

PARKS AND RECREATION

4

CHAPTER

Parks and recreation facilities are an integral part of the public infrastructure system and are essential to Laramie's strategic goal of promoting and sustaining "active living" for all residents and presenting a positive image to visitors. Foresight and preparedness is, therefore, of utmost importance to adequately plan to satisfy the needs and desires of citizens, both now and in the future. The framework of this chapter is intended to guide the City's decisions as to the enhancement of the existing parks and trails and the ongoing development of new facilities to pace future changes in population, demographics, and development.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Parks and Recreation Chapter is to determine the community's current and future needs for improving its existing parks and providing adequate areas and facilities to meet its immediate and long-term needs. This plan element includes the policy direction of the City pertaining to the timing of park development, their placement within the City and planning area, the type of facilities, and the method by which enhancements and improvements are funded. It guides the City's planning efforts for developing a "first class" public parks and recreation system, while directing private contributions through provision of active recreation areas and open space to meet the requisite needs of new development. This chapter addresses the availability, quality, type, size, and location of leisure and recreation opportunities to meet the needs of Laramie's residents and visitors.

Parks and recreation facilities are an essential part of a healthy, quality, and sustainable community environment. They provide necessary components in human existence for events outside of the home, after work, and beyond school activities. Whether for passive or active use, park areas and recreation facilities are an important part of everyday active living. Much like streets and sidewalks, water and wastewater lines, drainage facilities, police and fire equipment, and other municipal facilities, parks and open space are integral components of the municipal infrastructure. They warrant a significant level of attention

Parks and Recreation Planning Principles:

- ◆ All residents and visitors will have unrestricted access to public park areas and recreational facilities regardless of their age, gender, race, income, cultural background, housing environment, or handicap;
- ◆ Public recreation will be highly coordinated with other organizations and programs, including Albany County, the school district, civic clubs, athletic organizations, private entities, and others to avoid duplication and encourage cooperation;
- ◆ Public recreation will incorporate other public services such as education, health and fitness, transportation, and leisure;
- ◆ Facilities will be well planned and coordinated to ensure adequate adaptability to future needs and requirements;
- ◆ There will be an established process and procedure for acquiring land for future parks and recreational areas and facilities prior to development; and
- ◆ The design of spaces and facilities will encourage the most efficient utilization of land and will consider the needs, desires, and opinions of the intended users.

and commitment of resources to be adequately acquired, constructed, operated, and maintained.

A comprehensive and interrelated system of parks and recreation opportunities that respond to the needs and values of the local residents contribute to a community's quality of life and livability. Parks and recreation opportunities contribute to the health of residents, provide a variety of recreational and educational activities for all ages, and preserve and enhance the quality and integrity of the natural environment. Parks and recreation opportunities are also important in attracting visitors to the community and, thus, contribute to local tourism and economic development.

There are several specific reasons why this chapter is important; among them are the following:

- ◆ Investment in the community's livability and quality of life, which contributes to its economic development and attractiveness as a place to live and conduct business;
- ◆ Improve the quality and appearance of the community's public spaces, which help form a positive and desirable image of Laramie to visitors and investors;
- ◆ Provide areas and facilities for community citizens of all ages, to meet their active and leisure recreation needs;
- ◆ Contribute to a healthful community life by enabling citizens to use parks and trails for sport and exercise;
- ◆ Satisfy the interests of local recreation leagues and activity groups which use these facilities for athletic events and social interaction;
- ◆ Improve the safety and utilization rate of the existing parks by making necessary improvements and desired enhancements;
- ◆ Form decision criteria for acquiring and developing new parks, including their type, design, location, spacing, and methods of financing;
- ◆ Provide adequate areas and facilities within close proximity to all persons, including a diverse range and type of parks to meet the individual needs of citizens; and
- ◆ Preserve valued open space, aquifers, and other sensitive lands for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

GENERAL PARK AND RECREATION ISSUES

In conjunction with input received from the Director of Parks and Recreation, division staff, and members of the Parks, Tree, and Recreation Advisory Board; a number of key parks and recreation issues were identified, including the following:

Resource Conservation and Preservation

There are areas interspersed throughout the community and around the larger planning area (extending one mile outside the City limits) that have valuable natural resources needing protection. Lands along and adjacent to the Laramie River that bisect the community from north to south, the Spring Creek Corridor, as well as open lands surrounding the community, offer opportunities for resource conservation, aquifer recharge, and land preservation. While these areas are vulnerable to future urban development, they may be used to fulfill other community objectives, such as environmental protection, open space preservation, protecting Laramie's image as a

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"freestanding" community, and sound resource management. In some cases, they also provide important linkages to residents for public access to Federal lands.

Residents of Laramie are interested in forging a community that is both unique and attractive. This objective may be achieved by adopting sound environmental conservation and responsible land development practices through:

- ♦ Amendments to the City's zoning and subdivision regulations.
- ♦ Public investments in land acquisition and park development.
- ♦ Implement Land donations and dedication mechanisms.

Sensitive areas along the river and within other creekside and natural areas may be incorporated into residential development projects as a natural amenity, while sustaining their resource function. Doing so requires a regulatory system and investment program that balances development efficiency and resource protection. Through innovative land planning, such as cluster development, resources may be preserved and effectively integrated into development without compromising private interests (*Chapter 3, Community Character*). Areas such as the Casper Aquifer Protection area, wildlife habitat and floodplains may be good areas to employ these principals in an effort to protecting these natural resources.

Balanced, Convenient and Accessible Parks

The key to a successful and well-utilized system of parks is an even distribution of recreation areas and public open spaces throughout the community, including newer development north of the University campus and the well-established neighborhoods in the central parts of the City. In this way, all residents may have convenient access to open spaces, thereby meeting their active and passive (less exertive leisure uses such as nature observation or walking) recreation needs. It is also important that these individual parks are located and designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, provide safe and convenient access, and incorporate the equipment and facilities desired by their users. Depending on demographics and the availability of other facilities, some neighborhoods may be more interested in active facilities, such as basketball courts and play fields, while others desire passive activities, such as trails, nature areas, public art and picnic tables. For this reason, it is essential to include the end users in the planning and design phases of park development.

A true "system" of parks offers a wide range of public spaces, including large-scale facilities intended for persons within the larger region (generally within a one-hour driving distance), such as Medicine Bow National Forest, facilities that are used by the whole community (typically within a one-mile radius) like Washington, LaBonte, and LaPrele Parks, that are used by the surrounding neighborhood, or are used by a smaller area or individual development, such as an apartment complex. The value of an adequate park system is its ability to meet the individual needs of all persons.



The Laramie River provides many scenic and recreational opportunities.

"People, even today, want to get away from the noise and confusion of daily life and want to do so on their own. It is not enough for a parks department to offer structured recreational activities. People need to have a place where they can go to stroll or lie in the grass or bicycle whenever the mood strikes them and not just when it is a scheduled activity."

- Alexander Garvin in "Parks, Recreation, and Open Space: A Twenty-first Century Agenda"

The term "balanced" refers to a combination of indoor and outdoor facilities, as well as an adequate assortment of different types of activities (both passive and active) to meet the recreational needs of residents year-round.

