

# Crossville Park and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Scope

## INTITATION

### **Kickoff Meeting, Research, Information Assembly and Interviews**

The planning team will conduct a planning meeting with members of the City staff and other officials to review project goals, the planning process and the proposed time schedule. This will give the elected leaders an opportunity to share constituent concerns and their long-range visions for the department. This meeting will provide the opportunity to identify known issues and concerns, to gain an overview of the Crossville's resources and to discuss specific areas that may require special attention during the planning process. Target dates will be set for delivery of the preliminary reports and recommendations, submission of comments by the City and preparation of the final document for publication.

Prior to the kickoff meeting we will have reviewed any current owner-provided inventories, maps and GIS data; we will discuss previous planning reports developed by Crossville to gain a better idea of previous planning efforts and results. We will consult with City staff to identify the large private recreation providers in and around the City and how surrounding City and County recreation agencies should be involved in the process. We will then contact these providers in order to ascertain the levels and types of recreation services and facilities each provides. We will work with staff to formulate a list of benchmarking departments and then begin gathering comparison data. On previous projects, we have found that staff and elected officials have a good idea which communities they feel they should be measured against. We will want to meet with the GIS mapping staff to determine what databases exist, such as utility easements, property ownership, property boundary and easement information, and will desire a listing of all property currently owned by the City. We will also want to collect existing maps and aerial photographs of all parks. We will this stage with a windshield visit to as many parks as possible to get a feel of the condition and make-up of public facilities.

In the weeks following the kickoff meeting, our team members, using the information provided by the City, will begin visiting facilities to gain a better understanding of the City's level of service, maintenance practices and overall condition of park facilities. The team will also visit undeveloped properties owned by the City to see what the potential is for park development on these properties. The team will record their impressions relating to conditions of facilities, making specific notes on areas of safety concern or accessibility issues related to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Other issues related to historic significance, need for conservation, access, circulation, safety, aesthetics, surrounding land uses, drainage and forest canopy and user groups observed will be noted. Particular attention will be paid to the level of maintenance at each facility. Facility inventories will also be used to provide evaluations and recommendations for the comparative analysis of benchmark communities.

### **Staff and Stakeholder Interviews**

We, working with staff prior to our arrival, will prepare a sign-up sheet for a day of interviews on the initial site visit to the City. We anticipate that we will hold at least, if not more, than 16 individual interview meetings. We will want to start interviewing with the elected officials. Other members of City staff and appointed officials may also be interviewed as deemed relevant. Because we utilize extensive confidential interviews as part of our planning process, we will need two to three private offices or conference rooms in order to complete our interviews.

Following the interviews we will conduct a focus group workshop with representation from all the various athletic groups, environmental enthusiasts, non-athletic interest groups, etc. The purpose of the interviews and focus group meeting will be to identify needs and gather information about organizational

issues of Crossville, facilities, programs, policies and budgeting procedures in order to better understand how the Parks and Recreation Department fits into the overall structure of the City.

During this phase of the project, GIS mapping inventories will be developed. Maps documenting existing facilities, park locations and service areas will be developed. We will combine the public and private facilities databases and prepare a base map delineating all the recreation providers described above. Selected maps created throughout the planning process will be reduced to 11" x 17" in the final master plan report.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

### **Steering Committee Formation**

Concurrent with the site inventory and analysis, we will finalize with the City the makeup of the Steering Committee to work with our master planning team. We strongly encourage that you empower a group of citizen representatives (who can be relied up to make compromises where necessary) to help manage larger citizen special interest group expectations and represent underserved groups who might not otherwise participate in other types of public input. We will work with City Manager and City Clerk to identify those to serve and will prepare a letter of invitation to potential members. The invitation will include an overview of the planning process and a list of members' requisite tasks and responsibilities. We will follow up with chosen committee members to ensure that they fully understand the tasks and are committed to attend the Steering Committee workshop, public meetings, the preliminary draft presentation and the final presentation.

### **Staff Workshop**

To gain an understanding of the goals and vision for the future department, we will conduct a two-hour strategic planning session with senior park staff. This session will focus on determining how the organizational structure should work to implement the goals and visions for the department. We will focus on policy, funding and communications, along with the structure in the overall government.

