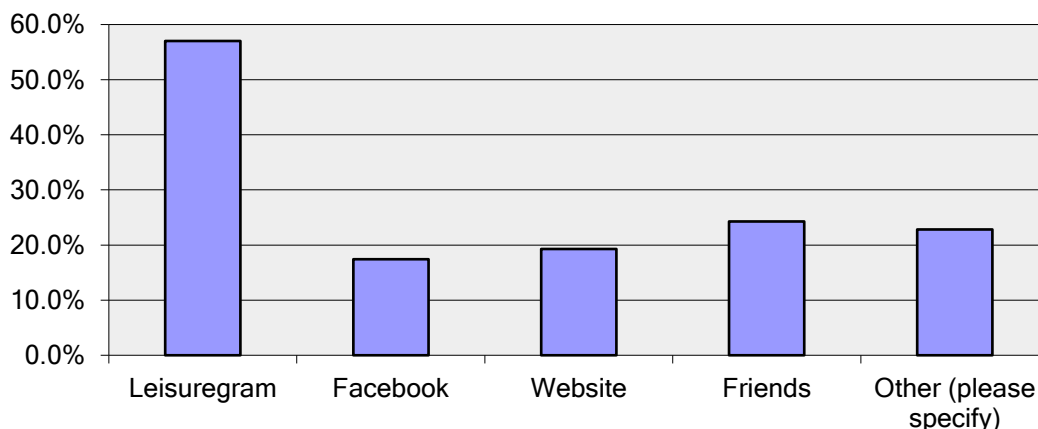
Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with recreational programs. The majority, 92%, were satisfied with the program safety and 87% were satisfied with the instructors of all recreational programs. Fees had the highest unsatisfied rating at 23%.

Rate your satisfaction with recreational or special event programs?



The Parks and Recreation program sends out three Leisuregram books a year that cover each season, showing what recreational opportunities are being offered. When asked how residents were notified about upcoming recreational opportunities the Leisuregram was the main way residents were informed at 57%. Facebook or social media was the lowest rated, showing that households still prefer a hardcopy when receiving their recreational opportunity.

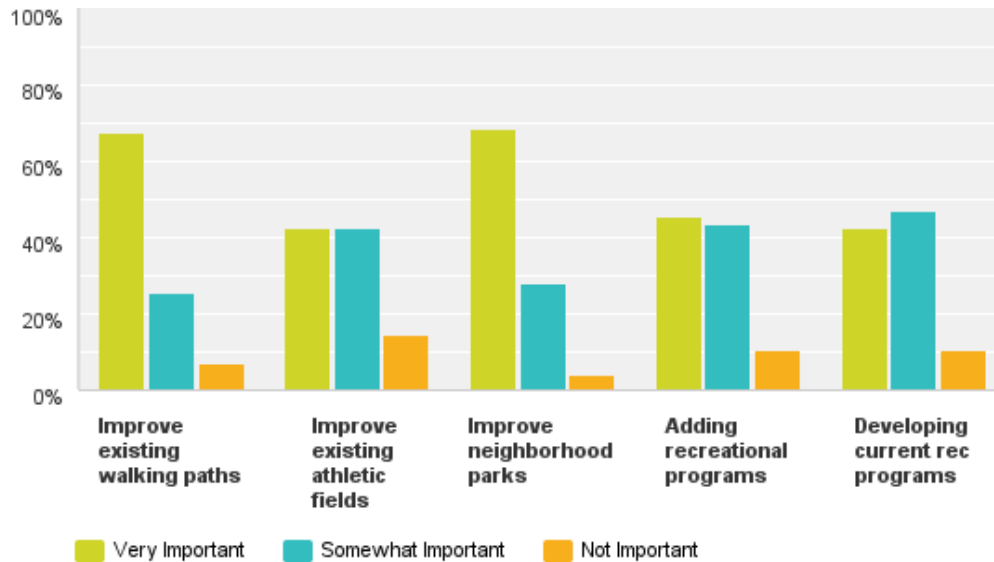
How are you aware about upcoming recreational program services being offered? (Please check all that apply)





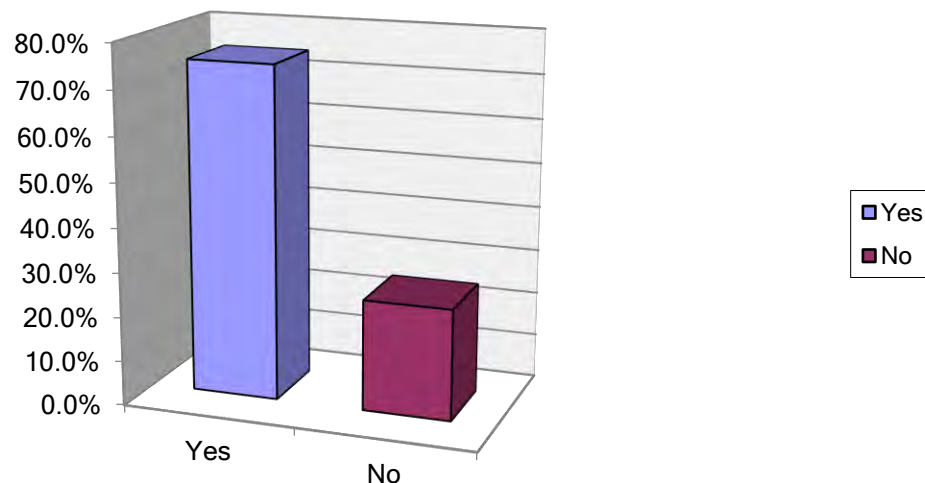
When given choices on what residents considered to be important, improving existing walking paths, 67%, and improving neighborhood parks, 68%, were the two most important. This ties in with an earlier question *“Which park amenities has your household visited during the past 12 months?”*, showing the importance of walking paths among the residents. Overall satisfaction with programs is good, with all categories rating from good to excellent.

What is the importance of the following below?



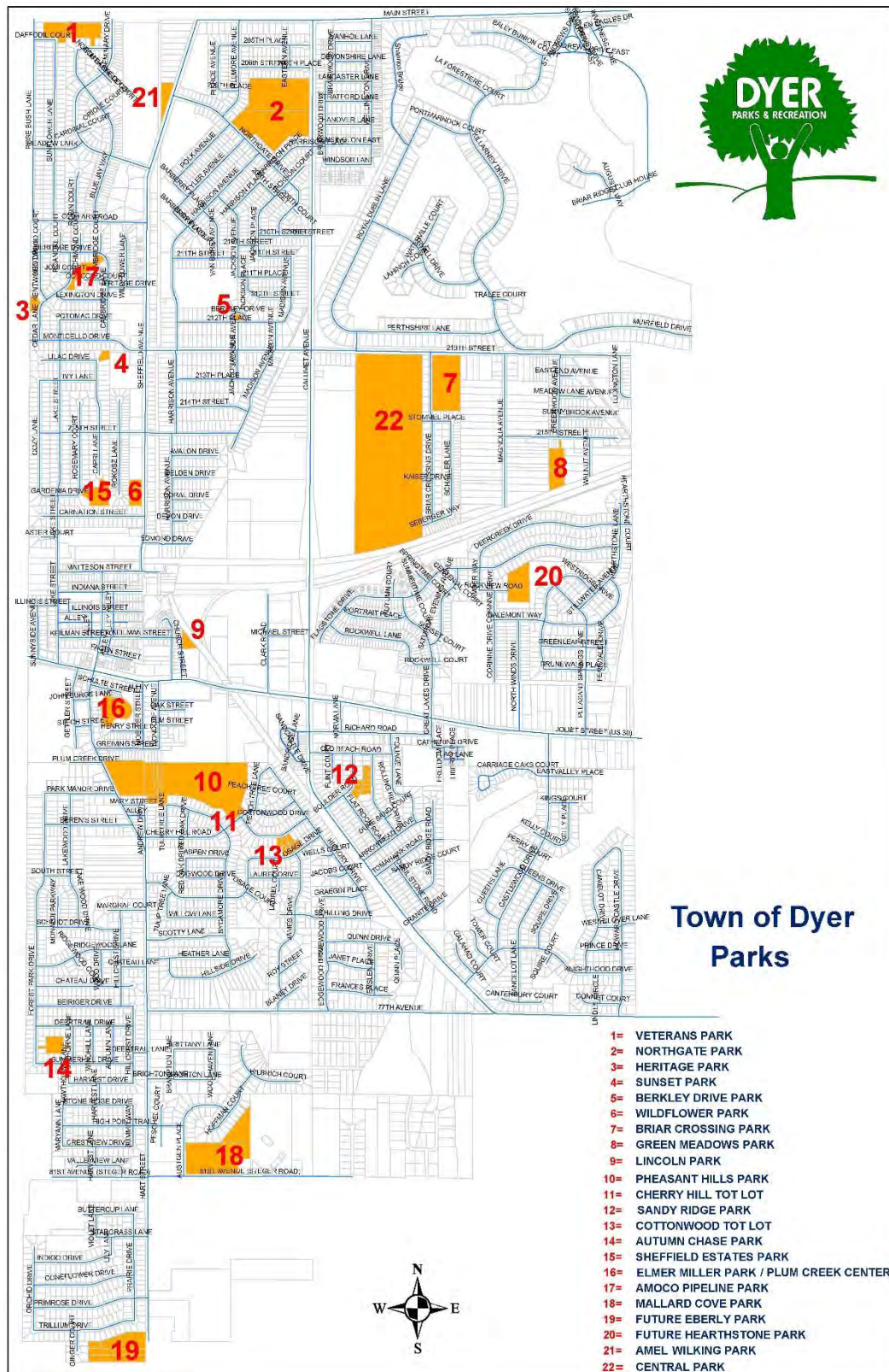
Overall, when asked if the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department is meeting the needs of the community, 74% of the survey respondents stated that their needs were being met.

Is the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department meeting your needs?





Town of Dyer Parks Map





Site Inventory/Goals/Accessibility

This section of the master plan is a guide of the current state of the agency to provide a benchmark for all future improvement projects.

Level of Service

In terms of acreage per person, the Town of Dyer does fall short of some standards used to measure this goal. It was noted that the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department adopted NRPA standards for acreage and projected needs as population continues to grow.

However, it is our position that while an arbitrary standard from a national organization is a good guide; it should not be the adopted standard due to convenience. This plan will provide a custom approach by developing a facility need based on site analysis, relying on survey data, public input, park location and finally capital costs to improve each site.

As the town's population continues to grow, the need for additional park space will continue to present a constant issue. The only available tool to address this is to acquire land at a reasonable cost and to insure gaps in level of service do not worsen as development occurs. The town owns approximately 204.4 acres of parkland. This equals 12.7 acres per thousand residents.

However, when Central Park's 77 acres were added to the inventory, it is the opinion of the current Park Board and those at public meetings that adequate overall parkland is present for a town of less than 20,000 residents when reviewing local conditions and what makes logical sense for the Town of Dyer.

Town ordinances calling for the donation of park land for developments allowed for the acceptance of detention ponds and land that is physically unable to be improved/developed for recreational uses. These types of properties, although allowing for more green space in the park inventory, have handcuffed the Parks and Recreation Department and served as a financial drain without much recreational benefit.



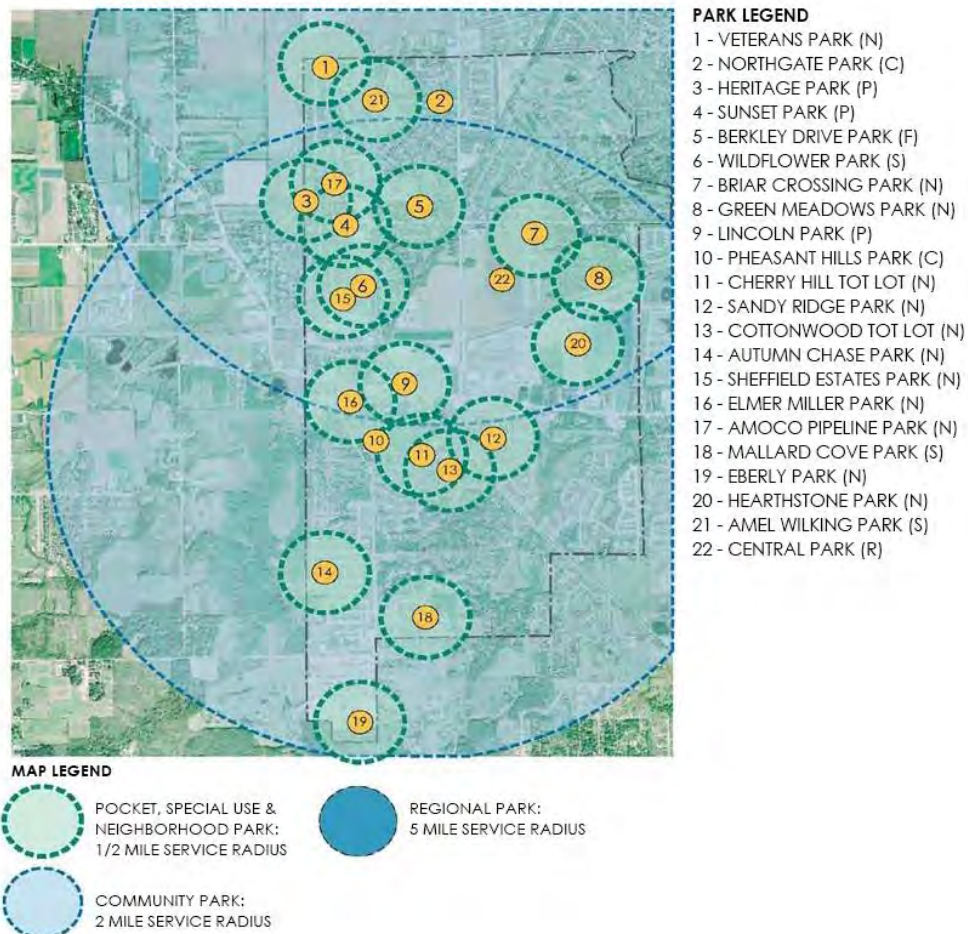
Site Inventory & Analysis

The Town of Dyer's existing park system is depicted with this summary. The system is composed of 22 park sites.