Linking Parks, Schools and Neighborhoods

A system of parks and recreation areas is not complete without linear linkages between facilities and connections to neighborhoods, schools, and other public use facilities. Areas

along the Laramie River and Spring Creek are ideal for pedestrian walkways and bike trails connecting each of the City's parks, neighborhoods, schools, and other community destinations (Downtown, the University of Wyoming, the Laramie Recreation Center, etc.). The river already serves as the north-south spine of a community-wide trail system. Lateral connections to the river trail can be developed along easements in open areas and could be expanded within the unusually wide surfaced areas of many of the local streets. Use of existing public ways, as well as excess rights-of-way along the railroads, utility and drainage easements, walkways or pedestrian paths through cul-de-sacs, and wide shoulder lanes along arterial streets and rural roadways may offer safe and convenient connections between each of the parks and public areas.



Connectors within and between neighborhoods improve pedestrian mobility and provide linkage to the larger trail system.

An interconnected system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities should serve as a form of recreation and exercise and provide an added benefit as an alternative mode of transportation. In 1999, the City adopted the *Laramie Bicycle Facility Master Plan*, which proposed to develop an extensive network of new paths, designated routes, and street improvements that would provide dedicated bicycle lanes on existing City streets. Listings of proposed facilities from the *Laramie Bicycle Facility Master Plan* are included later in this chapter. *Map 4.4 Bicycles and Trails Master Plan*, *Figure 4.3, Trail Development to the East* and *Map 4.3 Proposed Park Facility Expansion Areas* will address future trails and maps.

Coordination, Collaboration and Funding

Aging infrastructure, changing demographics, and increased demand for recreational programs and facilities have strained the resources of Laramie, Albany County, the school district, and other public entities. Intergovernmental agreements, contracts and public-private partnerships create opportunities to use tax-dollars wisely, utilize land efficiently, and conserve precious environmental resources while improving the quality and affordability of our parks. Joint acquisition, development, and ongoing maintenance of public spaces leverage additional resources while making sure that facilities are coordinated and connected. Coordination and collaboration among agencies and all vested parties such as Albany County, the Albany County School District #1, the University of Wyoming, and other public agencies is of mutual benefit for all interests and should be

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continued. It eases the burden on public tax dollars, enhances the quality of areas and facilities, and leverages their effectiveness.

PARK CLASSIFICATION & STANDARDS

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) published the Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines to establish nationally applicable criteria for the provision of parks and recreation facilities and open space. These standards serve as a guide for parks and recreation planning, but do not replace reasonable judgment or specific local needs. The needs and desires of the citizens of Laramie will justify continued development of parks, recreation, and open space to meet the specific needs and requirements of the community.

While national standards are useful, it is important to ensure they are reasonable for the community given considerations such as participation trends, user characteristics, demographics, socioeconomics, climate, natural environment, and other considerations. Leisure and recreation values are unique to each municipality; therefore, it is important that the standards represent the interests and desires of the community.

A variety of types and sizes of parks and recreation facilities and activities are recommended to satisfy the diverse interests of the population. This will ensure adequate and equal opportunity for all persons, and, ultimately, encourage use by all population groups. The classifications of parks needed to meet the diverse needs of the community are as follows:

Community Parks

Community parks are intended to function on a large scale, serving the parks and recreation needs of an entire community. They are typically larger in size and include facilities and improvements for area-wide activities and assembly events, such as picnic areas, walking/jogging trails, athletic fields, and other larger scale activities. It is important that adequate off-street parking is provided. Where feasible, community parks should be located adjacent or connected to a greenway to provide an off-street linear linkage with other areas.

Community Park Role

In similar-sized cities as Laramie, a community park often serves as the principal focal point for civic gatherings and organized recreational programs, special events, and sports league play. Further, a community park can often become a major landmark to the community, a symbol that enhances community identity and is beloved by residents.

The size of community parks varies according to the availability of land and the ability to take advantage of acquisition opportunities over time. Many community parks in smaller cities are situated along river corridors; others were integrated into a city at the time of original settlement and platting.

The National Recreation and Parks Association believe that parks and recreation:

- ◆ Enhance the human potential by providing facilities, services and programs that meet the emotional, social and physical needs of communities.
- ◆ Articulate environmental values through ecologically responsible management and environmental education programs.
- ◆ Promote individual and community wellness that enhances the quality of life for all citizens.
- ◆ Utilize holistic approaches to promote cultural understanding, economic development, family public health and safety, by working in coalitions and partnerships with allied organizations.
- ◆ Facilitate and promote the development of grassroots, self-help initiatives in communities across the country.



Figure 4.1 Typical Community Park Layout (Note the abundance of off-street parking).

Community Park Standards

National standards recommend a minimum community park size of ten acres, assuming appropriate topography and absence of other development constraints. Many community parks, especially those with athletic field complexes for organized sports, are as large as 40 or 50 acres, as shown in *Figure 4.1, Typical Community Park Layout*. In overall acreage terms, the standard is five acres per 1,000 in population. Recommended facilities and improvements include:

- ◆ Picnic tables with covers with barbecue pits or grills
- ◆ Sidewalks and/or a natural walking trail
- ◆ Mountain biking trails with exercise stations

- ◆ Shade trees and native landscaping
- ◆ Drinking fountains
- ◆ Security lighting
- ◆ Multi-purpose open play areas
- ◆ Multi-purpose courts
- ◆ Playground equipment and playscape (up to 50 children)
- ◆ Bicycle racks
- ◆ Perimeter fencing or landscaping
- ◆ Street signs indicating "children at play"
- ◆ Benches
- ◆ Trash receptacles and enclosures
- ◆ Curb cuts and crosswalks
- ◆ Tennis courts
- ◆ Basketball courts
- ◆ Softball and little league fields with bleachers
- ◆ Soccer/football fields with goals and goal posts
- ◆ Sand volleyball courts
- ◆ Swimming pool
- ◆ Covered pavilions
- ◆ Performance stage
- ◆ Restrooms
- ◆ Fencing for ball fields and athletic courts
- ◆ Concrete surface for a general play area
- ◆ Off-street parking

Community Park Locations

Community parks should be centrally located for convenience to all residents. It should have direct access to a collector or arterial street in order to handle special event traffic while avoiding neighborhood disruption. Community parks should include adequate off-street parking. The "ideal" service radius of a community park is one mile.

A community park that is located in or near a residential area usually serves a secondary role as a neighborhood park (see next section).

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks should provide facilities and improvements that conveniently accommodate use by surrounding neighborhoods. Ease and safe access from surrounding neighborhoods, central location, and pedestrian/bicycle linkages are key considerations when developing neighborhood parks. They should be designed to accommodate the needs of all ages and, therefore, should have a blend of passive and active facilities.

Neighborhood Park Role

Neighborhood parks are intended to provide residents with ample opportunity for both passive and semi-active recreation activity. The method of determining the need for neighborhood parks is quite different from an assessment of need for community parks. Whereas community parks are designed for large-scale, area-wide events and activities, neighborhood parks are intended to meet the daily recreation needs of nearby residents. As displayed by *Figure 4.2, Typical Neighborhood Park Layout*, the level of activity is limited as a result of the size and location of these parks and the equipment and facilities available.

