

City of New Castle Five-Year Park Master Plan



Plan Years 2016–2020

Draft Plan
Prepared by ARa
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II. Introduction

Demands on time and resources today are overwhelming. Fiscal responsibility of public agencies is imperative and doing more with less is a standard expectation in today's world. Many people find themselves with less time and money available for leisure and recreation activities. To enable the City of New Castle's Park Board to address these and other conditions the department goes through the process of developing a master plan on a five-year cycle.

The purpose of this master plan is simple: to set the course for recreation for the next five years. In order to do this we assess where recreational opportunities were five years ago, see what is available today and determine what the needs and desires of the community are for the next five years. Identifying the steps necessary to enable the implementation of the recreation master plan is also a major concern.

A number of areas are examined in the course of developing a master plan for the City of New Castle. First, local trends were reviewed, including demographics, growth areas, and economic data. While the master plan is for New Castle, the actual planning area reaches beyond the boundary of the city, and is defined in this document. As with any process that ultimately affects the public, input was sought from the citizens of New Castle. An inventory was completed of the parks and recreation system, as well as a review of the last five years. All of this information was compiled and analyzed. From this information, goals and objectives were developed that allowed priorities to be set and an action plan developed.

The City of New Castle Park Master Plan is an important step in guiding the development of the city into the future by opening up funding opportunities for its park system. The importance of having a master plan is not limited to enhancing funding opportunities. By creating a master plan, park boards formulate a formal framework for future action. This framework serves as a guideline for supporting sensible development of park and recreation services. Having a master plan is not only beneficial for board members; it also gives the community a clear sense of direction. An effective master plan is the result of a collaborative effort and utilizes strategic planning. The Indiana Department of Natural Resource provides instructions for local park boards to assist in developing master plans for their park systems. By following their format the city will develop a plan that will help:

- Examine the park system
- Analyze what people need and desire
- Determine what recreation facilities and programs are appropriate
- Prioritize and plan for new and renovated facilities and programs

Your master plan will only be as realistic and useful as you make it. In order to be responsive to changing needs, planning must be flexible. Keeping the plan simple will help keep it flexible. All of the information, assumptions, and justifications behind the

plan priorities and recommendations should be clearly stated. As change occurs, it will be easier to determine which recommendations are still valid and which are not. By continuing to incorporate and analyze new information, the plan will always remain current.

Park and recreation planning typically occurs at three levels: system wide master planning, site planning, and operational and maintenance planning. A master plan for the entire recreation system under the city's jurisdiction is required for participation in the Hometown Indiana Land and Water Conservation Fund programs. All park boards will deal with site planning as parks and facilities are developed, but many function without operation and maintenance plans.

In order to gather adequate information, an estimated six to eight months will be needed to complete the plan. It is imperative that the parks board and ARA establish a time frame in the early stages of the planning process, which specifies target dates for completing major components of the plan.

Community meetings were conducted to allow residents of the city to participate in planning the future development of the infrastructure needs by assessing the economic development, land use, and housing needs. This plan meets both the short-term and long-term goals of the city's parks system in that it establishes a basis for making sound development decisions for now and the future. The plan will have to be evaluated every year to distinguish its successes and failures. By accomplishing short-term goals and evaluation of the plan every year, long-term goals can be better realized. The city must keep the plan up-to-date and not allow it to gather dust on the shelf. Goals and objectives must be kept in pace with the rapidly changing community.

Following is a timeline and task matrix:

Introduction of Process and Timeline: ***August 3, 2015***
Present planning process and proposed timeline to park board.

Inventory/Identification of Existing Issues: ***August, 2015***
Gather information on existing park and recreation system. Compiling and analyzing existing data, studies, reports, and maps related to the city and the city's park system.

Public Survey: ***August-October, 2015***
Conduct an online survey soliciting community input on park needs, possible projects and prioritization of those projects. Survey link will be marketed via city website, park's Facebook page, distributed to schools, and through the newspaper and radio. A paper version will also be available at the parks department and at city hall.

Additional Data Gathering & Analysis: ***August-October, 2015***
Compile and analyze demographic information as it relates to the park system.

Public Participation:

September-October, 2015

Meet with elected officials, civic groups, and community leaders to gain input on issues and needs. Gather and record public information through the voice of the customer at public meetings. Conduct two or three public meetings in and around the community. The meetings will be community meetings held at different locations around the city. The meetings are a method of soliciting input on the needs and objective that relate to the future of the city. Two public meetings will be held at the regularly scheduled park board meetings

Development of Plan:

November – December, 2015

This Park Master Plan update must contain at least the following elements:

- *Definition of planning area*
- *Information gathering*
- *ADA accessibility*
- *Public participation*
- *Needs assessment*
- *Park recreation priorities based on all collected data and public input*
- *An action schedule*
- *Supporting documents, maps and pictures*

Submit Draft Plan:

January 15, 2016

A draft of the city's plan should be submitted to the Division of Outdoor Recreation. It will be considered a draft plan, subject to change. After receiving review comments from the Division of Outdoor Recreation, the park board should make the necessary revisions (if any), print the final version, and adopt the plan by formal resolution.

Submit (upload) a Copy of the Finalized Plan:

April 15, 2016

Submit an unbound copy of the finalized plan and resolution to the Division of Outdoor Recreation. After approval of the final plan, it was distribute to interested persons, groups, city officials, libraries, and the news media.

II. Executive Summary/Vision

Administrative Resources association has agreed to donate their services to the City of New Castle to assist in the development of the Parks and Recreation Five-Year Master Plan. The plan includes a review of demographic information, projections, a facilities survey, identification of growth trends, a review of facilities and programs, and recommendations regarding various aspects of the parks and recreation system in New Castle.

An inclusive process involving a broad cross-section of the community was implemented to address the most critical issues facing the parks and recreation system over the next five years. A number of techniques were used to gather information from the community regarding the recreational opportunities and needs including: interviews with residents, the parks and recreation board, and civic leaders in addition to a public planning and design session.

Final recommendations and timeline were developed and an evaluation of these recommendations was based upon responsiveness to identified needs, ease of implementation and accommodation of future growth. For a master plan to be successful the following issues need to be addressed:

- The condition of recreational services and programs;
- The development of new or the renovation of existing facilities; and
- Identification of indicators that can be used in determining the allocation of community resources is also critical.

In order to facilitate the development of such a plan a fair amount of groundwork needs to be completed. This includes a comprehensive information gathering stage where a variety of data is compiled and analyzed.

Goals were developed to identify specific areas where the parks and recreation board could respond to a variety of situations and conditions.

Recommendations for new and existing facilities are designed to address their imperative maintenance needs, expansion, and heightened usefulness and attractiveness. Goals for recreation were also developed as a result of, and in response to, the inventory, analysis, and public input.

III. Planning Area

The planning area included in the plan is divided up between the jurisdictional and fringe planning areas. The jurisdictional planning area consists of the area with which the City of New Castle Parks Department has responsibility. The fringe consists of areas around the jurisdiction that have an impact on park demand and usage.

Jurisdictional Planning Area

The limits of the jurisdictional planning area are represented by the boundaries of the City of New Castle. New Castle is a city in Henry County, Indiana, 44 miles (71 km) east-northeast of Indianapolis, on the Big Blue River. The population was 18,114 at the 2010 census. The city is the county seat of Henry County and has the largest percent of population in the county. This has a direct impact on the demand and need for recreational opportunities in the city new the people.

New Castle is home to New Castle Fieldhouse, the largest high school gymnasium in the world. The city is surrounded by agricultural land. In the past, it was a manufacturing center for the production of sheet iron and steel, automobiles, caskets, clothing, scales, bridges, pianos, furniture, handles, shovels, lathes, bricks, and flour.

New Castle is the county seat of Henry County, named in honor of Virginia patriot Patrick Henry. New Castle was the birthplace of Wilbur Wright and is the setting for Ross Lockridge's Raintree County. The city tree is the Golden Raintree, based on The Legend of the

Raintree: "Legendary Johnny Appleseed, wandered the Midwest carrying among his apple seeds a single, exotic seed from the golden raintree. Looking for a place where it would flourish and grow, he planted it somewhere in Henry County. Legend has it that those who find the raintree discover the realization of all dreams," from the historical novel and movie, Raintree County.

