

Section X

Findings and Recommendations

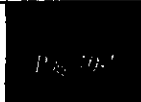
Summary of Major Findings

The following are major findings regarding key issues impacting the Open Space Plan. The findings are grouped into critical subject issues researched for the Parks and Open Space Plan. Details of findings are contained in the appropriate Sections.

Usage and Satisfaction with the Parks and Recreation System

Findings

- F1. Derby citizens use the current Parks and Recreation system extensively.** 73% of the survey respondents have visited a park within the past 12 month. Garrett Park is the most visited park in the current system.
- F2. The Derby Recreation Center is the most commonly used recreation facility by Derby residents.** The Recreation Center is used by (63%) of Derby residents, far more than any other individual facility.
- F3. Derby citizens in public meetings and through the citizen survey rate the programs of the Derby Recreation Commission very highly.** 75% of citizens feel the programs are either "excellent" (30%) or "good" (45%). Less than 1% of citizens rate the programs as being "poor".
- F4. Generally, citizens felt the maintenance conditions of parks are good or OK.** The highest rated facilities were walking and biking trails and the Derby Senior Center. The facilities that citizens felt needed most improvements were restrooms and shelters/pavilions. 68% of citizens rated the maintenance conditions of the city park nearest their home as "good"
- F5. Visual inspections of facilities on current parks indicate that horseshoe pits, playground equipment, basketball courts, t-ball fields, and football/soccer fields generally need the most repair -** Of these playground equipment, T-ball fields, soccer & football fields were all rated as priority importance for development by Derby citizens.

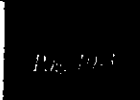


- F6. Visual inspections of facilities on current parks indicate that trails, baseball fields, picnic shelters, and softball fields were generally in the best conditions.** Of these baseball fields, softball fields, and trails were all rated of priority importance for development by Derby citizens.
- F7. The general public has generally not been actively involved in the decision making processes for parks and recreation services.** Planning and decisions regarding new programs and facilities are generally driven by boards, staff, special interest groups, and committees. While these are all essential elements of the decision making process, broad based public input is also important.
- F8. The success or non-success of initiatives are generally measured through attendance.** Current measurement instruments for recreation programs rely on tracking attendance trends. While this information is useful, it is also important to understand other aspects of customer interest, such as satisfaction with current programs, factors driving usage, key programs to offer, etc.

Current Parks & Recreation Facilities/Priority Improvements

Findings

- F9.** An outdoor pool or aquatic center, baseball fields, and soccer fields are the three active recreation facilities that survey respondents indicated should receive the highest priority for improvements over the next 10 years. In the aforementioned order, citizen respondents in the survey indicated that these facilities were the most important “active facilities” to improve over the next 10 years.
- F10.** Playground equipment, park restrooms, and parking spaces are the three passive parks and recreation facilities survey respondents indicated should receive the highest priority over the next 10 years. In the aforementioned order, citizen respondents in the survey indicated that these facilities were the most important “passive recreational facilities” to improve over the next 10 years.
- F11.** The majority of parks in Derby are under 5 acres in size. The size of parks in Derby is generally smaller than is found in other communities. While providing open space near to residential neighborhoods is very beneficial, such smaller parks are more costly to maintain, harder to program, and generally have less usage.
- F12.** Derby has generally sufficient acreage for mini-parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks. For each of these 3 categories, Derby meets the minimum standards for park acreage. Parks are classified as follows:
- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Mini-Parks -</i> | Duck Creek, Phillips Burr Oaks, Triangle, Zillinger, and Ward Clements |
| <i>Neighborhood Parks -</i> | Woodlawn, Hand, Riley, Tanglewood, Crane, and English Parks |
| <i>Community Parks-</i> | Garrett, Municipal Pool, and High Park |
- F13.** Derby does not have sufficient acreage for a the park category of “metropolitan park.”
- Derby does not have any metropolitan parks 200 acres or larger.