Each park site on the following pages was reviewed during the spring and fall of 2016 when all the park sites were examined and evaluated. The name, size, ID, type, amenities, general park impressions, accessibility and photos of existing conditions are listed on each inventory. In addition, specific goals/objectives for each park property are listed on the inventory sheet.

The park system as a whole has suffered from a lack of comprehensive planning and detailed site design in the past. This is nearly always a symptom of lack of capital budgeting to improve the park spaces. This approach is apparent from the time spent in each park.

The parks are evenly located throughout the town which is a positive, but the entire park land holdings should be re-evaluated to match the level of service. Possible re-allocation resulting in reduction of park properties and the addition of a capital improvement plan will be crucial to the success of this 2017 – 2021 five year Master Plan.





Site Inventory Methodology

The Park Board conducted a site visit and analysis for the comprehensive park & recreation master plan in which each park site was walked to review the existing conditions found. The survey and analysis was conducted as follows:

1. Observations (Visual Assessment)
 - A visual inspection was conducted examining existing conditions of the park site. No mechanical or physical testing was undertaken.
2. Photographic Documentation
 - Photographs were taken of existing conditions to document typical areas for reference and possible problem areas.
3. General Park Impressions
 - First reaction to the park space and characteristics of the site.
4. Discussion
 - The Park Board then met and reviewed each property and listed goals/objectives/plans for each location.

Accessibility and Universal Design

In an on-going effort, the Parks and Recreation Department continually evaluates facilities and programs for ways to improve accessibility. For example, starting in 2017 all portable restrooms units will be handicapped accessible. Purchasing accessible products and ensuring accessibility to newly constructed facilities is a constant task when funding is available for such.

Tom DeGiulio, has been designated as the Town of Dyer's ADA coordinator.

The Town has used Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to help improve accessibility throughout Town over the last 10+ years. In the parks, the Town has provided sidewalk access from the existing

neighborhood sidewalks through the park and to the playground areas at a number of sites where the sidewalks previously ended at the edge of the park property. A couple of parks also used this funding to provide pathway access to park amenities such as multi-purpose courts, playgrounds and two ball fields. This funding also allowed for a retrofit of the washroom facilities at the Northgate Park shelter which previously did not meet ADA standards.

Most of the Town's playgrounds have engineered wood fiber, which meets ASTM standards, as the accessible safety surfacing beneath the amenities. In the future, the goal is to provide poured in place surfacing.

Improvements will continue to be made through universal design for newly constructed facilities throughout the park system. One of the goals for this plan is to continue to improve accessibility to various existing park amenities. There are amenities that alone may be accessible, but do not have ADA accessible routes to access them.



Accessibility issues do exist in certain parks. The Town has used past CDBG funds to address accessibility issues. CDBG funds should be available in the future to help improve accessibility issues as noted in this plan. If CDBG or other funding is made available (possibly through a future park bond issue) these accessibility issues could be corrected in the next 8-10 years. The total cost to remedy the accessibility issues in all of the existing parks is estimated around \$500,000. The majority of this is for providing accessible routes to park amenities such as play equipment and athletic fields. Some signage would also need to be replaced as a part of these improvements.

The Town of Dyer Parks and Recreation Department follows the section 504 guidelines of the American with Disabilities Act. That section states that no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance. The Parks and Recreation

Department improved all curb cuts for ADA accessibility. Now that those have been brought up to code, the department prints the following statement in each of their three seasonal activity guides: "Regulations of the US Dept. of Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she had been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to Director, Equal Opportunity Program; National Park Service; PO Box 37127; Washington D.C. 20013-7127." In self-evaluation this statement has been neglected to be included in the seasonal brochures but in doing the master plan has reminded the department to include it once again. The annual brochures are mailed direct to all residences in the Town of Dyer three times a year. A summer brochure is mailed typically in April, a fall brochure is typically mailed in August and a winter/spring brochure is typically mailed in December.

Any individual can file an ADA grievance locally with the Town of Dyer. This can be done by submitting in writing an individual's full name, mailing address and phone number along with a brief description about the ADA violation to:

Town of Dyer
Attn: Tom DeGiulio, ADA Coordinator
1 Town Square
Dyer, IN 46311

Violations can also be submitted via:

The U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Disability Rights Section NYAV
Washington, D.C. 20530

www.ada.gov
(800) 514-0301 (voice)
(800) 514-0383 (TTY)



SECTION III

PARK INVENTORY

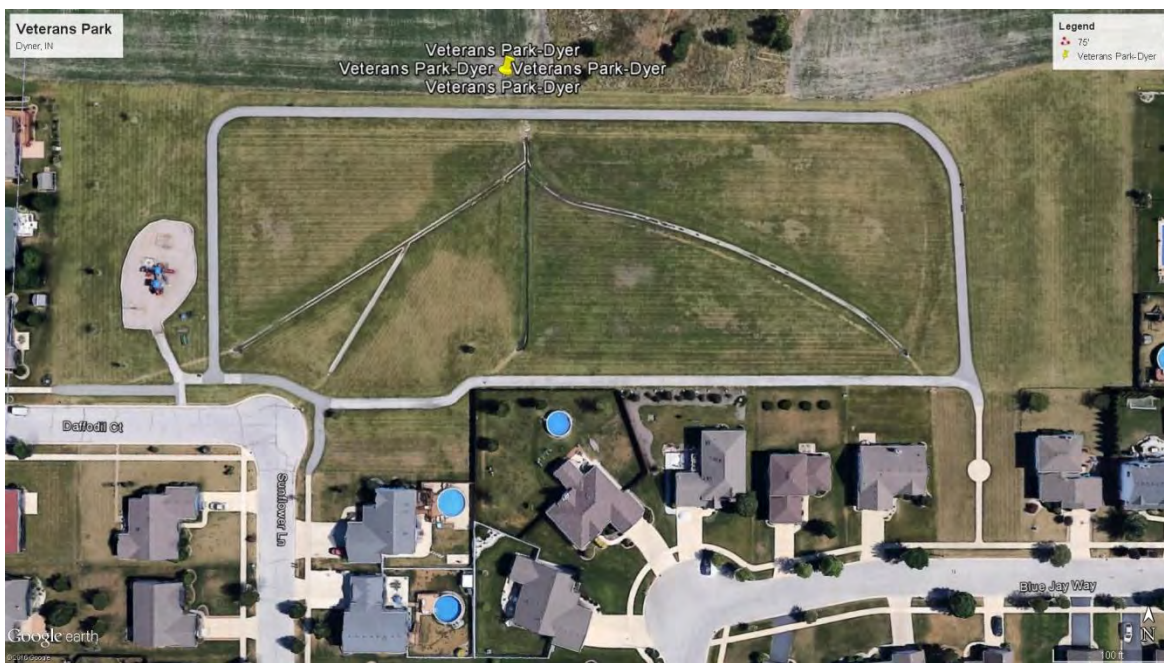


Park Name: Veterans Park

Park ID: 1

Park Location: North
Park Size: 5.7 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Fitness Trail (Asphalt); Playground

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site is one of the better developments, including a playground and path. It also includes a detention basin area that is crisscrossed with concrete swales.

Accessibility Level: There is a curb cut and accessible walk to the playground. The playground transfer module is not close to the access point. Engineered wood fiber surfacing level is low.

Notes: Playground equipment is approximately 15 years old. Normal life expectancy of equipment is 15-20 years, so this play equipment is nearing the end of its useful life.



Park Name: Veterans Park (continued)

Park ID: 1

Goals for park:

There is a lack of landscaping and shade trees in this park. There are however, a few benches placed along the trail. Landscaping can add character and define space. Other amenities such as fitness stations along the path and possibly a small shelter near the playground may be desirable. The detention basin can serve as a practice/open field area if the concrete swales are removed and the basin is graded and seeded. When the playground equipment is replaced the play surface will be upgraded to poured in place rubber surfacing.

If Main Street (to the north side of the park site) is extended west into the state of Illinois, there may be a need to add a fence and possibly buffer plantings between the park and the roadway.

These types of improvements could be funded through a Capital Improvement Fund.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Northgate Park

Park ID: 2

Park Location: North
Park Size: 23.9 acres
Park Type: Community
Park Amenities: Softball fields - 5; Trail – asphalt looping; Soccer Fields – 6 different sizes; Tennis Courts – 2; Volleyball Courts – 1 sand and 2 grass; Horse Shoe Pit; Bocce Ball Court and Bags Area; Large Shelter – with electrical; Concession; Restrooms; Playground; Sled Hill and Parking Lot – 2, asphalt, +/- 160 spaces

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Identified in the last master plan as a park that needed a complete renovation, this park has seen a transformation, with renovations and improvements implemented over the past two years.

This is a very nice active park site that needs minor updating to improve accessibility and play equipment, as well as some additional landscaping to define and beautify the spaces of use.



Park Name: Northgate Park (continued)

Park ID: 2

Accessibility Level: Good, paved access to tennis courts, bocce and bag set courts, and playground area were added in 2010. Site could use a connection at ball field #1 and #5 as well as to spectator areas for softball and soccer fields.

Notes: There is a small parking lot located off Northgate Drive, with a larger lot off of Calumet Ave. This site contains multiple amenities as noted above. All five ballfields have skinned infields with a limestone finishing's surface. The fields are numbered 1-5, with specific notes below:

- *Field 1* is near Northgate Dr. in the southwest part of the site. Field 1 has full fencing and bleachers and player bench "dugout" areas, but is not accessible. This field is lighted with concrete poles that look as if they have recently been installed. It has a boulder with a plaque identifying it as "Blaze Field". There is a Petroleum pipeline sign along the third base side of this field.
- *Field 2* is lighted and fully fenced with bleachers and player bench "dugout" areas. It is located in the center of the site and is close to the parking lot off of Northgate Dr. The light poles are wood and seem to have been there for a while. There is a utility pole with an older rusted electric panel and a new electric panel on it along the 3rd base line. This field is the only one with an electronic scoreboard. There is a bullpen and/or batting cage area behind home plate and outside of the right-center field area of Field 1. This field looks to be fully accessible.
- *Field 3* is in the northern part of the site, with its primary access off the Calumet Ave. parking lot. This field was recently fenced along the side lines and outfield, but is not lit. The field is accessible but the bleacher areas are not.
- *Field 4* is adjacent to Field 3. It is lighted and fully fenced. The field is accessible but the bleacher areas are not.
- *Field 5* is in the southern corner of the site and is a practice field with only a backstop and some benches. It is not accessible.

There are soccer fields located in the open turf areas around the softball fields in the north and east parts of the site. They seem to be geared primarily to very young players. There are portable benches and waste receptacles between fields. These areas are not graded specifically for a soccer field layout.

The sled hill has a very organized layout with access and sledding



Park Name: Northgate Park (continued)

Park ID: 2

defined by fencing. The orientation of the sled hill facing to the south-west may be undesirable. This amenity is not ADA accessible.

There is a sand volleyball court to the west of the sled hill just south of the main shelter. This amenity is not ADA accessible.

A large partially indoor shelter is located in the center of the site. This structure has had some recent improvements, and includes restrooms, concessions, and covered seating areas. There is a separate maintenance building adjacent to this shelter.

Next to the shelter there is a bocce ball court and bags court area that was installed over a circular basketball court, and 2 tennis courts.

Across the main parking lot from the court area there are 3 separate playground areas. The 2 larger areas have play structures and the one closer to the parking lot has a large net climber. The wood fiber surfacing is a bit low and the net ground connections are exposed. The third play area is much smaller, contains an old metal tornado style slide and sand surfacing, and is not accessible. All 3 areas have plastic curbs.

Next to the shelter there is a small memorial from the Town of Dyer Bicentennial Commission. The stone and the walls are nice but there is not very much landscaping to accent it. A path runs through and around the northern and central parts of the site.

Goals for park:

The 40+ year old shelter is a priority for this park. At a minimum, wooden boards need replaced and the shelter needs painting. This shelter is often rented by residents, sports groups and neighboring community residents. This park would also benefit from a paved walking path from the shelter area to Field 1. These types of improvements could be funded through the Capital Improvement Fund.

This is a very nice active park site that needs minor updating to improve accessibility and play equipment, as well as some additional landscaping to define and beautify the spaces of use.

In meeting the Park Board's desire to provide facilities for special needs users, this park has been considered to become the site of a Miracle Field type of ball field facility and/or a Boundless Playground type play area due its location, size, available parking, and ease of access.



Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Heritage Estates Park

Park ID: 3

Park Location: North
Park Size: 0.8 acres
Park Type: Pocket
Park Amenities: Playground

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site is small with limited open space.

Accessibility Level: Poor - Need accessible route from sidewalk to swings, tot swings and play equipment.

Notes: This is a small neighborhood park with 3 separate play areas with wood fiber and plastic curbs that are not accessible. It has an older style sign, a picnic table and a waste receptacle as well. There is a tall chain link fence along the back of the site which borders the state line with Illinois. There are a few mature trees on the site.



