

MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Harvard Parks Committee
FROM: Bill James
DATE: 10/15/2015
RE: Summary of Visioning Workshop

This memorandum presents the results of the Visioning Workshop conducted on September 15th, 2015. This event was a major part of the community engagement program within the strategic planning process.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Visioning Workshop for the Harvard Park System Master Plan was intended to solicit broad-based input from the general community on the existing park system and what it should be in the future. The Visioning Workshop was the biggest single public participation event of the planning process. The public will be invited to future Parks Committee meetings, at which the emerging plan will be discussed, and the Draft Master Plan will be presented to the public for review and comment, but the Visioning Workshop was the event at which the public could provide formative input.

The Workshop was structured to solicit responses to specific ideas and proposal, as well as to allow participants to contribute new ideas to the discussion. The primary form of expression by participants was through “key pad polling,” a technology that allows the audience to indicate varying levels of preferences to options shown on a series of PowerPoint slides. Results are shown in real time to promote discussion of each topic. The Workshop was organized into three major components:

- I. **Introduction and Background:** This first component provided participants with the intent and organization of the workshop as well as a general overview of the existing parks system, including the budget for the Parks and Recreation Department.
- II. **Discussion of Current Parks System:** The second component of the workshop focused on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the current system. This discussion is particularly useful to allow comparisons between the public’s perceptions of system strengths and weaknesses and the Parks Committee assessment, which was conducted in August 2015.
- III. **Discussion of Potential System Enhancements:** The third component focused on a discussion of potential enhancements to the parks system. Camiros presented a range of potential enhancements for discussion, each of which were discussed at the prior Parks Committee meeting. Participants were also asked for ideas of other enhancements not shown in the PowerPoint presentation.

The Visioning Workshop was well attended, with 22 people signing in and a total audience of approximately 35 members of the public. A healthy discussion of the issues/topics took place. The Introduction and Background segment was useful in presenting the current condition of the parks. The presentation of the Parks and Recreation Department budget was particularly useful, along with a comparison of the funding of park districts or parks departments in other communities. This introductory discussion helped frame the issues and promoted better discussion and input.

II. RESPONSES AND INPUT

The format of the workshop and the questions posed to the members of the public in attendance appeared very appropriate to the issues associated with the Parks System Master Plan and the interest of audience. The results to the questions, as evidenced by the key pad polling, showed significant majorities to nearly every question. This allows for clear conclusions to be drawn from the Visioning Workshop about what local residents think of the current parks system, and what they want the system to be in the future. A summary of the results to the questions asked is presented below, while the tabulated results are attached to this memorandum as Appendix A. Camiros' interpretation of the responses is shown in the [highlighted text](#) at the end of each question.

Discussion of the Current Park System

- 1. Importance of the park system to the Harvard community:** A very large majority (93%) thought the quality of the parks system was “very important” or “important.” Only 7% thought it is “somewhat important” and none of the participants thought it is “not important.” [This shows a clear mandate that the parks system is a crucial element of the quality of life in Harvard.](#)
- 2. Is the Harvard Pool a strength of the system?** A majority (70%) thought the Harvard Pool is either a “very important” or “important” strength of the system. Only 26% thought it is “somewhat important” while 4% thought it was “not important.” [Clearly, the pool was a good investment in the system and future expenditures on maintenance/improvements for the pool would appear to be supported.](#)
- 3. Are the Volunteer Sports Organizations a strength?** A very large majority (84%) thought the “volunteer sports organizations” are “very important” or “important.” Only 16% thought they are “somewhat important” and/or “not important.” [This shows a strong appreciation for the role these organizations play in community athletics and recreation. It also suggests support for the continuation of that role.](#)
- 4. Are nearby County facilities a strength?** Only (45%) thought the nearby McHenry County facilities are a “very important” or “important” strength. In contrast, 55% thought they are “somewhat important” or “not important.” [This indicates that these facilities are not considered integral to the system due either to location or the activities available within the facilities.](#)

5. **What are other strengths not discussed?** Two additional comments were offered as other strengths:
- a. Volunteerism in general is a strength of Harvard as a community, which could be used to improve the park system.
 - b. The School District is an asset in terms of its recreation facilities, which might be made more accessible to the general public if a stronger cooperative relationship were forged with the district.
6. **Is maintenance a weakness?** A clear majority (73%) thought the maintenance of the park system was is “inadequate” or “very poor.” Somewhat surprisingly, 4% thought maintenance is “very good) and 23% thought it was “adequate.” That 27% of respondents thought park maintenance is not an issue is at odds with comments made by user groups at key person interviews and Camiros’ observations. While upgraded maintenance is clearly supported, the size of the minority opinion may reflect Harvard’s values, which include a preference for “basic, no frills” public service. The size of the minority opinion may also reflect the difficulty in measuring the level of maintenance provided.
7. **Are facilities and activities offered adequate?** Responses to this question indicate a strong opinion that the facilities and activities offered do not serve the community well. 78% said that the facilities/activities offered are “inadequate” or “poor.” In contrast, 18% said the basic level of facilities/activities offered are “good” while 4% said they were “very good.” The responses indicate a clear lack of satisfaction with the facilities/activities offered.
8. **Is the design and appearance of the parks a weakness?** A strong majority (81%) indicated that the design and appearance of the parks is poor/unattractive. 15% said that design and appearance is not important while 4% said the design and appearance of the parks is good. The design and appearance of parks is difficult to measure, so the strong majority indicates a clear dissatisfaction with how the parks look and the design of improvements within the parks.
9. **Is coordination of use and maintenance of parks a weakness?** This question generated one of the strongest majority opinions of any question. 89% said coordination of the parks is “inadequate” or “very poor,” which is somewhat surprising because most average residents would probably not have knowledge of the coordination issue. Only 7% said coordination was “not important,” half the number (15%) that said “design and appearance is not important.” Clearly, most of the attendees at the event had some connection to the volunteer youth organizations, and this is an issue that resonates with them.
10. **Is the quality of neighborhood parks a weakness?** Response to this question represent a mixed message. 21% said the quality of neighborhoods parks are “good,” suggesting they think no enhancement is needed. 43% said the quality of neighborhood parks is “not good,” but that the larger parks were more important. 36% said the quality of neighborhood parks is “poor” and that they do not provide needed opportunities for recreation at the neighborhood level. So,

79% said neighborhood parks are “not good” or “poor.” The implication on what to do about the neighborhood parks is mixed. Slightly more people thought preference should be given to the larger community parks. This may also reflect higher representation of the volunteer youth organizations in the audience, because most organized athletics occur at the larger parks.

Discussion of Potential System Enhancements

The remainder of the event was devoted to a discussion of potential enhancements to the current parks system. The comments are presented below.

- 11. Has the park system changed with the times?** The response to this question indicates people think the system has not changed with the times and this is a problem. 79% said the system has not kept pace with the times and needs updating. Another 14% said the system has not kept pace with the times, but that this is not problematic or crucial. Only 7% said the system had kept pace with the times. Clearly, there is widespread sentiment that upgrades are needed to better meet the community’s current recreation needs.
- 12. Would an indoor recreation center be desirable?** Some background information was provided on what kinds of activities could be supported in an indoor recreation facility, then the audience was asked how desirable such a facility would be in Harvard. The response was very strong in favor of such a facility, with 96% saying it would be desirable to varying degrees. 64% said the facility would be “extremely desirable,” suggesting this is an essential upgrade. 14% said it would be “very desirable,” implying efforts should be made to add such a facility. 18% said it is “desirable” as one option to upgrade the system. Only 4% said it was “not desirable.” Clearly, there is overwhelming support for such a facility in the abstract.
- 13. Would upgrading neighborhood parks be desirable?** Some background information was provided on what benefits would result from upgrading the neighborhood parks. The response was very strong in favor of improving neighborhood parks, with 93% saying it would be desirable to varying degrees. 30% said the facility would be “extremely desirable,” suggesting this is an essential upgrade. 30% said it would be “very desirable,” implying efforts should be made to upgrade neighborhood parks. 33% said it is “desirable” as one option to upgrade the system. Only 7% said it was “not desirable.” Compared to the response to the “indoor recreation facility,” the support for improving neighborhood parks was lower with only 30% saying neighborhood park improvements were “extremely desirable” versus 64% for the “indoor recreation facility.” This may reflect support for a new facility/service versus improvement of an existing facility/service.
- 14. Would improved park maintenance be desirable?** The response was very strong in favor of improved park maintenance, with 96% saying it would be desirable to varying degrees. 36% said improved maintenance would be “extremely desirable,” suggesting this is an essential upgrade. 29% said it would be “very desirable,” implying efforts should be made to realize this goal. 32% said it is “desirable,” but that since the system is inferior, improved maintenance would have

limited benefit. Only 4% said it was “not desirable.” It is clear that improved park maintenance is desired. It is also clear that improved maintenance alone is not sufficient to upgrade the system. It is interesting that support for better maintenance is stronger than perceptions of maintenance as a weakness (see Question #6).