F14. Usage of School District recreation facilities is extremely important to the providence of recreation services to Derby citizens:

Not counting school facilities, the City of Derby would be currently deficient according to National Parks and Recreation Standards in the following types of parks and facilities:

<u>Facility or Park</u>	<u>Current deficiency</u>
- Unlighted Baseball Fields	-3 fields
- Unlighted Softball Fields	-4 fields
- Soccer Fields	-1 field
- Tennis Courts	-9 courts
- Sand Volleyball	-1 court
- Metropolitan Parks	- 93 to 187 acres

Counting school facilities that are currently accessible for public use and programming, the City of Derby is currently deficient according to National Parks and Recreation Standards in the following types of parks and facilities:

<u>Facility or Park</u>	<u>Current Deficiency</u>
- Unlighted Softball Fields	-4 fields
- Sand Volleyball	-1 court
- Metropolitan Parks	- 93 to 187 acres

F15. While the Derby community has sufficient athletic fields by National Standards in many instances these facilities are scattered in groupings of 1-2 fields in various parks. Such a distribution of facilities adds costs to the programming of athletic leagues and reduces opportunities to host tournaments which can bring revenues into the Derby community.

F16. Derby citizens support both improving the current park and recreation system and for acquisition of new park land for new parks - At the same time improvements to the current system are a preferred priority by over 70% of respondents.

- F17. An overwhelming majority of citizens feel improvements to the parks and open space system are important** - Over 90% of Derby citizens feel that it is “very important” (44%) or “somewhat important” (47%) to improve the City of Derby’s parks, open space, and leisure facilities. Less than 10 percent feel it is “not important” (6%) or “don’t know” (3%)
- F18. While a strong majority of citizens favor development of new leisure facilities and parks, no particular project stands out as singularly important.** For example, at least two-thirds of the respondents were either “very” or “somewhat” supportive of facilities for senior citizens (75%), walking and biking trails (69%), multi-purpose athletic fields (69%), more youth athletic fields (67%), and more nature trails (66%).
- F19. While acreage for neighborhood and community parks is generally within standards, there are pockets of the community that are not covered through these types of parks** - Using National Parks and Recreation area delivery guidelines, there are pockets of the community that are not served by neighborhood parks and also some areas (particularly northern Derby) not served through community parks.
- F20. Capital improvements to the parks and recreation system should be multi-faceted** - While citizens expressed support for a number of passive and active recreational facilities, no single facility or park was favored for improvement by over 50% of the community. 49% of survey respondents rated an outdoor pool/aquatics center as one of their 3 most active recreational facilities to improve. 40% of survey respondents rated playground equipment for children as one of their 3 most passive recreational facilities to improve.

Partnerships and Citizen Attitudes Towards Partnering

- F21.** The vast majority of survey respondents favored partnering efforts with either or both the Derby Recreation Commission (91% supportive) and USD 260 School District (87% supportive). In both instances nearly 70% or more of respondents were "very supportive" of such partnering efforts.
- F22.** While cooperation among the City, Recreation Commission, and School District is good it could be improved - The organizations have done an excellent job in working together as evident by the high approval rating of citizens. At the same time, there are significant disconnects in the communication and decision making processes of the various organizations that hinder effective planning, management, and financing of the Parks and Open Space system. Two key examples:
- a) While the Recreation Commission may have input into the acquisition of parks and the development of parks, that input can sometimes not be sufficient for programming needs. Since the Recreation Commission is charged with the responsibility for public recreation programming of School District residents, this can greatly influence service delivery.
 - b) While the city has responsibility (along with the School District) for providing programming spaces, the City of Derby does not have adequate input into the types of programming being provided, the lengths and dates of schedules, what percent of program attendees are Derby residents, or other program factors. All can have significant influence on both the types and numbers of facilities built.
- F23.** Agreements with community organizations are often verbal and short term in nature. The Recreation Commission does not have adequate written agreements with sports organizations, governing their use of school facilities. Current verbal and written agreements allow teams to work directly with the school district on reserving practice fields. While this does not occur a great deal, it could cause problems in the long run.
- F24.** A major purpose for having a Recreation Commission is the advantage created through using both City and School District facilities for recreation programming. One of the primary reasons for having a Recreation Commission is to take advantage of parks and facilities operated by both the City and School District. Both bodies have input to the Recreation Commission Board by their appointees..