Park Name: Heritage Estates Park (continued) Park ID: 3

Goals for park:

This is a small park site that needs improvements to accessibility and updated play equipment with poured in place rubber surfacing, as well as some landscape planning.

Park Site Pictures



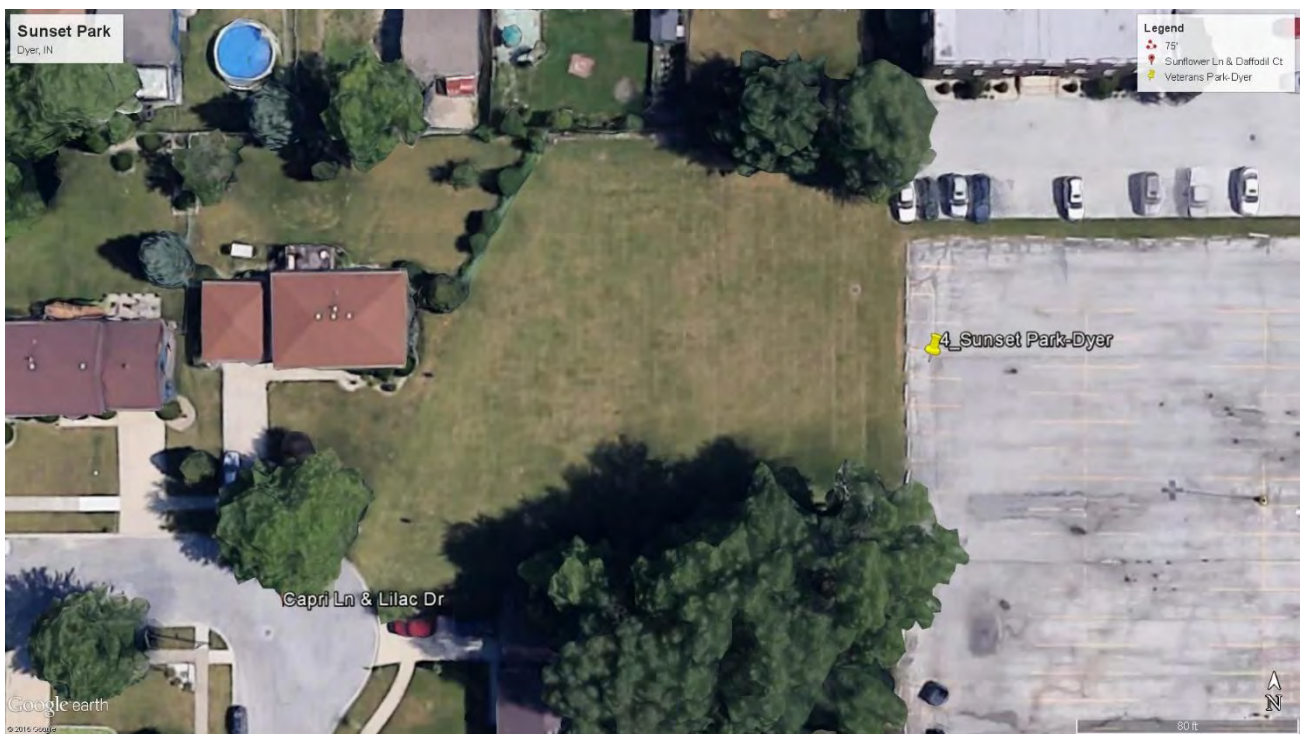


Park Name: Sunset Park

Park ID: 4

Park Location: North
Park Size: 0.5 acres
Park Type: Pocket
Park Amenities: Open space - undeveloped

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park is in close proximity to other parks with equipment/amenities.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Park is undeveloped.

Notes: This is a small open turf space. It has no other amenities.

Goals for park: There is space to locate a small playground if desired. Landscape can clarify the recreation space and beautify the site.

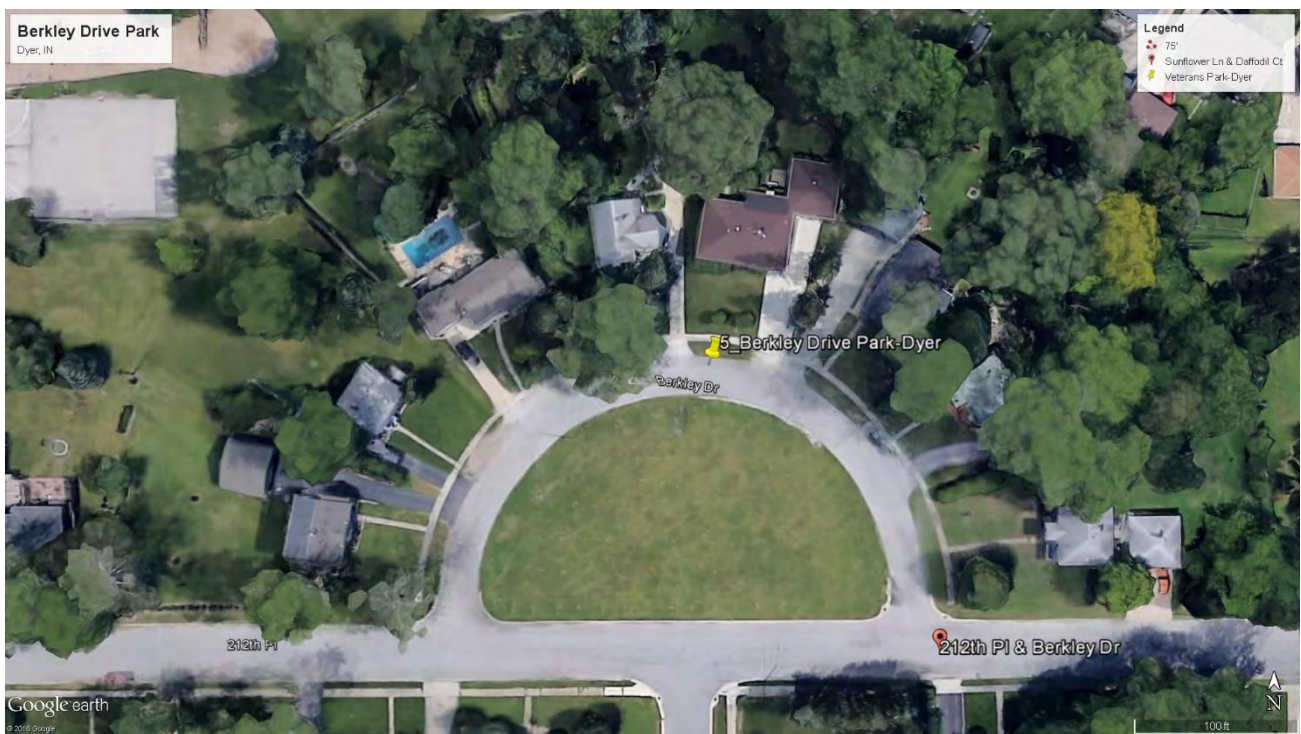


Park Name: Berkley Drive Park

Park ID: 5

Park Location: North
Park Size: 0.3 acres
Park Type: Pocket
Park Amenities: None

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site is undeveloped.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Park is undeveloped.

Notes: This is a half circle turf site with full street curb access. It has no other amenities.

Goals for park: There is space to locate a small playground if desired. Landscape can clarify the recreation space and beautify the site.

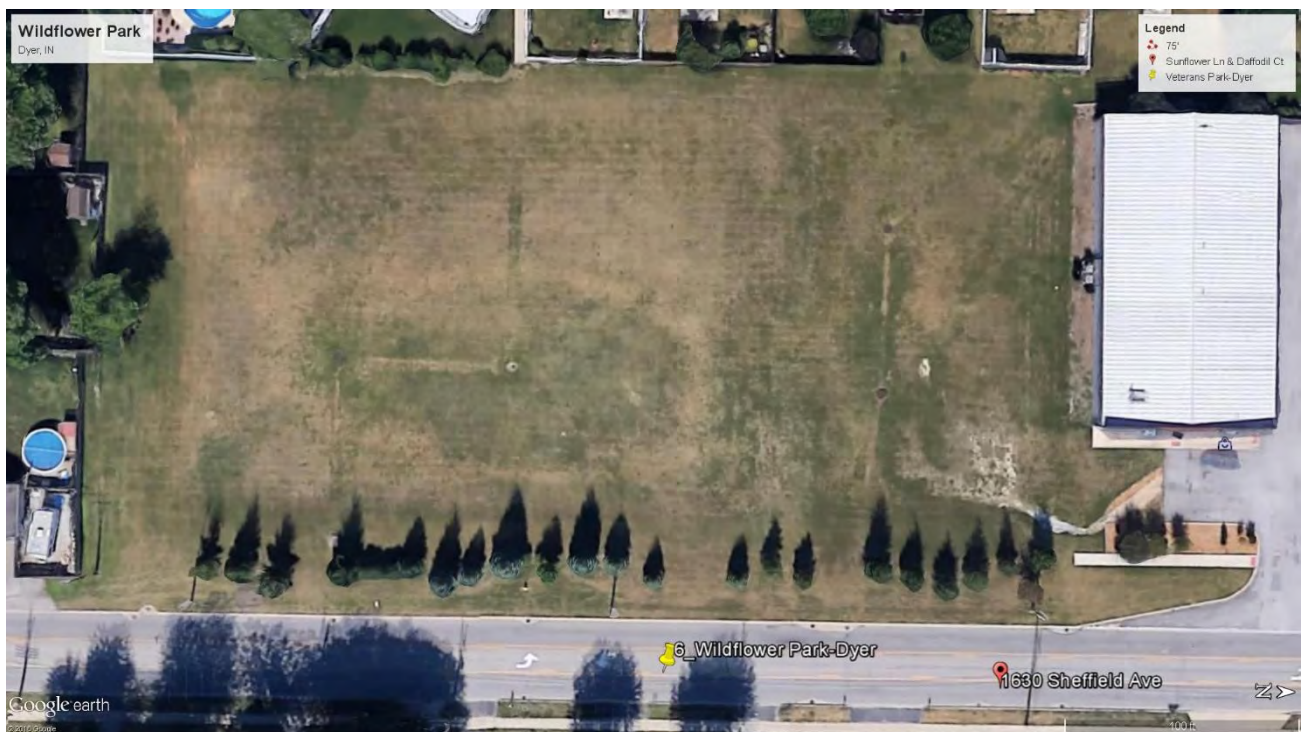


Park Name: Wildflower Park

Park ID: 6

Park Location: North
Park Size: 1.9 acres
Park Type: Special use
Park Amenities: Open Space – Detention Basin

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site is undeveloped.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Site is undeveloped.

Notes: This is a small park site with a turf detention basin and a line of evergreen trees along the street side. This property has been targeted by the Park Board to be donated to the Town Council/Storm Water Board because this property has no true park activity value.



Park Name: Wildflower Park (continued) Park ID: 6

Goals for park:

This piece of property is deeded to the Town of Dyer; however it is maintained by the Parks Department. This property has been identified by the Park Board to donate to the Town Council or Stormwater Board as it has no true recreational value.

Due to this lack of recreational value, the site could be naturalized if it remains a park site to reduce mowing and improve the environment.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Briar Crossing Park

Park ID: 7

Park Location: North
Park Size: 9.4 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Open Space with detention basin

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: This park site is a detention basin for the most part, with some high ground and a few existing trees.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Site is undeveloped.

Notes: This park site is primarily detention with some large drainage infrastructure. It is also adjacent to Central Park. This property has been targeted by the Park Board to be donated to the Town Council/Storm Water Board because this property has no true park activity value.



Park Name: Briar Crossing Park (continued) Park ID: 7

Goals for park:

Due to its proximity to Central Park and site character it is not an ideal location for any park amenity development. It could be naturalized if it remains a park site to reduce mowing and improve the environment.

With Central Park now a reality and literally across the street, this site will be used for storm water management of Central park. This property has been identified by the Park Board to donate to the Town Council or Stormwater Board as it has no true recreational value.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Green Meadows Park

Park ID: 8

Park Location: North
Park Size: 3.8 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Baseball Backstop; Half Basketball Court; Looping Asphalt Fitness Trail and Playground.

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: One of the better parks in the system, with a playground, path, half basketball court, and open lawn play space with a small backstop. There is electric service and security lighting at playground.

Accessibility Level: Good - Accessibility to park facilities.

Notes: This park site has a very small street access point but opens up to a larger neighborhood park site with a walking path, a playground, a ballfield backstop, and a half basketball court. The park sign is the older style. Access is decent. The playground has wood fiber surfacing and plastic curbs. The park site is bordered by the railroad and open space on the East and West sides.



Park Name: Green Meadows Park (continued)

Park ID: 8

Goals for park: The basketball court should be resurfaced with added functionality to include ice skating and pickle ball use. The play equipment should be updated and the site will benefit from additional landscaping. When the playground equipment is replaced, the surfacing should be upgraded to poured in place rubber surfacing. If street access and visibility could be improved, that may be desirable as well.