15. Would improved park design and aesthetics be desirable? The response was also very strong in favor of improved park design and aesthetics, with 93% saying it would be desirable to varying degrees. 25% said improved maintenance would be “extremely desirable,” suggesting this is an essential upgrade. 36% said it would be “very desirable,” implying efforts should be made to improve park appearance, especially since these improvements would be relatively easy to make and low cost. Conversely, 32% said aesthetic improvements are “desirable,” but that “marginal emphasis makes sense”. Only 7% said it was “not desirable.” The responses indicate improving aesthetics is important, but perhaps a lower priority than other improvements. Harvard’s sensibility that “basic and serviceable” is the appropriate standard might explain the slightly lower level of support.

16. Would upgraded athletic facilities be desirable? Some background was provided for this questions to illustrate what benefits might result from upgraded athletic facilities. The response was very strong in favor of upgraded athletic facilities, with 96% saying it would be desirable to varying degrees. 26% said upgraded athletic facilities would be “extremely desirable,” suggesting these are essential upgrade. 33% said it would be “very desirable,” implying improved athletic facilities are justified. 37% said it is “desirable,” and that “reasonable upgrades” should be made. Only 4% said upgrades are “not desirable.” The level of support for upgraded athletic facilities is strong, but not as strong as some other potential improvements, such as an indoor recreation center. Given the strong representation by the volunteer youth athletic organizations, support for “upgraded athletic fields” seemed somewhat muted. Camiros interprets the responses as voicing support for “reasonable upgrades” but not “high end” improvements. Harvard’s sensibility for “basic and serviceable” could be a factor here.

17. Would a community-wide trail system be desirable? The audience all seemed to know what a “community-wide trail system is and what the benefits would be. Strong support for such a trail system was voiced, with 93% saying it would be desirable to varying degrees. 32% said the trail system would be “extremely desirable,” suggesting this is an essential upgrade. 25% said it would be “very desirable,” suggesting strong support for the trail system. 36% said it is “desirable,” and that “a basic system of trails makes sense.” Only 7% said a trail system is “not desirable/needed.” Given the wording of the response options, Camiros interprets support for a trail system as very strong. The highest response was for the “basic trail system” at 36%, which was slightly higher than “extremely desirable” at 32%. This suggests that the participants thought that a trail system was achievable as part of a system master plan that includes multiple upgrades.

18. What other enhancements are desirable? Two ideas were offered as other enhancements at the meeting, while two other suggestions came in from the project website. These suggestions were:

- a. Splash Pad/Spray Park (small scale water-oriented park)
- b. Community Gardens
- c. Dog Park (web comment)
- d. Neighborhood Basketball (web comment)

The format of the meeting did not allow for audience scoring of these ideas/suggestions, but there was no negative/opposing comments to these ideas. Camiros interprets each of these ideas as potentially viable and expressions of making the system more in tune with the times.

19. What is your preferred system enhancement? Participants were asked which of the enhancements previously discussed would be most beneficial to the community, irrespective of costs. Participants could only indicate a preference for their single most favored enhancement, rather than ranking them. The preferences of participants was remarkably clear, the “indoor recreation center” was the preferred choice, with 60% of all responses. “Upgraded athletic fields” and “improved design and aesthetics” tied for second most preferred enhancement with 16%. “Improved neighborhood parks” and a “community-wide trail system” were the least favored enhancements with 4% support each. The responses indicate a clear preference for the indoor recreation center, far outdistancing the other three options when cost is not a factor.

20. Given cost considerations, what is your preferred enhancement? This question relied on the respondents’ own sense of the cost implications of each potential enhancement and the feasibility of implementing enhancements. Within this context, the preferences for system enhancements shifted. The most preferred enhancement was still the “indoor recreation center,” but the level of support dropped to 44% from 60% when costs are considered. “Upgraded athletic fields” was the second most preferred enhancement, gaining support and increasing to 26% from 16%. “Improved design and aesthetics” gained modest increased support to 19%, up from 16%. “A community-wide trail system” gained increased support to 11%, up from 4%. “Upgraded neighborhood parks” decreased in support, declining to 0% from 4%. The responses indicate that the indoor recreation center is still the most preferred enhancement when costs are taken into consideration, but support for this facility declined by almost one third in the face of cost considerations. Other, more practical enhancements, such as upgraded athletic facilities and a community-wide trail system, gained in support, but still had much less support than the indoor recreation facility. While it is clear from the responses that the participants are concerned about costs, there may be a message that the continued preference for the indoor recreation facility indicates that the community may be willing to pay more for recreation facilities they really want.

III. DIRECTION FOR PARK SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

Camiros sees several clear themes resulting from the Visioning Workshop that help to give direction to the park system master plan, as expressed below:

- The community has clearly stated that the parks and recreation system is very important a good quality of life in Harvard and significant upgrading of the system is desired. The consensus opinion is that the current system does not meet the needs of the community and needs improvement.
- The participants in the Visioning Session, while likely containing a large contingent of people involved in the youth sports organizations, appear to reflect the prevailing attitudes of the Harvard citizenry, by and large. The responses to the questions posed were not overly skewed in favor of improvement of the parks used by these organizations, and also appeared to reflect the orientation for common sense solutions and practicality that are strongly reflected in Village governance.
- While the park and recreation system should be improved, there is no support for a “Cadillac” system. A “no frills” system that provides for the reasonable recreation needs of the community will satisfy the community.
- An indoor recreation center is clearly desirable, and would represent the focal point of the system. Some basic level of financial feasibility should be performed as part of the master plan to determine if a “no frills” indoor recreation facility is a possibility.
- Two programmatic enhancements also were points of consensus: 1) improved maintenance; and 2) improved design and aesthetics. These enhancements would improve each park in the system, making them more useable and more enjoyable.
- A large majority of participants (79%) thought the parks system had not kept pace with the times. While this question did not translate directly into a consensus for specific enhancements, the master plan would be remiss if it did not propose improvements that responded to current needs/desires.
- There was no sentiment expressed for major new facilities, other than the indoor recreation center. This would suggest that no new parks are needed, although this does not preclude additional land purchases to augment existing parks if an advantageous opportunity arises.
- Somewhat mixed signals were given for upgrading neighborhood parks. There was a slight preference given to improving the larger, community-level parks. Nonetheless, if the programmatic enhancements of improved maintenance, design and aesthetics were applied to the neighborhood parks, they would be significantly upgraded. Also, making strategic facility improvements to some of the neighborhood parks should not be ruled out based on the responses received.
- A key “additional strength” was offered during the discussion of the existing park system, which was **volunteerism**. This was interpreted to mean that volunteerism is

a strength of the community, not specifically limited to the volunteer youth sports organizations. This could be an important concept for bridging the community's desire for upgraded parks and recreation, and funding constraints.

- A second “additional strength” named was the School District, implying that the recreational assets of the district could be better leveraged to serve the entire community if a stronger cooperative relationship were developed between the City and the District.

While the general themes expressed in the Visioning Workshop need to be translated into specific improvements in order to assess the extent to which they influence the master plan, it appears that the improvement needs exceed the financial capacity of the City to make them. Even if a future referendum extending the current pool levy is supported by voters, it seems clear that this level of funding will not be sufficient to make all the improvements needed to create a “no frills park system” that meets the needs of the community. Reconciling this dilemma will be a major challenge of the upcoming Framework Plan.