The size of neighborhood parks varies according to the availability of property, method and timing of acquisition, and intended use. One or two large vacant lots or several acres may both adequately serve the needs of a neighborhood if there is an even distribution of parks and sufficient facilities and equipment available. National standards recommend a minimum neighborhood park size of five acres assuming an adequate and even distribution. Although a 10-acre park may accommodate ball fields and larger recreation and open space areas, two parks that are five acres in size may equally and, perhaps better, serve the need, while providing a broader distribution of neighborhood parks.

Neighborhood Park Standards

The ideal neighborhood park should be between five and ten acres, with the provision of 1 acre per 1,000 residents. Recommended facilities and improvements include:

- ◆ Picnic tables with sheltering covers
- ◆ Barbecue pits
- ◆ Sidewalks and/or a natural walking trail
- ◆ Shade trees and landscaping
- ◆ Drinking fountain(s)
- ◆ Security lighting
- ◆ Multipurpose open play area with multipurpose play courts
- ◆ Playground equipment and/or a playscape (up to 25 children)
- ◆ Perimeter fencing or landscaping w benches
- ◆ Restrooms with on- or off-street parking
- ◆ Dog walking area (particularly when located in an urban neighborhood)
- ◆ Trash receptacles
- ◆ Curb cuts and crosswalks

It is important that a neighborhood park has toilet facilities. The lack of a restroom significantly limits the park's service radius and prevents it from accommodating organized recreation program activities or events, especially children's programs.

Neighborhood Park Locations

Neighborhood parks should be within a short walking distance (typically one-half mile or less) for the residents of one or more neighborhoods, thereby encouraging use and promoting convenience, ease of access, and walking safety for neighborhood children. Whenever possible, they should be located away from busy arterial streets and should not require any busy street crossings for access from their constituent neighborhoods. Accomplishing this has been difficult in Laramie, particularly in the more mature built-up areas having grid street patterns.

Playlots

Playlots are intended for active recreational use of nearby property owners, such as within apartment complexes and residential subdivisions. There are no specific criteria to guide development of playlots, although they should have facilities and improvements available to meet the identified needs of population living in the immediate area. The notable features that distinguish a playlot from a neighborhood park are its considerably smaller size and the lack of restrooms.



Figure 4.2 Typical Neighborhood Park Layout

Playlots Role

Playlots serve the immediate need of providing a minimum play area within minutes' walking distance of residents in the very immediate area. Unfortunately, playlots in many communities are established as to mitigate the need for a nearby neighborhood park. When this circumstance arises, the playlot often sustains heavy use and requires considerable maintenance. Facilities that are less than one-half acre in area are usually considered inefficient, as they require nearly as much time for mowing and other routine maintenance tasks as a neighborhood park. For this reason, many communities discourage the acquisition and development of truly small playlots. Playlots within the City of Laramie can still be useful and beneficial to the community. Playlots may be required within subdivisions when other parks land cannot serve the specified area. In these instances playlots will be required to be developed at the time of development and maintained by a home owners association or other entity as determined by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Playlot Standards

As mentioned before, there are no specific size or facility standards for playlots, but guidelines suggest that there should be one to three tenths acre per 1,000 residents. Recommended facilities and improvements might include:

- ◆ Picnic tables with covers
- ◆ Perimeter sidewalks
- ◆ Shade trees and native landscaping
- ◆ Drinking fountain
- ◆ Security lighting
- ◆ Multi-purpose open play area
- ◆ Playground equipment (up to 15 children)
- ◆ Perimeter fencing or landscaping
- ◆ Benches
- ◆ On-street parking
- ◆ Trash receptacles
- ◆ Curb cuts and crosswalks

Playlot Locations

The most important criterion for playlot location is that it be situated on a local, low-traffic street with sidewalk or path access to the residents it serves.

Open Space

Open space areas include reserved public lands dedicated as permanent open space. These lands are generally owned by the local government or dedicated through private instrument as a development reserve. They are typically undeveloped or limitedly developed and used for informal activities. They may also serve as flood collection areas during major storm events. Other examples of open space areas include easements for drainage basins, excess rights-of-way, greenways, and street esplanades. Areas that may be used for informal activities should be used to their maximum benefit.

Although open space is typically reserved public lands open space can also take shape in other forms. Open space can be “any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners, occupants and their guests of land adjoining or neighboring such open space. Open space may include active recreational facilities, such as swimming pools, play equipment, ball fields, court games, and picnic tables.”¹ Open space in public or private ownership can serve the purpose that is desired by providing natural areas, recreational opportunities and vistas among many other benefits no matter the ownership. With each new development opportunity to acquire open space, the type, usage, access, character and amount of open space, park, trail or facility should be explored and defined through the development process, so the needs of the community can be met.

¹ The New Illustrated Book of Development Definitions, Moskowitz & Lindbloom

Open space is particularly important in areas such as Laramie, which have dramatic topography and abundant mountain vistas. It is important that the tops and sides of prominent ridgeline areas, scenic vistas, rivers and aquifer areas remain largely open to protect the City's most important resources. Specific recommendations on protecting open space are presented later in this chapter. Also, for additional information refer to *Chapter 3, Community Character*.

Miscellaneous Facilities

There are many additional types of park and recreational facilities that fall outside of the classifications just described. Examples include:

- ♦ **Athletic Field Complexes.** Within the past 25 years, many cities have developed specialized, stand-alone facilities for baseball, softball, and soccer. These include multiple fields, restrooms, refreshment stands, and an abundance of off-street parking. Usually situated on a major street, these facilities are particularly suited for organized league activities and are intensely used during summer evenings and portions of the weekend. In Laramie, the Aragon Softball Complex and the Cowboy Field Little League Complex are included in this category.
- ♦ **Recreation Centers.** Laramie's Community Recreation Center serves as an example of a facility that provides a wide range of all-season indoor activities. It has direct access to an arterial street and includes a large area for off-street parking.
- ♦ **Specialized Facilities.** Laramie's Ice Arena, adjacent to the Community Recreation Center, is an example of a specialized facility that draws heavy use for a single type of activity. Another example is Green Hill Cemetery, which is City-owned and maintained by the Parks and Recreation Division. Also included in this category is the City of Laramie's Rifle Range that is located north of town. This facility also draws heavy use for a single type of activity.
- ♦ **Pathways and Trail Systems.** These facilities provide active recreational opportunities for hikers, bicyclists, casual walkers, and cross-country skiers of all ages in addition to serving as an alternative means of transportation for workers and students. All trails and pathways continue to emphasize the importance of improving the workability and connectivity of the community. Dedicated trails usually take advantage of natural river and stream corridors, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, the bases or tops of ridges, and open areas. Often a trail system includes dedicated lanes on existing streets as linkages between components of an off-road trail system. When completed, the Laramie Greenbelt will provide an outstanding example of a trail system (*Map 4.4 Trails Master Plan*).
- ♦ **Historic Sites and Buildings.** Many communities get the opportunity to acquire, restore, and operate specific historic sites and buildings. These include old mansions, railroad passenger stations, and similar landmark buildings. Often, these sites retain only limited use, but have the opportunity to be integrated into the park and recreation center with expanded programming. Sites that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places in Laramie and environs include the Wyoming Territorial Park; Fort Sanders Center; a number of homes, and schools, and churches; and the Downtown Historic District.