Park Site Pictures



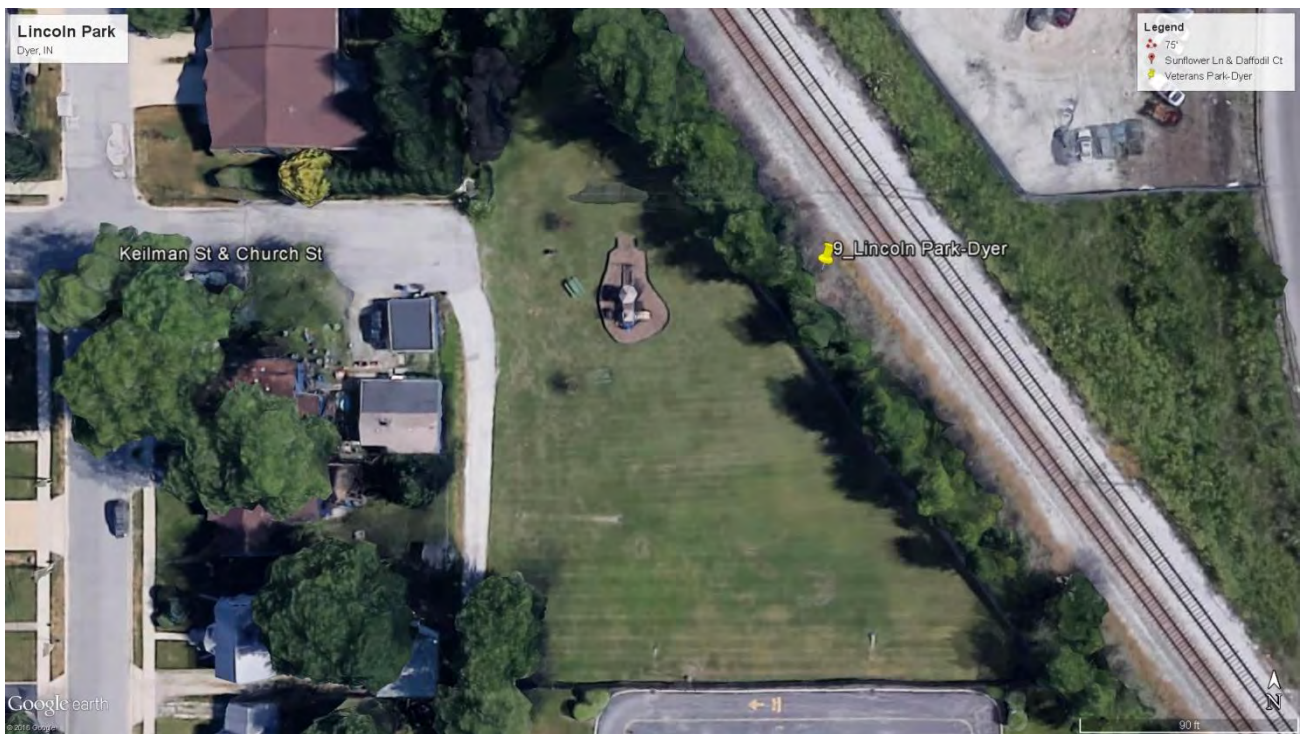


Park Name: Lincoln Park

Park ID: 9

Park Location: North
Park Size: 1.0 acres
Park Type: Pocket Park
Park Amenities: Open Space – Detention Basin; Playground

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site is in poor condition. Equipment is designed with a ramp for accessibility but no significant play events or paved route is provided.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Needs accessible route from park edge to playground area.

Notes: This park site is accessed at the end of Keilman Street along an alley. It is partially detention and is bordered by a parking lot and a railroad. The small playground has wood fiber surfacing and plastic curbs, and while it has a ramp access point it is not accessible.



Park Name: Lincoln Park (continued)

Park ID: 9

Goals for park:

When the playground equipment is replaced the surfacing should be upgraded to poured in place rubber surfacing. This site should be improved for accessibility and naturalization of the detention basin and additional landscaping is desirable. A site plan should be created to investigate a walking path as well as landscape improvements including additional trees throughout the park.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Pheasant Hills Park

Park ID: 10

Park Location: South
Park Size: 29.0 acres
Park Type: Community
Park Amenities: Looping Paved Trail (Asphalt); Playground; Small Picnic Shelter with electric; Large Picnic Shelter with electric; Picnic tables; 2 soccer fields; Horse Shoe Pit; Skate Park; Storm Water Pond (shallow – approx. 12 acres); Paved parking lot with 40+ spaces plus access to over 100 spaces.

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site has undergone extensive updating in the past 12 years with the addition of a skate park, new shelters, paved walking path, new playground equipment, landscaping and parking.

Accessibility Level: Good - Accessible connection from path to skate park is needed.



Park Name: Pheasant Hills Park (continued)

Park ID: 10

Notes:

This is a community park site with parking on both the north and south sides. On the south side the parking lot is smaller and is adjacent to a large open shelter with picnic tables and a playground dedicated to the memory of SSG David Nowaczyk. The access and layout of the walks to the playground and shelter are not very aesthetically pleasing. The playground can also be accessed on foot from Sycamore Drive. The playground has wood fiber surfacing and concrete curbs. Concrete walks lead to the playground. There does not appear to be any beveled or ramp access points down into the wood fiber.

There is a large pond that occupies the eastern portion of the site. Currently there is a path along the north and west sides of the pond that then loops around the western portion of the site to access a skate park in the northwest corner of the site. The skate park is in decent shape and features mostly pre-fabricated above ground ramp elements, with a large staircase at the west end that serves as both a skate event and an access point from Hart Street. The path loops back around to another shelter, drinking fountain and a pump station adjacent to the larger north side parking lot that may also serve the middle school.

Goals for park:

The Park Department will work with the Storm Water Board to investigate methods to improve water quality for the pond. A site plan should be created to explore adding a walking path around the pond with the addition of fitness stations and benches along the walking paths. Since this park is used for large special events, upgrading the electrical panels may be desirable as well.

This park site is well developed and will benefit from some simple accessibility improvements and landscape planning to improve the aesthetics and possibly address circulation issues.



Park Name: Pheasant Hills Park (continued)

Park ID: 10

Park Site Pictures



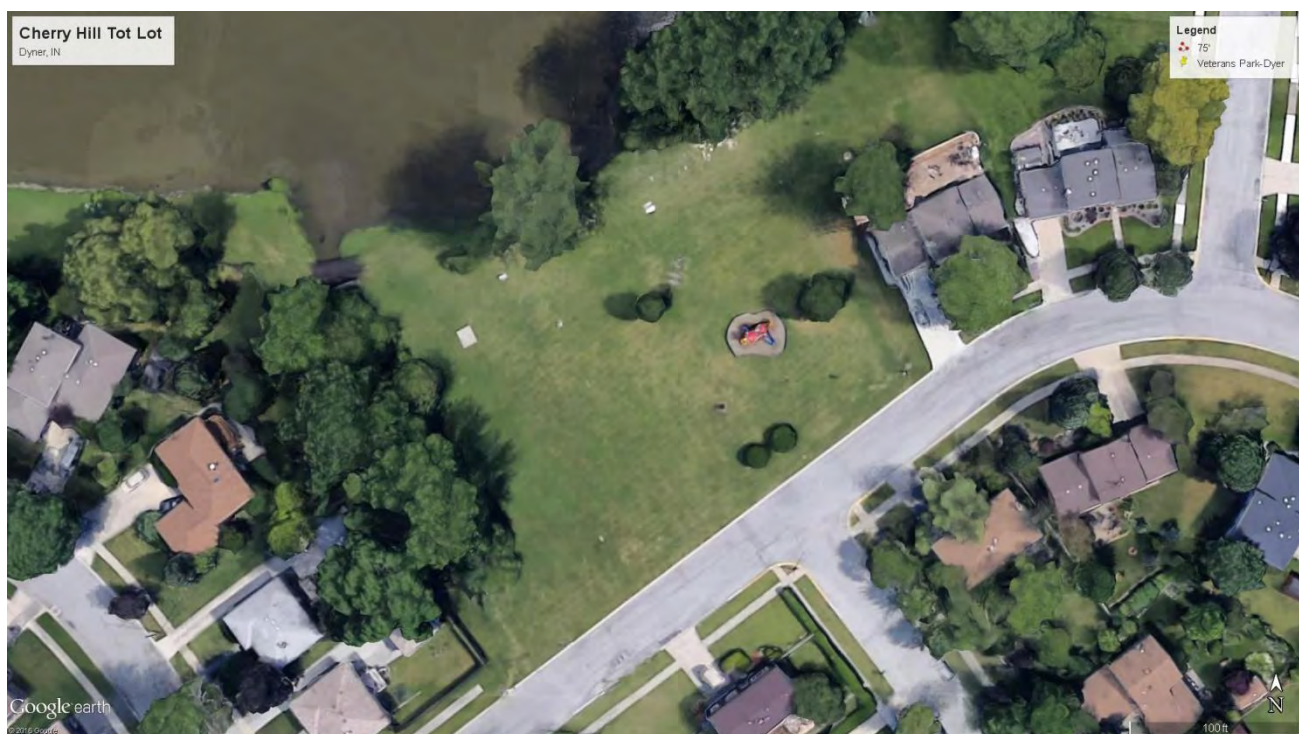


Park Name: Cherry Hill Tot Lot

Park ID: 11

Park Location: South
Park Size: 3.0 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Picnic area – 1 table; playground; 2 bridges (wood and metal)

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: No sidewalks to park. Playground equipment is older. Good views across the pond.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Need to connect sidewalk along park with a connection to playground area or to a future pond overlook. A connection from this site to the existing Pheasant Hills Park pathway would be a nice addition to provide access around the north and east sides of the pond.



Park Name: Cherry Hill Tot Lot (continued)

Park ID: 11

Notes: This property is on the south side of the Pheasant Hill Park pond area and has minimal recreational use.

This park site has no accessibility and a very small piece of play equipment.

Goals for park: This site is close to Pheasant Hills Park and in the previous Master Plan the possibility of removing the playground equipment was considered. However, the current goals for this park site include replacing the playground equipment and upgrading the play surface to poured in place rubber. A site plan should be developed to explore adding a walking path to provide site accessibility and also access to Pheasant Hills Park, including benches and possibly a gazebo viewing area to look out over the pond. If water quality is improved, this may also be a good spot for a fishing pier for the community. The plan will also recommend additional trees and landscaping.

Park Site Pictures



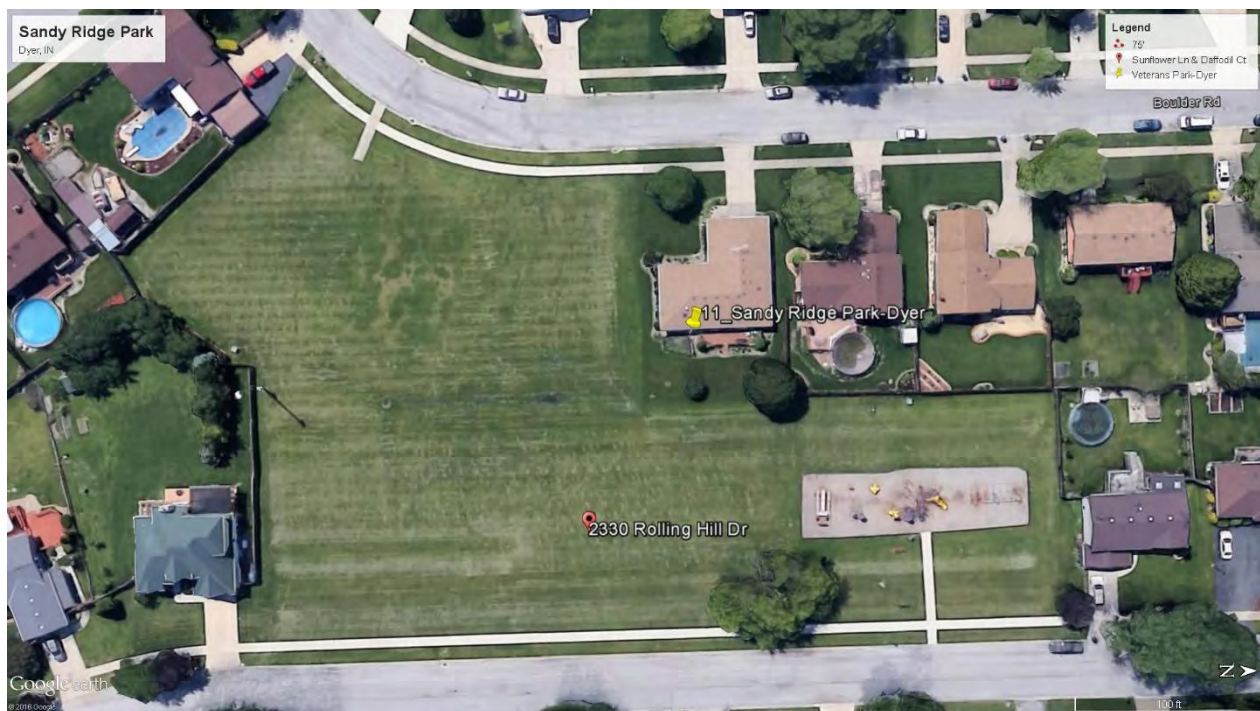


Park Name: Sandy Ridge Park

Park ID: 12

Park Location: South
Park Size: 1.9 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Soccer Field; Playground

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site is primarily a detention basin. Playground is a newer installation located on higher ground.

Accessibility Level: Good

Notes: This park site features a playground with wood fiber surfacing and play equipment on the north side of the site. The surfacing is low and the curbs are in some disrepair. The playground seems to have decent access, but this will need to be verified. There are also some benches, trash receptacles, and a new style park sign in this location. The southern portion of the site is a detention basin. There are only a couple trees on site.



Park Name: Sandy Ridge Park (continued) Park ID: 12

Goals for park:

The playground accessibility and curbing could be improved, and the site will benefit from additional landscaping and some naturalization in the detention basin. A path connecting the west side of the site to the east side where the playground is located may also be desirable.

When the playground equipment is replaced, the surfacing will also be upgraded to poured in place rubber surfacing.