CITY OF HARVARD PARK SYSTEM MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY MEETING SEPTEMBER, 2015

PARK SYSTEM VISIONING WORKSHOP



Introduction

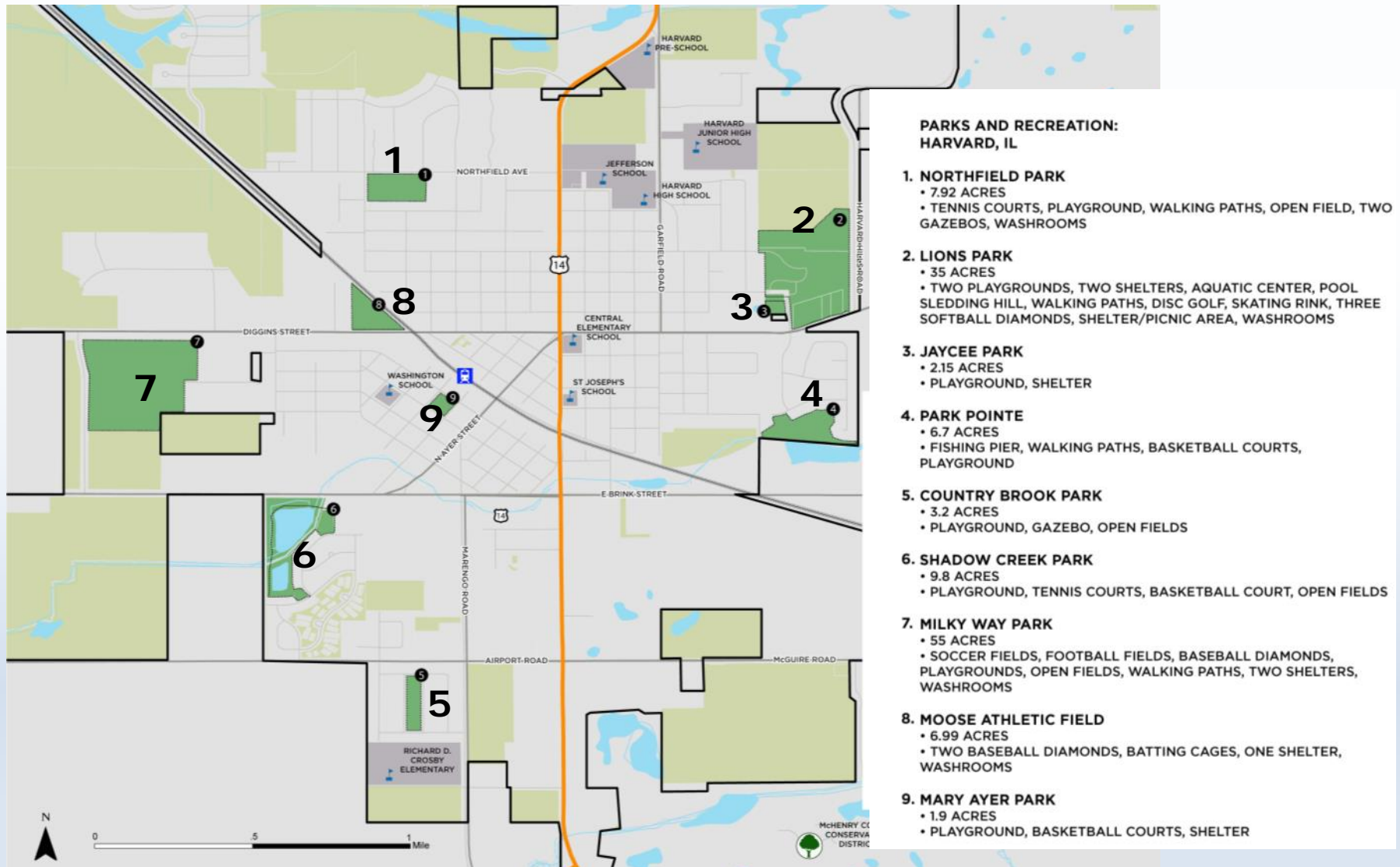
Park System Visioning Workshop:

an interactive discussion about Harvard's current park and recreation system and what people want it to be in the future. This meeting is a key component of the public involvement program designed to bring public input into the planning process.

Workshop Agenda:

- Introduction
- Background
- Parks Budget
- Discussion of Current System
- Discussion of System Enhancements
- Summary; what we learned
- Next steps in the process

Background; System Map



Background; Current Facilities

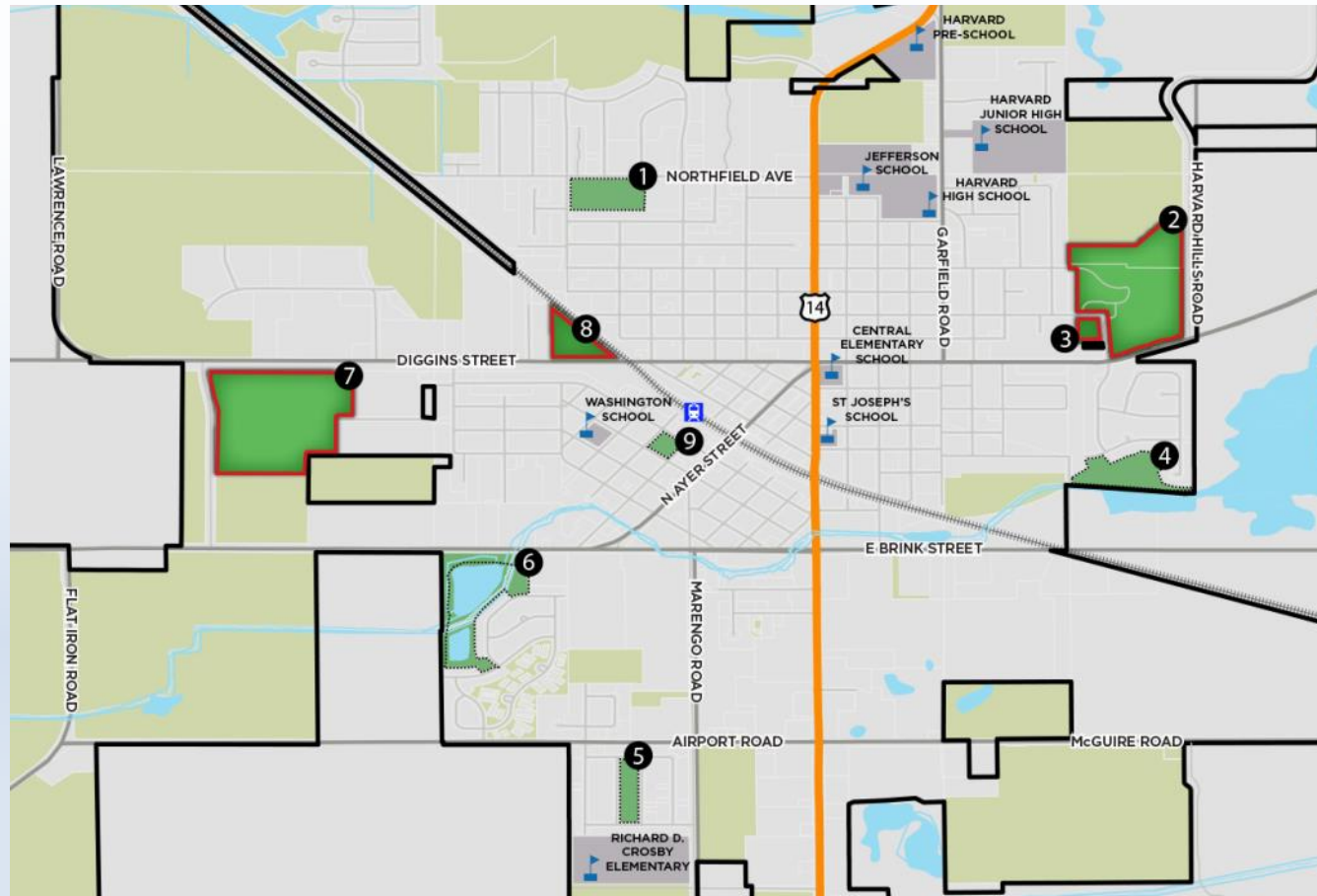
Reviewing the current parks and recreation system is essential to an informed discussion about the future system.

