

CITY COMMISSION MEETING

PARKS, RECREATION, ARTS AND CULTURE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

LAWRENCE, KANSAS

December 5, 2023



CONFLUENCE

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

PROS CONSULTING | DESIGNING LOCAL



AGENDA

Introductions

Process + Timeline

Inventory of Existing Park Facilities

Summarize + Next Steps



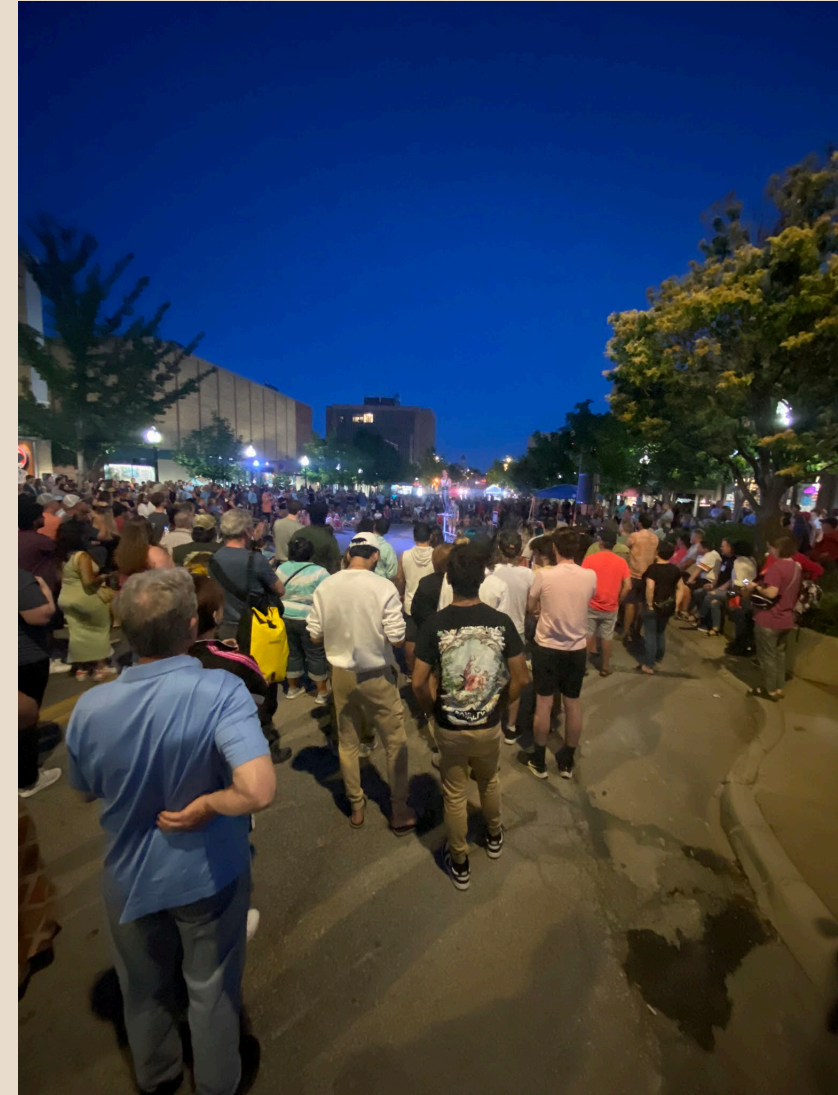
OUR TEAM

- Confluence –
 - Project Lead, Master Planning, Public Engagement
- PROS Consulting –
 - Demographic, Trends, Operations + Park Programming
- Designing Local Ltd. –
 - Arts & Culture Planning