The city is governed by a mayor who is elected for a four-year term and a five-member city council. The clerk-treasurer is the chief financial officer for administering city government funds, while the common council's main responsibilities are to appropriate funds, adopt ordinances and approve budgets. A four-member park and recreation board oversee the operations of 9 city-only parks (of which 5 are mini parks). The board is responsible for the administration and maintenance of the recreational properties, facilities and programs in the community. Exhibit A in the Appendix contains the planning area map.

Table 1: City Officials			
MAYOR Greg York	CITYCOUNCIL Mark Kroger - Pres Jeff Hancock – Vice Pres Mary Abbott Jerry Walden Aaron Dicken Rex Peckinpugh Aaron Dicken	PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD Patty Broyles, Park Board President David Nantz, Park Board Vice President John Henderson, Park Board Member Sandy Scott, Park Board Member	BOARD OF WORKS Greg York, Mayor David Barker, Director of Public Works and Safety David Copenhaver, City Attorney

Fringe Planning Area

The plan's fringe planning will consist of Henry County. As of 2014, the population of Henry County was 48,995. The county seat is New Castle with a population of 17,859. Middletown and Knightstown follow in size and population. Other small towns in the county are: Cadiz, Dunreith, Grant City, Greensboro, Hillsboro, Kennard, Lewisville, Luray, Maple Valley, Mechanicsburg, Messick, Millville, Mooreland, Mount Summit, New Lisbon, Ogden, Shirley, Spiceland, Springport, Straughn, Stoney Creek, Sulphur Springs and Westwood. Not all of these small towns are incorporated but represent "that hometown feeling".

Table 2: Populations		
Name	Population in 2014	Percent of Region
Kennard	464	0.9%
Knightstown	2,124	4.3%
Lewisville	360	0.7%
Middletown	2,264	4.6%
Mooreland	365	0.7%
Mount Summit	346	0.7%
New Castle	17,859	36.0%
Spiceland	867	1.8%
Straughn	219	0.4%
Sulphur Springs	386	0.8%

As the nation knows, Indiana is the "Crossroads of America." It's no surprise that many major highways entwine the areas of Henry County. The Old National Road also known as U.S. 40 is the oldest of these cutting across the entire southern part of the county.

Interstate 70 was built in the late 1960's taking a large amount of travelers from U.S. 40 and is a major thoroughfare today. Those seeking a more northern route can use U.S. Highway 36 or State Road 38 depending on your destination.

State Road 3 is a major 4-lane highway which runs north and south, linking visitors to Muncie and I-74. Henry County is a short drive from major urban areas such as Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Ohio, and northern Kentucky. Henry County abounds with history and nostalgic attractions offering the traveler an All-American getaway to make memories to be treasured for a lifetime! Rich in history, New Castle has a museum dedicated to Indiana high school basketball, the home court of the movie "Hoosiers," and the birthplace of aviation's pioneer, Wilbur Wright.

IV. Natural Features and Landscape

The natural features and landscape are important aspects of recreation planning considerations. The topography, natural resources, wildlife (particularly endangered species), geological and soil make-up must be considered when identifying and considering new park and recreation spaces.

Topography

The county is on a flat to gently rolling glacial till plain dissected by the Big Blue River, the Flatrock River, Fall Creek and numerous other creeks, streams and drainage ways. Low relief and few abrupt changes characterize the physiography. The greatest local relief in place more than 100 feet, is along the sluice way for the Big Blue River. Some moderately sloping to steep areas are in the Stony Creek and Blue River Townships, in the northeastern part of the county. New Castle has some slightly rolling hills.

Natural Resources

Henry County is about 70% cultivation crops and consists principally of corn, soybeans and wheat. About 17,000 acres in Henry County, or less than 7 percent of the total acreage, is woodland. Most of the county residents make their living from farming or working at factories in New Castle or adjacent communities. New Castle is in the center of the county and more of an urban population with less resources.

Henry County has two lake areas, Summit Lake State Park and Westwood Park. Summit Lake became Indiana's 19th state park in 1988. The park covers 2,680 acres, including an 800-acre lake. Westwood Park and reservoir is located four miles outside of New Castle and covers 800 acres and a 180-acre lake. Headwaters for two rivers, the Flatrock and Big Blue, originate in and run out of Henry County. No rivers run through the county or city. The streams of Baker Branch, Boulder Run, Castle Run, Dark Run, Elliott Cemetery Run, Elliott Run, Grove Run, Hillcrest Brook, Little Blue River, Memorial Creek, Mound Run, Penns Run, Pink Creek, Saint Creek, Saint Johns Drain, Sky Run, Sugar Drain, Suncrest Brook, West Leg Westwood Run, Westwood Run and Wood Brook run through this Henry County.

Ground water is the main source of water for Henry County. It is readily available. More than 40 wells pump in the county ground water for public and industrial uses. These wells supply ground water to more than 90 percent of the residents in the county. The averaged depth of these wells is 150 feet.

Wildlife, Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Species

Good wild life habitat is in the upland areas and along the major flood plains in Henry County. A few inland and marsh areas provide habitat for aquatic animal and water fowl. Fence rows, woodland, and other types of cover also provide habitat for wildlife including upland game.

The woodland wildlife in the planning area consists of endangered, threatened and rare species that could be impacted by development and should be identified and possible mitigation pursued in an effort to limit or negate harm to them. The wildlife includes *NORTHERN LEOPARD FROG*, *BARN OWL*, *VIRGINIA RAIL*, *GREAT BLUE HERON*, *INDIANA BAT*, *KIRTLAND'S SNAKE*, and the *AMERICAN BADGER*. The endangered, threatened and rare species in the planning areas, both city and county, are listed in Tables included in Exhibit G.

Baker Park, Trojan Woods and Osborne Woods have been identified to have the most potential for endangered species noted above. The services and nature area for walkers and bikers embraces and protects these species. The parks department has and will continue to take care not to disturb or displace any endangered species noted.

The Baker and Osborne Parks are currently being impacted by Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Both parks have ash trees in them and the nature areas around them. In the Osborne Park woods nature area a few ash are dying or dead. The city cannot afford treatment, but have a very progress replacement plan. Between 500 trees being planted and natural tree regeneration in this area, there are more than enough tree replacements. The community has planted 110 trees in Baker Park and 25 in Osborne Park. The mayor directed that after 70 trees were cut down at one time that he would replace three new trees for every one the city cut. That was 3 ½ years ago. Recently the ratio was changed to a 1 to 1 which is a more sustainable and cost effective number.

Geology and Soils

It is important to note again, that New Castle is in Henry County and that Soil Survey Maps are county based. In evaluating the park sites and city soil suitability we must divide this evaluation into areas or sections. Each section will be examined for such things, as wetness, slope and texture of the surface layer. Soils subject to flooding are limited for recreational use by the duration and intensity of flooding and the season when flooding occurs. Soil maps and tables are included in the exhibits for reference.

The primary soil association in New Castle (Henry County) area is:

Crosby-Cyclone-Miamian: Deep, nearly level, somewhat poorly drained, poorly drained, and well drained, medium textured and moderately fine textured soils formed in loess or silty material and in the underlying loamy glacial till; on till plains and moraines.

This map unit is nearly level and the gently sloping area is characterized by small natural drainage ways, which lead into open ditches, or by small streams, which flow into the larger streams. Slopes range from 0 to 6 percent. The map unit makes up to 46 percent of the county. It is about 40 percent Crosby soils, 39 percent Cyclone soils, 6 percent Miamian soil, and 15 percent minor soils.

- Crosby soils are on the higher, broad flats and slight swells and are somewhat poorly drained. They are nearly level or gently sloping. Typically, the surface layer is dark grayish brown silt loam. The subsoil is brown mottled, firm silt loam and silty clay loam in the upper part and yellowish brown clay loam in the lower part.
- Cyclone soils are in the more depressed areas in swales, along poorly defined drainage ways and are poorly drained. They are nearly level. Typically, the surface layer is very dark grayish brown silty clay loam. The subsoil is dark gray, gray, and yellowish brown, mottled, firm silty clay loam and clay loam.