EXISTING FACILITIES INVENTORY

FACILITIES/ACTIVITIES																								
PARKS	Acres	Baseball/Softball	Basketball (outdoors)	Batting Cages	Disc Golf	Dog Park	Fishing Pier	Football	Gazebo	Ice Skating Rink	Indoor Recreation	Natural Areas	Open Field	Parking Lot	Playground	Ponds/Water	Pool	Shelters/Picnic Area	Sledding Hill	Skatepark	Soccer	Tennis	Volleyball	Walking Path
NORTHFIELD PARK	7.92								X				X	X	X							X		X
LIONS PARK	35.00	X			X					X				X			X	X	X					X
JAYCEE PARK	2.15																	X						
PARK POINTE	6.70		X				X					X		X		X								X
COUNTRY BROOK PARK	3.20								X				X											
SHADOW CREEK PARK	9.80		X									X	X	X		X						X		
MILKY WAY PARK	55.00	X						X					X	X				X			X			X
MOOSE ATHLETIC FIELD	6.99	X		X										X				X						
MARY AYER PARK	1.90		X															X						

Background; Land Area

- Total park area in system: 128.66 acres
- Land in park area = 12.2 acres per 1,000 residents
- Exceeds former standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents
- Significant undeveloped land exists for new facilities



Background; Park Photos



Parks Budget; Park District vs City Department

- Communities can fund parks and recreation services through a ***park district***, which is separate unit of government, or through a municipal service as a ***city department***.
- Neighboring Park District per capita budgets:
 - Crystal Lake ~ \$125.00
- Neighboring communities providing municipal park services, per capita budgets:
 - Woodstock ~ \$180.00
 - McHenry ~ \$70.00
- Harvard has a municipal Parks and Recreation Department; its 2015 budget equals ~ \$15.00 per capita

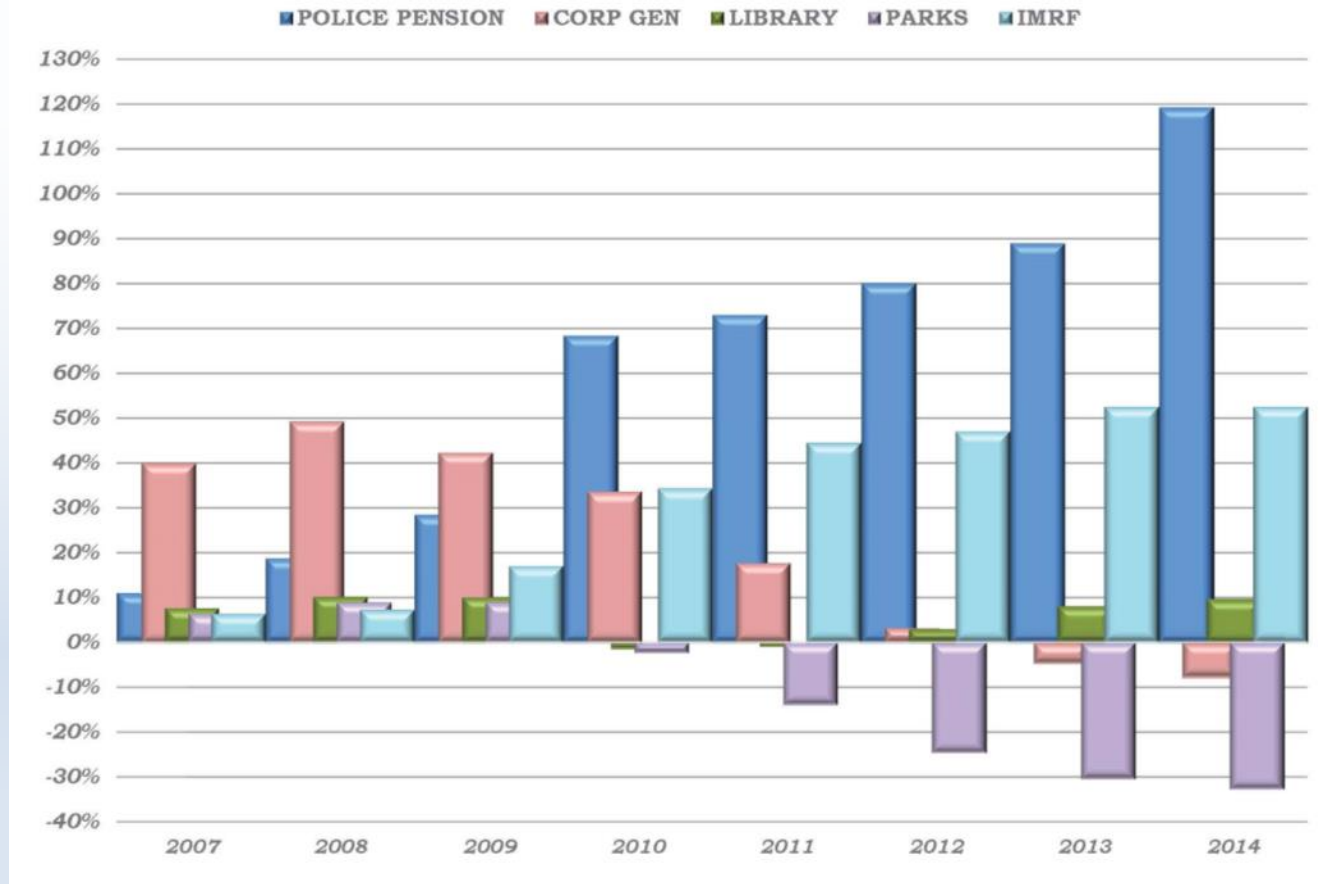
Parks Budget; Harvard's Parks Budget

Harvard's budget for its Parks and Recreation Department, while always small compared to other communities, has declined significantly in recent years.

Title	Actual 11	Actual 12	Actual 13	Actual 14	Budget 15	10/31/2014	50.00%	Budget 16
* REAL ESTATE TAX	\$ 30,491.07	\$34,945.97	\$38,816.82	\$41,002.97	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 37,151.17	94.70%	\$ 38,150.00
* PAYMENTS	\$ 26,471.07	\$26,309.00	\$25,166.00	\$22,221.00	\$ 22,200.00	\$ 22,221.00	100.09%	\$ 22,200.00
transfer out			\$13,389.00	\$7,500.00	\$ 17,000.00	\$ 8,500.00	50.00%	\$ 15,950.00
				\$29,721.00	\$ 39,200.00	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -
PARKS								
* REAL ESTATE	\$ 108,609.89	\$97,373.67	\$85,640.83	\$76,883.88	\$ 73,500.00	\$ 70,456.70	95.86%	\$ 71,500.00
* BUILDING PERMITS	\$ 1,657.43	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$811.20		\$ -		
* GRANTS		\$195,781.55	\$0.00			\$ 7,500.00		
* CONCESSIONS STAND		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -
* DONATIONS		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 125.00	12.50%	\$ 1,000.00
* INTEREST	\$ 591.89	\$277.19	\$293.39	\$425.76		\$ 168.20		\$ 250.00
* MISCELLANEOUS/milk day reim.	\$ 1,569.58	\$4,500.00	\$325,884.51	\$1,337.50	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,076.57	41.53%	\$ 2,500.00
* TRANSFER IN from NISRA & Corp gen		\$0.00	\$ 13,389.00	\$ 14,402.00	\$ 23,300.00	\$ 12,400.00	53.22%	\$ 23,750.00
* RENT VERIZON	\$ 24,660.00	\$27,583.40	\$19,669.05			\$ -		
* PARK RENTALS	\$ 1,670.00	\$2,190.00	\$2,910.00	\$2,225.00	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 1,900.00	73.08%	\$ 2,200.00
* PARK PROGRAMS		\$9,019.00	\$6,462.00	\$5,718.50	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 1,193.00	15.91%	\$ 10,000.00
* CASH ON HAND		\$0.00			\$ 32,300.00	\$ -	0.00%	
TOTAL	\$138,758.79	\$336,724.81	\$454,248.78	\$105,803.84	\$145,700.00	\$95,819.47	65.76%	\$ 111,200.00

Parks Budget; Harvard's Dilemma

Harvard's municipal budget is subject to mandatory contributions to pensions and other required spending while its overall property tax levy is capped by State statute, creating a dilemma that necessitated reduced spending on discretionary services, such as parks and recreation.



Parks Budget; Options

Harvard has few options to increase funding for its Parks and Recreation Dept.

- **Continue Pool Levy:** One option is to continue the property tax levy currently in place to retire the bonds, which were issued to fund the building of the pool. This tax levy currently generates ~ \$150,000.00 per year. Those bonds will be paid off in 2-3 years, and with voter approval, could be continued to fund parks and recreation services.
- **Harvard Parks Foundation:** This nonprofit organization has recently been formed to help improve the quality of park facilities and services. The organization may be able to raise funds more effectively as a nonprofit organization than the City can. Whether the Harvard Parks Foundation will be able to add substantive benefits to the system is unknown. It may be that the grant funding it receives will be limited and for special purposes.

