

## Acknowledgements

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Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update  
Boone County Kentucky

### Fiscal Court

Judge Executive, Gary W. Moore  
Cathy Flaig, Commissioner  
Charles Kenner, Commissioner  
Terri Moore, Commissioner  
James E. Parsons, Administrator (at project initiation)  
Jeff Earlywine, Administrator (at project completion)

David Whitehouse, Parks and Recreation Director

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Architect's Project No. 05129 December, 2006	Mapping by Robert Jonas, Boone County Planning Commission



# Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update Boone County, Kentucky

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## Executive Summary

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### A Bold Vision

You need not travel very far to witness outstanding examples of park systems which are the direct result of a bold vision developed long ago and implemented over a long period of time. The City of Louisville, Kentucky brought landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmsted to the City in 1891 to begin the process of developing a long-term plan for parks. His firm was employed by the City over a 50 year period to implement a very bold vision that now results in an outstanding system of active and passive parks throughout a community.

Just across the river in Cincinnati, the bold vision of George Kessler in 1907 resulted in the City's park system recently being labeled one of only three cities in the country with a four star rating by the Trust for Public Land. This does not include the outstanding park system that has been developed by surrounding Hamilton County, which the residents of Boone County visit frequently according to the public input for this Master Plan. Chicago Architect and Urban Planner Daniel H. Burnham best summed up the philosophy of a bold vision by the following quote "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever – growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty. Think big."

With this preface, the leadership of Boone County, the Parks and Recreation Department, the Master Plan Steering Committee, and the Consultant, Brandstetter Carroll Inc., present this bold vision for the long-term future of parks and recreation in Boone County.

### The Need for a Plan

The Boone County Fiscal Court and Parks and Recreation Department completed a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan in the year 2000. One of the highest priorities at that time was for the acquisition of land for parks and open space primarily due to the rapid growth of the County population. The County has made great strides towards improving the parks and recreation system since the 2000 Plan was completed. The County purchased several hundreds of acres of land reserved for parks, prepared master plans for much of the new land, established the Boone Conservancy, developed some of the parks and, partnered with Florence in developing the Florence-Boone County Skate Park and partnered with the YMCA to develop the RC Durr Family YMCA with an outdoor family aquatic center. Although much has been accomplished, much of the land that was purchased has not yet been developed into public use parks and the population continues to grow. The population doubled from 1980 to 2005 and is expected to nearly double again by the year 2030. The Boone County Fiscal Court and Parks and Recreation Department have a very difficult task in trying to keep up with this rapid population growth to provide the quality of services that they have maintained and developed over the last several years. Therefore, it is imperative that Boone County continue to review and update the Parks and Recreation

Master Plan every five to six years to evaluate the progress made toward implementation of the Master Plan and to re-evaluate the goals, objectives and strategies to accomplish the bold and long term vision that is in this Plan.

## A Citizen Driven Plan

The Plan is truly based on the community needs. The public was involved in the process in the following methods:

1. Two public workshops at the beginning of the process.
2. A web based survey that was completed by approximately 1,117 households.
3. An active Parks and Recreation Master Plan Advisory Committee.
4. Meetings with several groups including the Boone Conservancy, Boone County Extension Service, baseball, softball, soccer and football organizations, bicycle groups, tennis enthusiasts, home-school groups, school districts, cities within the County and others.
5. Comprehensive presentations at three Fiscal Court meetings that were open to the public.

## What Boone County Residents Told Us

Through the many opportunities for community input, the citizens' needs were determined. The following is a brief summary of the needs as communicated in the various methods:

1. Central Park, Boone Woods, England Idlewild Park and Big Bone Lick State Park are the most used parks.
2. 66% of persons responding to the survey use an outdoor park or recreational facility once a week or more often.

3. Indoor facilities are used with less frequency with only 37% stating that they use a facility once a week or more often.
4. Approximately 83% are satisfied or very satisfied with the current facilities offered.
5. 64% of residents stated that Boone County's facilities are not adequate to meet the future needs of the County.
6. 87% of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the level of maintenance of the existing parks.
7. 45% of the population has been involved in programs offered by Boone County Parks and Recreation over the last year.
8. 65% of the respondents would support additional taxes that are dedicated towards parks and recreation.
9. The outdoor facilities, which have the highest response as most needed include:
  - Jogging/walking trails
  - Bike trails/paths
  - Hiking trails
  - Children's playgrounds
  - Dog park
  - Baseball lighted fields
10. The indoor facilities that residents stated were the most needed include the following:
  - Youth center
  - Indoor swimming pool
  - Senior citizen center
  - Ice skating rink
  - Gymnasium
  - Aerobics and exercise room
11. There is a general shortage of park land throughout the County.