### **Steering Committee Workshop**

We will then conduct a four-hour workshop with the Steering Committee. The workshop agenda will involve subdividing the group and giving each smaller group a list of questions to which each responds. The issues considered in this workshop will include developing a mission and vision for the department and a discussion on establishing local facility development standards or level-of-service standards. This will involve presenting existing National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) community park standards and modifying these standards to reflect the specific needs in Crossville. We will also discuss the demographic trends in the area and how new expectations for park and recreation services may differ from the established understanding of park and recreation facilities. Also on the agenda will be the identification of dual service opportunities and partnerships that exist in the community. Projected areas of growth, which will require expanded parks and services in the future, will be identified and new developments planned within the community will be evaluated for the impact they will have on the parks system. The groups will then reassemble to hear presentations from each and subsequently build a consensus as a single body.

### **Public Input Meetings**

In order to gauge public support and to understand fully the recreational needs of Crossville, our team will facilitate an initial public meeting to inform citizens of the upcoming planning process and to take their input. Prior to the meeting, the team will assist in the preparation of a press release to be submitted by the City for advertisement about the upcoming input sessions. The goal of the meeting, like other venues for public input, is to gauge a list of needed facilities and programs. The meeting will also reflect the community's vision for parks within the overall scope of public services offered by the City. Input will be solicited about the development of the local park and recreation standards specific to the City. During the

meeting, the project team will also address citizens' questions about the master plan and will record opinions and ideas about the current delivery system.

The meeting will also provide opportunities for people to offer ideas for change and improvement. This first round of public input will occur on the second team site visit after the team has developed inventories and a basic understanding of the department. A presentation on initial findings, as well as recreation trends and opportunities, will be made to explain the planning process and to encourage the community to think of recreation opportunities outside what currently exist. We will solicit comments on recreation needs, open space and conservation needs, programming opportunities and issues of connectivity with greenways and sidewalks as part of the presentations. Comment cards will be distributed and the resulting submissions compiled with the verbal comments from the workshops for inclusion in the final report.

### ***Product of This Phase***

We will record all comments during interviews, meetings and presentations and assemble the material into a summary report illustrated with charts and graphs to indicate clearly the outcome of the process. This information will be evaluated and tabulated for use in the demand analysis and/or recommended program offerings. This information will also be used in subsequent evaluations and recommendations of the Department. All summaries, results, charts and graphs will be included in the final master plan document.

### **DEMAND ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION/NEEDS INDEX/FACILITY ASSESSMENT/ACTION PLAN**

This phase begins with previous phases, but continues after the initial phases are complete. The analysis phase of the project is a detailed process that identifies community characteristics and allows the project team to become familiar with previous and current planning efforts. At this stage of the process, we will consolidate and analyze all public input, demographics and existing planning documents. Existing parks and recreation goals will be analyzed and restructured in response to interviews, workshops, and public comment. We will review the goals and objectives of existing planning reports to determine the extent to which those goals have been achieved. We will utilize the consensus results of public input, personal interviews, workshops and steering committee meetings to shape demand analysis questions that are part of a Community Needs Assessment survey.

### **Demand Analysis/Community Needs Assessment Survey**

We will use a technique we used on several recent plans, which is to post on the City's website the link to the community survey we will host on a separate web site. This will give people who were not able to attend public input meetings an opportunity to participate in the process. While these responses will not be fully statistically valid, they do provide us with valuable preference data that can be used to shape programming and facility recommendations. We will work with staff to tailor the questions for the survey to focus on the most critical issues related to parks, open space, greenways and access to park programs and facilities.

Our staff will compile and analyze the survey results, looking for preferences and tendencies within the survey responses. Because we have completed multiple recreation surveys as part of our comprehensive planning process for other communities around the country, we will be able to compare Crossville area responses to other communities and see if local trends are similar to regional and national trends. As part of the master plan report, the survey responses will be tabulated and documented with charts and graphs. A PowerPoint presentation of survey findings will also be provided in addition to the survey narrative in the master plan report.