Warm up!

Who's your favorite "Parks and Recreation" character?



1. Leslie



2. Ron



3. Li'l Sebastian



4. Never seen it!

Current Parks System

Reviewing the current parks and recreation system is essential to an informed discussion about the future system.

The City's Parks Committee recently completed a SWOT analysis of the systems strengths and weaknesses. Please add your opinion by responding to the following questions.



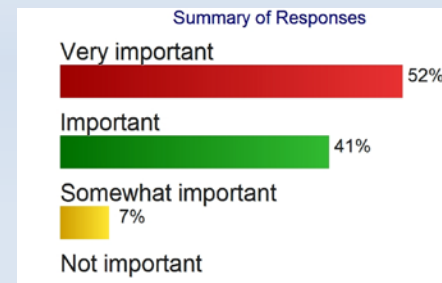
Current Park System: Importance to Community

- Different people utilize park and recreation services to different degrees.
- Some people believe park and recreation is very important to the community while others do not.



Please rank the importance of the parks system to quality of life based on the scale, below:

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not important



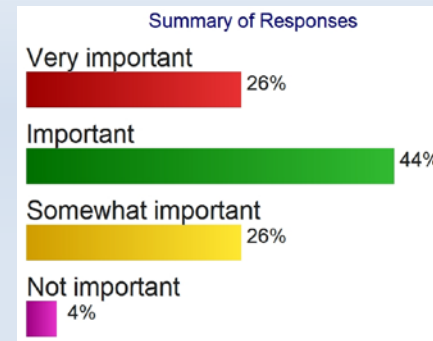
Current Park System Strengths: Pool Facility

- Harvard has a quality pool facility, unlike many communities its size.
- Pool facility represents a major capital cost, and is almost paid for.



Please rank the pool based on the scale, below:

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not important



Current Park System Strengths:

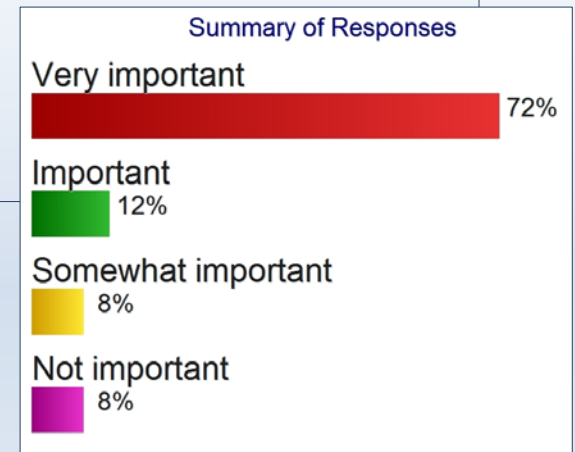
Volunteer Sports Organizations

- The volunteer groups that run the sports leagues represent a major asset.
- They not only organize participation, they help maintain the park facilities.
- These groups also make improvements to park facilities.
- These groups conduct successful fund raising to support their leagues, which is an important source of funds.



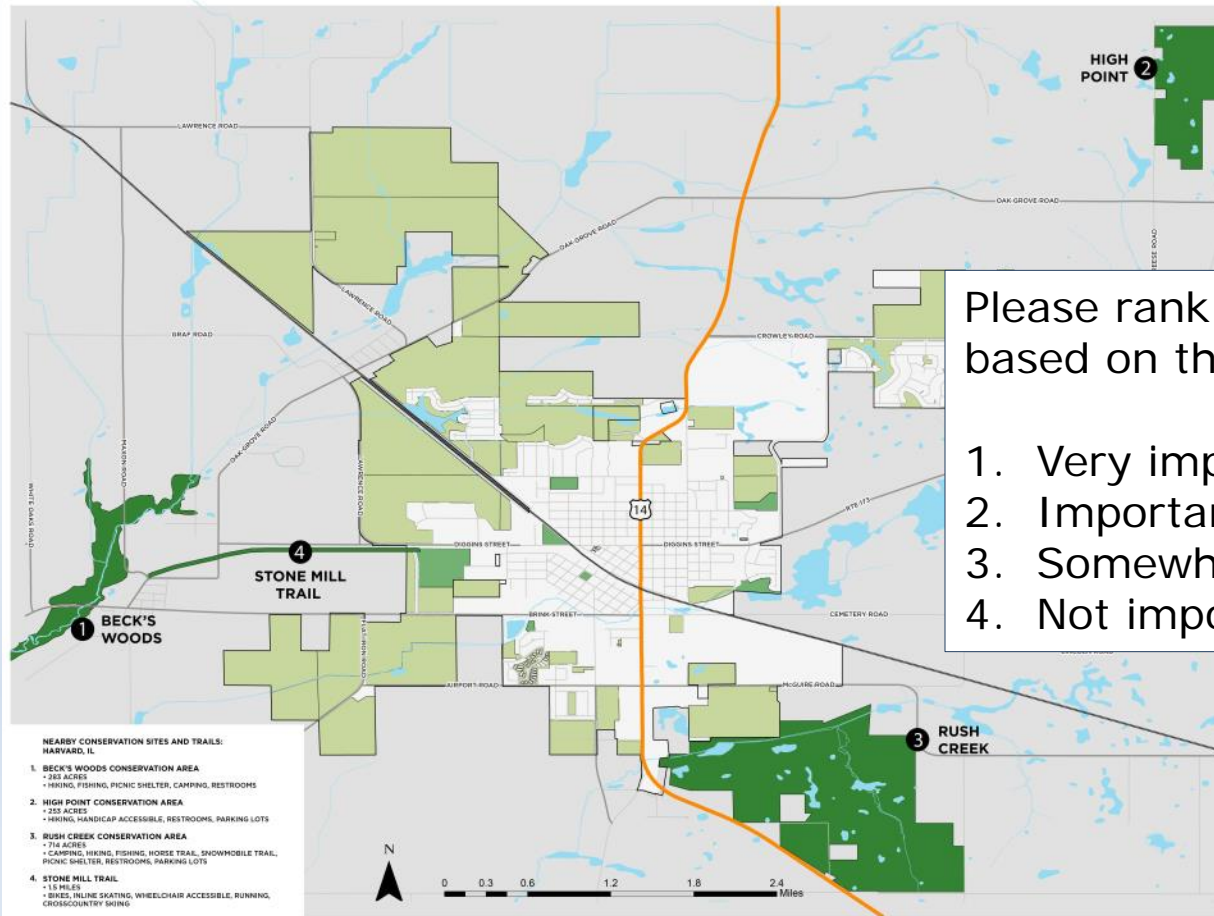
Please rank these volunteer organizations based on the scale, below:

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not important



Current Park System Strength: Nearby McHenry County Facilities

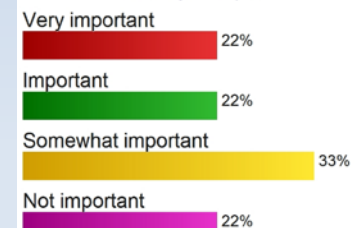
- Facilities operated by McHenry County augment Harvard's parks system.



Please rank the County facilities based on the scale, below:

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not important

Summary of Responses



Current Park System Strengths:

Other Strengths

What other features, assets or program activities do you think are strengths of the system? (responses of attendees)

- Volunteerism is a strength of Harvard as a community, which could be used to improve the park system
- The School District is an asset in terms of its recreation facilities, which might be made more accessible to the general public if a stronger cooperative relationship were forged with the district.

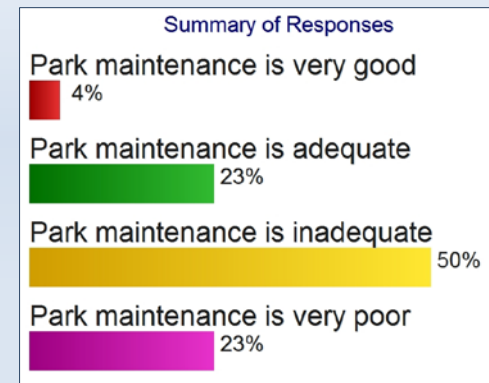
Current Park System Weaknesses: Maintenance

- Current level of maintenance compromises the use of certain facilities.
- Reflects poorly on the parks system, but also the community as a whole.