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- ♦ **Facilities for Persons with Special Needs.** Many communities are developing specialized facilities that support activities for senior citizens and persons with disabilities or special needs. In most cases, these facilities and activities are located within or adjacent to an existing community park, neighborhood park, or trail system, rather than its own site.
- ♦ **Nature and Interpretive Centers.** These areas usually include facilities that are oriented toward a specific natural feature such as a natural prairie, wetland, unusual geologic features, or scenic vista. Uses are specific and of low intensity. These facilities usually do not integrate with other elements of a park system, except for the trail system or possibly interpretive signs.
- ♦ **Golf Courses.** Many cities of Laramie's size or larger own and operate full-size municipal golf courses designed for beginner- to moderate-level public play. While activities are limited only to golf, a municipal course can become a valuable contributor to "borrowed open space" (*Chapter 3, Community Character*) and can enhance the aesthetics of an entrance to the City. Many public municipal golf courses throughout the U.S. were once privately owned, either as commercial facilities or as country clubs, and were subsequently purchased by the municipality in order to enable continuation of play and as a measure to preserve valuable open space from development. Laramie has two Golf Courses, Jacoby Golf Course a public 18 hole course and The Laramie Country Club a private course.
- ♦ **Water Detention.** Laramie uses water detention as a means of controlling water runoff in developed areas. Due to the fact that these detention areas consume large areas it could be in the best interest of the city to maximize the benefit that these areas can provide. Developing these sites as parks or recreational open space though additional landscaping or other improvements can provide another area for residents to recreate. Development will be highly dependent upon the primary function of water detention but all efforts should be taken to maximize the benefits of these areas. Examples include the southwestern corner of 30th Street and Reynolds and Harney and 15th Street.

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

As parks and recreation sites are evaluated for acquisition and development, it is important for the City to have a standardized list of facilities and equipment desired for each type of park to assess the development feasibility of each site, as identified in the park classification system described in the previous section. There are important considerations in developing parks including the size, shape, and orientation of the site; pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access and parking; adjoining land use; development constraints such as grades, poor drainage, and flooding; environmental impacts; and the anticipated use of the park. In assessing the feasibility of a site, each of these considerations is important.



The Recreation Center provides indoor activities to complement the abundance of outdoor and natural area opportunities in and around the community.

Table 4.1, *Facility Development Guidelines (Part I)* and Table 4.2, *Facility Development Guidelines (Part II)*, provides guidelines for developing activity areas and improvements within a park facility. It identifies the requisite space and dimensional requirements, orientation, service radius, and generally required per capita units. Of note in this table is the current NRPA standard of one soccer field per 10,000 persons population. This appears to be too low for many communities as the popularity of organized children's soccer programs has increased significantly in recent years.

Locations

Laramie parks and other recreation or open space assets are located in *Map 4.1, Existing Park Facilities and Schools*. The map includes facilities maintained by the Albany County School District #1, University and State of Wyoming. Green Hill Cemetery is also indicated as it is owned and maintained by the City. A summary listing of these facilities located on *Map 4.1, Existing Parks, Parks Facilities and Schools* is shown in *Table 4.3, Laramie Parks and Recreation Facilities*. A comparison between *Table 4.1, Facility Development Guidelines (Part I)* and *Table 4.2, Facility Development Guidelines (Part II)* and *Table 4.3, Laramie Parks and Recreation Facilities* shows that many of the national standards are not met by many of the Laramie parks. Although there may be a deficiency according to National Standards the parks that are located around Laramie seem to serve it well.

A more detailed description of our existing parks system and how it relates to national standards is listed below.

Descriptions

Community Parks

Laramie's two community parks, while somewhat small for this classification, are ideally situated and are well used. Because they are located within generally residential areas, each also serves the role of a neighborhood park. The community parks include:

- ♦ **Washington Park.** This heavily used facility supports an exceptionally broad range of activities given its limited site of 13 acres. Facilities include four covered picnic shelters, sand volleyball court, fitness course, 12 horseshoe courts, wading pool, additional uncovered picnic tables and grills, internal walking trail, play equipment, and basketball court. Washington Park's distinguishing feature is its band shell, used for concerts and civic activities.
- ♦ **LaBonte Park.** Located in the northwest quadrant of the main core of Laramie's original development, LaBonte Park supports a wide range of activities including lighted baseball/softball fields, basketball court, playgrounds, in-line & skateboard park, picnicking with four covered shelters, and an internal walking trail with a fitness course. Its main feature is a picturesque lagoon. It is also the site of the Ft. Sanders Center building, which currently houses the Laramie Children's Museum.

**FACILITY DEVELOPMENT
GUIDELINES (Part 1)**

Activity/ Facility	Required Space	Size and Dimensions		Units per Population	Service Radius	
			Long axis north-south.	1 per 10,000 persons.		Outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings.
		195' to 225' x 330' to 360' with a minimum clearance of 10' on all sides.	Spring/Fall season -- long axis northwest to southeast. For longer periods, north to south.	1 per 10,000 persons. This standard needs to be discussed further.*		Number of units depends on popularity. Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to schools or neighborhood parks.
	Minimum of 7,200 sq. ft. for a single court. (2 acres for a complex).	36' x 78'; 12' clearance on both sides; 21' clearance on both ends.	Long axis north-south.	1 court per 2,000 persons.		Best in batteries of 2 to 4. Located in neighborhood/ community park or adjacent to a school site.
	Minimum 4,000 sq. ft.	30' x 60'. Minimum 6' clearance on all sides.	Long axis north-south.	1 court per 5,000 persons.		Same as other court activities (e.g. badminton, basketball, etc.).
		160' x 360' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides.	Fall season -- long axis northwest to southeast. For longer periods, north to south.	1 per 20,000 persons.	15 - 30 minutes travel time.	Usually part of baseball, football, soccer complex in community park or adjacent to high school.
Multiple-Use Recreation Court (basketball, volleyball, tennis)			Long axis of courts with primary use is north-south.	1 per 10,000 persons.		In neighborhood or community parks.
	Minimum of 40 percent undeveloped per park.			5 acres per 1,000 persons.	30 minute travel time.	Within neighborhood and community parks or stand-alone.
1/4 Mile Running Track		Overall width - 276'. Length - 600.02'. Track width for 8, 4'-lanes is 32'	Long axis in sector from north to south to northwest to southeast with finish line at northerly end.	1 per 20,000 persons.	15 - 30 minute travel time.	Usually part of high school or in community park complex in combination with baseball, soccer, etc.

**Table 4.2
FACILITY DEVELOPMENT
GUIDELINES (Part 2)**

Activity / Facility	Required Space	Size and Dimensions		Units per Population	Service Radius	
	3.0 - 3.85 acres minimum.	Baselines -- 90'. Pitching distance -- 60-1/2'. Foul lines -- 320' min. Center field -- 400'+.	Locate home plate so the pitcher is throwing across the sun and the batter is not facing it. Line from home plate through pitcher's mound runs east-northeast.	1 per 5,000 persons.		Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields should be part of a community park or sports complex.
	1.2 acres minimum.	Foul lines -- 200'. Center field -- 200'-250'.		Lighted -- 1 per 30,000 persons.		
		Baselines -- 60'. Pitching distance -- 46' min.; 40' -- women. Fast pitch field radius from plate -- 225' between foul lines. Slow pitch -- 275', men; 250', women.		1 per 5,000 persons (if also used for youth baseball).		Slight difference in dimensions for 16" slow pitch. May also be used for youth baseball.
		10-40 feet in width, maximum average grade 5% not to exceed 15%. Routs may be improved to different standards and signed.		1 system per region.		Located in greenways, natural areas and parks, and along drainage ways, levees, and utility easements. Their purpose is to accommodate walkers, joggers, and bicyclists away from traffic.