Miamian-Losantville: Deep, gently sloping to steep, well drained, medium textured and moderately fine textured soils formed in the glacial till or in a thin mantle of loess and the underlying loamy glacial till; on till plains and moraines.

The map unit is on knobs and breaks along the major streams and many of the minor ones. The terrain generally is very hilly and rolling but is nearly level near some of the edges of the mapped areas. Most areas are drained by small natural drainageways, which flow into the major streams. Slopes range from 0 to 30 percent.

- Miamian soils are on ridges between drainageways and on till plains. They are gently sloping. Typically, the surface layer is dark brown silt lam. The subsoil is dark yellowish brown and yellowish brown, firm clay loam and clay. The substratum is loam glacial till. Sand and gravel are at a depth of 5 to 12 feet in some of the more nearly level areas.
- Losantville soils are on knobs and breaks between drainageways. They are gently sloping to steep. Typically, the surface layer is brown silt loam. The subsoil is dark yellowish brown, firm clay loam.

Recreation is a growing industry in Henry County. Because of the recent development of water resources and the close proximity to large metropolitan areas, the number of recreation enterprises in the county in has increased. The county (not so much the city) provides opportunities for fishing, canoeing, camping, hunting golfing and picnicking. Additional opportunity for outdoor recreation will be avialbe as a water shed project in the county is competed.

The soils of the survey area are rated in table 10 of the attached soil survey for Henry County. They are rated according to limitation that affect their suitability for recreation. The ratings are based on restrictive soil features, such as wetness, slope and texture of the surface layer. Susceptibility to flooding is considered. In planning recreational facilities, onsite assessment of the height, duration, intensity and frequency of flooding is essential.

The park department will use this soil information to guide current park improvements and future park planning efforts as some soils would not be suitable or amenable to a park development.

V. Man-Made Historical and Cultural Features

Identifying the man-made historical and cultural features allows planning and future projects to perhaps incorporate or at least consider the historical value and assets of the community.

Historical

In July of 1821, the centrally located village of New Castle was named as the county seat. Laid out on 100 acres of donated land, the town slowly developed as the county's governmental center. The county's first courthouse, a hewn log structure was constructed in 1823-24 but was quickly replaced by a two story brick building completed in 1835-36. When this building was destroyed by fire in 1864, current courthouse was constructed with an east wing added in 1905.

Although New Castle was and is the county seat much of Henry County's early economic growth occurred in the southern tier of township, along the National Road. While the National Road provided economic growth for southern Henry County, the coming of the railroad would dramatically impact the entire county's economic and social system. Nowhere is the profound effect made by the railroad more evident than in the county seat of New Castle. When natural gas was discovered in the area during the 1880s, this ready access to cheap fuel, as well as to a number of transportation routes, attracted new businesses and industries to the county seat. By the twentieth century, the gas supply was waning but Bridge Company, the Hoosier Kitchen Cabinet Factor and Ingersol Steel and Disc Company made New Castle one of the region's leading industrial centers. The Maxwell-Briscoe Motor Company, later bought out by Chrysler, was the city's largest single industry, employing hundreds of workers. Between years 1900 and 1920, the city's population jumped from 3,400 to over 14,000. The city was also home to burgeoning flower industry led by the Heller Brothers. The high quality roses grown by the company earn New Castle the name, "City of Roses". New Castle's industrial prominence continues today, balancing Henry County's rich agricultural heritage.

New Castle has five historic districts within in it corporate boundaries. They are the South Main Street Historic District, New Castle Commercial Historic District, South 11th Street Historical District, Maplewood Historic District and the Audubon District. Map and sites

are included in the attachment of plan. The districts descriptions are as follows:

- *South Main Street Historic District* – The South Main Street Historic District is located south of New Castle’s business district. The residential area was one of the first areas in town to develop as the city grew to the south. The turn of the century neighborhood features large homes, set back of the wide streets and represents a period in New Castle when the city was experiencing widespread growth due to the gas boom.
- *New Castle Commercial Historic District* – the New Castle Commercial Historic District includes most of the town’s business district. This collection of late twentieth century commercial and public buildings traces New Castle’s development as the county’s economic and governmental center.
- *South 11th Street Historical District* – The South 11th Street Historical District is located several blocks south of New Castle’s business district. This large residential area, developed during the early twentieth century, represents a typical middle class neighborhood of the period. The modest houses were built close to the street with small yards and are spaced relatively close together. Mature trees line many of the streets giving the area a pleasant appearance.
- *Maplewood Historic District* – the Maplewood Historic District is located on the western edge of New Castle. This early to mid-twentieth century residential district is distinguished by the heavily weeded, hilly terrain which gives the area a park-like quality. A mixture of historic and contemporary houses are interspersed on large lots, some of which are positioned as to be barely visible from the streets.
- *Audubon Historic District* – The Audubon Historic District is located south of the New Castle’s original commercial and residential core in an area once known as Slough’s Woods. This early twentieth century middle class neighborhood developed, as many other of the city’s areas, during the period of 1910-1930. However, the district’s natural setting as well as its arrangement of homes set it apart from other neighborhoods. Deep setbacks on large lots, slight elevation changes and a variety of mature trees gives this area a district character.

Preserving the historic nature of community import to quality of life and economic vitality of community. The parks in New Castle are not in historic districts, but ~~located near~~ located near them and around historic ~~scattered~~ scattered sites. The parks department needs to be ~~away~~ aware of these districts and sites as it looks to develop new parks so as to insure that historic buildings and ascetics are not hurt during the process.

Festivals/Cultural Features

The City of New Castle has a number of annual events and wonderful venues that are home to many outings and activities throughout the year.

The following are some of the most recent:

Nature and Conservation
December

Art Association of Henry County,

218 South 15th Street, New Castle, 47362 United States

Mary Morris Summer Art Days in December offers instruction expressing Nature and Conservation. Students will develop and create their own art utilizing mediums and methods experienced through pottery, acrylic and water color painting, pencil and charcoal drawing, as well as recycling and natural elements projects. These creative programs deliver exposure to the arts through an enjoyable, annually anticipated art camp for ages 3 to 17.

Farmers Pike Festival

September

Seven miles east of New Castle, Indiana (SR 38), acres of treasures, 400 spaces of everything. Visit the Lighthouse Chapel. Southern gospel, bluegrass, dance to bands and food galore.

Art Center & Arts Park of Henry County

218 S 15th St New Castle Indiana 47362

Art gallery with outdoor park and pavilion. The Art Center offers shows and classes throughout the year.

First Nighters Civic Theatre

410 S 11th St New Castle IN 47362

Community theatre group offering quality entertainment for the family. Performances are usually held at Bundy Auditorium in New Castle.



Guyer Opera House

110 W Main St Lewisville IN 47352

Built in 1901 and producing community theatre in Henry County, Indiana since 1976, the Guyer Opera House is the only remaining gaslight-era theatre and one of the most important historic buildings in Henry County.



Old School Artistry

1407 Walnut Street New Castle Indiana 47362

Loretta Wray, an artist cooperative showcasing hand-made, one-of-a-kind fine arts and crafts made in Henry County Indiana and the surrounding area. Hours: Friday & Saturday 10am-5pm located in the old high school building.

Artistry Annex Gift Shop

15th and Broad Street New Castle IN

This shop is a place for local artists to display and sell their work. It is a new option to buy one-of-a-kind gifts.

VI. Social and Economic Characteristics

The size and growth rate of population are important factors in planning for park and recreational facilities. In 2000, the population of the City of New Castle was 17,780. The population had increased to 18,114 persons by 2010, an increase of two percent (approximately 255 people). There was a slight estimated decrease in 2013 and 2014 of 2.3% and 2.5% respectively. The is contrast to the State of Indiana that saw an estimated 1.3% and 1.7% increase for that same period of time.

The population in Henry County also saw a decrease in population from 2010 to 2014. Henry County had a population of 49,462 and was ranked 5th in the state. The population then decreased to 48,995 or a .9% decrease in population. This was slightly less than New Castle's 2.5% decrease.