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F25. To not count School District facilities as components of the Derby system would be running contrary to core purposes for the Recreation Commission. - Counting only City facilities as components of the public parks and recreation system runs contrary to a chief benefit of a Recreation Commission.

F26. Neither the Recreation Commission nor the City of Derby have sufficient input or influence on major decisions (by the other organization) which affect their operations and more importantly service to citizens. The acquisition of open space and the design of recreation facilities (both areas of City decision making) have great influence on the ability of the Recreation Commission to provide programs, both as relates to quantity and quality. Throughout the process, concerns have been expressed regarding the level of input and influence representatives from the Recreation Commission have on these decisions.

At the same time, numerous aspects of developing, managing, and funding recreation programs have a tremendous influence on the City, particularly the capital development of facilities and their maintenance. The types of recreation programs that are offered, expansion into new seasons or leagues, the lengths of time for baseball, softball, and soccer games, dates programs are offered, and registration open to both Derby and non-Derby residents can drive the need for new facilities. Again, throughout the process, concerns have been expressed regarding the level of input and influence the City has in the process.

F27. Consideration should be given to moving the Park Division from the Department of Community Services. While having park operations within Community Services or Public Works Department was once common, it is no longer the norm. Such placement does not allow park operations an adequate platform to work in partnership with community groups and other providers. Recruitment of professional staff to such operations is more difficult.

F28. The role of the park board is important but largely advisory. Members of the park board are dedicated to the community and spend a great deal of volunteer time assisting the city in considering issues relating to the acquisition of park land and other parks operations. Their recommendations are advisory in nature, which is sometimes frustrating to members of the board. There is no clear linkage between their responsibilities and activities of the Recreation Commission.

Potential Locations for Open Space, Parks & Recreation Facilities

- F29. Derby residents are willing to drive 4 miles or more to participate in recreation or leisure activities.** Over ½ (51%) of survey respondents were willing to drive a minimum of 6 miles to participate in recreation or leisure activities. 73% were willing to drive a minimum of 4 miles or more.
- F30. Trails are considered important to Derby residents.** Most (83%) respondents in the citizen survey indicated that the development of walking or biking trails would be either “very” (54%) or “somewhat” (29%) important. Another 81% considered the development of trails that connect Derby parks and neighborhoods to be either “very” (53%) or “somewhat” (28%) important. Three-fourths (71%) of the respondents considered walking and biking trails to be one of the two most important types of trails to develop.
- F31. The City of Derby has tremendous opportunities to create a linked trail system throughout the community connecting many parks.** Excellent opportunities exist to create a high value trail system, running east/west and north/south through Derby. The trail system can connect major parks, such as High Park and Garrett Park, and also create a linkage to an envisioned riverfront park.
- F32. Opportunities to develop a multi purpose municipal park exist in Derby -** The City of Derby has opportunities to develop a municipal park to be used for both active and passive uses. As an example, open space both immediately north and parcels of land to the south of High Park would be excellent locations. Open space in both areas could link into a developing trail system.
- F33. Opportunities exist to develop a riverfront park along the Arkansas River -** Opportunities to develop a riverfront park along the southwest portions of Derby exist. Again, this park could be linked into a trail system.

Methods to Finance Improvements

F34. Fees from users and private fund-raising were the two sources of revenues most favored by residents to support development of new leisure facilities. Over 65% of respondents to the survey showed some level of support for using sales tax revenue to support development of leisure facilities, while 64% showed some level of support for using excise fee to support development of leisure facilities. Less than 45% of respondents favored using property taxes, with only 9% being very supportive.

	Very <u>Supportive</u> %	Somewhat <u>Supportive</u> %	Not <u>Supportive</u> %	Don't <u>Know</u> %
Sales tax revenues	20	48	30	2
Property taxes	9	33	57	1
Fees from users	62	26	10	2
Private fund raisers/donations	74	19	6	1
An excise fee that is charged when lots of land are developed for commercial/residential use	32	34	26	8

F35. Fees to operate recreation programs on city parks generally cover all direct costs of programs - The Derby Recreation Commission works from a policy that recreation programs pay all direct Recreation Commission costs for conducting the program, and a portion of indirect costs. This generally takes place.

