

## Executive Summary

For the past 50 years since the formation of the Hampshire Park District in 1948, the District has experienced limited growth in park land and population served. The District, with its boundaries coinciding with the Township of Hampshire, remained predominantly rural with a strong agricultural land use. Within its boundaries, the Village of Hampshire maintained a small historic downtown as the center for the community.

Since 2000, the Village began to experience considerable growth, with both the Village and Park District population increasing by over 33% in five years. In 2004, the Village adopted the *2004 Land Use Comprehensive Plan* which established a framework for a balanced and orderly future development pattern that enhances the living environment and unique character of Hampshire. The Plan incorporates a strong open space element to preserve natural resources and provide through land/cash contributions, park land to meet the future recreation needs of residents.

As a result of the Village's Plan, it is anticipated that the Park District will expand from its present 31 acres with two parks, to over 250 acres

and 10 park sites within ten years. Population within the District will grow to over 20,000.

In order to meet this challenge, the *Comprehensive Park Master Plan* was developed to establish guidelines for the growth of the Hampshire Township Park District. The purpose of the Plan is to:

- Inform residents and user organizations of the changes planned for each park facility;
- Facilitate long-term capital budgeting for the Park District;
- Provide for the donation of new parks based upon the growth in the Park District;
- Permit the Park District Board of Commissioners and staff to implement projects in a more timely and orderly manner;
- Achieve continual improvements to park facilities to enhance the experience of all users and to impart a positive image of the Park District; and,
- Identify and implement new recreation programs to better serve the needs of Park District residents.

The Plan has been divided into nine chapters, with a summary description of each chapter as follows:

### Chapter 1: Introduction

The introductory chapter identifies the purposes of the Plan and provides a general background and history of the Park District, Township, and Village.

### Chapter 2: Inventory and Evaluation of Resources

Chapter 2 identifies resources in and around the Park District that have an influence, including governmental jurisdictions, regional and local agencies, natural resources, land use (existing and future), and transportation.

The existing three parks – Seyller, Ream and Schmidt – were inventoried and evaluated with specific recommendations established for improvements. Current and proposed developments which are either under construction or in various stages of the Village’s review/approval process were identified and evaluated in terms of their impact on the Park District. These developments will add over 220 acres to the existing parks, creating more than 250 acres of park land and a projected District population of over 20,000. In addition, twelve future developments were identified that could generate an additional population of 7,200, and the need for an additional 74 acres of park land.

### **Chapter 3: Demographics and Trends**

Chapter 3 reviews national and local demographics, with comparisons between 1990 and 2000 census data, and comparisons to national, state, county and local communities. Between 1990 and 2000, population in the Park District grew by 41%. The 2000 census established the population of the District at 4,792, and an estimated 2005 population at 6,500. Existing and projected School District enrollments in the Park District were reviewed, with projections indicating an enrollment increase ranging between 78% and 494% for the next ten years.

Trends in recreation are identified that could have an influence on Park District facilities and recreation programs. A meeting with the District’s Board of Commissioners and Long Range Planning Committee, and a public listening session identified and prioritized issues and needs.

### **Chapter 4: Park and Open Space Standards**

Chapter 4 establishes planning standards for parks and open space and a park land/open space classification system based on use. Classification standards are developed which include service areas, size of parks, acres per 1,000 population and population served for the different types of parks. Based on a standard of 10 acres of park land per 1,000 population, the District is deficient in park land by 30 acres, but based on projected population and proposed park land, the District will have a surplus of almost 50 acres.

A detailed service area analysis of existing, proposed, and future parks based on existing, proposed and future developments establishes the need for eight additional parks.

### **Chapter 5: Recreation Programs**

Chapter 5 reviews and evaluates existing recreation programs offered by the Park District. The evaluation includes activity areas, age, fees, gender, and season offered. Recommendations are developed which include establishing a core group of program areas based on need and present strengths of the program; a fee policy and scholarship program; reciprocal and cooperative programs; and program evaluations.

### **Chapter 6: Maintenance Program**

Chapter 6 reviews and evaluates existing park area and facility maintenance practices. Present maintenance operations by District staff and maintenance practices out-sourced are identified. Recommendations include full-time Superintendent of Parks, development of a Maintenance and Management Plan, hiring of full-time and part-time staff, development of a facility inventory data base, and staff training.

## Chapter 7: Goals and Objectives

Chapter 7 establishes a Mission Statement for the Park District and develops goals and objectives for land and facilities; recreation programs; administration; finance; maintenance; communications; and cooperation and collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

## Chapter 8: Park and Open Space Master Plan

Chapter 8 develops a Park and Open Space Master Plan based on functions for recreation, conservation and protection, and land use/development shaping. The Plan identifies over 380 acres park lands. This acreage is comprised of 31 acres of existing park land, 250 acres of proposed park land, 29 acres of additional proposed park land, and 74 acres of future park land. The Plan also establishes an Open Space system that links parks, schools, residential areas, and community facilities. The Open Space system, with over 6,000 acres, preserves natural resources as well as establishes a “Greenways” system for pedestrian and bicycle trails throughout the District. Management techniques for the Open Space system are reviewed, and include public ownership, special service districts, land trusts, homeowners associations, special associations, and conservation easements.

## Chapter 9: Capital Improvement Program, Recommendations, and Implementation

The final chapter establishes three Capital Improvements Program Options for the next ten years based on the costs of recommended improvements for existing parks, which total approximately \$3 million and does not include a new Community Recreation Center. The three Options identify a low, medium, and high level of capital budgets based on a number

of different revenue sources. In addition, cost estimates were developed for proposed and future park improvements, which range between \$21 and \$25 million. The development of the three Capital Improvement Program Options illustrate that unless significant financial resources are increased, all the recommended improvements to existing parks can not be implemented, as well as new facilities such as a new community recreation center, skate-board park, and improvements to proposed and future parks.

In Chapter 9, eight categories of recommendations are created, including:

- Finance and Referendum
- Inter-Agency Cooperation
- Operations and Policy
- Park Land Donations/Acquisition
- Land Facilities
- New Facilities
- Other Recommendations

Within the eight categories, the major recommendations for implementation include:

- Contract for a Financial Study and develop a Financial Plan;
- Referendum for tax increase and/or bonding authority;
- Construct a new Community Recreation Center building;
- Renovate the existing Recreation Building for pre-school programs;
- Rent new space in the community for administrative headquarters and recreation programs;
- Prioritize improvements for existing, proposed, and future parks and new facilities;
- Establish Park Foundation and Citizen Advisory Committee; and
- Create new staff position for a Superintendent of Parks.

Chapter 9 also reviews implementation of the Plan by establishing three levels of action steps - Critical Action Steps (6 to 12 months); Immediate Action Steps (12 to 36 months); and Long Range Action Steps (2 to 10 years).

The final section of Chapter 9 discusses alternative funding sources, including grants, corporate support, corporate sponsorships and advertising, park foundation, and memorial gifts and donations.

### **Conclusion**

The Comprehensive Park Master Plan should serve as a compass to guide the Board of Commissioners in making decisions and achieving its Mission. Although specific, the plan will be subject to change and must remain flexible enough to adjust as individual projects occur. Significant projects will require the development of detailed implementation plans. In the development of these plans, the Park District may provide opportunities for residents to provide further comment on the project and influence its final form.

The Goals and Objectives of the Plan should be reviewed annually and revised if necessary. The Plan should also be updated every three to five years to accommodate changing needs and conditions in the District.