Park Site Pictures



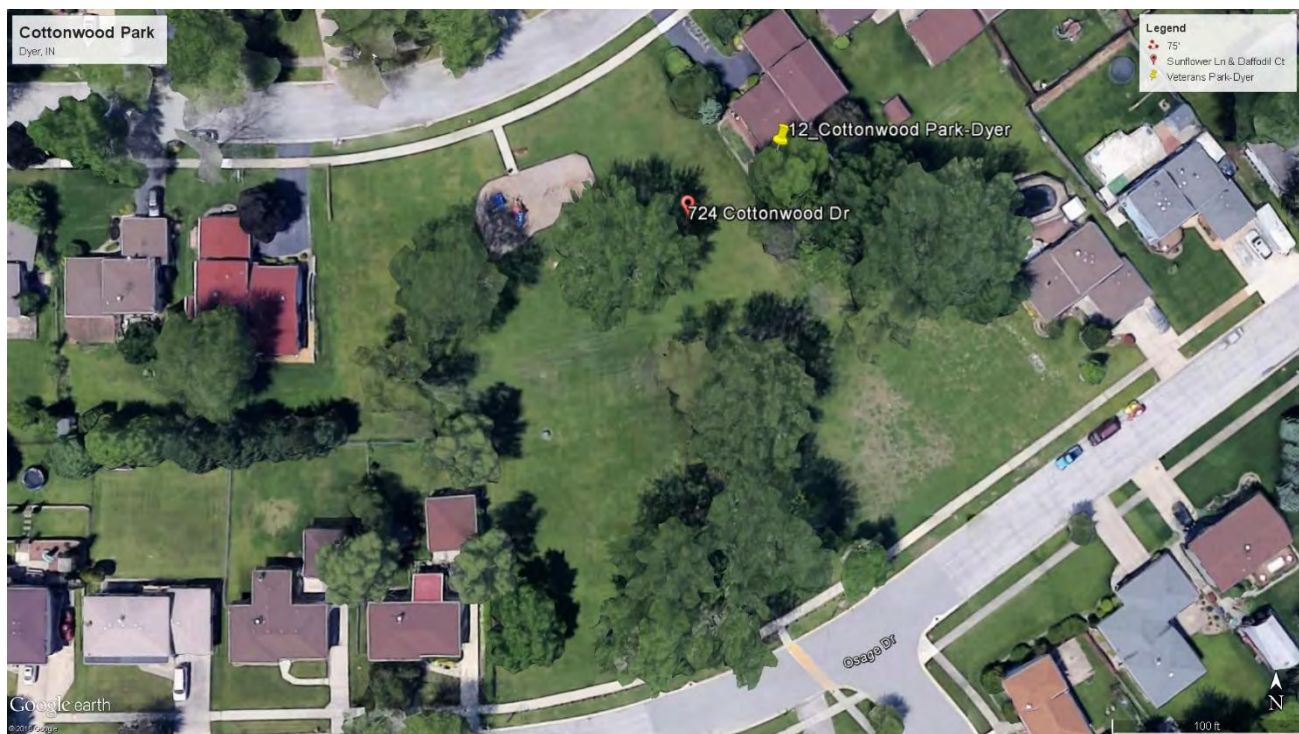


Park Name: Cottonwood Tot Lot

Park ID: 13

Park Location: South
Park Size: 1.5 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Playground

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Playground with sidewalk access. The South side of the site serves as a detention basin.

Accessibility Level: Good

Notes: This park site has a playground in the north section with decent access and plastic curbs and wood fiber surfacing. The surfacing is a bit low. The southern portion of the site contains nice mature trees, but also has some remaining utilities and concrete pads likely from the homes that were removed when the site expanded. There is also an old style park sign and wood bollards along the street on the south side.



Park Name: Cottonwood Tot Lot (Continued) Park ID: 13

Goals for park:

Some naturalization on the south side of the site may be beneficial to reduce mowing and improve the environment. It could also allow for some interpretive signage possibilities for the park site.

A path around the site connecting the south side access to the playground and also creating a walking loop may also be desirable.

When the play equipment is replaced, the surfacing will be upgraded to poured in place rubber.

Park Site Pictures



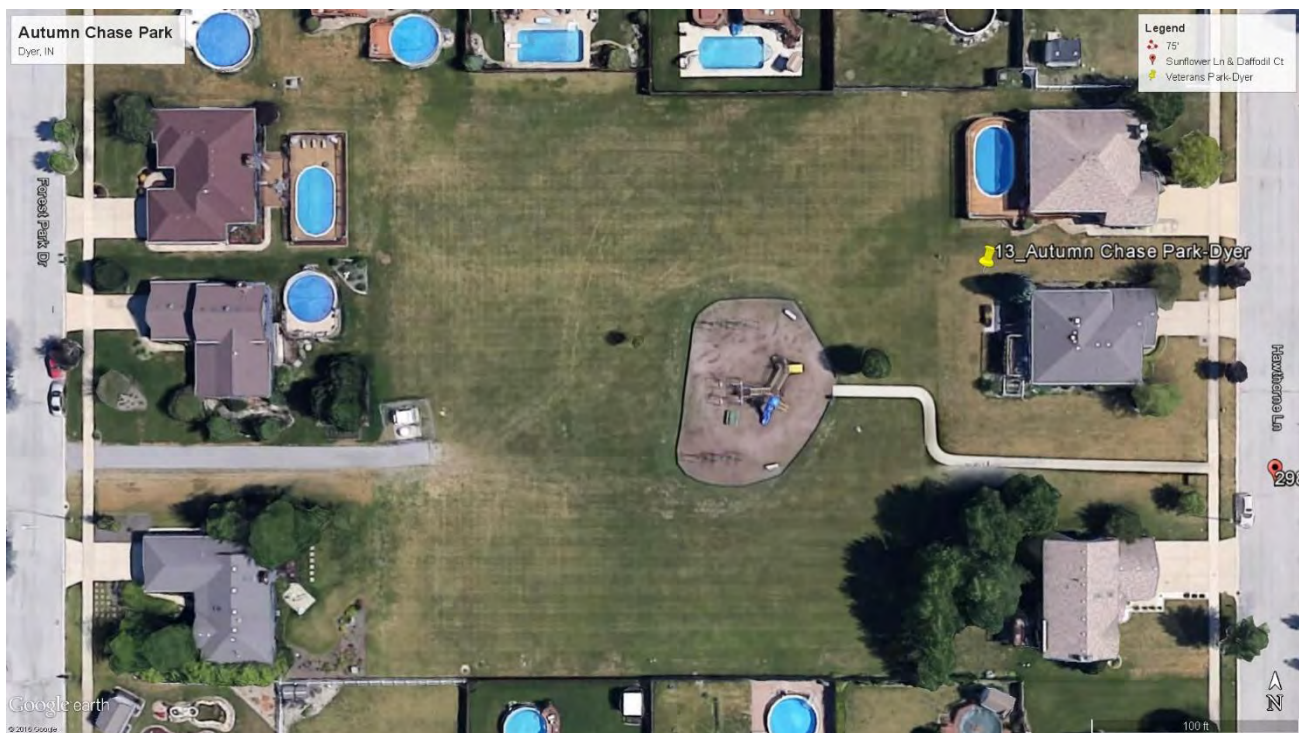


Park Name: Autumn Chase

Park ID: 14

Park Location: South
Park Size: 2.0 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Playground; Dead end asphalt walk

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: This is primarily a neighborhood park tucked into the subdivision. The park has a playground with a sidewalk entrance. There is very little shade.

Accessibility Level: Good

Notes: This park site has a small access on the east side that leads to a playground with plastic curbs and wood fiber surfacing. This access point has a new style sign with one tree by the playground. There is a boulder with a plaque listing the donors that contributed to the playground development. Access to the playground is decent. There is a bench and picnic table along with waste receptacles in the playground area as well.



Park Name: Autumn Chase (Continued)

Park ID: 14

There is a vehicular access on the west side of the park site where there is a wastewater pumping station.

Goals for park:

Playground equipment is nearing its useful lifespan. Once play equipment is replaced, a new site design should be considered to investigate the possibility of relocating the playground area to a corner of the park to allow for more open field space. When the play equipment is replaced, the surfacing will be upgraded to poured in place rubber. The site plan will also address landscaping to define space and add beauty.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Sheffield Estates Park

Park ID: 15

Park Location: North
Park Size: 2.9 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Playground; Asphalt Trail (does not loop); Sand Volleyball Court; Open Space (Detention Basin).

Park Site Aerial Image

General Impressions: Park site was poorly designed.



Accessibility Level: Average - Access to the amenities on the west side of the park is needed.

Notes: This park site has access off Rosemary Court and Capri Lane. The remainder of the site is detention. The access off Capri Lane has an asphalt path that leads to a playground area with a modular structure, wood fiber surfacing and plastic borders. Accessibility is not ideal and the playground is nearing its useful lifespan.



Park Name: Sheffield Estates Park (Continued) Park ID: 15

There is also a picnic table and a large storm structure in this location. On the Rosemary Court side there is a sand volleyball court and a play area with wood fiber and plastic curbs with 2 bays of swings. Neither of these elements is accessible. There is also a bench and waste receptacles in this location.

Goals for park:

A site plan should be developed to explore a more consolidated park layout that locates all the park amenities into one area and addresses circulation, accessibility, and landscape to define space, add shade, and naturalize the basin. This plan may also investigate a possible hard court area for ice skating, tennis, and/or pickle ball.

When the play equipment is replaced, the surfacing will be upgraded to poured in place rubber.

Park Site Pictures

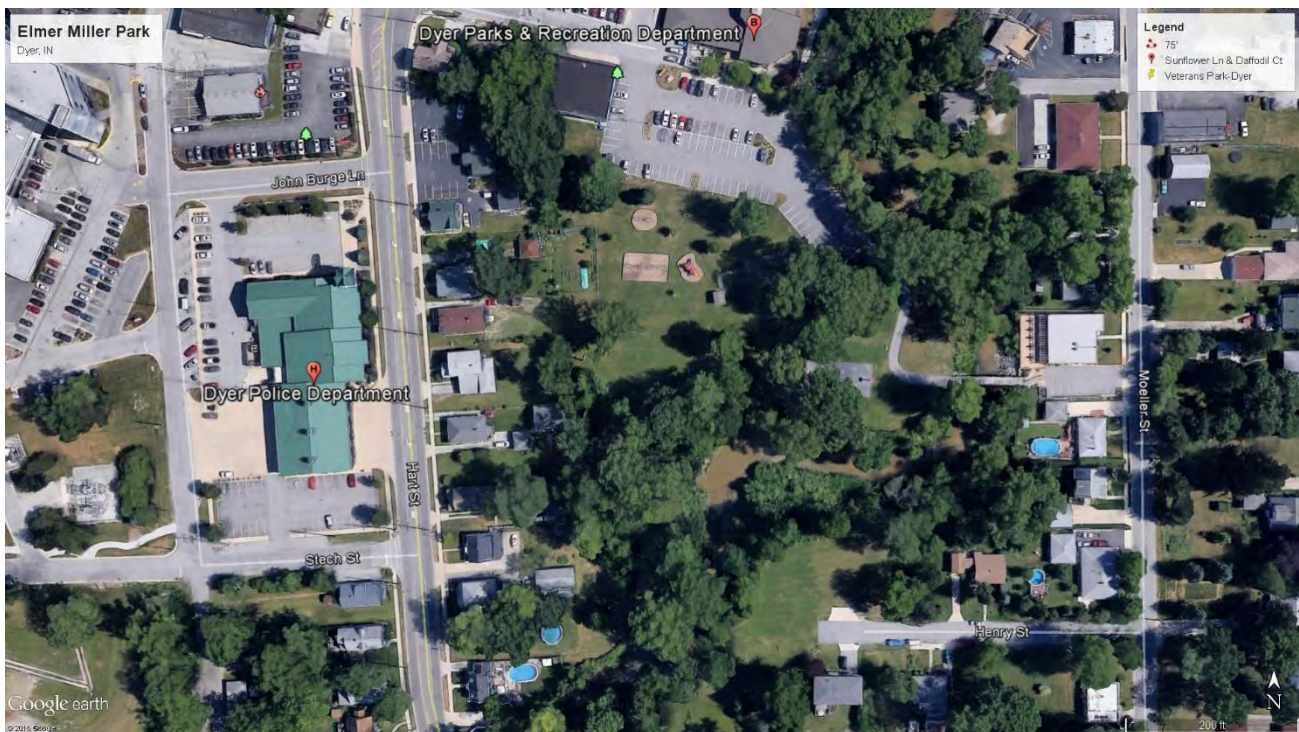




Park Name: Elmer Miller Park/ Plum Creek Center Park ID: 16

Park Location: South
Park Size: 4.1 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Bocce Ball, Game Tables and Bags court area; Playground; Grass Volleyball Court; Picnic Shelter with electric; Drinking Fountain; Parking Lot with +/- 41 spaces; Storage Building; and Community Building with composite wooden deck.

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Mature park with average tree canopy (some older trees are in need of removal/replacing). The playground structure is nearing its useful life and needs replacing. The swings and tire swing are in good shape. There is a creek along the east property line.

Accessibility Level: Average - Access to the playground swings, tire swing, play structure and court is needed along with an accessible connection to the parking lot.



Park Name: Elmer Mill Park/ Plum Creek Center (continued)

Park ID: 16

Notes: You can walk from parking lot via a paved pathway to the Plum Creek Center. There is, however, no paved path to the playground equipment.

Plum Creek Center came about in response to results from the 2006-2011 Master Plan that indicated a need for a community center. Although much smaller than hoped (can accommodate 100 guests inside), the center has grown in popularity for local meetings, events, showers, etc. Plum Creek Center features a large wooden sundeck overlooking the creek with additional seating outside. There is also a wooden bridge leading to Elmer Miller Park.