F36. Fees to operate recreation programs on city parks do not take into account maintenance costs for the City. Incorporation of some portion or all of such costs is becoming more prevalent across the country, as communities move to match up costs of programs to benefits.

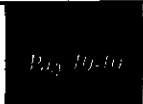
F37. The mill levy for the School District is significantly higher than the City of Derby mill levy - 1 mill for the School District generates \$220,783 in revenues as compared to 1 mill for the City of Derby which generates \$76,480 in revenues. The Derby Recreation Commission benefits by these additional revenues since their 4 mill tax rate is tied to the School Districts mill rate. While the higher mill rate is used to provide services to all residents of the School District, residents of Derby also benefit through the additional funding, both from a standpoint of fee reductions and additional services which can be provided.

F38. While the City of Derby uses a number of funding sources for capital projects, local taxes make up a majority of revenue sources for recreation projects. Funding sources currently being used by the community include general obligation bonds, ad valorem property taxes, sales tax, lease purchase financing, interlocal agreements, and ISTEA. Sources in the process of being developed include dedication development fees, foundations/gifts, and an excise fee.

F39. Residents are willing to fund a variety of new leisure facilities through some increase in taxes. Over 50% of residents are very willing or somewhat willing to fund the following parks or facilities through taxes. Over 60% were very willing or somewhat willing to fund more youth athletic fields, more nature trails, walking/biking trails, facilities for senior citizens, and a regional park along the Arkansas River.

	Very Willing %	Somewhat Willing %	Total %
A new outdoor pool/aquatics center	21	38	59
More youth athletic fields	34	33	67
Multi-purpose athletic fields	37	32	59
Additional parks	22	33	55
Land for open space	20	32	52
A cultural facility	21	33	54
A fishing lake	30	27	57
More nature trails	32	34	66
Walking/biking trails	37	32	69
Facilities for senior citizens	40	35	75
A regional river park	31	32	63

F40. The Derby Recreation Commission brings in more revenue per capita than any other benchmarked community. - Per capita revenues from recreation programs were higher in Derby than in any other community. Derby and Olathe were the only two communities to bring in more than \$30 per resident in fee revenues.



RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. A “Derby Standard” for developing parks and recreation facilities should be adopted. Reflecting citizen wishes, this standard should place greater emphasis on the development of active recreation facilities, swimming pools, and trails than National standards. The following are recommendations for the Derby Standard as compared with National Parks and Recreation Guidelines.

Parks and Facilities	NRPA STANDARDS	Recommended Derby Standard
<i>Baseball Fields</i>		
Lighted	1 @ 30,000	1 @ 20,000
Unlighted	1 @ 5,000	1 @ 4,000
<i>Softball Fields</i>		
Lighted	1 @ 30,000	1 @ 20,000
Unlighted	1 @ 5,000	1 @ 4,000
Basketball Courts	1 @ 5,000	1 @ 4,000
Bike Path	1 system @ region	1 system @ region
Football Fields	1 @ 20,000	1 @ 20,000
Soccer Fields	1 @ 10,000	1 @ 6,000
Racquetball Courts	1 @ 20,000	1 @ 20,000
Swimming Pool	1 @ 20,000	1 @ 10,000
Tennis Courts	1 @ 2,000	1 @ 2,000
Sand Volleyball	1 @ 5,000	1 @ 5,000
<i>Developed Park Acres</i>		
Mini Parks	.25-.50 @ 1,000	.50 @ 1,000
Neighborhood Parks	1.0-2.0 @ 1,000	2.0 @ 1,000
Community Parks	5.0-8.0 @ 1,000	8.0 @ 1,000
Metropolitan Parks	5.0-10 @ 1,000	7.50 @ 1,000

R2. Priority attention should be paid to capital improvements at the present city parks. These improvements should pay attention to important site needs, such as additional parking and restrooms, as well as improvements to active and passive recreation facilities.

