



CITY OF WICHITA

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING
PROCESS

OTHER MUNICIPALITIES FOCUS GROUP
MAY 17TH, 2007

Representatives of many of the smaller communities around Wichita met on the morning of May 17th to discuss regional parkland provision. The focus group included representatives from Andover, Bel Aire, Colwich, Derby, Haysville, Kechi, and Maize. Participants noted many park and recreation issues in common, among them:

- Lack of planning/consideration for the preservation of open space
- Lack of control over development
- Lack of imagination around what constitutes parks
- Lack of funding
- Maintenance and vandalism

Participants in the focus group noted that the smaller communities look to Wichita to set the standard, on policies such as land dedication requirements. Participants also emphasized the need for a regional approach to parks and recreation, and saw a coordinated master plan as a major component of this approach. The regional approach might also include:

- A county-wide park and recreation department, or coordinating role (Johnson County and Wyandotte County examples)
- The city or county as a coordinator of recreation services for the region
- Resource-sharing across county communities
- A coordinated effort to implement impact fees, dedication requirements, density bonuses, or other alternative mechanisms for parkland development
- A connected regional system of trails, including multi-use trails and a water trail
- Regional maintenance, such as contracting with other cities on park maintenance, or regional equipment sharing
- Regional purchasing, such as for site furnishings, to get competitive pricing
- A countywide parks funding mechanism, such as a mill levy for parks countywide that could be shared by all communities
- A regional consortium that regularly meets to discuss park and recreation issues