12. There is a strong desire for more open space and land to be preserved as future green space and natural areas.
13. The development of non-traditional activities such as a dog park, hobby park and others are needed.
14. The populace understands that as the County population continues to grow, there will be an increased demand for park land, recreation facilities, and programs.
15. There is a very strong demand indicated in all methods of public input for trails throughout the County.
16. There is a demand for indoor activities including a youth center, senior citizen center, indoor swimming pool, gymnasium, and other activities.

## Future Vision of Parks and Recreation in Boone County

The vision for the future for Parks and Recreation in Boone County, as determined from the surveys, workshops, community input, and the Consultant's recommendations, include the following components:

1. Land is acquired for the development of parks in the areas that currently need parks and also land will be set aside for the expansion of these parks as the population grows.
2. Land will be acquired to be preserved as open space.
3. Develop a system of greenways, hike and bikeways, and linkages that connect the parks, schools, playgrounds, neighborhoods, and green spaces throughout the County.
4. Unique or significant natural areas of the County are studied and preserved.
5. The parks are developed for the most needed park and recreation activities that were identified through the public input process.

6. Indoor recreation facilities are developed to allow increased programming by the Boone County Parks and Recreation Department and to provide for the recreation and fitness needs of Boone County residents.

### **New Parks and Land Acquisition**

1. The plan recommends 1,668 acres of new parks throughout the County.
2. The County should establish a goal of 50% of the park land owned by the County to be developed. The remainder would serve as open space and green space for the future.
3. The new parks that are proposed would be a mixture of neighborhood parks, community parks, county parks and special use parks that would be strategically located to provide convenient access to all residents of the County
4. The recommended County Parks include the following:
  - Expansion of Central Park
  - Expansion of England Idlewild Park
  - Development of the Waller-Stephenson Mill Park and future addition
  - The Hempfling property as a sports field complex
  - New park in the Richwood area
  - Development of the Union Park and future addition
  - Development of four new neighborhood parks and 11 community parks that would be strategically located throughout the County
  - Special use parks would be developed at the following:
    - Riverfront park in the Bellview area

- Hobby park
- River park in Petersburg
- Horse trail development near the power plant
- Perform a study of all watersheds and significant natural areas in the County to determine the most desirable areas to preserve

**Major Recommended Facilities**

1. Develop family outdoor aquatic centers at the site of the existing Union Pool and a new southern facility in a park in the Richwood area.



2. Develop a multi-generational community and recreation center that provides senior and youth activities, multi-purpose game rooms, meeting rooms, exercise facilities, arts and crafts programs and other year round activities to serve the southern portion of the County.



3. Develop an indoor sports complex to include gymnasiums, indoor soccer, exercise areas

and locker rooms that would also be centrally located in the County or in the southern portion.

4. Develop indoor aquatic facilities in conjunction with Boone County Schools for competitive use by the High Schools and swim teams and also provide a family aquatic center in the new indoor recreation center in the southern portion of the County.
5. Develop athletic field complexes for baseball, soccer and other rectangular sports fields.



6. Provide picnic areas at all new neighborhood, community and county parks.
7. Develop a county wide greenway and trails plan.
8. Develop the land across Camp Ernst Road from Central park to expand the Boone County Arboretum as a regional attraction with gardens, visitor center, education facilities and trails.

**Other Recommendations**

1. Expand program offerings to include indoor programming, nature education programming and more as facilities are developed to support these activities.
2. As the park system is expanded, develop a new southern maintenance base and satellite maintenance facilities at Hempfling Park, Waller-Stephenson Mill Park and Union Park.

## Where to get More Information

The Master Plan includes a great deal of additional detail including the following topics:

1. Population and Land Use
2. Existing Budget and Staff
3. Inventory of Existing Programs
4. Inventory of Existing Parks and Facilities
5. Summary of Public Workshops and Focus Groups
6. Discussion of Survey Results

7. Park and Facility Needs
8. Individual Park Recommendations and Budgets
9. Priorities for the Proposed Improvements
10. Implementation Strategies
11. Potential Funding Sources

This information is intended to provide the direction needed by the Fiscal Court, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, and communities within the County to implement the Master Plan. The final Master Plan is available for viewing at the Parks and Recreation Department Office, Boone County Fiscal Court Offices, and the Boone County Public Library.