Elmer Miller Park is adjacent to the park department offices and near the town center. Access to the park site and parking area is a bit disjointed. The parking lot has an accessible walk to an open shelter with some picnic tables and to a small utility building. There are also some small playground areas with wood fiber surfacing and plastic curbs which are not accessible. Just south of the shelter is a bocce ball court, game tables and bags court area which is also not accessible. A path leads over the river to the Plum Creek Center. This path may need some adjustment to be accessible. The Plum Creek Center has outdoor deck seating along the river. The river runs through the southern portion of the site and then along the eastern edge adjacent to the park offices where it crosses under Route 30. The river way is very steep with extreme erosion.

Goals for park: A site plan should be created for this site to investigate overall layout, access and circulation. The shelter needs to be updated with new paint and lighting fixtures. The play equipment is nearing its useful life and when the equipment is replaced the surfacing will be upgraded to poured in place rubber. The site plan will also explore adding a temporary ice skating or a hard court surface area that could also be used for tennis/pickle ball.

Plum Creek Center will benefit from technology improvements that will make it more attractive to business rentals.

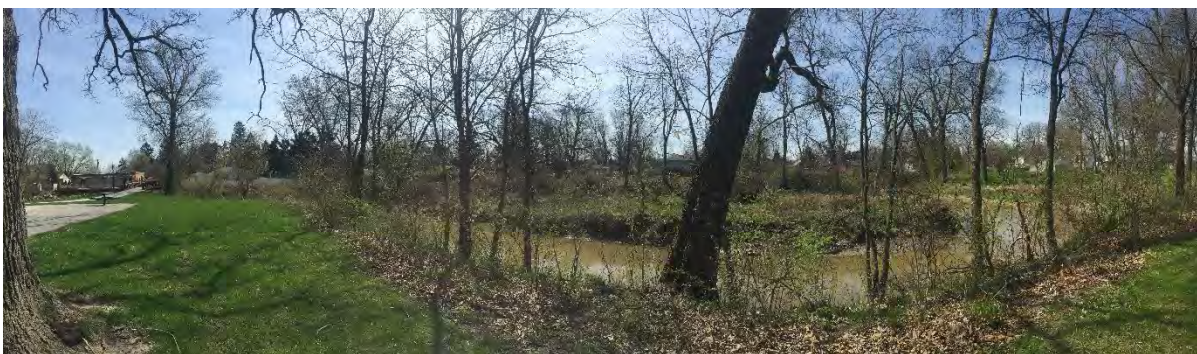


Park Name: Elmer Mill Park/ Plum Creek Center (continued)

Park ID: 16

The river way could be a great recreational amenity if the shoreline is stabilized and made accessible for kayaks or canoes. The playground area should be updated and made accessible. Accessibility should be reviewed across the entire site. Shoreline stabilization and site naturalization is desirable. Vehicular access throughout the site should be reviewed to study where it might be enhanced.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Elmer Mill Park/
Plum Creek Center (continued)
Park ID: 16

Park Site Pictures (Continued)



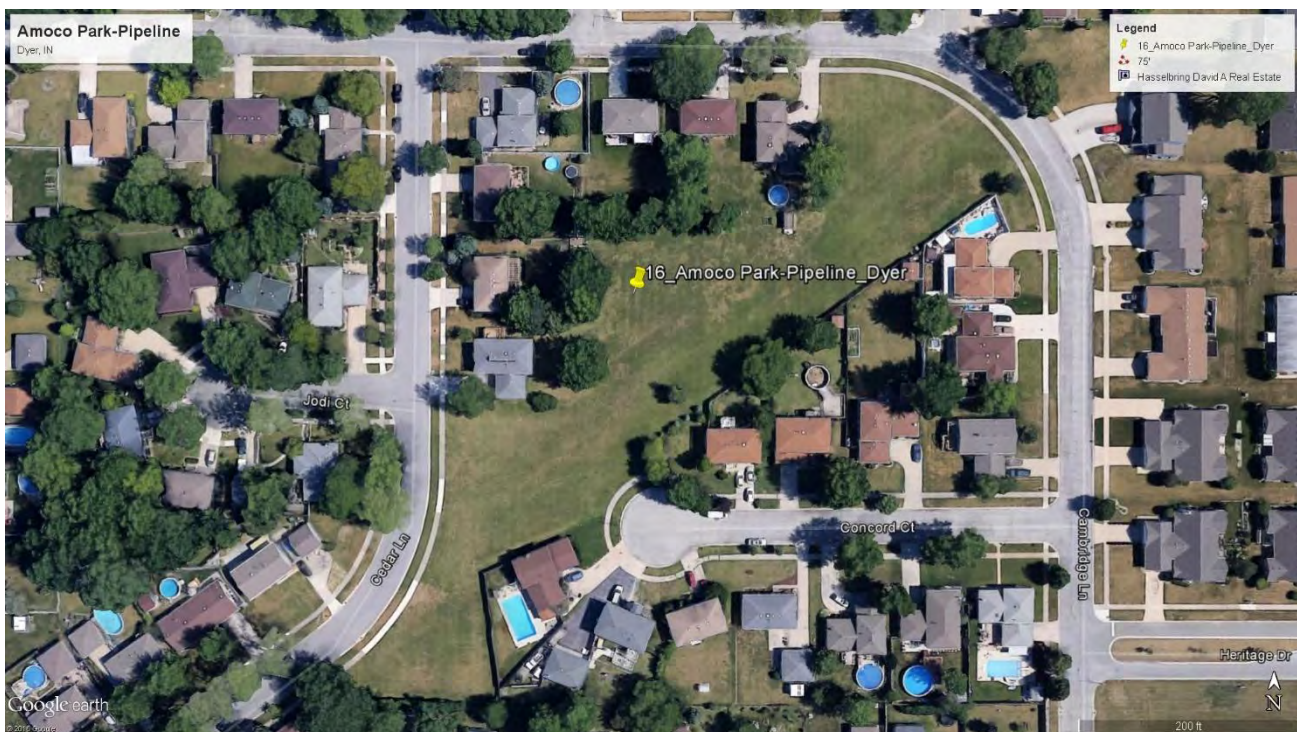


Park Name: Amoco Pipeline Park

Park ID: 17

Park Location: North
Park Size: 2.1 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Open Space

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Park site is undeveloped.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Park is undeveloped.

Notes: This site is an open space with turf over a petroleum pipeline.

Goals for park: This site, like many other properties in Dyer, was accepted as donated park space, but can only be truly utilized as green space.

This site is not ideal for significant amenity development. Goals can include naturalization to reduce mowing, along with a path and seating areas. The site may also be suitable for disc golf.



Park Name: Amoco Pipeline Park (continued) Park ID: 17

Park Site Pictures



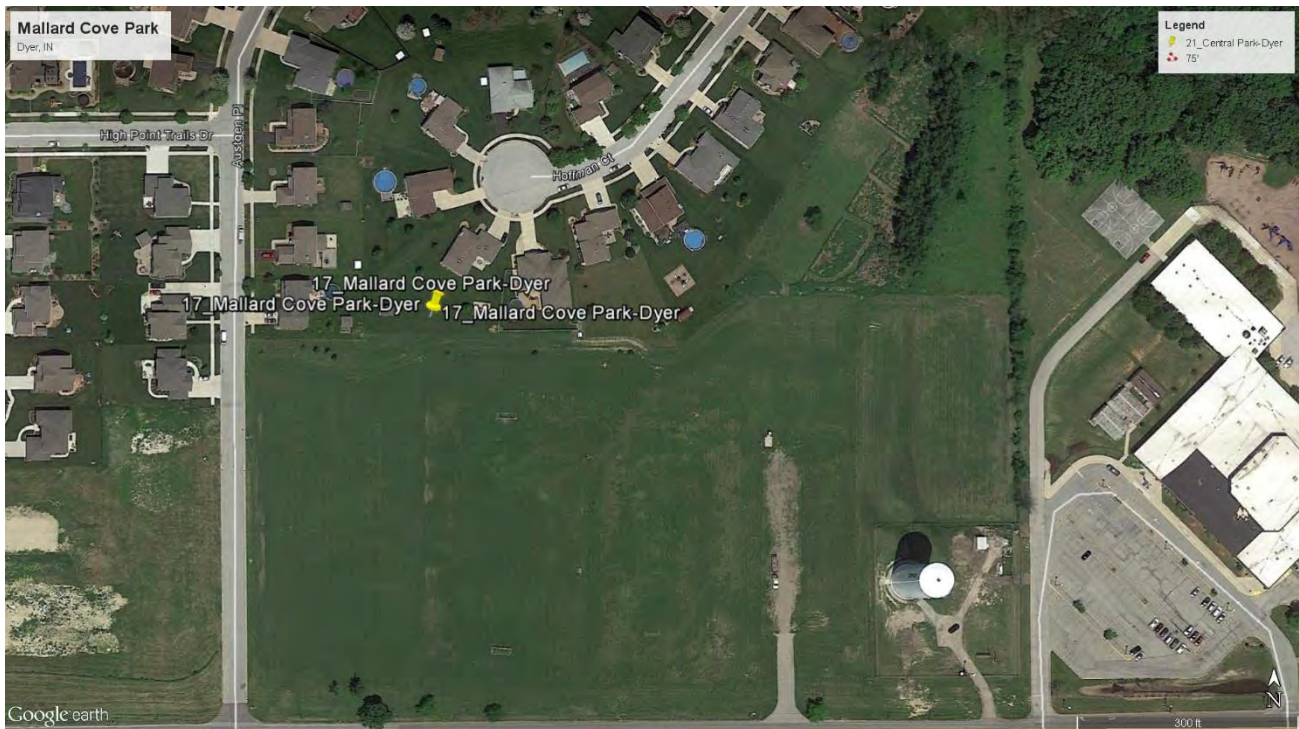


Park Name: Mallard Cove Park

Park ID: 18

Park Location: South
Park Size: 14.4 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood/Special Use
Park Amenities: Open Space; Soccer Fields; Special Grass parking lot

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: 11 acres of this park is leased property from the Diocese of Gary. The Park Board authorized the grading and seeding of this property to use for much needed soccer fields. They were opened up to Dyer Kickers in the fall 2011.

Accessibility Level: Average

Notes: This site has a turf parking lot with rope delineation and open turf fields programmed for soccer. There is a water tower on site as well. It is adjacent to George Bibich Elementary School. It may also be the site of the park department tree nursery effort.



Park Name: Mallard Cove Park (Continued) Park ID: 18

Goals for park:

Soccer fields will remain the primary use for this site; however, additional programming may be scheduled on these fields as needed.

Dyer Kickers use this space for soccer practices and games. Formalizing a user agreement will benefit both the Town and Dyer Kickers, allowing them to determine what improvements both organizations can make to best utilize this site.

Since it is a leased site, any further development will need to be done with assurances of continued lease options. Also, since it is adjacent to a school site, the possibility of more closely coordinating with the school district is an option.

Park Site Pictures



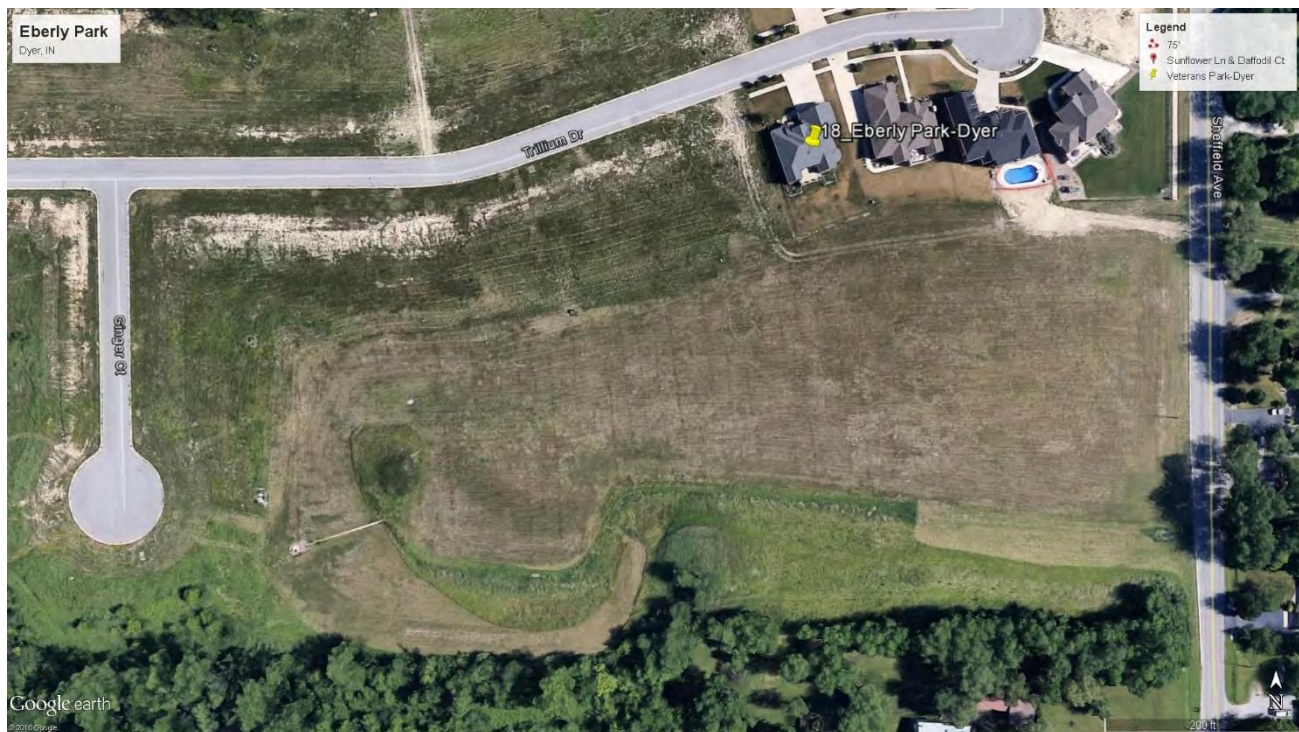


Park Name: Eberly Park

Park ID: 19

Park Location: South
Park Size: 8.5 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Open Space

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: The Parks Department is currently working with residents to develop a site plan for this park site. The site is currently open space with some low wet areas and stormwater infrastructure.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Park is undeveloped.