R3. Emphasis should be placed on developing walking and biking trails, that link parks to each other. Such trails were a high priority of citizens. The City has excellent opportunities for such trails to be developed.



- R4. Increased attention should be given to acquiring open space land outside of flood plain areas for active recreation usages.** Currently a great deal of park property is in flood plains. While such properties work well for developing trail systems and other non-structure related recreation programming, they are not generally appropriate for activities requiring structures, such as baseball fields.
- R5. The City should generally minimize acquiring open space that cannot be developed into parks of at least 5 acres or larger.** We would suggest that within those acquisitions, at least 80% of the land can be improved for recreation and park purposes.
- R6. The City should develop a fee in lieu of land policy and an alternative land acceptance policy, for the acquisition of open space.** Current policies and practices are overly restrictive on both the city and developers regarding the acceptance of land for open space purposes. We would recommend that the city develop a fee in lieu of land policy for the acquisition of open space. The cash can be deposited in a special fund for land acquisition and park purposes. Additionally, the city should develop a policy allowing for the acquisition of alternative land (owned by a developer, etc), outside of new developments, if that land is better suited for park purposes.
- R7. The City should aggressively move forward on developing a new outdoor family aquatic center.** - This facility was the most desired active recreation projects by survey respondents. Family aquatic centers, particularly with water slides, zero depth entries, play areas for young children, teen activity areas, etc. are the hottest trend in public parks and recreation. A new metropolitan park would be an excellent location for such a facility.
- R8. A comprehensive capital improvement program should be developed.** The program should be balanced in addressing active and passive recreation facilities, as well as acquiring open space. The following are highest priority activities

Highest Priority

- a) Improvements to existing parks, especially playground equipment, park restrooms, and parking;
- b) development of walking and biking trails
- c) construction of an outdoor pool or aquatic center
- d) enhancements to baseball, soccer, and softball fields
- e) development of a metropolitan park

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- R9. Complete the development of High Park.** High Park is an excellent project for the community and its completion should be aggressively pursued. All parties assigned to plan the project should sign off on design standards and funding prior to each step taking place.
- R10. The City should consider developing a riverfront park.** A riverfront park was one of the highest rated improvements by citizens. The City of Derby should pursue acquiring land and developing the park along the Arkansas River in the southwest regions of the community. **The park should include trails, playground and picnicking areas, and be the site of major special events for the community.**
- R11. The City should pursue acquisition and development of a metropolitan park of over 200 acres.** The one park standard that the City of Derby does not meet is having a metropolitan park. Such a park should be acquired and developed. Metropolitan parks serve as community gathering places and make singular recreation attractions possible and affordable. The park should be used for both passive and active parks and recreation pursuits, including location of a new pool and possibly a golf course.
- R12. As possible, active recreation facilities (baseball, softball, and soccer fields) that are used for city wide programs should be relocated out of neighborhood parks to a metropolitan park -** When a metropolitan park is acquired and through the development of High Park, facilities should be removed from neighborhood parks. This will provide two benefits, those being: 1) returning the parks to their stated need in serving neighborhoods and 2) consolidation of sports facilities in a smaller number of locations, thus reducing costs for operations, increasing program quality, and increasing the ability to attract tournaments.,
- R13. The City should continue pursuing development of a public golf course.** Based on the survey there is a strong core of support for a public golf course. As previously indicated a new metropolitan park may be an ideal location for such a course. Such land holdings make a golf course financially feasible.

- R14. The City of Derby should receive an annual report detailing Derby citizens participating in Recreation Commission programs.** Such an annual report will be a valuable measuring tool for both the City and the Recreation Commission in tracking usage and benefits. While funding for the Derby Recreation Commission comes through the School District's mill levy, City of Derby citizens make up a substantial portion of that funding base. The City has also been the Recreation Commission's major partner in funding new capital projects.
- R15. Careful attention should be given to expanding programs for senior adults -** Citizens indicated that their highest priority for investing tax dollars is on programs and facilities benefiting seniors. Importantly, this support came from a broad spectrum of Derby's population.
- R16. Community involvement should be a cornerstone of parks and recreation planning and decision making.** On-going efforts to involve a broad spectrum of citizens should occur. These should include neighborhood meetings, focus groups, stakeholder meetings, and citizen surveys. An annual report highlighting citizen involvement with parks and recreation services should be prepared.
- R17. Funding for planning and development of parks and open space should come from a combination of public and private sources.** Clearly citizens desire to have improvements to the park system be "in part" financed by non-tax revenues, such as user fees and foundation revenues. At the same time, such funding in and of itself cannot finance the majority of capital improvements and new projects needed.