### **Demographic Research**

In order to fully reflect the community for which the plan is being developed, the project team will utilize current and projected demographic and sociological factor data, including population composition, population growth projection and trends, economic factors, and land-use patterns to prepare charts and graphs illustrating the City's actual growth between 2000 and 2010, as well as projected growth through the year 2030. Available data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census and our more accurate subscription service, "DemographicsNow," will be used to express the overall gender, age, education and economic health of the citizens served by Crossville parks. General comparisons of these statistics will be made at state and national levels in order to understand community characteristics in a broader sense. We will prepare a detailed comparative analysis with the selected benchmark communities. We will look at the data both globally throughout the City and by census tract when evaluating service areas. We will also apply the demographics analysis to the service area of the parks to determine how each park is currently or should in the future service the surrounding population.

### **Park Distribution Mapping and Gap Analysis**

A critical element of the planning and evaluation service will be to develop level-of-service maps with service area boundaries for existing parks using GIS base information provided by the City. These maps will then be overlaid with other community data, such as location of libraries, schools and school playgrounds, colleges, large private recreation facilities and state or federal park facilities, to determine access to park facilities on a community-wide basis. These maps will allow the planning team to determine where service gaps are located and the relationship of facilities to major population centers within Crossville. All of this data will be critical to developing recommendations for new park facilities and recommending open space.

As part of the park distribution gap analysis, we will review the impacts of the growth projections and land use guidelines outline in the City's comprehensive plan. It will include analysis of the impact of the desired growth patterns on existing parks and identify where new parks, greenways and open space will be needed to provide a well-rounded system as growth and new develop patterns develop. It will look at travel times and impediments to travel that limit access to existing and proposed facilities. Short term and long term recommendations will be made in order to minimize the gaps in service and create more connectivity through greenway and sidewalk development. This part of the analysis will also look at where potential passive open space may be needed to provide relief from development and to protect ecologically sensitive areas.

Using a combination of the demographics analysis and the park distribution analysis, we will develop a scoring strategy that outlines areas of the city based on how well they are served and how future demographic trends will affect these levels of service.

### **Connectivity Analysis**

As part of the overall park land assessment, the team will look at open space, existing greenways and trails and trails proposed as part of the existing planning efforts to determine the potential for an expanded system to link park, neighborhoods and community facilities. Most communities today are looking for safe non-vehicular alternative transportation systems, including greenway corridors, sidewalks and on-street bicycle paths, to connect their community. Over the past 15 years, with the advent of conservation subdivision, conservation easements and mandatory open space set-aside requirements, communities have begun to protect open space resources. In some cases the resources are accessible and provide public access and recreation programming; in others, the protected open space has limited access but provides visual relief from development. In either case, the land is protected from future development and provides recreation and environmental benefits to the community.

Team members will review any existing and planned greenway corridors in Crossville, recommendations of the City's comprehensive transportation plan, projected land use plans and existing open space and large green spaces that should be considered for acquisition or protection by the City. The team will assess the overall connectivity of the community in order to determine areas where connectivity is limited and improved community access is needed. In addition to reviewing existing physical connectors such as bridges, sidewalks, etc. and barriers such as busy highways, rivers, walls, etc., we will look at where potential connectivity can be achieved through the protection of riparian corridors and where, in addition to connectivity, water quality, habitat protection and open space preservation can all be obtained. The team will also look at the potential to link City greenway corridors with those of surrounding communities in order to maximize overall connectivity within the region.

After the analysis of connectivity and environmental benefits has been completed, the team will prepare a greenway corridor map that details existing systems and recommended facilities. The team will develop a phasing plan and cost analysis for the recommendations.

### **Program Analysis**

The planning team will use the results of all the input methods and inventories to make recommendations for programs. Recommendations will identify new programs that will require new facilities, programming opportunities that have the potential to serve new user groups and program opportunities to expand revenue generation within the department. Working with the park staff and our stakeholder groups, we will develop a ranking strategy to determine which programs receive priority.

### **Budget Analysis, Fees and Charges**

We will look at the parks budget to determine the current level of per capita spending by the City, to determine percentage of total City budget and to compare these spending levels with other communities of similar size in the state and region. These comparisons will provide the planning team with a better understanding of the level of funding for recreation programs and services. This assessment will also look at areas to increase internal revenue production based on the current fees and charges. The planning team will determine the best business practice for fees and charges. The planning team will evaluate your current fee determination process and make recommendations for development of a standardized approach to assessing resident and nonresident fees.