Notes: A site plan has been developed for this site.

Goals for park: A site plan has been developed and presented to the Park Board and local residents which includes a playground, paths, landscaping and natural areas. This plan has been presented in public meetings and will be the basis for future development. This plan will be implemented in phases, allowing for a possible hard court area, shelter, and other amenities in the future.



Park Name: Eberly Park (Continued)

Park ID: 19

These types of improvements could be funded through a Capital Improvement Fund or through state or other grant applications.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Hearthstone Park

Park ID: 20

Park Location: North
Park Size: 9.6 acres
Park Type: Neighborhood
Park Amenities: Open Space

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: The Parks Department is currently working with residents to develop a site plan for this park site. The site is currently open space with some low wet areas and stormwater infrastructure.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Park is undeveloped.

Notes: A site plan has been developed for this site.

Goals for park: A site plan has been developed and presented to the Park Board and local residents which includes a playground, paths, landscaping and natural areas, as well as parking. This plan has been presented in public meetings and will be the basis for future development. This plan will be implemented in phases, allowing for a possible hard court area, shelter, and other amenities in the future.



Park Name: Hearthstone Park (Continued) Park ID: 20

These types of improvements could be funded through a Capital Improvement Fund or through state or other grant applications.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Amel Wilking Park

Park ID: 21

Park Location: North
Park Size: 1.5 acres
Park Type: Special use
Park Amenities: Open Space with Natural Condition

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: Natural area with wildlife.

Accessibility Level: Poor – Park is left in a natural condition

Notes: This site is a triangular piece of land with a railroad to the west side and Sheffield Avenue to the east side. It currently generates revenue with a billboard.

Goals for park: Park site is not a very usable site and the best option seems to be to naturalize it.

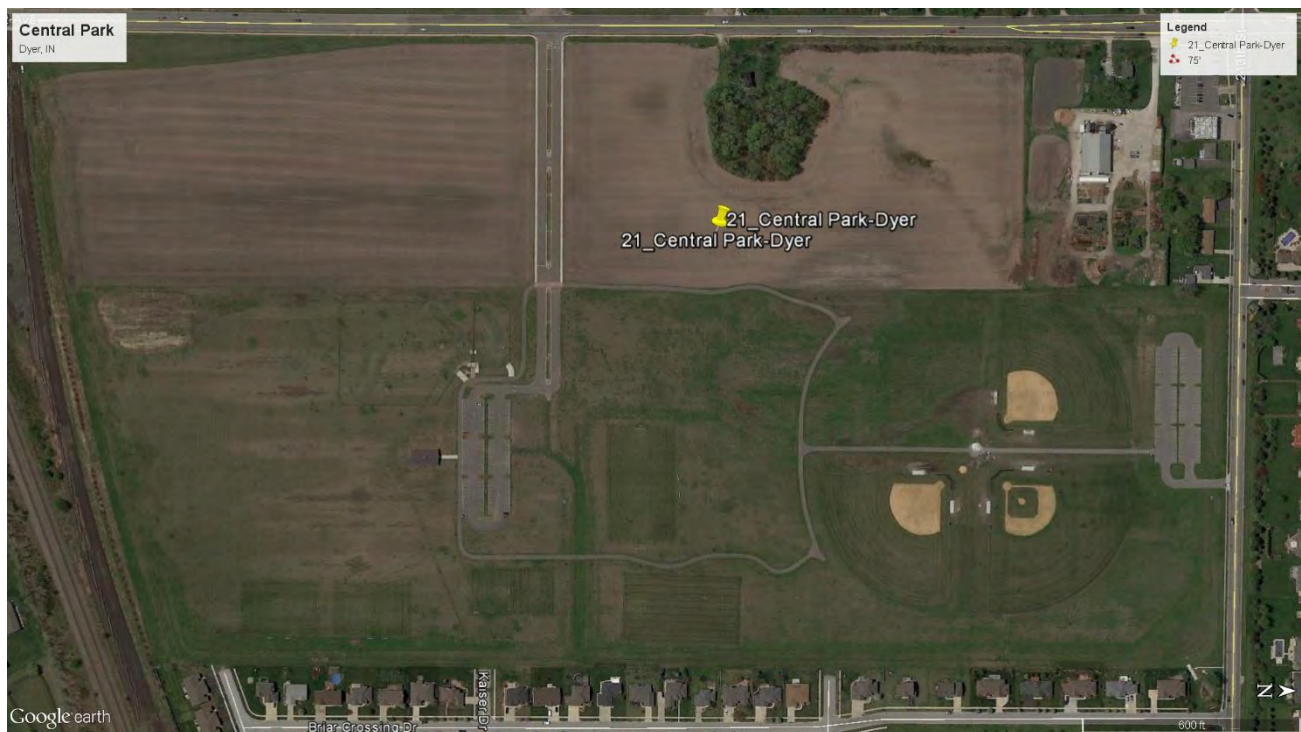


Park Name: Central Park

Park ID: 22

Park Location: North
Park Size: 77 acres
Park Type: Regional
Park Amenities: 3 Multi-purpose ball fields; soccer fields; a dog park; a large shelter; paths and asphalt paved parking lots on the north side and middle of the site with around 200 parking spaces.

Park Site Aerial Image



General Impressions: The site is a sports complex now with a dog park and paths. The site plan calls for extensive development to create a multipurpose recreational site.

Accessibility Level: Good

Notes: Central Park currently is used for baseball, softball, and soccer, and the dog park is popular as well. The site is still in a state of development and future improvements will add many more recreational and community amenities.



Park Name: Central Park (continued) Park ID: 22

Goals for park:

Central Park is a Community Park for all of Dyer. The features throughout the park provide activities for all users. The master plan has evolved over the last five years, from the purchase of the land through numerous public meetings and finally with the Town of Dyer Park Board's hiring of Robinson Engineering and Land Design Collaborative.

Central Park is a park for everyone, with a focus on the residents of Dyer as well as providing an amenity to the region. The design has features for the family, the corporate outing or for the individual. No one sport or activity dominates the park. Soccer, baseball, a Dog Park, walking trails, tennis courts, an amphitheater, play areas, a picnic area and memorial offer something for every user.

The Park Design is based on a strong center core with a defined central axis through the park. The hub and the meeting point is the Community Center with central access to all elements. A strong axis down the center of the park through the ball fields to the picnic shelter gives patrons easy access from parking to activities, and connects all activities along the core. Throughout the park similar design elements will tie the park together.

Implementation:

The Central Park site implementation depends on the development of a strategic implementation process. A timed process was developed based on dividing the park into four segments with eight phases of implementation. These phases suggest a priority for improvement development based on the existing park facilities, current uses and future anticipated demand.

Park Site Pictures





Park Name: Central Park (continued) Park ID: 22

Park Site Pictures (continued)





Park Name: Central Park (continued)

Park ID: 22

Park Site Plan



Land Design Collaborative, Inc.
Robinson Engineering

CENTRAL PARK MASTER PLAN Town of Dyer, Indiana

February 10, 2015



Park Name: Central Park (continued)

Park ID: 22

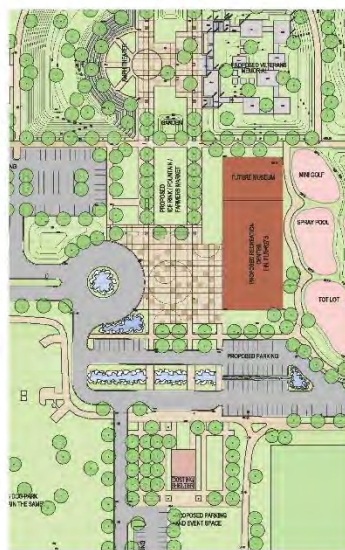
Central Park Core – Site Rendering



Central Park – Master Plan Segments



Wetlands & Native Buffer



Core Area



Baseball Field "Hub"

Master Plan Segments

Dyer, Indiana

LAND DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, INC. | ROBINSON ENGINEERING LTD.
JAN. 27, 2016

16



SECTION IV

PRIORITIES/COSTS/COMPLETION DATES



Priorities/Costs/Completion Dates

Priorities and Action Schedule

There is a need to improve existing parks and add provide two new parks north and south of Route 30 in response to the Town's bisection by Route 30. The Central Park improvements will serve the entire community and provide a centrally located place for special activities and festivals, farmers markets, and community/sub-regional attractions. Two new park implementation projects are slated for 2017; Hearthstone and Eberly Parks. Hearthstone Park is just north of Route 30 and serves a new neighborhood PUD in its final stages of build out. By comparison Eberly Park is at the extreme south end of Dyer and serves a newer single family neighborhood in an early stage of construction.

Both Parks are slated for a 2017 first phase of improvements including grading and drainage, primary paths, parking and sports fields. These parks are adjacent to new residential communities that are continuing to build out both north and south of Route 30. Elmer Miller Park, Sheffield Park, and Veteran's Park are slated for specific enhancements to improve paths, play areas, and plant shade trees. An aggressive improvements program is underway for 2017 including five neighborhood parks and the Central Park community park facility. The Capital Improvement Plan indicates the proposed range of these improvements.

Staffing

Currently the Parks Department has three full time staff and five part time staff. Seasonal part time staff is added for the summer to assist with camps and other programs. To improve programming and

events offerings, an additional full time person is desired. This person would give the Parks Department the ability to focus on particular areas, for example, Recreation Supervisor I, would focus on all youth programming and events and Recreation Supervisor II would focus on all adults, seniors and trips programming. With the development of Central Park, full time and part time maintenance staff will be needed to solely work at Central Park in order to keep its beautification and value and is an issue that the Park Department is considering.



DYER, IN Park System Improvement Program

Estimated Costs/Final Completion Target/Action Plan 2017 to 2021

(added 2% compounded each year for 5 years for 2017 to 2021 costs plus new Parks)

Veterans Park		Target Date: 2017-2021
Shade Tree Installation	\$13,500	CIP, Grant
Park Signs	\$8,000	CIP
Pathway Fitness Stations	\$16,000	CIP, Grant
Conc. Swale Removal Seed Basin	\$40,000	CIP 2021
Playground Replacement	\$100,000	CIP 2021
Total		\$177,500
Northgate Park		Target Date: 2018
Shelter Improvements	\$0.00	CIP COMPLETED
Additional Walks/Paths	\$50,000	CIP
Landscaping - Sled Hill & Shelter Area	\$25,000	CIP
Total		\$75,000
Green Meadows Park		Target Date: 2021
Replace Curb for ADA	\$0.00	CDBG COMPLETED
Basketball Court Equipment Update	\$7,000	Operating Budget
Sign	\$8,000	Operating Budget
Total		\$15,000
Pheasant Hills Park		Target Date: 2018
Park Signs	\$12,000	CIP
Electrical Panel Improvements	\$25,000	CIP
Walks/Paths	\$200,000	CIP, Safe Routes to Schools Grant, School Corp. partnership
Site Amenities	\$5,000	CIP
Total		\$267,187
Autumn Chase Park		Target Date: 2017-2021
Playground Improvements	\$0.00	CIP COMPLETED
Shade Tree Installation	\$10,000	CIP, Operating budget
Total		\$10,000
Elmer Miller/Plum Creek Center		Target Date: 2019
Shelter Replacement	\$450,000	CIP
Playground Improvements	\$50,000	CIP
Walks/Paths	\$40,000	CIP, CDBG funds
Shade Tree Replacement	\$10,000	CIP, Grant



River Walk Improvements	\$200,000	CIP
Technology Improvements to PC Ctr.	\$10,000	CIP, Operating budget
Ice Skating Area	\$50,000	CIP
Total		\$920,608
Eberly Park		Target Date: 2017-2021
Parking Area/Entrance	\$71,950	CIP, LWCF Grant
Walks/Paths	\$184,237	CIP, LWCF Grant
Playground	\$125,190	CIP, LWCF Grant
Tennis Courts	\$86,400	CIP, LWCF Grant
Shelter & Misc. Amenities	\$172,400	CIP, LWCF Grant
Shade Tree Installation Landscape	\$250,000	CIP, Grant, LWCF Grant
Park Sign	\$8,000	CIP, LWCF Grant
Total (incl. \$65K Demo & Site Prep.)	\$898,177	\$898,177
Hearthstone Park/Village Circle Park		Target Date: 2017-2021
Walks/Paths	\$190,148	CIP
Initial Playground	\$136,750	Developer Donation
Playground Addition	\$88,440	CIP
Parking Area (2)	\$132,240	CIP
Tennis Courts	\$86,400	CIP
Site Furnishings	\$176,400	CIP
Practice Ball Backstops	\$20,000	CIP, Donation
Shade Tree Installation Landscape	\$200,780	CIP, Grant
Park Sign	\$8,000	CIP
Total (incl.\$65K Demo & Site Prep.)	\$1,039,158	\$1,039,158
Central Park TBD Area A		Target Date: 2017-2021
Dog Park development	\$40,000	Donation from dog park committee
Playground	\$300,000 \$150,000	CIP
Splash Pad	\$500,000	CIP
Athletic Courts	\$450,000	CIP
Community Center	\$4,000,000	CIP
Walks/Paths	\$300,000 \$150,459	CIP, CDBG funds
Site Furnishings	\$60,000	CIP, CDBG funds
Roadways/Parking	\$250,000 \$489,330	CIP
Park Monument Signs	\$40,000	CIP
Shelter/Concession/Storage	\$500,000	CIP
Shade Tree Install/Landscaping	\$80,000 \$381,500	CIP, Grant
Maintenance Building/Storage	\$500,000	CIP
Electric Infrastructure Irrigation	\$300,000 \$104,000	CIP
Earthwork	\$1,200,000	
Athletic Field Under drains	\$200,000 \$99,712	CIP



Total w/Demo & Site Prep \$55,000	\$2,630,000	\$7,520,000 = \$8,302,687
Grand Total 5 year Plan		\$5,996,885.70
SUMMARY Budget per Year		\$1.2 million

CIP=Capital Improvement Plan

Funding for a CIP is to be determined but most likely would need to be from a future bond issue.