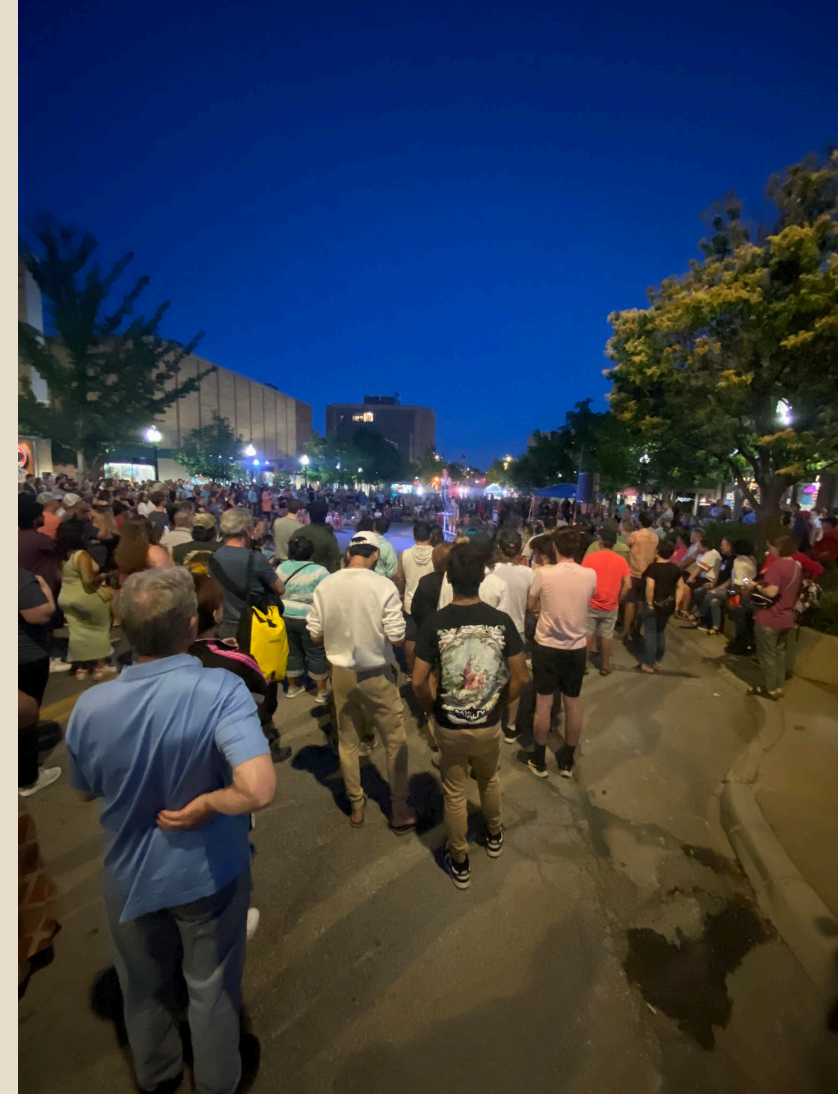
WHY PLAN NOW?

- Define Community Vision
- Strategic/Prioritized Funding and Implementation
 - Good stewards of available financial resources
- Programming and Capital Planning
- Flexible, Living Document
 - Board and Staff to revisit document annually to review progress
 - Realistic completion beyond 10 years