### **Staffing Assessment and Operational Budget**

Working with City staff and elected officials, the team will evaluate and provide recommendations for the future department staff structure. Recommendations will be developed for staff organization, titles, new planning and programming divisions, and new staff needed to operate and maintain new park programs and facilities. These recommendations will be made to provide for the delivery of recreation services and programs. Budgeting projections for new staff and future staff at new facilities will be provided along with estimates for operational expenses for each basic park using per-acre cost and for all major facilities.

As part of this evaluation, the planning team will look at which staff positions will optimize service delivery by full time City staff and which positions can be contract positions. Many parks and recreation agencies today routinely utilize part-time staff and contract staff to direct programs, oversee entire facilities and as part of the overall maintenance operation. We recently did a similar evaluation in a recent plan and recommended a combination of contract services and City staff to maximize delivery of service for a new department with challenges similar to those Crossville faces.

### **Park, Facility and Land Needs Assessment**

The planning team will review existing facilities relative to expandability, existing design standards and levels of maintenance. In addition to site-based assessment, the distribution of facilities relative to travel

times and population served will be developed. Facilities will also be categorized using established park standards (mini-park, neighborhood, community, open space, greenway) to analyze the makeup of the parks within the system relative to national standards for park facilities. Use and overuse of facilities based on program registrations and community input will be evaluated to aid in the development of recommendations. Strategies and policy recommendations will be made to enhance existing facilities and to maximize recreation opportunities. We will identify where additional focused studies may be needed in order to take the master plan recommendation and develop recommendations related to the operations and maintenance of parks and facilities. We will analyze these factors to determine their carrying capacity and if they have reached, or are near reaching, that capacity. We will review and rank major green space resources for applicability to overall park land needs and will recommend criteria for park land acquisition.

We will utilize national standards published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), staff and steering committee recommendations and benchmark communities to develop standards and recommendations specific to Crossville. The proposed standards will be tailored to achieve the consensus goals, objectives and vision identified in the planning process; it is understood that local trends and desires are critical to this planning process and should take precedence over national planning standards.

#### **Capital Improvement Priorities**

We will prepare a preliminary Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for City's park system. We will use information gathered throughout the process to create a short-term phasing recommendation (years 1-2,) a long-term phasing recommendation (years 3-5) and a future term (years 6-10). The plan will also include recommendations for implementing changes using partnering agencies (schools, private groups, community organizations, etc.) to carry some of the responsibility. Recommendations will be based on actionable, not theoretical methods of funding, and will consider possibilities such as fees, foundations, sales tax, millage increases, grants and endowments, etc. These will be presented to the City as well as to the Steering Committee for review and comments. Following review comments and recommended modifications, we will prepare the final capital recommendations and phasing report.

#### **Public Outreach Recommendations**

The results of the survey data will identify strengths and weaknesses of how the public is made aware of the department's activities. From the survey questions, we will be able recommend ways to increase your presence in the community and identify which media resources, partnering community organizations, etc. are the best avenues for communication.

#### **Concept Park Plans**

The design team will develop concept plans for several (number to be determined) of the City's parks, or recommended property acquisitions, as determined by staff. For each park the team will prepare a series of alternative plans that offer optional recreation programs that can be offered in each park and will then present these concept parks to the community as part of the public input process. These concept plans will be developed to a level that shows circulation and facility relationships suitable for the development of master plan budgeting. These plans will be developed at appropriate stages during the overall project schedule. Each selected alternative plan will be included in the Master Plan Report.

## **PRESENTATION OF THE PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN REPORT AND FINDINGS ALONG WITH THE PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN, COST AND FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Preliminary Recommendations Input Meetings and Web Posting**

Our planning team will present the preliminary recommendations and findings for the park system and the individual park/connectivity master plans to the Steering Committee, Elected Officials and City staff to gain their feedback on the recommendations. We will also conduct a communitywide public meeting to gather input and review comments on the proposed plan recommendations. The meeting will be an open house format. We will provide the City with a .pdf copy of the preliminary master plan report to post on the City's website for a two-week comment period. This will give citizens who were unable to attend the public meeting an opportunity to comment on the plan.