Table 3		
Population	New Castle	Indiana
Population, 2014 estimate	17,859	6,542,411
Population, 2013 estimate	17,694	6,570,713
Population, 2010 (April 1) estimates base	18,106	6,484,192
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014	-2.50%	1.70%
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013	-2.30%	1.30%
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau		

Age of the population is also a determining factor in the types of facilities and services provided through parks and recreation. The change can affect the demand for recreational amenities. New Castle's population has a significant portion of older individuals living in the community. The median age of New Castle has slightly increased from 2010 (36.6 yrs.

Table 4				
Population over Time	Number	Rank in State	Percent of State	Indiana
Yesterday (2010)	49,462	5	0.8%	6,483,797
Today (2014)	48,995	5	0.7%	6,596,855
Tomorrow (2020 projection)*	47,664	7	0.7%	6,852,121
Percent Change 2010 to Today	-0.9%	13		1.7%
*Projection based on 2010 Census counts.				
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Indiana Business Research Center				

old) to 2013 (37.1 yrs. old) which is a slightly higher increase than Indiana's of 40.7 in 2010 and 40 for 2013, but a younger overall median age. The ages of the population in the city closely profiles that of the population statewide as shown below in Table: 5. When looking at recent trends, as of 2013 the population of New Castle tends to have a larger percentage of its population age 35 and older than the state. This would tend to guide the recreation planning activities suited to older population.

Table 5				
Population by age	Indiana		New Castle	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	percent
Under 5 years	427,452	6.60%	1,037	5.80%
5 to 9 years	445,453	6.80%	1,107	6.20%
10 to 14 years	449,848	6.90%	1,285	7.20%
15 to 19 years	468,392	7.20%	1,130	6.30%
20 to 24 years	464,838	7.10%	1,068	6.00%
25 to 34 years	831,532	12.80%	2,303	12.80%
35 to 44 years	836,606	12.80%	2,325	13.00%
45 to 54 years	929,430	14.30%	2,490	13.90%
55 to 59 years	430,771	6.60%	1,272	7.10%
60 to 64 years	363,809	5.60%	1,085	6.00%
65 to 74 years	473,582	7.30%	1,470	8.20%
75 to 84 years	275,562	4.20%	907	5.10%
85 years and over	117,586	1.80%	469	2.60%
Source: United States Census Bureau - 2013				

Households

Household makeup is also an important demographic to include in park planning and can influence the demand/need for family amenities. According to the 2009-2013 U.S. Census American Community Survey, the number of households in the City of New Castle was 7,316, a decrease from 2010 which was 7,759. The current compositions of households in New Castle is 4,412 family households and 1,874 households with children under 18 years old. Of the families represented, the average persons per household is 2.38 and average family size is 3.09. The household size is slightly lower than state average of 2.53, but New Castle has a little larger average family size than the state (3.08). There has also been an increase in both averages from the 2010 where there was a 2.29 household size and 2.96 family size. Family amenities and activities will be important to considering in the plan.

Table 7				
Households	Indiana		New Castle	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	percent
Total households	2,481,793	2,481,793	7,316	7,316
Family households (families)	1,655,596	66.70%	4,412	60.30%
With own children under 18 years	734,537	29.60%	1,874	25.60%
Married-couple family	1,240,254	50.00%	2,899	39.60%
With own children under 18 years	492,012	19.80%	940	12.80%

City of New Castle Five Year Park Master Plan

Male householder, no wife present, family	109,905	4.40%	391	5.30%
With own children under 18 years	59,485	2.40%	310	4.20%
Female householder, no husband present, family	305,437	12.30%	1,122	15.30%
With own children under 18 years	183,040	7.40%	624	8.50%
Nonfamily households	826,197	33.30%	2,904	39.70%
Householder living alone	688,283	27.70%	2,706	37.00%
65 years and over	244,196	9.80%	1,166	15.90%
Households with one or more people under 18 years	816,085	32.90%	2,143	29.30%
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	606,750	24.40%	2,127	29.10%
Average household size	2.55	(X)	2.38	(X)
Average family size	3.12	(X)	3.09	(X)

Source: United States Census Bureau – ACS 2009-2013

Education

Comparing the graduation rates can represent the educational attainment for the area. Residents of New Castle had an estimated higher rate of individuals with less than a 12th grade education level (18.1%) than Indiana at 12.2%. New Castle has a higher percent population with high school degrees than the state (42.8%), but less higher education attainment. However, New Castle has seen an increase education attainment since 2010 where only 80.2% percent were high school graduates or higher and bachelor's degree or higher was at 10.6%. In 2013 it was 81.90% and 13.2% respectively. Education attainment levels can dictate recreational demands and interests.

Table 8				
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	Indiana		New Castle	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Population 25 years and over	4,258,878	100.00%	12,321	100.00%
Less than 9th grade	178,422	4.20%	710	5.80%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	365,926	8.60%	1,517	12.30%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,500,702	35.20%	5,275	42.80%
Some college, no degree	891,274	20.90%	2,362	19.20%
Associate's degree	334,834	7.90%	826	6.70%
Bachelor's degree	632,094	14.80%	1,003	8.10%
Graduate or professional degree	355,626	8.40%	628	5.10%

City of New Castle Five Year Park Master Plan

Percent high school graduate or higher	(X)	87.20%	(X)	81.90%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	(X)	23.20%	(X)	13.20%

Source: United States Census Bureau ACS 2009-2013

Racial Characteristics

Racial characteristics in the planning area show a homogeneous population, but slightly changing. In 2010 the white race represented 98.9 percent of the population, with less than 1.1 percent being black and the remainder being other races (Hispanic only .06%). In 2013 the number of white residents decreased to 98.4 and black population rose to 1.6. The 2013 ACS estimates that Hispanic residents increased to 2 percent. It should be noted that the Hispanic population is the largest minority in New Castle and is the largest growing minority in community.

Accessibility

Providing accessibility to the disabled is an important function of all public recreational facilities, including that of parks. The 2009-2013 ACS noted that 3,338 persons out of 17,510 or over 19% of the city's population were determined to have some type of disability. This is over 6% higher than the state average of 13%. This is a significant number individuals in the community with disabilities and must be considered in programing, recreational activities and accommodations at the parks. Note that not all of these are physical disabilities.

Table 9				
DISABILITY STATUS OF THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION	Indiana		New Castle	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	percent
Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population	6,414,808	100.00%	17,510	100.00%
With a disability	834,080	13.00%	3,338	19.10%
Under 18 years	1,593,235	1,593,235	4,140	4,140
With a disability	73,971	4.60%	363	8.80%
18 to 64 years	3,990,694	3,990,694	10,582	10,582
With a disability	449,049	11.30%	1,659	15.70%
65 years and over	830,879	830,879	2,788	2,788
With a disability	311,060	37.40%	1,316	47.20%

Source: United States Census Bureau - 2013

Economic Characteristics

Income plays a factor in park planning as income helps dictates the type of recreational activities the residents in the area can afford and will undertake. ACS 2009-2013 documentation found that the New Castle median household income is lower (\$32,559) than Indiana as whole (\$48,248) and the per capita income for New Castle is (\$17,126) which is lower than the state average (\$24,635). New Castle also has a higher percentage of families whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level (20.7%) of the state, which is at 11.72%. Overall assessment is that New Castle is slightly less affluent than the average city in Indiana and park planning needs to take this into consideration.

Table 10				
Income	Indiana		New Castle	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Total households	2,481,793	100.00%	7,316	100.00%
Less than \$10,000	183,230	7.40%	1,354	18.50%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	136,220	5.50%	497	6.80%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	289,432	11.70%	936	12.80%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	289,157	11.70%	1,080	14.80%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	383,572	15.50%	1,499	20.50%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	479,611	19.30%	1,043	14.30%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	309,007	12.50%	578	7.90%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	272,366	11.00%	250	3.40%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	75,783	3.10%	55	0.80%
\$200,000 or more	63,415	2.60%	24	0.30%
Median household income (dollars)	48,248	(X)	32,859	(X)
Per capital Income	24,635	(X)	17,126	(X)

Source: United States Census Bureau - ACS 2009-2013

New Castle is seen as a manufacturing community with a majority of employees employed in industrial fields. Based on the 2008-2012 American Community Survey the largest number of employees, 1,760, work in the educational services, and health care and social assistance areas (26.3%). The next highest area of employment is in the manufacturing field at 20% or over 1,383. It was documented that 35.7% of the population in the county commute to surrounding counties for employment (ACS 2009-2013 survey). ACS 2009-2013 estimated the planning area to have an unemployment rate at 9.2%, higher than that of the state average of 6.2%. As of June 2014 the unemployment rates were: United States-4.5 percent; Indiana-4.8 percent; and Henry County-6.3 percent. Unfortunately the county unemployment rates have steadily risen.