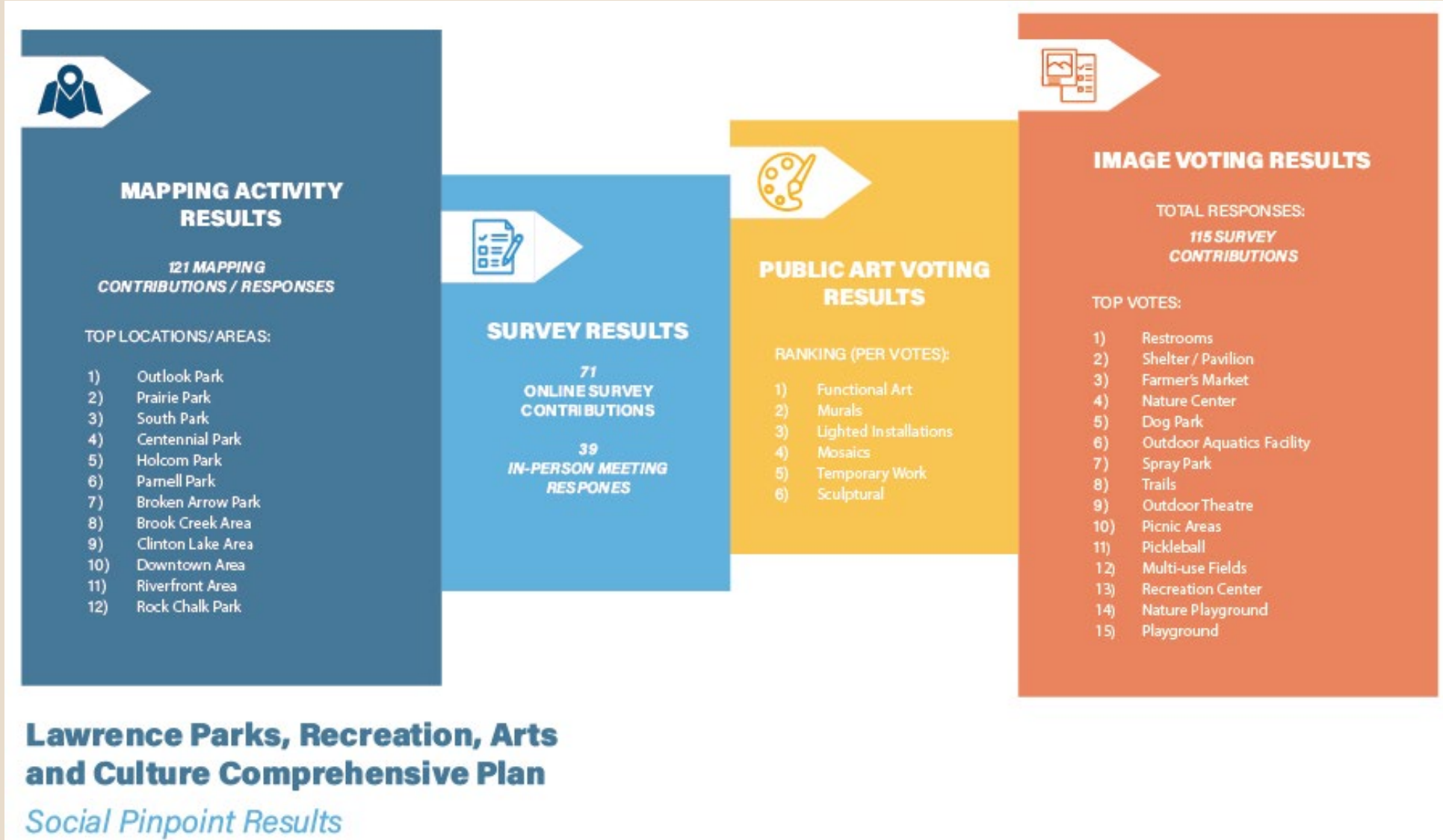


TASKS COMPLETED - PARKS

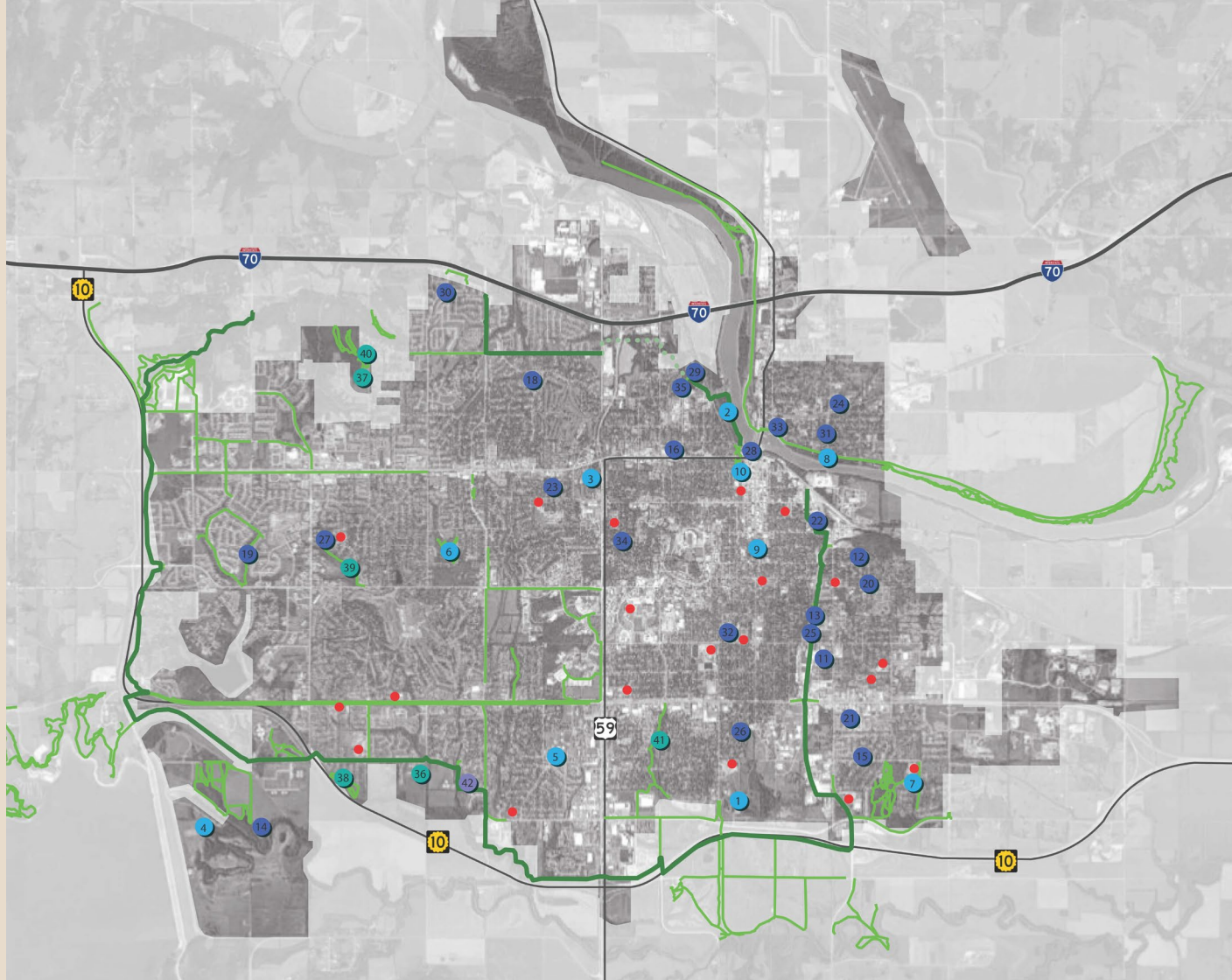
- Inventory and Documentation of all Existing Parks
- Review of all Recreation Facilities and Support Structures
- Completed Level of Service Mapping
- Conducted Public Workshop #1
 - +/- 80 attendees
 - Visual Preferencing
 - 110 Comment Cards Completed