Please rank the overall quality of park maintenance based on the scale, below:

1. Park maintenance is very good
2. Park maintenance is adequate
3. Park maintenance is inadequate
4. Park maintenance is very poor



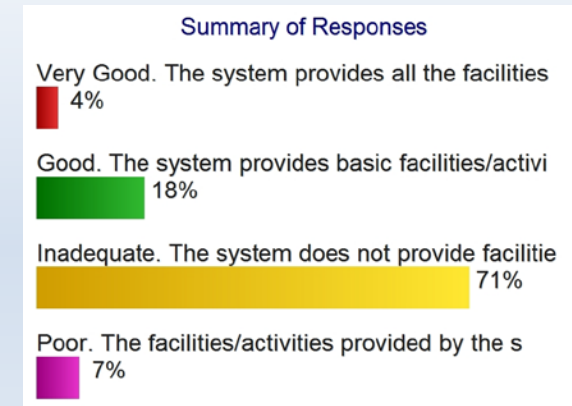
Current Park System Weaknesses:

Facilities and Activities Offered

- Current system is very basic; consists only of the bare necessities.
- Some basic facilities/activities are not provided.
- There are little or no indoor recreation facilities.

Please rank the overall adequacy of park facilities and activities based on the scale, below:

1. Very Good. The system provides all the facilities/activities my family wants
2. Good. The system provides basic facilities/activities
3. Inadequate. The system does not provide facilities/activities on par with other communities
4. Poor. The facilities/activities provided by the system is very poor and negatively affects the quality of life in Harvard



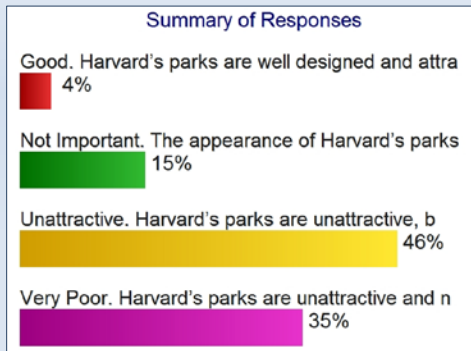
Current Park System Weaknesses:

Poor Design and Appearance

- Little consideration for the arrangement of improvements within the parks.
- The aesthetic quality of the parks is very poor.
- Budget constraints not solely responsible.
- Absence of concern for design and appearance is not cost efficiency.



A well designed, attractive park



Please rank the design and appearance of Harvard's parks based on the scale, below:

1. Good. Harvard's parks are well designed and attractive.
2. Not Important. The appearance of Harvard's parks is not very important.
3. Unattractive. Harvard's parks are unattractive, but this does not impact the community's image.
4. Very Poor. Harvard's parks are unattractive and negatively affect the community's image.

Current Park System Weaknesses:

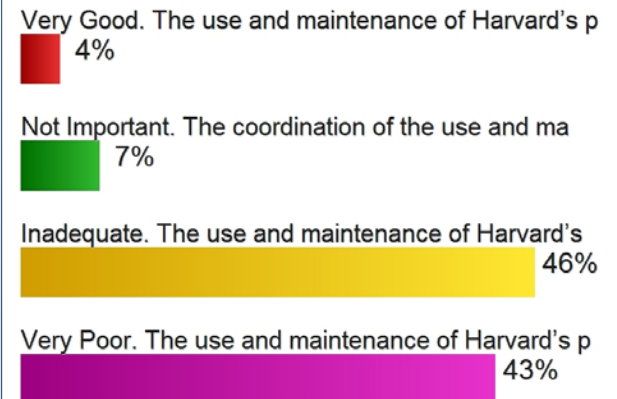
Poor Coordination

- Poor coordination and communication exists between the City and volunteer groups.
- Poor coordination results in less effective maintenance.
- Also results in the absence of effective teamwork.

Please rank the coordination of Harvard's parks and activities based on the scale, below:

1. Very Good. The use and maintenance of Harvard's parks are very well coordinated with the various user groups.
2. Not Important. The coordination of the use and maintenance of Harvard's parks is not very important.
3. Inadequate. The use and maintenance of Harvard's parks are poorly coordinated with the various user groups.
4. Very Poor. The use and maintenance of Harvard's parks are poorly coordinated with the various user groups, and this has a negative effect on the use of the parks.

Summary of Responses



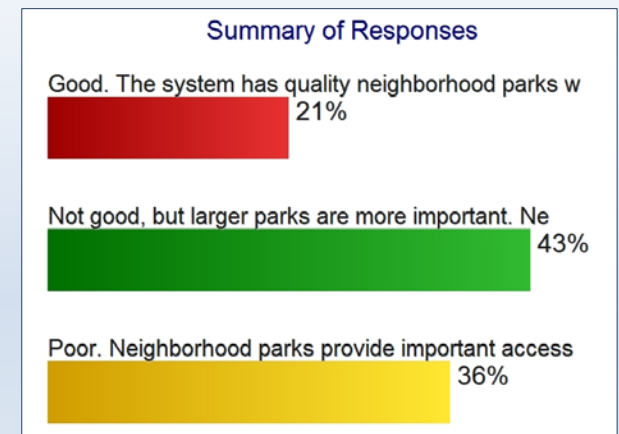
Current Park System Weaknesses:

Neighborhood Parks

- Current system over-emphasizes the larger system parks.
- Neighborhood parks are needed for impromptu recreation and passive use.
- Over-emphasis on larger system parks decreases accessibility to parks and activities.
- Improved maintenance and facilities are needed to make neighborhood parks usable.

Please rank the usability of Harvard's neighborhood parks based on the scale, below:

1. Good. The system has quality neighborhood parks within a short walk of each neighborhood in the City.
2. Not good, but larger parks are more important. Neighborhood parks are neither conveniently located nor of good quality, but the larger community parks make up for this.
3. Poor. Neighborhood parks provide important access to recreation and the lack of quality neighborhood parks means that a portion of the community's recreation needs are not being met.



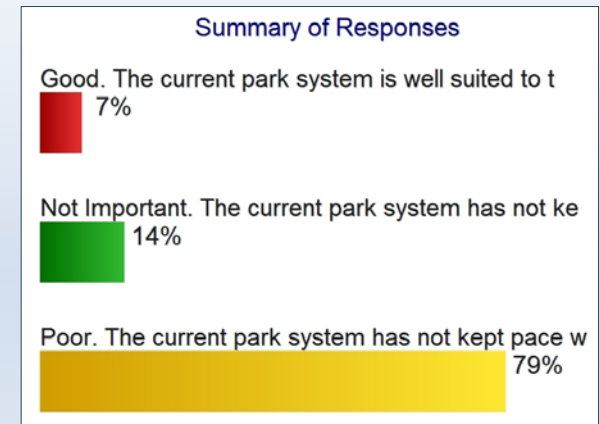
Current Park System Weaknesses:

Not Changing with the Times

- Current system is much like it was 40 years ago.
- Activities focused on sports leagues.
- System has not changed to reflect current demographics.
- System focused on youth recreation; little recreation for adults.
- No adaptation to reflect social/demographic changes.

Please rank how well the system has kept pace with the times based on the scale, below:

1. Good. The current park system is well suited to the current times
2. Not Important. The current park system has not kept pace with the time, but this is not problematic and updating is not crucial.
3. Poor. The current park system has not kept pace with the times and the new Park System Master Plan should incorporate proposals for updating.



Future Park System Enhancements

The discussion will now focus on what you want Harvard's future park system to be, presenting potential enhancements to the system for discussion. A range of enhancements will be presented, some being modest while others are more significant. In this discussion, please do not consider the cost of the enhancements in your responses and presume that all of the enhancements could be made within the current cost/tax framework.

Future Park System Enhancements:

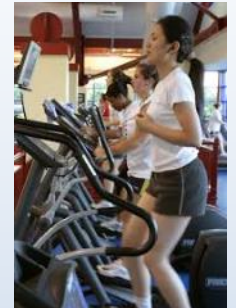
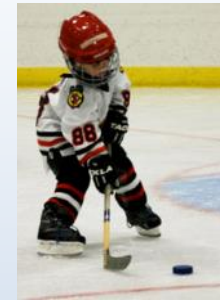
An Indoor Recreation Center

One of the most significant potential enhancements to the Harvard park system would be the addition of an indoor recreation facility and community center. Such a facility could host a wide range of recreation and social activities, depending on community needs and preferences. These could include:

- Indoor basketball, volleyball and other hard court sports
- Indoor swimming and diving
- Indoor tennis and racquetball
- Weight lifting, fitness, aerobics and pilates
- A game room for cards, darts and other social games
- Indoor ice skating

Future Park System Enhancements: An Indoor Recreation Center

Some images of similar facilities in other communities are shown below.