Table 11				
EMPLOYEMENT	Indiana		New Castle	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
OCCUPATION				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	2,963,879	100.00%	6,695	100.00%
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	950,886	32.10%	1,682	25.10%
Service occupations	509,612	17.20%	1,340	20.00%
Sales and office occupations	708,542	23.90%	1,639	24.50%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	263,121	8.90%	544	8.10%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	531,718	17.90%	1,490	22.30%
INDUSTRY				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	2,963,879	100.00%	6,695	100.00%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	43,031	1.50%	65	1.00%
Construction	171,832	5.80%	313	4.70%
Manufacturing	544,081	18.40%	1,383	20.70%
Wholesale trade	76,829	2.60%	197	2.90%
Retail trade	339,488	11.50%	646	9.60%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	155,430	5.20%	256	3.80%
Information	46,866	1.60%	57	0.90%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	156,757	5.30%	364	5.40%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	228,778	7.70%	286	4.30%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	688,595	23.20%	1,760	26.30%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	264,959	8.90%	593	8.90%
Other services, except public administration	140,224	4.70%	416	6.20%
Public administration	107,009	3.60%	359	5.40%
Source: United States Census Bureau - ACS 2009-2013				

In developing the recreational opportunities based on the demographic data, the park board must consider a range of activities and projects that helps a population that is growing older

and includes options for medium income earners, as well as those that are unemployed, that may be in need of affordable recreational alternatives. The demographic also supports family friendly amenities.

The city does have a large industrial employee base who works a variety of shifts. However, the industries nor their employees in the community have expressed any demands for off-hour recreational opportunity. The park department has not received any requests in the public hearings or through the survey conducted during this process. The mayor also noted that his office has not received any requests.

VII. Parks and Recreation Board and Department Profile

The New Castle Parks and Recreation Board and Department possess the general powers and duties to conduct such programs that are generally understood to be park and recreation functions as defined by Indiana Code 36-10-3.

The Parks Board

The mayor appoints the four-member board. The term is on a four-year rotating basis. The most basic and necessary function of the New Castle Park Board is to outline proposed goals and objectives which will provide the framework and direction within which the board will direct its future land acquisition, development, and recreational programming.

Table 12 lists the current New Castle Parks and Recreation Board members and the expiration date of their term of office. In the last few years the accomplishments of the Board and Department include the pool overhaul and the hiring of a pool manager to make the pool a better, safer place to swim.

Table 12			
MEMBERS AND STAFF	ADDRESS	APPOINTED BY	EXPIRATION OF TERM
Dan Denny, Superintendent	227 N. Main St.	N/A	N/A
Patty Broyles, President	1325 Circle St.	Mayor	12/31/19
David Nantz, Vice President	202 South 14 th Street	Mayor	12/31/17
John Henderson, Member	104 Wildwood Blvd	Mayor	12/31/17
Sandy Scott, Member	2127 Deer Run Drive	Mayor	12/31/19
<i>Note: addresses are all New Castle, Indiana</i>			

The Parks and Recreation Organization and Facilities

The parks department has a park superintendent, a full-time employee and a seasonal part-time pool manger. The months of May to September are the most active for the park system. This is predominately due to the escalation of recreational activities during the summer, partially as it

relates to the pool. The New Castle park system consists of eight parks, with the largest being Baker Park to the south and Osborne Park to the north. There are also as many as nine additional pieces of land which fall under park responsibility. Opportunities for family outdoor recreation are tremendous.

The Park Department maintains a private nursery for growing trees, flowers and shrubs to make it possible for the city to reduce expenses while adding beauty throughout the community. These plantings will be used to increase the number of trees on city properties as well as replace fallen trees. It is hoped that the project will be so successful that it might generate additional income for the department in the future.

The following is a description of each park:

Baker Park (located on west side of Main Street just South of M Ave.)

Brief History - The park originally known as the City Park was started with 10 acres of rough land located just south of I Avenue and east of Main Street (where the current little league diamonds stand). It grew with the addition of a beautiful 40-acre grove in 1935, located on the west side of Main Street just south of M Avenue. This grove was the last remaining natural wooded area within the city limits and was purchased from Alden Estes and his mother, Mrs. Belle C. Bailey, for \$5,000. Another 30 acres on the east side of Main Street was given to the city by Chrysler Corporation.

In 1935 the city council issued bonds in the sum of \$33,000 and went to work building "a real city park." Plans were made to include a swimming pool, playground equipment, furnaces and a shelter house.

The formal dedication of Baker Park was held on June 20, 1937 and was named in honor of Sidney E. Baker, the mayor of New Castle for twelve years. Mayor Baker, more than any other person, was responsible for the establishment of the park.

Facilities Available: 2 large enclosed shelters, with electricity and water close by (reservations needed), 4 small shelters, available to the community on a first come - first served basis, one covered stage area, with electricity that may be reserved with Baker Park Shelter #1 only, restroom facilities, picnic areas, swimming pool, "Fun Park" for children, and a large playground area, basketball courts, tennis courts, shuffleboard and horseshoe pits.

Aquatic Center at Baker Park: (2001 South Main Street)

The original pool and stone bath house were constructed in 1936 and at that time it was considered to be one of the most modern facilities in Indiana. After 69 years of use and generating countless fond memories, the old Baker Park pool was showing advanced signs of deterioration and had to be declared unsafe in 2005 and closed. The New Castle Park Board spearheaded a community survey and design feasibility study to fashion a more efficient pool design, plan the renovation of the old WPA built bath house and examine the relationship of these aquatic facilities with the various nearby park resources. Part of this monumental effort included blending financing from the New Castle City Council with a community wide capital campaign to raise all the funding necessary to finance the project.

Facilities Available: a 25 meter lap swim area, splash down area for a future water slide, wet deck area with water toys and the renovated original 1936 bathhouse.

Lowe Park (900 block of South 25th Street)

Located in the 900 block of South 25th Street, this park was donated to the city in 1924 by William and Anna Lowe of Johnson County, Missouri. In 2004, volunteers from the fire department constructed a covered shelter for the community's enjoyment.

Facilities Available: playground, basketball court, wide open space for neighborhood football games and family picnics, large shelter with concession stand and restrooms, medium size shelter, and small shelter.

Osborne Park (Washington St. and N. Hillsboro Rd.)

Facilities Available: 1 large enclosed shelter with electricity and water close by (reservations needed), 4 small shelters available to the community on a first come - first served basis, restroom facilities, picnic areas, a large playground area and shaded walk park, basketball courts, and space for family football or soccer and softball diamonds that are utilized for managed leagues.

Mini Park - Your Park (State Road 3 and 38 intersection)

Located at the State Road 3 and 38 intersection, this park welcomes visitors to our community. Although small, this park consists of beautiful flower beds, flag pole and monument and one covered picnic shelter. There's plenty of space to put down a blanket and take a break from the hustle and bustle. There are currently no reservations needed to use the facilities at this park.

Mini Park - Hospital Heights Park (Alabama Street just east of Henry County Memorial Hospital)

Located on Alabama Street just east of the Henry County Memorial Hospital. A neighborhood park consisting of a large playground area, covered picnic shelter, and open space for neighborhood football or soccer games. The residents of this area take pride in the park, pitching in to keep it clean and safe for the children.

Mini Park - Murphey Park (Grand Avenue and South 15th Street)

Located on Grand Avenue and South 15th Street, the 3 acres of ground for this park were purchased in 1928 from William J. Murphey. Many years later, the city gave a large portion of the ground as the site for the National Guard Armory. The armory has placed an armored tank on the grounds and there's plenty of space for neighborhood football or soccer games. You'll also find a small playground and large rock garden at this location.