DYER, IN Park System Improvement Program

The following Parks and open spaces have not been included in the budget forecast due to the condition and/or appropriateness of their facilities for programed recreational use.

Heritage Park		Target Date: 2021
Shade Tree Installation	\$10,000	CIP, Grant
Play Equipment	\$30,000	CIP
Park Signs	\$8,000	CIP
Total		\$48,000
Sunset Park		Target Date: 2021
Additional Walks/Paths	\$10,000	CIP
Landscaping - Trees	\$10,000	CIP
Total		\$20,000
Berkley Drive Park		Target Date: 2019
Replace Curb for ADA	\$5,000	CDBG
Trees	\$5,000	Operating Budget
Total		\$10,000
Wildflower Park		Target Date: 2020
Landscape Improvements	\$12,000	CIP
Walks/Paths	\$26,000	CIP,
Site Amenities	\$5,000	CIP
Total		\$55,000
Briar Crossing Park		Target Date: 2021
Pathway Improvements	\$25,000	CIP
Shade Tree Installation	\$5,000	CIP, Operating budget
Total		\$30,000
Lincoln Park		Target Date: 2021
Playground Improvements	\$50,000	CIP
Walks/Paths	\$40,000	CIP, CDBG funds
Shade Tree Replacement	\$10,000	CIP, Grant
Site Amenities	\$10,000	CIP Grant
Signs	\$8,000	CIP Grant
Total		\$118,000



Sandy Ridge Park		Target Date: 2021
Shade Tree Installation	\$20,000	CIP, Grant
Park Signs	\$8,000	CIP
Playground Improvements	\$100,000	CIP
Pathway Fitness Stations	\$20,000	CIP, Grant
Total		\$148,000
Cottonwood Park		Target Date: 2021
Playground Improvements	\$70,000	CIP
Additional Walks/Paths	\$30,000	CIP
Landscaping -	\$25,000	CIP
Total		\$125,000
Sheffield Estates Park		Target Date: 2019
Replace Curb for ADA	\$5,000	CDBG
Playground Equipment Update	\$100,000	CIP
Pathways	\$20,000	
Hard Surface Court Area	\$100,000	
Trees and Landscape	\$25,000	
Total		\$250,000
Amoco Pipeline		Target Date: 2021
Park Signs	NA	CIP
Shade Trees	\$25,000	CIP
Walks/Paths	\$40,000	CIP, Safe Routes to Schools Grant, School Corp. partnership
Site Amenities	\$5,000	CIP
Total		\$70,000
Mallard Cove Park		Target Date: 2021
Sports Field Improvements	\$50,000	CIP
Shade Tree Nursey Installation	\$20,000	CIP, Operating budget
Total		\$70,000
Amel Wilking Park		Target Date: 2021
Walks/Paths	\$10,000	CIP, CDBG funds
Landscape Natural Areas	\$20,000	CIP, Grant
Total		\$30,000



Funding Recommendations/Priorities

Funding Recommendations/Priorities

Veterans Park	\$37,500	Target Date: 2017
Autumn Chase Park	\$10,000	Target Date: 2017
Hearthstone Park	\$1,039,158	Target Date: 2017
Central Park TBD Area A Yr #1	\$1,000,000	Target Date: 2017-2021
<i>Sub-Total 2017</i>	<i>\$2,086,658</i>	
Northgate Park	\$75,000	Target Date: 2018
Pheasant Hills Park	\$267,187	Target Date: 2018
Central Park TBD Area A	\$1,000,000	Target Date: 2017-2021
<i>Sub-Total 2018</i>	<i>\$1,342,197</i>	
Elmer Miller/Plum Creek Center	\$920,608	Target Date: 2019
Sheffield Estates Park	\$250,000	Target Date: 2019
Central Park TBD Area A	\$1,000,000	
<i>Sub-Total 2019</i>	<i>\$2,170,608</i>	
Eberly Park	\$898,177	
Central Park TBD Area A	\$1,000,000	Target Date: 2017-2021
<i>Sub-Total 2020</i>	<i>\$1,898,177</i>	
Heritage Park	\$48,000	Target Date: 2021
Sunset Park	\$20,000	Target Date: 2021
Sandy Ridge Park	\$148,000	Target Date: 2021
Cottonwood Park	\$125,000	Target Date: 2021
Veteran's Park Phase 2	\$140,000	Target Date: 2021
Central Park TBD Area A	\$1,000,000	
<i>Sub-Total 2021</i>	<i>\$1,511,000</i>	
Lincoln Park	\$118,000	Target Date: 2021
Amoco Pipeline	\$70,000	Target Date: 2021
Amel Wilking Park	\$30,000	Target Date: 2021
Central Park TBD Area A	\$1,000,000	Target Date: 2017-2021
Green Meadows Park	\$15,000	Target Date: 2021
Mallard Cove Park	\$70,000	Target Date: 2021
Wildflower Park	\$55,000	Target Date: 2020
Briar Crossing Park	\$30,000	Target Date: 2021
Berkley Drive Park	\$10,000	Target Date: 2021
<i>Sub-Total 2021</i>	<i>\$1,398,000</i>	



The Town of **Dyer's** Recreation Programs

The community has a residential population of 16,051 based on the July 1, 2015 Census estimate. Dyer is primarily a bedroom community providing homeowners easy access to the Chicago metropolitan area where many residents are employed. Excellent schools and established housing in all categories for families of various income levels has made Dyer an attractive place to call home. Furthermore the Town's investment in parks and recreational offering is another asset to attract families to Dyer. However the number of recreation programs is limited due to lack of indoor recreational facility space.

The Town does have some challenges that limit participation in recreational programs. The Town is physically divided by US Route 30, a five lane highway which is the primary east/west alternative to Interstate 80/94. This division has been cited by some residents for making it more difficult to get to a site for recreational programs. A lack of indoor space for programs is also a major factor limiting the department's program offerings. The Town Hall has a pair of small activity rooms inside the Town Hall which are used for various programs. However the size of the two rooms limits the amount of participation and what types of classes can be held there. In the last five years the Town added the Plum Creek Center which has helped increase program offerings. That facility is used primarily for programs Monday-Thursday while Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays are available to the public for rentals. For a banquet hall it is relatively small. It can hold up to 100 people for events. The room has provided the department with a larger indoor space where a number of exercise and

fitness related activities have been offered.

The department still lacks a large indoor space, specifically a gymnasium, fitness center, walking track and indoor classrooms. Indoor recreation space under the direct control of the parks and recreation department would provide the best flexibility for the department to offer programs at times that are desired by the public. Using space at the local schools, churches or hospital is only available after their programs and activities have been satisfied which is not always the most convenient times and days.

While the majority of this plan has focused on developing properties to meet the needs of residents, it is crucial to recreational programs to have such park facilities as well to continue to be successful.

A recreation demand analysis has been completed to evaluate recreational offerings in addition to collecting information for future planning. The following table compares results from Dyer and neighboring communities.





Recreation Demand Analysis	Dyer	Highland	Munster	Schererville	St. John
Population	16,051	23,136	22,984	28,791	16,495
Number of Parks	22	22	28	28	28
Park Acreage	204	230	383	260	120
Indoor Recreation Facilities	1	1	2	1	0
Recreation Programming staff	2	4	2	2	0
# of Annual Recreation Programs	200	115	600	200	130

The data that generated the table above provides an interesting comparison to the way parks and recreation agencies operate. Each of the communities offers some level of recreational programming. Dyer's addition of Plum Creek Center as an indoor recreation facility is an asset, but that facility does not compare favorably to the ones within Munster and Highland. Munster's Community Park center is probably similar but the clubhouse/banquet facility at Centennial Park is approximately four times as big as Plum Creek Center. When compared to the Highland Lincoln Center, which now includes a field house (four basketball courts and walking track), a fitness center, five multi-purpose classrooms, day care rooms, administrative offices and a 300 person banquet facility, the Plum Creek Center is approximately 1/12th the size.

For a number of years the Town of Dyer has searched for a way to provide a Community Center which when realized will be located at Central Park. The example that Highland has provided is a good model to follow. The Lincoln Center is operated by consistent

funding coming from the day care lease of space and the annual memberships to the fitness center. Rentals of their banquet hall, classrooms and field house are also ways that they bring in revenue to pay for the operations of the facility. They work their recreational programs around these activities to make use of the facility as much as possible. The concept of having the Dyer Town Hall operations move into such a Community Center has also been brought up as a way to share the operational expense of a building.

The desire for indoor recreation space (a community center) has been noted in a number of community questionnaires over the last twenty years. For various reasons, these efforts have yet to come to fruition but the Park Board is still aware of the desire. A community center similar to the Highland Lincoln Center would provide ample indoor space for additional recreation programs to enrich the lives of all Dyer residents. Such a signature community building, to serve all residents, would also serve Dyer as the identifiable landmark for the Town of Dyer.



Master Plan Public Input Review and Comment

The Parks and Recreation Department continues to be committed to its tradition while enhancing our future by providing resources to revolutionize recreation. The Town of Dyer Park Board has hired a professional grant writer to assist the Park Board and staff in selecting the proper grant to pursue in order to maximize improvement funds.

The agency will provide programs based on facility availability, community needs, and current trends. The Parks and Recreation Department is always looking to add new programs that will enhance the community and develop long lasting memories.



Master Plan Public Input Review

The Park Board held a public hearing on the 2017-2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan at 6pm on July 26, 2016, a youth sports group public hearing September 12, 2016 and a second public hearing was held October 25, 2016



Conclusion

As the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department continues to plan for its future, it is sure to make significant strides to becoming a noticed agency. For this to happen, ownership of this master plan and the leadership to implement it must occur.

In 2017, progress must be visible to the town leadership and most importantly, the public that has supported this initiative. There is too much that needs to be accomplished in the finances, organizational structure, recreational programming and capital development to delay implementation.

This master plan does not provide every answer because we do not have all the potential questions. It does however give detailed recommendations based on layers of analysis. Improvement needs to be charted regularly, and the plan used frequently in the next five years.



A few key recommendations that were noted in the executive summary are:

1. Invest in the parks capital improvement plan.
2. Re-bond as soon as feasible. Keep the public informed of master plan progress.
3. Reorganize the Parks and Recreation Department to fully maximize all staff. Develop current recreation offerings and constantly stay on top of new trends and continue to seek additional avenues for revenue.
4. Fully maximize recreation programming by working with neighboring towns and community groups.
5. Build relationships with local sports and school groups to better enhance the overall park experiences.
6. Insist on impact fees and get to the table early with developers to maximize park opportunities.
7. Aggressively pursue funding in the way of grants/donations which would be aided greatly by the creation of a matching fund program.



Resolution Adopting Master Plan

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

RESOLUTION NO.: 2017-_____

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN FOR THE YEARS 2017 THROUGH 2021

WHEREAS, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Board has studied the park and recreational needs of the residents of the Town of Dyer; and

WHEREAS, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Board is desirous of providing aesthetic and functional park and recreational facilities and programs to the residents of the Town of Dyer to meet their needs; and

WHEREAS, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Board realizes the importance of sound planning in order to meet the future needs of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Dyer Parks and Recreation Board is aware of the value and importance of leisure opportunities and recreational programs and facilities to the future of the Dyer Parks and Recreation Department and its programs and to the residents of the Town of Dyer.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF DYER PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: That attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit “A” is the Town of Dyer, Indiana, Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the years 2017 through 2021, which is hereby adopted as the official plan for the growth and development of parks and recreational opportunities within the Town of Dyer, Indiana, over the next five year period of time.

Section 2: That the town of Dyer, Indiana, Parks and Recreation Board shall conduct an annual review and provide an update of the goals and objectives of said master plan.

**ALL OF WHICH IS PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2017,
BY THE TOWN OF DYER, INDIANA, PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD.**

Dane Huebner, President

Maria Gurtler, Vice President

Mike Kapitan, Executive Secretary

Zara Fagan, Member

ATTEST:

Lorraine Copenhaver
Clerk



Assurance of Accessibility Compliance

**ASSURANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE WITH:
ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT of 1968 (As Amended);
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (As Amended);
AND TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990
(As Amended)**

The _____ (Applicant) has read the guidelines for compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (As Amended); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (As Amended); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (As Amended) and will comply with the applicable requirements of these Acts.

SIGNATURE _____
APPLICANT PRESIDENT

(President's printed name)

SIGNATURE _____

(Secretary's printed name)

DATE _____