**TABLE 4.3
LARAMIE PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND
RECREATION FACILITIES**

Facility	Acres	Agency
Community Parks		
LaBonte Park	34.5	City of Laramie
Washington Park	13	City of Laramie
Neighborhood Parks		
Depot Park	2.7	City of Laramie/Union Pacific Railroad
LaPrele Park	29.1	City of Laramie
Harbon Park	2	City of Laramie
Kiowa Park	1.5	City of Laramie
Kiwanis Park	8.4	City of Laramie
Optimist Park	4.8	City of Laramie
Scout Park	12.5	City of Laramie
Undine Park	9.6	City of Laramie
Playlots		
O'Dell Mini Park	0.2	City of Laramie
Special Facilities		
Athletic Fields	29.5	City of Laramie/University of Wyoming
Albany County Fairgrounds	60	Albany County
Green Hill Cemetery	52	City of Laramie
Jacoby Golf Course	200	City of Laramie/University of Wyoming
KOA Kampground	31.6	Private (open to the public)
Laramie Community Recreation Center	25	City of Laramie
Laramie Country Club	75	Private (open to the public)
Laramie Ice Arena	3	City of Laramie
Laramie Greenbelt	n/a	City of Laramie
Laramie Trap Club	20	Private
UW Prexy's Pasture	7.5	University of Wyoming
Wyoming Territorial Park	240	State of Wyoming

Neighborhood Parks

- ♦ **Depot Park.** The 2.7-acre strip of land, immediately south of Downtown Laramie, is the site of the original Union Pacific passenger depot. The land is maintained by the Laramie Parks and Recreation Department and supports a small picnic area, playground area, and decorative gardens. The former passenger depot is now made available by the City for private gatherings. A Depot Board has been created to manage reservations.



Washington Park's Band Shell

- ♦ **LaPrele Park.** This park is in the southeast quadrant of the City's original area of development, along the channelized portions of Spring Creek. Facilities include two covered picnic shelters, additional unsheltered picnic tables and grills, play equipment, and access to a greenbelt trail along Spring Creek. The park is also the site of the Spring Creek Disc Golf Course, which is considered to be highly challenging. LaPrele Park is also the location of Huck Finn pond a youth fishing pond that holds many types of game fish. An annual youth fishing derby is held here each year making the pond a valuable and unique asset to the community. Though LaPrele Park provides a somewhat smaller array of facilities, it is the only community or neighborhood park in the established portions of Laramie that has significant expansion opportunities on vacant

lands to the east. Although these opportunities exist it has been determined that this area is to remain natural thus making this area not suitable for a Community Park but as a Neighborhood Park.

- ♦ **Harbon Park.** This park serves neighborhood needs in the immediate area north of the University of Wyoming campus, which is intensely developed and is likely to have a higher incidence of younger families with children. Harbon Park, by neighborhood park standards, is relatively small (two acres) but does include playground equipment. Harbon Park does not have restrooms, a factor that limits its service area.
- ♦ **Kiowa Park.** This is another small neighborhood park, which is located in the far northeast sector of Laramie at the present edge of City development. It provides playground equipment and an open picnic area, but has no restrooms or off-street parking.
- ♦ **Kiwanis Park.** Kiwanis Park is located at the western edge of West Laramie and is the only park that conveniently serves the needs of neighborhoods west of Interstate 80. The eight-acre facility includes fields (baseball/softball and soccer), play equipment, one picnic shelter, additional uncovered picnic tables and grills, restrooms, and off-street parking.
- ♦ **Optimist Park.** Situated along the east bank of the Laramie River, Optimist Park serves the small neighborhood that is bounded by the Union Pacific tracks and Interstate 80. Facilities include play equipment, two sheltered picnic areas, additional picnic tables and grills, one basketball court, one soccer field, restrooms, dog run and off-street parking. One of its distinguishing characteristics is that it also provides an important community-wide "gateway" to the Laramie River Greenbelt.
- ♦ **Scout Park.** This is one of Laramie's newer parks, as it was acquired in the 1980s through funds raised by the Kiwanis Club. Facilities are currently limited only to soccer fields; however, additional improvements to the eastern 1/3 of the park are scheduled.
- ♦ **Undine Park.** Situated in the south-central part of the City, Undine Park is one of Laramie's original parks. The 9.6-acre park includes restrooms, wading pool, tennis court, three picnic shelters with barbecue pits, play equipment, sand volleyball court and a basketball court.

Playlots

- ♦ **O'Dell Mini Park.** This is a basic playlot located at the far north edge of development. It consists of one residential-size lot that was donated to the City by the subdivision's developer. Facilities include playground equipment, one picnic table, and two park benches.

Athletic Fields

Laramie's inventory of outdoor athletic facilities mainly for baseball/softball, soccer, and tennis is supplemented substantially by University of Wyoming-owned facilities that are maintained by the City and integrated into Laramie's extensive recreation programs. These sites are labeled on *Map 4.1, Existing Parks, Parks Facilities and Schools*, as "UW Athletic Fields." They include:

- ♦ **La-Ramie/Aragon Fields.** This 12-acre area east of Campus provides two soccer fields, two lighted baseball/softball fields, restrooms, and off-street parking.
- ♦ **UW Little League Complex.** An eight-acre part of the UW East Campus area accommodates four lighted fields, off street parking, and restroom facilities.
- ♦ **Cowboy Field.** The City leases the six-acre main University baseball competition field with restrooms as a part of its baseball program.

Greenbelts and Trails

The Laramie River Greenbelt is comprised of six and one-half miles of hiking and bicycle trails on both banks of the Laramie River between Curtis Street to the north and the County fairgrounds to the South, occupying approximately 100 acres of land. The trail has been developed through both the use of public lands and the acquisition of permanent easements on privately-owned parcels. In addition part of the green belt is in a Union Pacific Rail Road remediation site. The facility, which is still being expanded and developed, is a source of considerable community pride and sponsorship. It is widely used and supported by many recreational programs. Most significantly, it has provided the critical mass for a trail system that could eventually surround the City and extend to nearly all of Laramie's existing parks and neighborhoods.



Lighted ballfields east of the UW Campus.

Special Facilities

- ♦ **Albany County Fairgrounds.** The fairgrounds are owned and operated by Albany County and host annual Rodeos and a County Fair, in addition to many other community activities. The fairgrounds include an arena for occasional spectator demolition derby competitions, but no other disruptive motor sports. The Albany County Fairgrounds also serves as a main hub of activity during Jubilee Days.
- ♦ **Ft. Sanders Center.** This building is located in LaBonte Park and is currently the home of the Laramie Children's Museum.