TASKS COMPLETED - PARKS



INVENTORY OF PARK FACILITIES



NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

1. BROKEN ARROW PARK (20 ACRES)
2. BURCHAM PARK (70 ACRES)
3. CENTENNIAL PARK (35 ACRES)
4. CLINTON LAKE OUTLET PARK (60 ACRES)
5. HOLCOM PARK (31 ACRES)
6. "DAD" PERRY PARK (45 ACRES)
7. PRAIRIE PARK (72 ACRES)
8. RIVERFRONT PARK (994 ACRES)
9. SOUTH PARK (15 ACRES)
10. BUFORD M. WATSON, JR. PARK (7 ACRES)

COMMUNITY PARKS

11. CHIEF JIM MCSWAIN PARK (5 ACRES)
12. BROOK CREEK PARK (43 ACRES)
13. BURROUGHS CREEK TRAIL & LINEAR PARK (36 ACRES)
14. CLINTON LAKE LEASED AREA (1515 ACRES)
15. CHAPARRAL PARK (2 ACRES)
16. CLINTON PARK (3 ACRES)
17. CONSTANT PARK (36 ACRES)
18. DEERFIELD PARK (10 ACRES)
19. DEVICTOR PARK (40 ACRES)
20. EDGEWOOD PARK (23 ACRES)
21. HAND PARK (1 ACRE)
22. HOBBS PARK (9 ACRES)
23. LUDLAM PARK (1.4 ACRES)
24. LYONS PARK (5 ACRES)
25. PARNELL PARK (2.7 ACRES)
26. PARK HILLS PARKS (5 ACRES)
27. QUAIL RUN PARK (5 ACRES)
28. ROBINSON PARK (1 ACRE)
29. SANDRA J. SHAW COMMUNITY HEALTH PARK (8 ACRES)
30. STONEGATE PARK (4 ACRES)
31. JOHN TAYLOR PARK (6 ACRES)
32. VETERANS PARK (3 ACRES)
33. WALNUT PARK (1/3 ACRE)
34. WATER TOWER PARK (2 ACRES)
35. WODDY PARK (4 ACRES)

GREENWAYS & PRESERVE AREAS

36. PAT DAWSON-BILLINGS NATURE AREA (80 ACRES)
37. LAWRENCE NATURE PARK (100 ACRES)
38. KANZA SOUTHWIND NATURE PRESERVE (18 ACRES)
39. CONRAD & VIOLA MCGRE NATURE PRESERVE (15 ACRES)
40. MARTIN PARK (19 ACRES)
41. NAISMITH VALLEY PARK (25 ACRES)