SEPTEMBER 15, 2015

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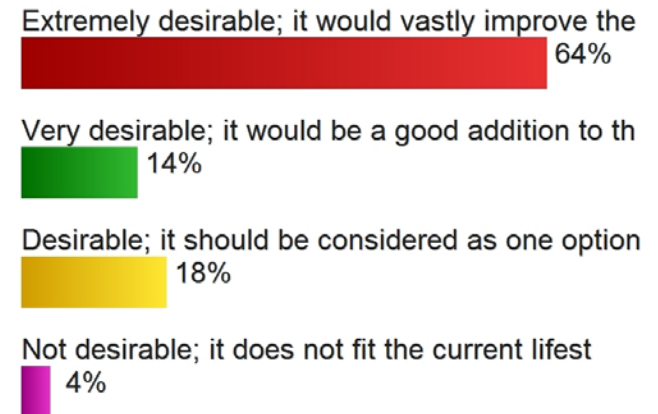
Future Park System Enhancements:

An Indoor Recreation Center

Please rank how desirable this kind of indoor recreation center would be based on the scale, below:

1. Extremely desirable; it would vastly improve the quality of life in Harvard and help attract new residents.
2. Very desirable; it would be a good addition to the community.
3. Desirable; it should be considered as one option to upgrade recreation in Harvard.
4. Not desirable; it does not fit the current lifestyle in Harvard and represents too much change.

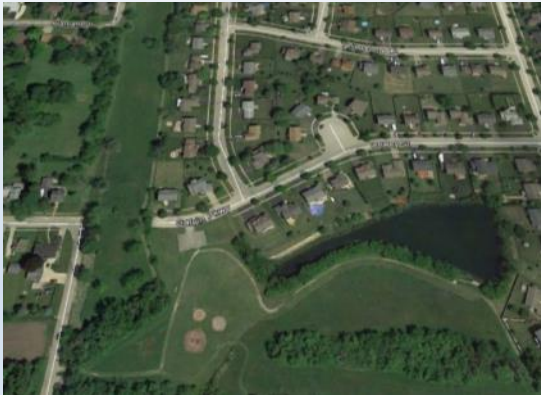
Summary of Responses



Future Park System Enhancements:

Upgrading Neighborhood Parks

The Harvard park system has adequate land area, including sizable neighborhood parks. However, the facilities and improvements within the neighborhood parks are minimal. Significant upgrades to these existing neighborhood parks could be a component of overall system enhancement.



Park Pointe



Shadow Creek



Northfield Park

Future Park System Enhancements:

Upgrading Neighborhood Parks

Upgrades to the neighborhood parks could include the following:



Natural areas



Better use of and access to water



Quality basketball and tennis courts



Lawn games like
Horseshoes



Improved picnic
and shelter areas



Playgrounds



Trails and running tracks

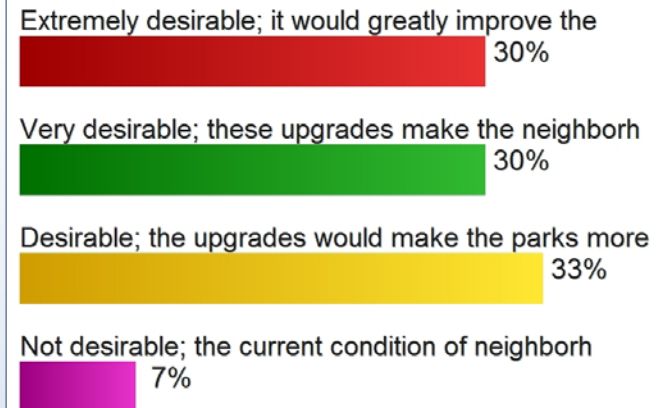
Future Park System Enhancements:

Upgrading Neighborhood Parks

Please rank how desirable upgrading neighborhood parks would be based on the scale, below:

1. Extremely desirable; it would greatly improve the quality Harvard's neighborhoods.
2. Very desirable; these upgrades make the neighborhood parks assets.
3. Desirable; the upgrades would make the parks more usable.
4. Not desirable; the current condition of neighborhood parks is acceptable and such upgrades would create too much activity.

Summary of Responses



Future Park System Enhancements:

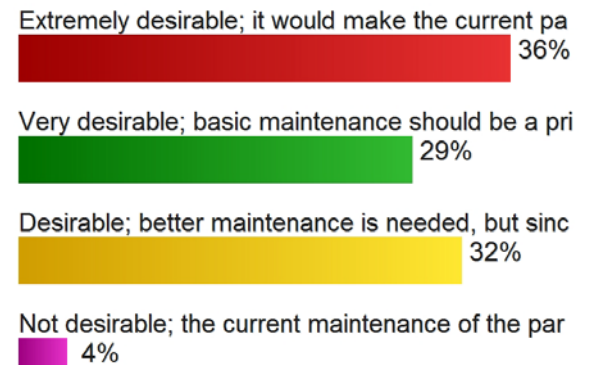
Improved Maintenance

The current level of maintenance of the parks and facilities is considered by many to be a critical shortcoming. Improved maintenance would include: a) more frequent grass cutting; b) better lawn care; c) better maintenance of buildings/structures; d) better grooming of athletic fields; and e) better maintenance of parking lots and paved surfaces.

Please rank how desirable improving maintenance of the parks would be based on the scale, below:

1. Extremely desirable; it would make the current park facilities fully useable, which they are not now.
2. Very desirable; basic maintenance should be a priority.
3. Desirable; better maintenance is needed, but since the current system is inferior, this will produce only marginal benefits.
4. Not desirable; the current maintenance of the parks is acceptable.

Summary of Responses



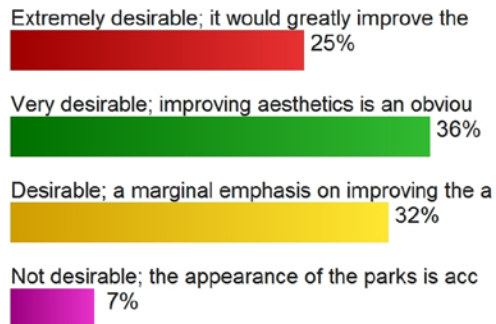
Future Park System Enhancements:

Improved Aesthetics

Most people interviewed agreed that the current parks are not well designed and are not visually attractive. Upgrading the aesthetics of the existing park facilities to make them more inviting and to improve the park experience is very achievable.



Summary of Responses



Please rank how desirable improving the appearance/aesthetics of the parks would be based on the scale, below:

1. Extremely desirable; it would greatly improve the level of satisfaction and significantly upgrade Harvard's image.
2. Very desirable; improving aesthetics is an obvious upgrade that is relatively easy to accomplish.
3. Desirable; a marginal emphasis on improving the appearance of parks makes sense.
4. Not desirable; the appearance of the parks is acceptable.

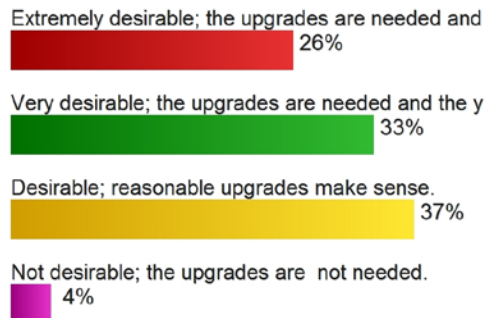
Future Park System Enhancements:

Improved Athletic Facilities

Harvard has a strong reputation for its youth athletic programs. Upgrading the athletic facilities to be on par with the programs is an option. The indoor recreation facility could include indoor practice facilities. Other improvements could include upgraded turf/playing fields, better signage, better parking, concessions facilities, improved restrooms and spectator amenities.



Summary of Responses



Please rank how desirable upgrading the system's athletic facilities would be based on the scale, below:

1. Extremely desirable; the upgrades are needed and they would help make Harvard recognized for its youth programs.
2. Very desirable; the upgrades are needed and the youth athletic organizations deserve this support.
3. Desirable; reasonable upgrades make sense.
4. Not desirable; the upgrades are not needed.

Future Park System Enhancements:

Community-Wide Trail System

A system enhancement that would serve all residents is a community-wide walking/biking system. Such a system would link all the major facilities/destinations together including parks, schools, the downtown area and other places of interest. The system would also connect to nearby regional trails and could extend to County conservation areas.