- ♦ **Greenhill Cemetery.** The cemetery is operated and maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. While it is not of significance from a recreational standpoint, it is recognized from an historical standpoint. Many of the persons that are part of Laramie's celebrated past are buried here, and there are regular organized tours of noted grave sites. Greenhill Cemetery is also the location of the community gardens. The cemetery will be approaching capacity in the next 10-15 years. A new location should be identified for a new cemetery site.
- ♦ **Jacoby Golf Course.** The University-owned golf course is available to Laramie residents on a fee-basis. It is currently developed with 18 holes, driving range, putting green, chipping green and a clubhouse. This is the only golf course available to the public in Laramie.
- ♦ **Laramie Ice Arena.** Located on the southeast Grand Avenue entrance to Laramie, the recently developed Ice Arena provides a variety of skating programs including instruction, organized hockey, and open skating. During the summer the facility is open for summer rental.



Jacoby Golf Course is an attraction for Laramie residents and visitors

- ♦ **Laramie Recreation Center.** Located immediately southeast of the Ice Arena, the Recreation Center provides extensive indoor facilities including large indoor-outdoor swimming pools, water slide, basketball/volleyball courts, exercise and weight training areas, inside jogging/walking track, community rooms, and lounge areas.
- ♦ **Prexy's Pasture.** Open grass commons area of the University of Wyoming Central Campus. Serves as the University focal point and is the site of many organized and informal student activities.
- ♦ **Wyoming Territorial Park.** Operated by the State, the Wyoming Territorial Park is considered to be a statewide tourist destination point. Situated on the strip

of land between I-80 and the Laramie River, the park includes the site and restored buildings of Wyoming's first territorial prison and is operated as a museum. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, further restoration of the original prison broom factory is planned. The site's 240 acres accommodates a significant part of the Laramie's current Greenbelt trail system. Much of the northern portion of the site remains undeveloped.

Joint Use of School Facilities

School playgrounds, athletic fields, and courts provide additional park and recreation areas and, if accessible to the public, will enhance the number and availability of neighborhood parks within the City. The City and School District have agreements for the use and programming of school facilities, particularly gymnasias. The sharing of these public resources enables greater efficiency and minimizes duplication.

As displayed in *Map 4.2, Park & School Service Areas*, the school sites contribute to the service area coverage of the neighborhood parks. While there is some degree of overlap with the neighborhood park facilities, they serve some areas that are not well-served by

existing neighborhood park facilities. If an expanded joint use agreement can be reached between the City and the School District, the coverage of park facilities can be expanded to better serve the area neighborhoods. Joint use of facilities and inter-jurisdictional agreements reap benefits for all parties and may result in the establishment of park and recreation facilities in unincorporated areas.

Classification	Standard	Low	High	Recommended
Community Park	3 to 5 acres/1,000 persons	81.6	136.0	108.8
Neighborhood Park	1 to 3 acres/1,000 persons	27.2	81.6	54.4
Playlot	.1 to .3 acre/1,000 persons	2.7	8.2	5.4
Total		111.5	225.8	168.6

Source: Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, National Recreation and Parks Association, 1995.

Needs Assessment

Resources vs. Needs

A combination of a standard-based and demand-based approach is used to assess the need for additional parks and recreation areas and facilities within Laramie. The demand-based approach entails additional input from the City's Parks and Recreation Department staff, meetings with the Parks, Tree, and Recreation Advisory Board, and other public meetings directed at soliciting general citizen participation during the course of this planning process.

Using the published standards of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the acreages of parks and recreation areas currently needed in Laramie are as displayed in *Table 4.4, Recommended Area Standards*. The need for additional parks and recreation acreage is determined by applying the recommended standards to the existing (Year 2000) population of the City.

As shown in *Table 4.4, Recommended Area Standards*, which is based on a 2000 Census population of 27,204 persons, the total projected acreage needed ranges from approximately 111.5 to 225.8 acres. The recommended need (which is based on the average of the low and high columns indicated in the table above) shows a total of 169 acres of needed community parks, neighborhood parks, and playlots. Not included in these figures is the need for a new City Cemetery. The current cemetery will be at capacity in the next 10-15 years and a new site will need to be identified (*Map 4.3, Proposed Park Facility Expansion Areas*).

Currently, the City maintains 118.3 acres of parks and recreation areas in the three specified categories, plus an additional 29.5 acres of athletic fields that are owned by the University of Wyoming, but are available for resident use and City programs. Since the athletic fields and other specialized recreational areas are not typically used by all persons on a daily basis, they have not been included in the total parks and recreational acreage for the purpose of this analysis.

Displayed in *Table 4.5, Existing Acreage vs. Future Demands*, is a tabulation of the recommended supply necessary to support the existing population and a projected future population of 33,830 (*Chapter 2, Community Profile*). Of the recommended acreages according to NRPA standards Laramie is currently deficient of park area in each of the three categories. As population increases, the need for additional park area will also increase. It should also be noted that with the continued expansion of the University of Wyoming and Wyoming Technical Institute through scholarships and new programs the increase of students may increase at a higher rate than projected or seen in the past. By the Year 2030, the City is projected to need an additional 91 acres or more, depending upon projected population, of developed park areas.

Qualitative Analysis and Commentary

From a pure statistical land area standpoint, Laramie's park system would appear deficient. There are, however, significant factors that compensate for this:

- ♦ There is an abundance of regional outdoor recreational opportunities in or near Laramie. The Medicine Bow National Forest along with multiple locations of State and

Federal lands provide outdoor recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, fishing and hunting.

- ♦ The Laramie Greenbelt enhances the effectiveness of the overall park

Classification	Existing Supply	Acres Needed		Surplus/(Deficiency)	
		Current	Year 2030	Current	Year 2030
Community Park	76.6	108.8	135.3	(-32.2)	(-58.7)
Neighborhood Park	41.5	54.4	67.7	(-12.9)	(-26.2)
Playlot	0.2	5.4	6.8	(-6.6)	(-6.1)
Total	118.3	168.6	195.3	(-51.7)	(-91.0)

system to a degree that is more than commensurate with its acreage. In essence, the trail system functions as a community park and supports the types of contemporary, "active living" programs that are now so popular.

- ♦ The Parks and Recreation Department provides effective seasonal activity programming of all facilities.
- ♦ University of Wyoming student enrollments, which are included in the Census population, skew the statistics though it would be inappropriate to omit students from the calculations.
- ♦ Provision of indoor recreational activities compensate for some of the demand for parks, particularly for winter activities. In recent years, the community has invested heavily in facilities such as the Ice Arena and Recreation Center.

Nevertheless, the need for more park land is made apparent by the heavy utilization levels of existing parks (particularly Washington and LaBonte Parks), the high number of picnic shelter reservations, frequency of needed trash collections, demand for new soccer fields, and other measurable factors. Overstressed parks require higher maintenance and more frequent replacements of facilities.

Service Areas

The following areas appear to lack convenient access to City park facilities:

- ◆ Neighborhoods north of Reynolds Street, which are served only by O'Dell mini-park
- ◆ Residential areas in the fringes of Downtown, which are more distant from LaBonte and Undine Parks
- ◆ The Imperial Heights, Laramie Plains, Sherman Hills, and other developments in the far southeast sector where there are no parks within over one mile.
- ◆ The eastern neighborhoods of West Laramie, which are just outside the service area of Optimist Park.
- ◆ West Laramie neighborhoods south of Snowy Range Road.
- ◆ Areas located near the cottonwood estates subdivision.