FUTURE PARKS

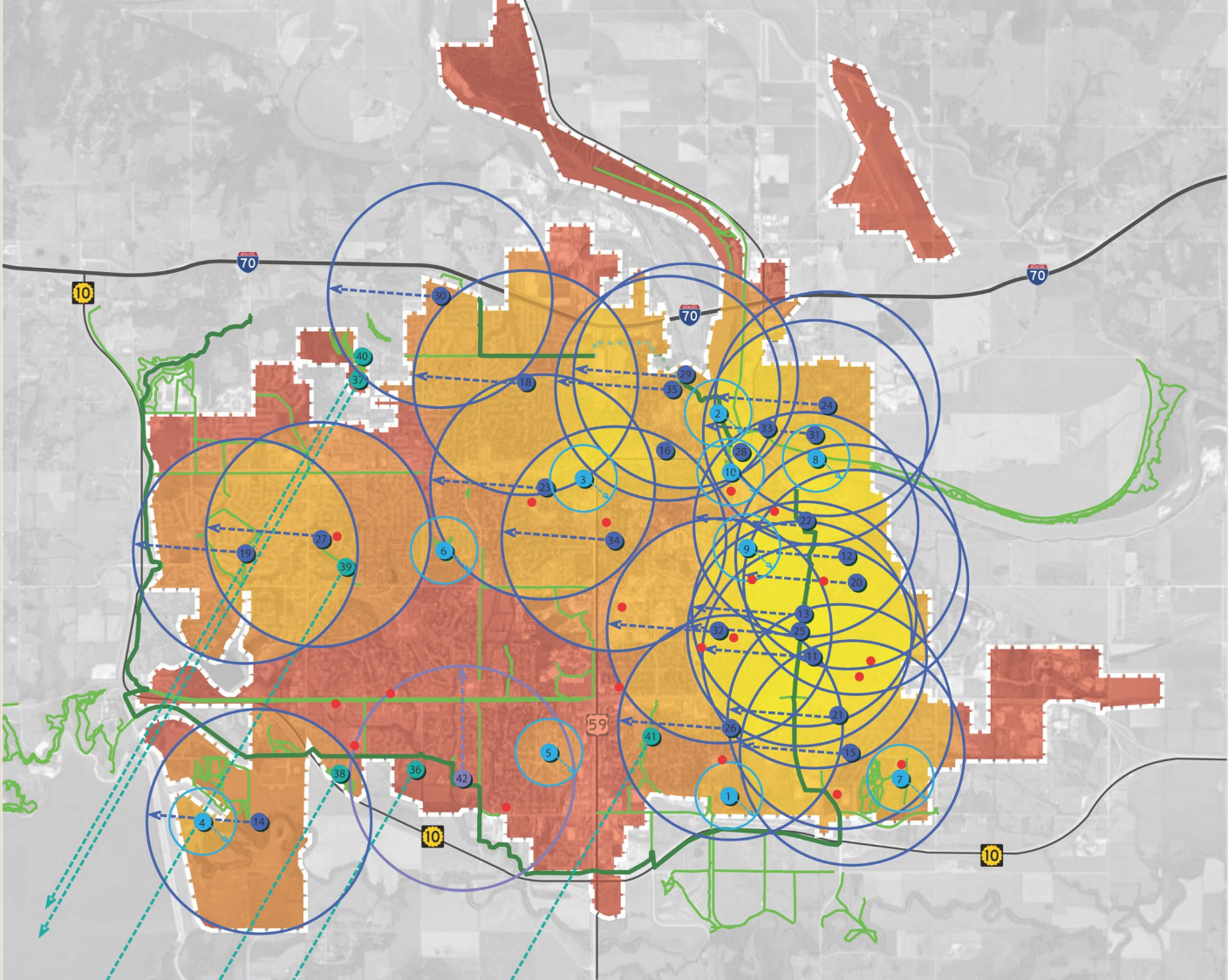
42. Green Meadows Park (14 ACRES)

INVENTORY OF PARK FACILITIES

- Pedestrian Trails / Connectivity
- Upgrades of Programmatic Amenities
- ADA Accessibility / Connectivity Improvements
- Good Variety of Park Types / Spaces
- Equitable Distribution to be Reviewed
- Land for Other Park Uses
- Other Opportunities?