The following 9 sources are recommended to serve as the principal means for funding capital improvement projects:

- General Obligation Bonds
- Ad Valorem Property Taxes
- Sales Tax
- Excise Fee
- Interlocal Agreement
- ISTEPA
- Foundations/Gifts
- Grants
- Private Concessionaires
- Recreation Service Fund

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- R18. The City of Derby should aggressively pursue raising private fund-raising revenues to support parks, open space, and recreation initiatives -** The City has an existing community foundation and the “Derby Citizens Recreation Association” that have been very successful in fund-raising. Their expertise and assistance should be utilized in these efforts. At the same time, the city should be flexible in its approach to fund-raising, through listening to potential donors and/or partners who might wish to develop new foundations, land trusts, or other vehicles for fund-raising specific to individual projects.
- R19. The city should aggressively pursue opportunities to educate community non-profits, and partner organizations on ways to raise private dollars to help build and /or make major repairs to public sports facilities -** The city, either directly or in partnership with the community foundation, etc., can sponsor fund raising training workshops for volunteers and serve in the capacity of “fund raising coordinators for partnerships involving parks and open space projects.
- R20. The City of Derby should set up a “matching revenue sources program” to spur collection of fund-raising dollars and other non-city tax sources for funding capital projects.** Organizations that raise private fund-raising dollars, fee revenues, or other sources of non-tax revenues to assist in building capital projects should benefit from these efforts. We would recommend that the city match any dollars raised through these efforts with tax revenues and also give a higher priority status to major capital projects which are funded through a combination of public/private sources.
- R21. Additionally opportunities for partnering with the Derby Recreation Commission and USD #260 should be a high priority -** Such partnerships are supported by over 85% of Derby residents.
- R22. The City should place priority importance on partnering with non-profit community organizations and Sedgwick County -** Over 80% of Derby residents support each of these types of partnerships.

- R23. An equity approach to program fees should be used. As part of this fee policy, a portion of recreation user fees should be set aside for capital projects.** It is becoming more common for improvements to capital structures to be funded through an equity formula based on who benefits from the structure. As a component of this equity plan, a portion of user fees for programs such as softball, baseball, soccer, etc. should be set aside in a "Recreation Service Fund" and used only for capital improvements to the facility. These revenues can serve as a match to foundation moneys and public support.
- R24. Comprehensive written agreements need to be developed with non-profit community providers using City of Derby parks -** These agreements should spell out in specific terms the responsibilities of the parties to each other as relate to maintenance, programming, fees, length of contract, etc. Separate contracts should be developed with each non-profit organization, that receive services from both the City and the Derby Recreation Commission.

Management Options

The City of Derby has a fine parks and open space system. The Derby Recreation Commission does an excellent job in providing programs, both to residents of Derby and others within the School District. The School District has played a supporting role in making facilities available and partnering with the city and recreation commission on some important projects.

At the same time, there are some significant disconnects in communication and decision making that impact the ability of the city and its partner organizations to plan, develop and manage parks and open space, and to provide recreation programs. While the "Parks and Open Space Plan" does not have a strong management review within its scope, the management of the system will play a significant role in how planning efforts are implemented.

Our experience in many communities would indicate that no one way of delivering parks and recreation services is consistently superior to all others. At the same time, some service delivery systems are generally strong ways to manage systems, while others are generally weaker.

Based on our planning efforts, and through interfacing with members of the Derby community and public officials, we would offer the following opinions regarding four (4) management options that the City of Derby might use in implementing the "Parks and Open Space Plan".

Option 1: Status Quo - This option would make no changes in the way the system is managed within the city. Parks would remain a division of the Department of Community Services.