Summary of Responses

Extremely desirable; such as system would help un



Very desirable; such a system represents a core c



Desirable; a basic system of trail makes sense.



Not desirable; Harvard is a small community and p



Please rank how desirable a community-wide trail system would be based on the scale, below:

1. Extremely desirable; such as system would help unify the community and make Harvard's amenities more accessible to all.
2. Very desirable; such a system represents a core component of recreation and non-motorized transportation.
3. Desirable; a basic system of trail makes sense.
4. Not desirable; Harvard is a small community and people can use city streets to access parks and other facilities.

Future Park System Enhancements:

Other Enhancements

This strategic planning process should consider all reasonable enhancements to the system. Are there other types of enhancements you'd like to see that we have not suggested? (public comments)

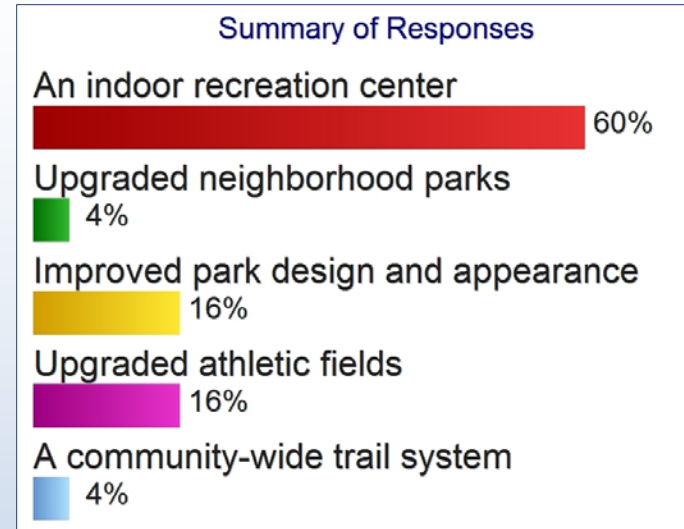
- Splash Pad/Spray Park
- Dog Park (meeting and website comments)
- Community Gardens

Future Park System Enhancements:

Preferred Enhancement

Irrespective of costs, which of the system enhancements presented do you think will be most beneficial to Harvard's parks and recreation system?

1. An indoor recreation center
2. Upgraded neighborhood parks
3. Improved park design and appearance
4. Upgraded athletic fields
5. A community-wide trail system

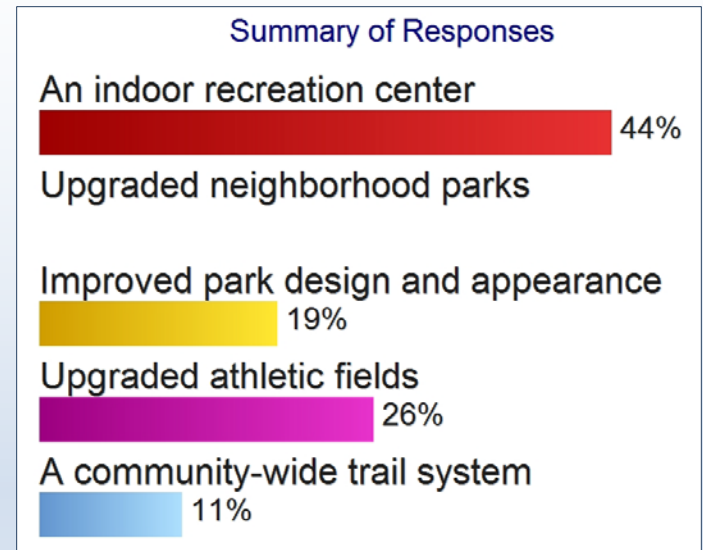


Future Park System Enhancements:

Most Cost-Efficient Enhancement

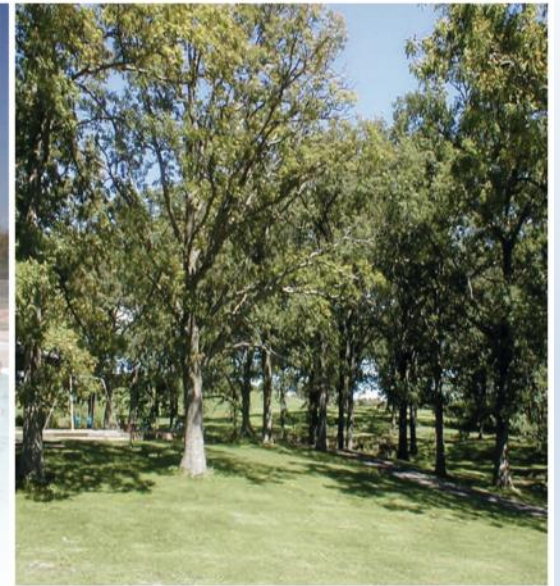
Considering the cost associated with each enhancement, which of the system enhancements presented do you think would provide the most cost-efficient benefits to Harvard's parks and recreation system?

1. An indoor recreation center
2. Upgraded neighborhood parks
3. Improved park design and appearance
4. Upgraded athletic fields
5. A community-wide trail system



Summary

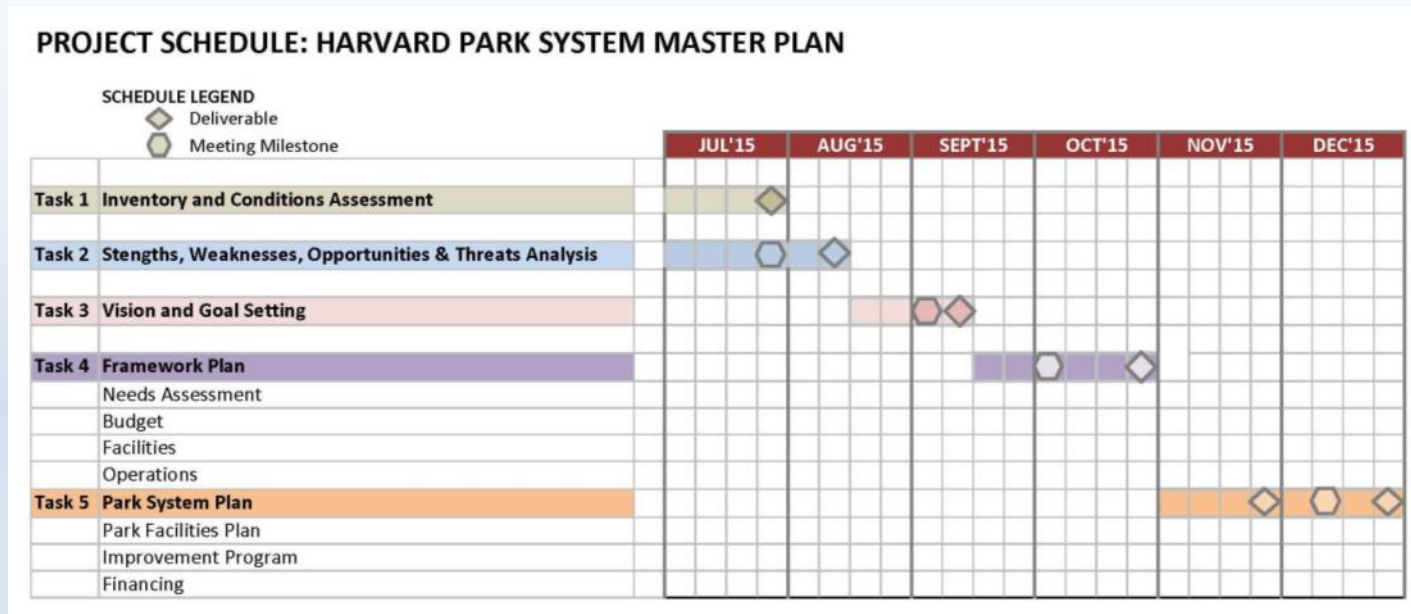
It is important to make sure we understand all of the input, so let's take a moment to review the major points of consensus voiced at this visioning workshop.



Next Steps

Please stay involved in the park system planning process. Follow the progress of the plan at harvardparksplan.com and offer additional suggestions. The key next steps in the process are:

- Creating a Framework Plan that outlines the basic direction of the Harvard park and recreation system.
- Formulating a full Park System Plan that proposes facility upgrades, a schedule of improvements and a financing plan.



Thank you!