LEVEL OF SERVICE



- NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**
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ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

- COMPLETED ENGAGEMENT
 - Steering Committee Meetings - 2
 - Initial Public Open House Held 10/25/23
 - Staff Input Sessions
 - Statistically Valid Survey
 - Social Pinpoint Live
 - On-line Survey Live
- FUTURE ENGAGEMENT
 - Steering Committee
 - Survey Results
 - Social Pinpoint Input
 - On-line Survey Results
 - Second Public Open House

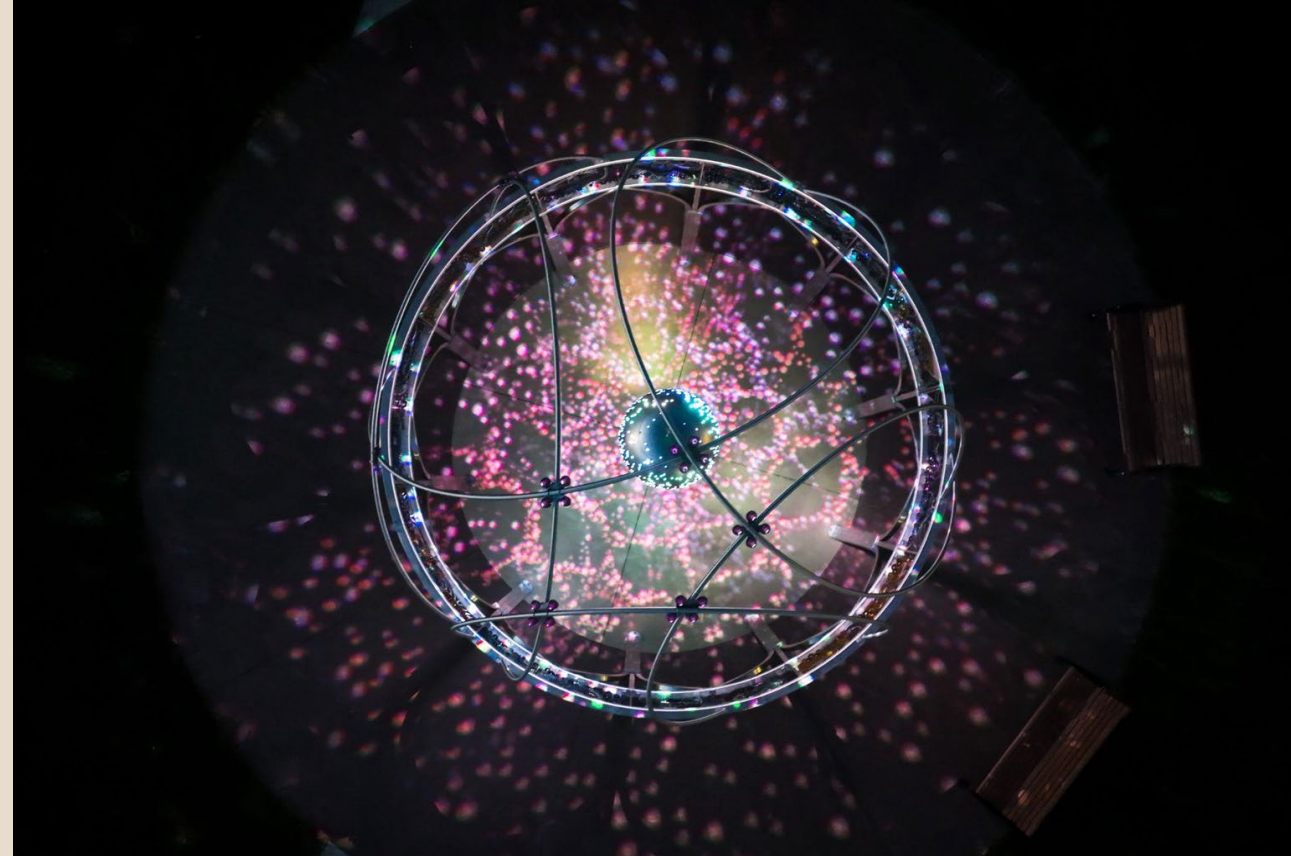


TIMELINE

- Statistically Valid Survey Complete – 12/31/23
- Draft Recommendations and Second Public Meeting – 2/15/24
- Final Recommendations for City Review – 3/15/24
- Final Presentation of the Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan – 4/15/24

ARTS & CULTURE UPDATE

- Discovery Phase Complete
- Stakeholder Interviews Complete [Report]
- Case Study Research [Complete]
- Draft Percent for Art Ordinance [Review Ready]
- Survey Underway



ARTS & CULTURE UPDATE

Public Art

- Formalize the public art ordinance with a supportive policy
- Explore temporary public art events in existing parks
- Place new public art in new parks
- Explore the creation of a mural grant program in Lawrence
- A city wide public art “white rabbit” trail like prior Jayhawks statues

Staffing

- Liaison for Native American Affairs in the Parks Department
- Public Art Coordinator
- A recommendation for the formation of an arts council should be considered.