Strengths of Option

- Continuity with current system
- Allows Derby Recreation Commission to still receive higher mill levy from the School District

Weaknesses of Option

- Focus of department is more maintenance oriented than customer oriented.
- Department generally has a weak understanding of current parks and recreation business.
- Location does not provide a strong platform from which to engage community providers and decision makers in partnership discussions
- Location would indicate that parks is a service of second tier importance
- Hurts recruitment of professional staff.
- Provides a “weaker” collaborator and negotiator with Derby Recreation Commission personnel on issues including park designs, financing, understanding of programming, etc.
- Location hinders ability to implement some recommendations of the “Parks and Open Space Plan”.

Option 2: Create Parks Department that reports to City Manager - This option would upgrade the importance of the parks operations by removing it from the Community Services Department and creating a Parks Department within the City of Derby. The Park Superintendent would report to the City Manager.

Strengths of Option

- Elevates the importance of parks to a first tier city operations
- Allows easier recruitment of professional staff
- Eliminates some organizational barriers preventing meaningful partnership dialog with community organizations.
- Can serve as a catalyst towards having a more active Parks Board.
- Provides an enhanced ability to implement the “Parks and Open Space Plan” recommendations.
- Places parks operations on a more equal status with the Derby Recreation Commission.
- Allows Recreation Commission to still receive higher mill levy from School District.

Weaknesses of Option

- Focus of operations would still remain more maintenance oriented than customer oriented.
- Structure would place very high premium on partnering skills.
- Leaves unsettled means for using fees to help finance capital projects.
- Recruitment of professional staff would largely be limited to those having a parks maintenance background.

Option 3: Contract Parks Operations to the Derby Recreation Commission - This option would have the City contract with the Derby Recreation Commission for the operations of the city parks. While the contract could take many forms, the easiest format would be to contract overall management of the parks operations to the Derby Recreation Commission and use city staff to run day to day operations of the department. Such a contract would in a sense be an “outsourcing of parks operations”, whereby the outsourcing entity (Derby Recreation Commission) used city resources, staff, and equipment. Specific terms of the contract and measurements would need to be carefully negotiated.

Strengths of Option

- Provides an entrepreneurial approach to parks operations
- Allows use of professional expertise existing in the Derby Recreation Commission
- Eliminates the need to recruit an additional layer of management staff.
- Can serve as a catalyst towards having a more active Parks Board and one that works more closely with the Derby Recreation Commission Board.
- Provides an enhanced ability to implement “Parks and Open Space Plan” recommendations
- Places parks operations on a more equal status with the Derby Recreation Commission.
- Allows the Derby Recreation Commission to still receive higher mill levy from School District.
- Allows for a united approach to serving parks and recreation customers.

Weaknesses of Option

- Derby Recreation Commission may have no interest in such an arrangement
- Contract could be difficult to structure and administer
- City staff could be concerned regarding having an equal status.
- Option would need to be agreed to and strongly supported by School District.

Option 4: Create a Derby Parks and Recreation Department - This option would allow for the creation of a parks and recreation department within the City of Derby governmental structure. Such a move would require the Derby Recreation Commission to cease operations. While a number of recreation commissions still operate across the state, this option has been implemented by many cities. The parks and recreation department would operate as a first level department within the city, with its Director reporting to the City Manager.

Strengths of Option

- Most traditional way of combining strengths of parks and recreation operations.
- Allows use of professional expertise existing in the Derby Recreation Commission
- Eliminates the need to recruit an additional layer of management staff.
- Provides an enhanced ability to implement "Parks and Open Space Plan" recommendations
- Allows for a united approach to serving parks and recreation customers.
- Provides the easiest system to administer from a financial standpoint.
- Allows direct relationship between programming and capital expansion of the system.

Weaknesses of Option

- Citizens could have some concerns with recreation services being downgraded in importance over the years.
- Eliminates the Recreation Commission Board and most likely would create an advisory board made up of members from the Recreation Commission and Park Board.
- Might require eliminating higher mill levy from School District. A contract with the School District to provide recreation services to areas outside of Derby could be negotiated.