Opportunities and Constraints

While the citizen satisfaction levels in Laramie's park system appear to be high, it is clear that more lands are needed and that the City should take advantage of every available opportunity to supplement the system and preserve open space. The planning process must also give realistic consideration to its limitations.

Opportunities

Current expansion opportunities include:

- ◆ Expansion of the trail system westward, using the abandoned railroad right-of-way easement with the I-80 underpass.
- ◆ Redevelopment of the vacated Tie Plant site, near the I-80 crossing of the Laramie River. Use of this land is likely to be challenging and expensive, as nearly all the topsoil on this site has been stripped. Nevertheless, further investigation is appropriate because of the site's ideal location.
- ◆ Community and Neighborhood park acquisition in conjunction any redevelopment that might possibly occur at sites around Laramie. Sites such as the former BP/Amoco



Open area near intersection of Spring Creek and 7th Street: a prime candidate for trail system improvements.

site, Turner Tract, newly annexed land near the airport and land north and south of the city limits should be identified as potential future locations for Community or Neighborhood parks. This site abuts the Laramie River at Curtis Street. Ideally, the park would connect to the Laramie Greenbelt.

- ◆ Use of the Recreation Mill as a potential funding source for the

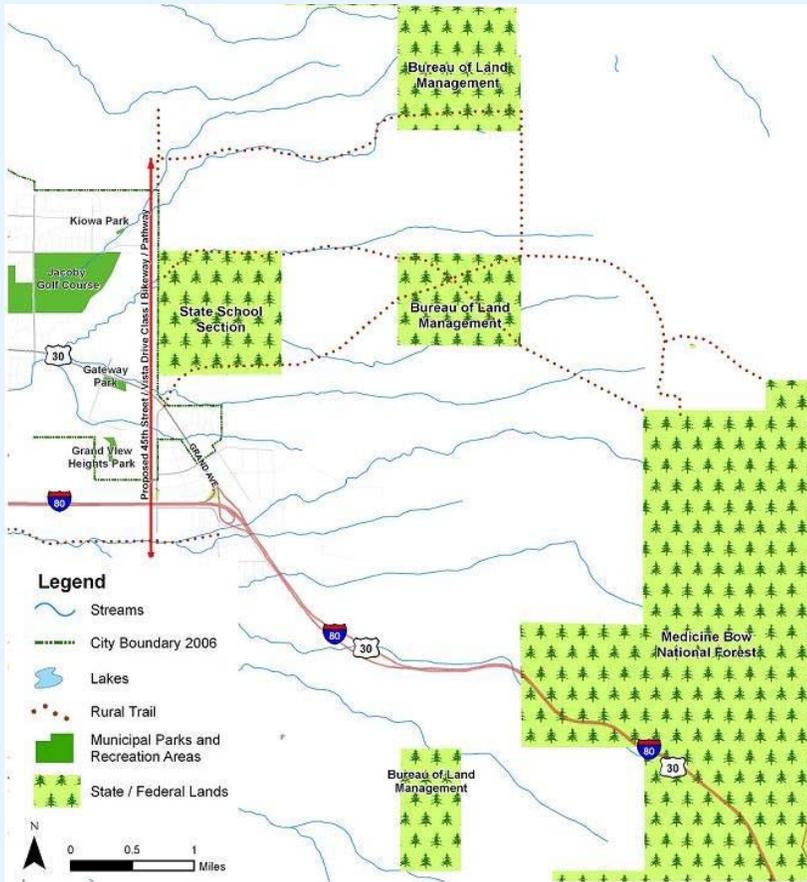


Figure 4.3 Trail development to the East could provide permanent public access to Multiple State, BLM and National Forest Properties.

purchase of parks, trails and open space.

- ♦ The 10,000-acre Monolith Ranch site, which the City acquired in 1982, presents a significant opportunity for recreational uses such as hiking, camping, larger picnic events, or nature observation. The array of suitable activities for this park may be limited, however, due to its distance from the City's residential areas. Areas of the Monolith site might also be appropriate for land swaps with owners of closer-in properties, if executed in accord with this Comprehensive Plan and in conjunction with a long-range site development plan for the property (*Map 2.2, Monolith Ranch*).
- ♦ The Turner Tract area will be developed based on the guidelines of the Turner Tract Area Plan. Within the Turner Tract Plan open space, parks and trails are

important part of the development of this area. Within the Turner Tract there may be additional locations for future parks such as the remaining property located around the Recreation Center which could be dedicated as open space or parks land.

- ♦ Pursue ways in which the City of Laramie can provide permanent access to the Laramie Mountains and all other state and public lands to the east. Development of non-motorized trails would provide for a unique way to access public lands directly from the city limits (*Figure 4.3, Trail Development to the East, Map 4.5 South and East Laramie Trails Master Plan*).
- ♦ Possibility of the development of a dog park to allow for an unleashed active green space for dogs and owners to exercise together.

Constraints

The major constraints to future park development, in addition to reasonable funding limitations, include:

- ♦ In-city land costs, particularly near campus and Downtown, are relatively high.
- ♦ Lands surrounding heavily used Washington, Undine, and LaBonte parks are already developed, precluding any reasonable expectations of expansion without acquisition and demolition of adjoining residences.
- ♦ Limitations on linear expansion to the south and west are imposed by I-80, the railroad tracks, and the Laramie River. As new crossings are exceptionally costly, continuing

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attempts must be made to secure separated trail/walkway rights-of-way or easements for all current and future crossings.

- ♦ Areas in West Laramie and in developing parts of southeast Laramie have already been platted, thereby hampering any opportunity for significant acquisition.

Parks and Recreation System Goals and Action Statements

In this section the goals and action statements for each element of the plan are set forth. The goals and action statements are to be used as a starting point to achieve the overall vision of this plan.

New Parks and Facilities Goals and Action Statements

To enhance the system of neighborhood and community parks that will adequately serve the existing and projected future parks and recreational needs of the whole community, the City will need to acquire and develop parks within identified deficiency areas. Proposed parks, trail system expansions, bikeways, and open space preservation areas are shown in *Map 4.3, Proposed Park Facility Expansion Areas, Figure 4.3, Trail Development to the East and Map 4.4 Bicycle and Trails Master Plan, Map 4.5 South and East Laramie Trails Master Plan*. These improvements will help to achieve full service area coverage of community parks and an even distribution of neighborhood parks. Goals and action statements specifically include:

1. Completion of a Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan. Within the plan the goals and action statement in the Laramie Comprehensive Plan shall be further developed. Development of this plan should not inhibit any of these goals or action statements from being developed but should further plan and aid these goals and action statements. Additional and more specific goals shall be developed with the completion of the new Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan (*Map 4.4 Bicycle and Trails Master Plan, Map 4.5 South and East Laramie Trails Master Plan*).
2. Establish new neighborhood parks and open space in conjunction with future developments. Parks should accommodate new residential development as well as supplementing those areas that are lacking parks service. The City of Laramie should attempt to achieve a standard equal or higher than the national standards for parkland acreage and recreational facilities.
3. Acquiring and developing new parks can be difficult. Achieving a system of neighborhood and community parks that is uniformly distributed may be accomplished in several ways, including:
4. **Pre-development acquisition.** The City should continue to identify opportunities to acquire desirable tracts that are favorably situated to accommodate expansion of the park system.
 - a. **Land donation requirements concurrent with subdivision approval.** Developers should be required to set aside five percent of an intended residential development site's area for improvement as a future park that would serve the newly established neighborhood. At the Preliminary Plat stage of the project, planning for a park should be explored by looking at location as well as other factors. Requiring the dedication of park land concurrent with a

final plat or a development site plan is a sound method to assure adequate park areas consistent with the demand and impact placed on the public parks system by new development. For overall project sites smaller than 100 acres (i.e., the resulting park site would be smaller than five acres), a fee comparable to five percent of the site’s market value should be provided to an established City trust fund, and earmarked for future land acquisition in the vicinity of the proposed development.