Mini Park – Trojan Woods Wildlife Sanctuary (corner of Lynndale and Trojan Lane)

Located on the corner of Lynndale and Trojan Lane, this 40 acres has been used over the years as an "outdoor observation laboratory" of sorts for the local school system. Little has been done to disturb the natural habitat in an effort to preserve both floral and wildlife.

Mini Park – 24th Street and Vine Street

These lots are vacant lots acquired by the city as small green space parks with no amenities at this time.

Inventory Forms

In September 2015 facility inventory forms were completed for all of New Castle Park and Recreation Department's owned and operated facilities. The Indiana Recreation Facilities Inventory Update forms were utilized for this purpose. The completed forms are included

in Exhibit F of the Appendix. Exhibit A and I of the Appendix contains a maps of all public recreation facilities and trails.

Other Recreation Opportunities in the Area:

North Main Park

A pocket park located in the 500 block of North Main and is owned by a non-profit, but city did install a shelter and playground equipment a few years back.

The Wilbur Wright Trail

The Wilbur Wright Trail (WWT) will involve 5 phases of trail construction, generally along an abandoned railroad corridor between New Castle and Losantville (in Randolph County). The WWT will originate near at the Henry County YMCA and pass through Hillsboro, Messick, and Mooreland before connecting with the Cardinal Greenway in Losantville.

The WWT will travel across relatively flat farmland. Potential equestrian opportunities are west and east of Mooreland. Transportation Enhancement (TE-21) funds have been awarded for the design, engineering, construction and land acquisition for Phase 1. Indiana Heritage Trust funds have been obtained to purchase railroad corridor land.

Memorial Park

Memorial Park is a county run park that consists of a lake, golf course, basketball courts, volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, tennis courts softball diamond, soccer fields, playgrounds and nature trails. The park has 19 shelters houses, an arena, cabins, barns and amphitheater that can be rented.



VIII. Public Participation

The public participation process is considered very important to the establishment of recreational needs for the planning area. Any form of planning, whether public or private, must emerge from a basic understanding of the relative values and desires of those for whom the plans are prepared. Consequently, public participation meetings were held as part of the city park board meeting agenda on September 8, 2015, September 16, 2015, October 5, 2015. Table three is public schedule provided to community/media. The board conducted working sessions on October 19, 2015 and November 2, 2015 to finalize the pieces of the plan. The media provide wonderful coverage of all the meetings as well as reaching out skateboards to solicit some comments from them on the plan. The agenda, minutes and news articles are included in Exhibit B.

Table 13

Activity	Date	Time	Location
1st notice in the paper	On or before August 26, 2015		N/A
1st Public Meeting	Sept 8, 2015	5:30 - 6:30 PM	City Hall
Survey starts	Sept 8, 2015	5:00 PM	NA
2nd notice in the paper	On or before Sept 10, 2015		N/A
2nd Public Meeting	Sept 16, 2015	5:00 – 6:30 PM	Baker Park Shelter #1
Survey ends	Oct 5, 2015	5:00 PM	NA
3rd notice in the paper	On or before Sept 24, 2015		N/A
3rd Public Meeting	Oct 5, 2015	5:30 – 6:30 PM	City Hall
Plan Presentation	TBD	TBD	TBD

Meeting Summaries

September 8, 2014

Publication method: Article in newspaper

Time: 5:00pm

Number of public (non-board or media in attendance): 5

Summary of meeting: Introduction of the planning process and visioning and an interactive process to discuss goals and objectives. In order to facilitate this interactive process, citizens attending the public meetings were asked to discuss key issues and projects with the end result being openly discussed with the entire group. In this meeting some of the major goals, objectives and projects were discussed as well as methods for survey distribution and times of future meetings.

September 16, 2015

Publication method: Articles in newspaper and notices at city hall

Location: Baker Park Pavilion

Time: 5:30 pm

Attendees: 11

Summary of meeting: The public meeting initially focused on the purpose of planning and the sharing of background information. The need for planning and the public support for planning which is necessary for success were stressed, as well as presenting information about park-owned properties, the recreational programs and the population characteristics of the community. The public expressed their concerns, best things they like about the parks and what project they felt needed addressed. Survey response update was provided and meeting leaders encouraged more to be submitted.

October 5, 2015

Publication method: article in newspaper

Time: 5:30pm

Number of public (non-board or media in attendance): 5

Summary of meeting: Update of provider of project Summary of 1st public input session

Presented results of the public survey and prioritization of needs and projects. Requested other input on process, projects and needs.

October 19, 2015

Publication method: Article in newspaper

Time: 5:30pm

Number of public (non-board or media in attendance): 4

Summary of meeting: Worked on the prioritization of needs and projects as well as the 5-year action schedule. Also defined the park board's goals and objectives.

November 1, 2015

Publication method: article in newspaper

Time: 5:30pm

Number of public (non-board or media in attendance): 5

Summary of meeting: The findings of Five-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan and a summary of the five-year action schedule was presented to the park board at their monthly park board meeting. They agreed to move some project up into 2016 to keep momentum going. Specifically they want the war memorial wall upgraded, new skate park and parking issues addressed in 2016.

The newspaper articles, agendas, minutes etc. of all of the public meetings is contained in Exhibit B of the Appendix.

Community Survey Process

The parks department conducted a survey from August to October to gather input from area residents and park users on park usage and demand. There were 268 respondents. The survey was available on-line as well as a paper version. The online survey was marketed through articles in the newspapers and at all public planning sessions and resulted in 211 responses. It is estimated that 200 paper copies were made and 59 received and manually entered in survey monkey. Survey results and survey tool are included in the Exhibit E of this plan. Analysis of the results of survey and input received at the public hearings are included in the Needs Analysis section of this plan on pages 28.

IX. Goals and Objectives of Parks Board

Taking into consideration the citizen comments from the public meetings and the parks and recreation survey, the following goals and objectives were developed:

Continue to maintain and upgrade facilities and equipment

- Maintain current and future programs and facilities at a high level of quality
- Provide recreational programs and facilities for all ages and user groups in the community

- Renovate the older infrastructure of the parks
- Utilize life-cycle costs as a planning tool in facility renovation and expansion and equipment replacement that facilitates maintaining a high level of quality in facilities and reduces maintenance costs of equipment
- Evaluate security/safety needs
- Review ADA compliance at the parks
- Weigh and evaluate current needs prior to expansion
 - Conduct a cost benefit analysis

Provide family friendly and inclusive park experience

- Reduce vandalism and improve security efforts
- Keep parks clean and visually pleasing
- Provide safe areas and equipment for children to play
- Develop accessible play areas and restrooms

Grow funding for parks

- Creation of a park foundation
 - Create a pass through account at the foundation
 - Appoint committee of park board members or volunteers to work on development of the organization, fund raising etc.
 - Review Columbus Park Foundation formation documents
 - Create bylaws and incorporation documents
 - Appoint board members per bylaws
 - Evaluate the current opportunities for funding
 - Fees
 - Budget
 - Grants
 - Foundations
- Explore the possibilities of other funding sources
 - Grants (state and federal)
 - Develop facilities as revenue streams (rental/user fees for shelters)

Support the implementation of the trail plan

- Use proposed new trails pedestrian plan for development and submission of grant request
- Implement after funded
- Develop or improve walking paths in the parks (Osborne and Baker)
- Evaluate usage
- Review annually trail network throughout the city and continue to support next phase

X. Accessibility - Section 504 Compliance

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act requires that local governments with over 50 employees designate at least one individual to act as ADA compliance coordinator for the entire government unit. The City of New Castle Parks is using the city designated ADA

coordinator, Ed Hill. Any person or persons who have complaints, grievances or comments related to accessibility may contact Ed Hill; 227 N Main Street, New Castle, IN; phone/765.529.7605 X-3113; email/ ed-hill@cityofnewcastle.net or any staff member of the New Castle Parks and Recreation Department staff, or any member of the New Castle government. All comments will be replied to within five business days. The city provides the public with information on accessible facilities programs in all applicable notices and through city hall. The city also has developed the required INDOT ADA Accessibility Plan.