Prioritization strategies will be prepared for implementation of recommended facilities, land acquisition, staffing, maintenance and program findings. These strategies will include recommendations for improvements and renovations to existing facilities, as well as new facilities required to meet the identified public need. Staff organization strategies, along with future staff needs, will be provided in organizational charts along with anticipated budget impacts of new staff. Vision statements along with short- and long-term goals and objectives will be provided to direct implementation of the master plan.

### ***Product of This Phase***

The technical report from this phase will include:

- Summaries of data analysis
- Recommended staff additions
- Policy and Program summaries and recommendations
- Survey summaries and analysis
- Budget review and recommendations
- Individual park assessments, renovation concept plans and cost estimates for individual sites and potential new land acquisition recommendations.
- New park facility cost estimates
- Distribution pattern maps
- Facility inventory charts
- Open space dedication maps
- Greenway and trails connectivity maps and cost estimates
- Land acquisition recommendations for future development or reserved open space
- Funding sources and recommendations
- Overall capital spending and phasing plans
- Operations and facilities projected costs.

After we have gathered all the comments, we will meet with staff, City Administration and Elected Officials to go over a comment summary. At this meeting, comments will be presented by topic area, and the team will ask for final input before the final master plan is prepared.

### **Deliverables**

We will provide printed copies of the preliminary master plan, plus reproducible copies and a digital copy in .pdf format on CD and a copy of our PowerPoint presentation to staff for distribution. We will also

provide one set of color graphs and/or maps used in the preliminary report in 11" x 17" and a full-size print of key maps. A master plan appendix will have copies of all meeting and planning session summaries. Other critical data that is felt to be important to explaining the master plan recommendations will also be included in the appendix.

### **FINAL MASTER PLAN PREPARATION**

After a thorough evaluation of all comments on the Preliminary Master Plan, our team will prepare a Final Master Plan Report and will present it first to City staff as a draft, and then after revision, to the City Manager and City Council. This plan will include the following:

- Capital expenditure, opinions of probable costs, renovation and new park facilities
- Identification of policy changes and partnership opportunities
- Identification of service areas and service area gaps
- Program and facility recommendations
- Opinion of probable cost of staff and financial impacts on operation budgets
- Identification of additional park maintenance staff needed for each type of park
- Documentation of findings related to demographic and socio-economic factors
- Organization charts with recommended future staff additions
- Implementation action statements
- Funding and revenue recommendations, options and alternatives
- Recommendation on needed department policies and operations needs
- Comparisons to other agencies of similar size and service areas
- Comparisons to National Standards and benchmark communities
- Needs analysis based on new community standards
- A two-year (near-term) a 3-5-year (long-term) and years 6-10 (future) CIP
- Policies, Goals and objectives to implement the vision for the Department
- An executive summary

### **Final Deliverables**

We will provide 5 printed copies of the final master plan report, a reproducible copy, a digital copy in .pdf format on CD and a copy of our PowerPoint presentation to staff for distribution. We will also provide one set of color graphs and/or maps used in the final report in 11" x 17" format and a full-size version of key maps.

### **PROJECT TIMELINE AND MILESTONES**

We regularly perform comprehensive master plans for cities and counties in approximately 4-6 months. We feel that in order to perform the scope of work in a professional and meaningful manner, the amount of time we have dedicated to each step is appropriate, and includes sufficient time for City officials to review the recommendations at each step. Should City review require more time, we can recover the schedule by condensing the schedule as desired by moving forward with some portions of subsequent steps while waiting for review on unrelated other matters.

<b>Project Initiation:</b>	<b>Weeks 1-3</b>
<b>Public Participation:</b>	<b>Weeks 4-5</b>
<b>Demand Analysis/Survey and Evaluation/Needs Index/ Facility Assessment/Action Plan &amp; Creation of Preliminary Plan:</b>	<b>Weeks 1-14</b>



**Presentation of the Preliminary Master Plan  
Report and Findings & Associated Meetings:**

**Weeks 15-16**

**Creation of Final Master Plan**

**Weeks 16-20**

**Final Master Plan Presentation:**

**Week 21**