- b. **Developer impact fees.** In addition to the land donation requirements stated above, developers should be required to pay an impact fee based on new residential units in order to fund the actual improvements of parkland. Collection of this impact fee would occur during the building permitting process, prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
 - c. **Public/private partnerships, donations, and other strategies.** Just as universities, hospitals, and cultural institutions systematically pursue individual and corporate donations, the City of Laramie should promote opportunities to receive donations and bequests of land. An excellent example of such a bequest is the “Turner Tract” property, which was donated to Laramie two generations ago. As with the Turner property, however, it is important that properties be received with “few or no strings attached” to enable flexibility in development planning and possible sale of less-favorably situated parcels.
 - d. **Development Code Updates.** Use of the new development code to establish processes to address acquisition of park land and trails.
 - e. **Funding Sources.** The City will need to rely on other funding measures for full development of a parks system. Donations, bonding, taxes and capital budgeting must be evaluated and considered in an effort to develop a parks system set out in this plan.
5. Reuse of existing brownfield sites as public open space or as some other recreational site.
 6. Develop standards that aid the City of Laramie and other entities such as Schools, Private Companies and others in an attempt at shared facilities. These standards can increase recreational opportunity without high costs.
 7. Identify a location for a new city cemetery site. Capacity at the existing site will be up in 10-15 years (*Map 4.3, Proposed Park Facility Expansion Areas*). Sites identified are only possible locations. Only one location would need to be selected depending upon the size.
 8. Work with local interest groups and volunteers in helping develop, maintain, improve and extend our local Parks and Trails.

New and Extended Trails Goals and Action Statements

The Laramie Greenbelt should be extended to encompass the entire City and provide access to outlying open space resources in addition to improving the walkability and connectivity of the community. Proposed goals and action statements include:

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1. Acquire and develop trail locations shown on *Map 4.4, Bicycle and Trails Master Plan* and *Figure 4.3, Trail Development to the East*, *Map 4.5 South and East Laramie Trails Master Plan*.
2. Extension of the Greenbelt eastward from the intersection of the Laramie River and Curtis Street along Reynolds and Harney Streets to the athletic fields complex.
3. Connect greenbelt and trails to adjacent neighborhoods and parks as well as provide more trailheads.
4. Extension of the Greenbelt westward from the intersection of the Laramie River and Curtis Street to Welsh Lane and Route 130.
5. Continuation of the Greenbelt along the Laramie River southwest to the Monolith Ranch river access point and further to the end of the Monolith Ranch property.
6. Extension of the Greenbelt along the river northward from Curtis to the Union Pacific rail road crossing.
7. Tie in locations for the Greenbelt to the BP Amoco site should be considered, especially if this site is developed for parks or open space land in the future.
8. Completion of the Spring Creek trail.
9. A new trail built in conjunction with the Bill Nye Avenue corridor street project. This trail will serve as a major east west pedestrian and bike route from the future Turner Tract development to 3rd Street.
10. Continued maintenance of the east-west abandoned railroad right-of-way that goes under I-80 near Van Buren. This site could provide necessary access under I-80 for Bike or trail.
11. A new trail developed south of Interstate 80, along a creek bed, linking to the existing Valley View, Country Meadows, Sherman Hills, Laramie Plains, and Imperial Heights neighborhoods at the far southwest edge of the City. Limitations on linear expansion to the south and west are imposed by I-80, the railroad tracks, and the Laramie River. As new crossings are exceptionally costly, continuing attempts must be made to secure separated trail/walkway rights-of-way or easements for all current and future crossings.
12. Maintenance/Improvement of Adams Street trail.
13. Development of trails found in *Figure 4.3, Trail Development to the East*.

Bicycle Lanes and Bikeways Goals and Action Statements

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities serve not only as alternative modes of transportation, but also as important forms of recreation. Therefore, in addition to the greenbelt and trail system improvements recommended above, the City should develop a series of marked bikeways or bicycle lanes along the existing street system. These routes, are shown in *Map 4.4, Bicycle and Trails Master Plan*.

1. Completion of a Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan. Within the plan the goals and action statement in the Laramie Comprehensive Plan shall be further developed. Development of this plan should not inhibit any of these goals or action statements

from being developed but should further plan and aid these goals and action statements.

2. Mark and stripe bike lanes throughout the city along with extra wide curb lanes on local, arterial and collector streets. Laramie's exceedingly wide residential streets present an ideal opportunity for reconfiguration and striping.
3. Routine maintenance such as repainting, snow removal and sweeping for debris must be incorporated so bike lanes and trails are safe and useable throughout the year.
4. Continued assessment of trails system should be done. The remaining components of the trail and bike network should be based on actual usage of the system.
5. The system of off-street bike and walking trails should be designed and constructed in compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Further information on pedestrian and bicycle facilities is provided in *Chapter 8, Transportation*.

Open Space Goals and Action Statements

1. Portions of the BP/Amoco brownfield site near the Curtis Street crossing of the Laramie River should be evaluated for its potential for open space or as a recreational opportunity.
2. Identify if the Mountain Cement and Union Pacific sites south of Interstate 80 at the Laramie River could provide areas of open space near the Laramie River Greenbelt.
3. Undeveloped area along Spring Creek immediately east of the 3rd Street entrance to Laramie. Acquisition of this land would enhance the greenbelt along Spring Creek and would improve the appearance of this important gateway to the City.
4. Areas along and at the top and bottom of the ridge at the northern border of Laramie should be protected through easements, strategic land acquisitions, and the adoption of zoning amendments that would establish greater yard restrictions and development standards on ridgelines. This would preserve existing clear sightlines to the Laramie Mountains.
5. Areas within the one mile boundary should continue to have undeveloped open space so preservation of the rural atmosphere of this area can be preserved. Having undeveloped area within the one mile boundary should help keep the small town and independent feel of the community while discouraging sprawl.
6. Areas considered to be "sensitive" (i.e. aquifer protection area, floodplains, ridgelines, unique features, etc.) should be protected or reserved as open space when these areas are contained within developments or should be set aside before development occurs through purchase, transfer of development rights, overlay zones or through other methods.
7. Provide and Identify areas on the Monolith Ranch property for open space and recreational activities (*Map 2.1, Monolith Ranch*).