The City of New Castle has eight (8) parks/recreation facilities/area under its oversight, ownership and control. The parks consist of Baker, Osborne, Lowe, Your Park, Hospital Heights, Murphey Park, Trojan Woods Wildlife Sanctuary and park at 24th and Vine. These parks consist of recreational uses such as basketball courts, picnic areas, swimming pool, walking/hiking trails and playground equipment. The city has been working to update the parks, facilities and equipment to make them more accessible. Some of the recent improvements consist of handicapped accessible playground equipment, drinking fountains, shelters, etc.

The Parks and Recreation Board has completed and signed an Assurance of Compliance form for this plan. The forms are included in Exhibit J of the Appendix. The park department superintendent conducted a self-assessment of their park facilities in an effort identify potential areas of concern and create a transition plan or mitigation of activities to address these concerns. The following section consists of an accessibility checklist used during the process assessing each of the city's parks. 504 Facility Accessibility Checklist Results are included in Exhibit J.

Proposed Accessibility/Transition Plan

New Castle has been working diligently to replace play structures and improve accessibility to its local park and recreational facilities. Not all of the current sites meet Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines, National Playground Safety Institute guidelines, or the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas. One of the playgrounds needs to be updated or install age-appropriate play equipment that has safe and accessible surfacing underneath it and accessible routes to the other amenities in the park like water fountains, shelters/tables and grills. The following bare minimum cost estimate for this kind of upgrade is approximately \$500,000. 'Ideal' amenities will cost a great deal more. Funds are expected to come from grants and donations. Below in Table 14 we identify transition plan items (also included in the Priorities and Action Schedule found in this plan) including a proposed timeline for completion.

Table 14			
Park	Improvement	Estimated Cost	Year
All Parks	Publications, misc. maintenance and facilities improvements compliant with ADA	\$10,000	Annually/ongoing
Baker	Handicapped accessible bathrooms	\$100,000	2016

Osborne	Handicapped accessible bathrooms	\$100,000	2017
All Parks	Water fountains, grill access paths, pathways	\$150,000	2018
Baker	ADA swing sets and play equipment and surface for children/young adults with disabilities (Fun Park)	\$100,000	2019
All Parks	ADA paths in parks to all general access to specific areas.	\$50,000	2020

XI. Trends and Programs

Vandalism is becoming an unwelcome trend throughout the park systems in the United States and New Castle isn't immune to it. Bathrooms and other facilities have been repeatedly damage by vandals. However, there are some expands or trends that might help. The City of Missoula is one. Reducing vandalism in parks and trails Missoula Parks & Recreation strives to prevent and reduce the impact of vandalism before it happens. Missoula has had great success in past years due in large part to ~~on~~their proactive involvement.

Security has been increased by the Missoula Police Department along the Riverfront Trail with bike patrols. Lights are located along sections of the Riverfront and Milwaukee Trails. Exhibit K and section B has more information on what is being done there to deal with the vandalism.

Suggestions from the communities:

- Replace ceramic sinks and toilets with stainless-steel
- Add touch free fixtures (less moving parts to break)
- Increase visibility of areas (remove shrubs and hiding places)
- Cameras and watch programs
- Fixed damage and graffiti quickly
- Use peel off clear coat paint

XII. Needs Analysis

The City of New Castle's park and recreational needs assessment examined factual data and community input to derive the areas' needs. The city felt it was essential to the planning process that the following items were also taken into consideration: current community recreational facilities, communicating with its citizens regarding these needs, and examination of the interaction or impact of these needs on the natural and manmade environments. This level of review is extremely crucial to park and recreation planning because it involves a governmental function whose limitations are set in large part by consumer preferences. A roadway improvement, which displeases residents, may be

undesirable, but it is ordinarily used for its intended purposes. However, a park or recreation program, which generates a negative reaction, is likely to remain unused, serving as a costly reminder of a misapplication of community resources. It became apparent after examining this data that the park system needs some upgrades and that certain populations were not being served by the current programs and facilities.

Attitudes and preferences related to leisure time activities are constantly changing. More demands are being made of communities to provide a wider variety of opportunities to a larger cross section of people with the same or reduced budget. In order to be effective, a park and recreation master plan must be responsive to the needs and desires unique to the community under study. This philosophy is central to the master planning approach applied during this study.

Methodology

The methodology used in this needs assessment is divided into two basic techniques. These techniques were used to identify the recreational demands, needs, and possible solutions for the City of New Castle:

- Physical and Demographic Analysis
- Public/Users Input

Recognizing that each technique has limitations, this combined approach was used in order to more accurately reflect the actual needs of the community. This approach also provided many more opportunities for input from a broad range of groups and individuals. The existing physical and demographic characteristics for New Castle were examined as factors affecting recreation needs, along with the relevant changes, which have been predicted for the area.

Physical and Demographic

Many features of the City of New Castle have an effect on the development of recreational facilities and programs for area residents. Physical features are important determinants of population distribution and the citing of recreational facilities. These physical factors serve as constraints to the development of new facilities, particularly those, which serve active sports and are heavily used by the public. In order to avoid the higher costs associated with converting land, which is not well suited for park facilities; the best strategy is to use existing park sites to their fullest potential while preserving their open space qualities. This strategy will also promote the preservation of woodland areas and wildlife habitats in the area. The land and soil of each park location has been assessed and was found to be suitable for its intended use. Also there will be no impact on historic properties as a result of any of proposed improvements or renovations.

The population characteristics and growth trends of New Castle also have an impact on recreation demand. Once the need for new facilities and programs has been determined, it is critical that they be targeted geographically and demographically to conveniently serve residents in new growth areas and segments of the population. Population statistics for the

city (2010) indicate that proportionate population increases will occur in the oldest (55+) age groups. The city's median age is also increasing. Also the city has a high number of individuals with disabilities residing in the community. Therefore, special consideration must be given to the importance of certain types of facilities or programs serving these age groups and demographics.

Income levels by family type are another indicator of recreation need. Female-headed households with dependent children have the lowest incomes; less than half that found in married-couple families. Public parks facilities and services such as after school/summer playground programs or guardian/child programs may represent the only recreation outlet for children and parent from these households. Fees for public recreational opportunities must therefore be based on the participant's ability to pay for services. The accessibility section 504 compliance results noted the need for accessibility issues in most of the parks. The improvements needed consist of more handicapped parking spaces, need for paths to equipment, and the need to purchase accessible recreation equipment.

In summary, all of the physical and demographic factors help to shape the demands for recreation services and assist in identifying the most effective distribution of recreation facilities and programs. Services and programs need to be considered for activities such as: intergenerational activities; coordinated/scheduling events and functions (including before and after school), input into family oriented programs' needs, and handicap facility update.

Public Input/User Assessment

The needs analysis technique involves a process of identifying and listing all of the needs that affect facilities, programs, and the administration of the park and recreation system. Specific recommendations are then formulated to address the needs identified. For the New Castle Park and Recreation Plan, four methods were used to identify Needs:

1. Public Input Process

Through two (2) public meetings and numerous planning sessions, ideas and comments were generated regarding facilities and programs. These advertised meetings were held at varying locations. Attendees were asked for a list of projects, what they liked about their parks and concerns with park system.

A summary of results are as follows:

- New handicapped restrooms at Baker.
- New handicapped restrooms at Osborne.
- Security system and cameras at Baker
- Security system and cameras at Osborne
- Color playground equipment at Baker
- Color playground equipment at Osborne
- Improve shelters at Baker

- Improve shelters at Osborne
- Upgrade mowers and equipment
- Splash pad @ Osborne
- Skate Park at Baker
- Broken equipment removed/repaired and new equipment installed
- Remove and replace grills
- Curb appeal areas maintained
- Climate controlled shelter at Baker
- Park maps and website (noting location, amenities, and distance between)
- Signage (park names) on parks like Baker, Osborne and Lowe
- Brochure of park listing for Henry County CVB
- Safe place for children to ride bikes
- Designated nature area or reserve
- ADA addition to F.U.N. park
- ADA drinking fountains
- Creation of parks and recreation foundation (Friends of Park)
- Adopt a park program
- Shelter rental/deposit program
- Card locking system for bathrooms
- Private concession vendor (also oversee bathrooms)
- Park on the west side of Highway 3

Concerns

- Vandalism
- Trash
- Limited revenue for parks department
- Small parks harder to find
- Lack of direction signs in the parks
- Limited pool hours
- Safety of kids due to traffic inside parks (Baker Park noted)
- Older playground equipment

Best Things about Parks

- High usage/popular
- Nice trees
- Nature areas
- Monday night bluegrass jam sessions at Baker Park
- Organizations/user help with upkeep and projects (example – lights at shuffle board area)

- Community interest and support of the parks
- Number of acres of park and recreation space
- Types/variety of parks (mini, larger, pool, natural, sports, etc.)
- Connectivity via trails (bike/ped plan)

2. Community survey

Results: Surveys Received: 268

Approximately 25% (200) of the respondents were from the City of New Castle and 25% (68) of the respondents lived outside the city limits.