Programming & Events

- Provide streamlined process for creating and hosting events in Lawrence
- Expand grant programs to support festivals and events that are focused on cultural exploration and celebration
- Understand overlapping programs provided by Parks and Recreation and other organizations in the City and provide grant support for the program to be free/low cost for participants if happening outside of a parks and recreation facility.
- Explore an artist in residency at the City that could focus on Lawrence storytelling, creating public art, or support for the local music community.

Cultural Spaces

- Consistent mention of incubator spaces and artist studios or live/work spaces (affordable housing for artists/creatives?)
- Some desire for storage space for musicians/bands
- Support expansion of the music scene in Lawrence through a number of strategies:
- Small stages with access to electricity in parks
- Grants for businesses to host live music

Funding

- Formalize 2% for Art in Capital Projects
- Explore sustainable funding models for existing cultural organizations
- Explore how to develop more diverse public/private funding methods

General Marketing

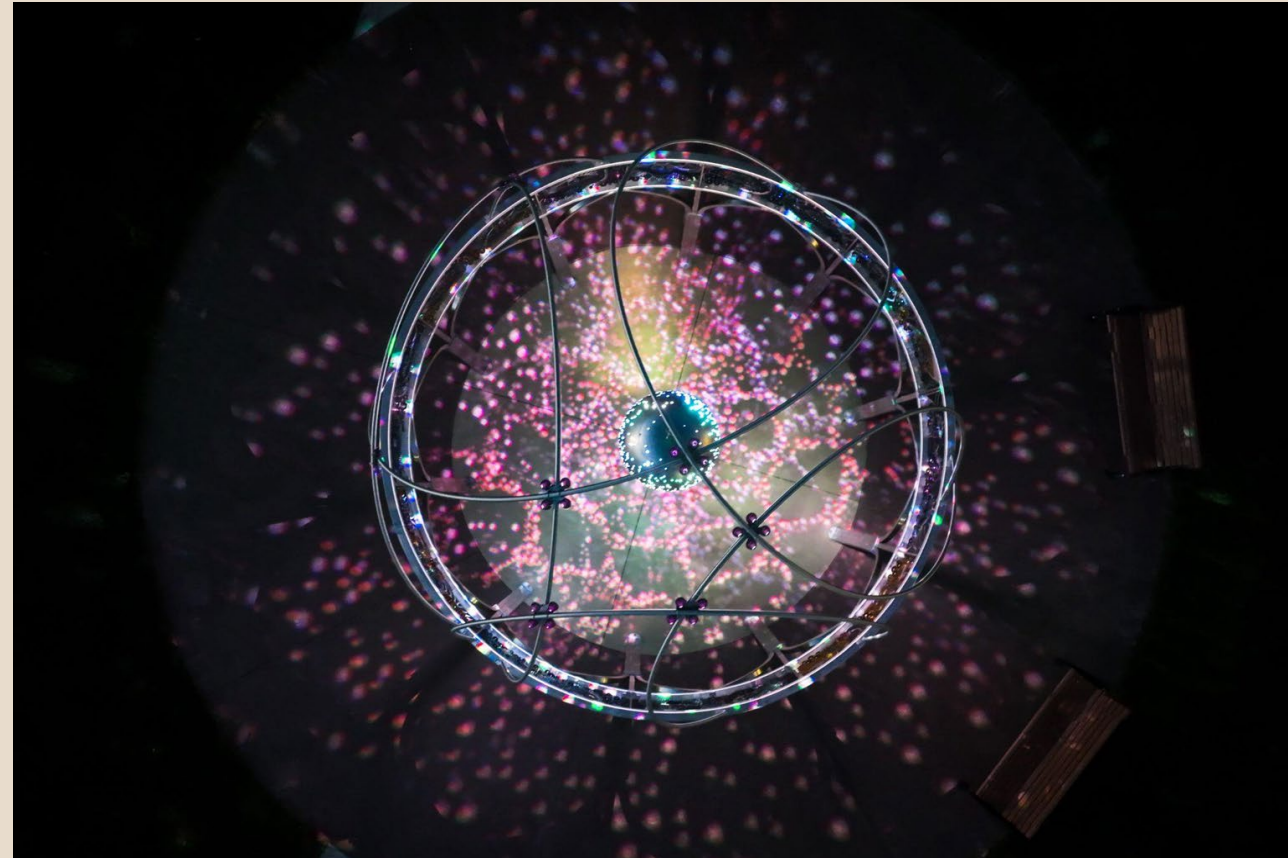
- Explore Lawrence Marketing Campaign focused on Lawrence as a City of the Arts

Consider Large Projects

- Music Festival
- Temporary Public Art Festival
- Large installation at former site of Sacred Rock by indigenous artist
- New Bandshell/Outdoor amphitheater

ARTS & CULTURE NEXT STEPS

- Fill case study research gaps
- Review Survey Results
- Draft Arts & Culture Plan Language
- Synthesize with the Community



BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

This analysis is to **identify** operating metrics that benchmark Lawrence Parks and Recreation against comparable parks and recreation agencies.

The goal of the analysis is to **evaluate** how the system is positioned among peer best-practice agencies.

3 Park Agencies Were Used In The Analysis:

- Bloomington Parks and Recreation; Bloomington, IN
 - Columbia Parks and Recreation; Columbia, MO
 - Corvallis Parks and Recreation; Corvallis, OR

The information sought was a combination of operating metrics that factor budgets, staffing levels, and inventories, as well as perspective on each community's approach to public art.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The cities of the peer agencies selected for the benchmark analysis are comparable in size with population, population per square mile, and each has a major college or university in the community.

Specific areas where Lawrence's Parks and Recreation level of service comes in higher than the benchmark agencies include:

- Park acres developed.
- Trail miles per 1,000 residents.
- The number of FTEs per 10,000 residents.

The level of service areas where Lawrence Parks and Recreation comes in lower than the benchmark agencies include:

- Operating expense per acre.
- Operating expense per FTE.
- A much lower annual capital budget than the communities included in the analysis.

RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The goal of the assessment is to **understand** current recreation program and activity offerings.

The assessment helps **identify** strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding programming as well as recognize core programs, and what the community expects in recreation.

Areas of improvement, and future programs and services are **evaluated**, and the findings are based on a review of information provided by the Lawrence Parks and Recreation staff including program descriptions, financial data, website content, and through discussions with key staff.

This report **addresses the program offerings** from a systems perspective for the entire portfolio of programs.

FRAMEWORK OF THE ASSESSMENT

Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department has a diverse type of program offerings for a broad range of age groups. Programs and activities are supported by several facilities including:

- Two aquatic centers (Indoor and Outdoor Aquatic Centers)
- Eagle Bend Golf Course
- Prairie Park Nature Center
- Community Building
- East Lawrence Recreation Center
- Holcomb Park Recreation Center
- Lawrence Sports Pavilion
- Clinton Lake Sports Complex
- Youth Sports Complex
- Municipal Stadium

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Observations that stood out during the analysis:

- ✓ The **program descriptions and goals** within each core program area at Lawrence effectively communicate the key benefits and desired outcome for the participants.
- ✓ **Age segments** are represented among various core program areas.
- ✓ Of the different **program lifecycle stages**, 59% of Lawrence's programs are categorized in the Introduction, Take-Off, or Growth stages.

OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED

- ✓ **Pricing strategies** are used consistently across all Core Program Areas at Lawrence, and they price programs according to market rate, established cost recovery goals, and the customer's ability to pay.
- ✓ A few core program areas are operating at or above established **cost recovery goals**.
- ✓ A variety of methods track **program performance** including customer satisfaction levels through surveys, program cancellation rates, and participation levels.
- ✓ Methods for **marketing and promotions** rely heavily on technology. Print advertisements are also used regularly.

CORE PROGRAMS

Identifying Core Program Areas based on current and future needs creates a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community.

The following Core Program Areas currently being offered by Lawrence Parks and Recreation and its contractors, and/or partnering organizations in Lawrence are:

- Adult Sports
- Aquatics
- Camps
- Gymnastics
- Golf
- Lifelong Recreation
- Nature
- Special Events
- Youth Special Interest
- Youth Sports
- Unified Recreation

KEY FINDINGS OF EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREA

- ❖ Additional programming staff, partnerships, and space can increase capacity for more programs to meet demand.
- ❖ Sustainable funding sources ensure recreation opportunities for low-income individuals and families.
- ❖ Communication standards and a work order management process are not fully used.
- ❖ There is no Program Resource Guide to reduce communication gaps and provide a tool for proactive planning.
- ❖ No onboarding process for the staff about programming standards, processes, and resources is used.



NEXT STEPS

- Tabulation of Survey Results
- Recommendations Development
- Public Workshop #2
- Report Development



CONTACT INFORMATION

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DISCUSSION



[Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Comprehensive Plan - City of Lawrence, Kansas \(lawrenceks.org\)](http://lawrenceks.org)