The majority of the responses came from 40-50 year olds (27%) followed closely by 50-60 year olds at 22%.

Eighty-nine percent of respondents used the cities park facilities. A lower than expected response.

Baker Park was the most used facility with 91% and next highest at 42% said they use the pool at Baker Park. Next closest was Osborne at 37%. All the other parks received less than 10%.

Walking was the highest activity at 47%. The next highest activity from respondents was playing with their children (42%). Other higher responses came in family gathering (37%) and picnicking (29%). Also noted was playing or watching baseball and softball, followed by swimming.

Over 45% of the respondents use the park facilities at least 2 to 10 times a month and the second largest response came from those that used them less frequently (31%) less than twice a month.

The reasons they use the parks is pretty diverse and no one reason stands out. The highest percent can to the parks to relax (25%). The next highest was to exercise at 22%. Then there are a four other choices that received 10-15%.

When asked what improvements they would like to see in or to a park, the responses for bathroom upgrades were the highest at 61%, followed by new playground equipment. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents said they would like to have more trails or paths and 30% wanted upgrades to the shelter houses.

Some of projects noted were:

1. Security system and program
2. Sports plan/complex
3. Skate park
4. Landscaping

5. Water fountain, splash pad or feature
6. Baseball field upgrades
7. Handicap accessibility improvements

Summary

After reviewing all the data and community input, the results of this assessment can best be summarized in the following areas: general issues/needs addressed by community; causes for nonuse of the current facilities; special use needs in community, and proposed uses of existing facilities.

Table 15 is a list of the general issues/needs that were identified by either the public input sessions, users' comments and the physical and demographics needs then ranked by the Park Board. The board and members of the community were asked to rank their top five most important projects. The scoring matrix is shown at the bottom of the table.

Table 15	
Projects	Score
New handicapped restrooms at Baker	20
New handicapped restrooms at Osborne	20
Security system and cameras at Baker	15
Security system and cameras at Osborne	15
Color playground equipment at Baker	12
Color playground equipment at Osborne	12
Improve shelters at Baker	7
Improve shelters at Osborne	7
ADA addition to F.U.N. park	7
Trails (including upgrade at north side of Osborne Park)	6
Remove and replace grills	5
ADA drinking fountains	3
Skate park at Baker	2
Sports plan	2
Splash pad @ Osborne	1
Climate controlled shelter at Baker	1
Signage (park names) on parks like Baker, Osborne and Lowe	1
Improve sidewalks at Baker park	1
Parking lot on old skate park at Osborne	1
Baseball and softball field improvements	1
Rank 1 = 5 points; Rank 2 = 4; Rank 3= 3; Rank 4 = 1; Rank 5 or up = 1 point	

The following is a list of items that were identified as causes of nonuse by either public input sessions, users' comments or the physical and demographics needs:

- Accessible bathrooms
- ADA accessible sidewalks between fields and playground areas.
- ADA play areas

- ADA accessibility to drinking fountains
- Access to grills
- Play surface in playground area

There were a couple of special use needs that must be addressed in this plan. The biggest special needs concern that was mentioned at the public input sessions and from local services providers' related park and recreation barriers to the individuals with disabilities in the community. They explained that Indiana's citizens with disabilities continue to encounter barriers to community participation. Park and recreation is one of their areas of concern. The other specific issues that were described and projected as needs of special populations are as follows:

- Handicapped accessible bathrooms
- Limited number of ADA accessible recreational equipment.
- Need for more programs for all ages and abilities.
- Sidewalks between fields, park amenities (drinking fountains, grills, and tables) and playground area not being handicapped accessible.

The following is a list of the projected/proposed future uses of current and present facilities that were identified by the public input sessions, users' comments and the physical and demographics needs:

- Should use resources to maintain existing park facilities and equipment instead of building new parks.
- Signage in parks and wayfinding signs outside parks needs to be assessed and upgraded.
- A new or upgrade to existing park facilities with a focus on ADA and safety surface needs.
- Support of the trail network and trails inside parks

XII. Priorities and Action Schedule

A five year capital improvements plan has been structured in Table 16 to indicate the timing and cost of major actions necessary to implement the recommendations described in the previous paragraphs.

The timing of improvements has been established in consideration of the priorities of the board and citizens, the potential funding capacities of the local community, and outside funding sources, the amount of lead-time to arrange financing and to design facilities, and the ability of staff to manage an aggressive capital improvements program. As a result, the plan provides for a steady stream of projects to be designed and implemented over a five-year period.

The estimated costs of projects are generalized for planning purposes. As such, these cost estimates are based on comparable costs of similar facilities constructed elsewhere, rather

than on detailed estimates of quantities of construction materials and labor time. The actual costs may vary due to local and seasonal variations, discounts and donations, quality and types of materials, and economic conditions. Detailed and accurate costs estimates can result only after careful design has been completed. Exhibit I of the Appendix contains a map of existing proposed park and recreational facilities and trails.

The potential funding sources include:

Park General Fund

The local park general fund, which receives an annual appropriation from the city council and annual income from operations. The budget appropriation from city council is derived from taxes on real estate. A copy of the park budget is included in Exhibit K of the appendix.

Local Funds

Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT)

EDIT funds may be used for economic development projects and for other uses specified in the EDIT law. An economic develop project is a project the city will promote with significant opportunities for gainful employment of its citizens; attract a major new business enterprise to the unit; or retain or expand a significant business enterprise within the unit. An economic development project must involve an expenditure for the acquisition of or interest in land; site improvement; infrastructure improvement; rehabilitation, renovation and enlargement of building and structures; machinery; equipment; furnishings; facilities; administrative expense with an economic development project or operating expenses of a governmental entity that plans or implement development projects. A capital improvement plan must be developed and include proposed projects/expenditures.

County Motor Vehicle Excise Surtax /Wheel Tax

The county council adopt an ordinance in 2015 (effective 2016) to impose an annual license excise surtax at the same rate or amount on each motor vehicle listed in subsection (b) that is registered in the county. At a specific amount of at least twenty-five dollars (\$25) on passenger vehicles.

The license excise surtax applies to the following vehicles:

1. Passenger vehicles.
2. Motorcycles
3. Trucks with a declared gross weight that does not exceed eleven thousand (11,000) pounds.

Revenue for the surtax and the wheel tax can be distributed to the county and to cities and towns in the county on the basis of population and comparative street and road mileage. Currently the rate is not less than 2% and not more than 10% of the amount of the state motor vehicle excise tax in effect prior to 1990.

Cumulative Funds

Cumulative Capital Development Funds (CCDF) is passed by the legislative body of a city or town and are funded from property taxes. CCDF are viewed as funds into themselves. This is because, unlike other cumulative funds, there is an exclusion from maximum levy controls. These funds can be used for the following general areas of improvement: bridges, airports, levees, channel, maintenance, public building for which cumulative building fund moneys may be expended, public ways and sidewalks, regulated drains, and park and recreation facilities.

Tax Increment Finance (TIF)

In general, TIF provides for the temporary allocation to redevelopment districts of increased tax proceeds (known as “increment”) in an allocation area generated by increases in assessed value. Thus, TIF permits cities to use increased tax revenues stimulated by redevelopment to pay for the capital improvements needed to induce the redevelopment. It requires the creation of a redevelopment commission, redevelopment plan and the passage of declaratory resolution. Other steps include working with the plan commission and conducting public hearings for public comment.

Bonds are typically sold based on the TIF district incremental revenue and used for public improvements. TIF proceeds can be used for property acquisition and redevelopment activities including the construction of “local public improvements” such as public ways, sidewalks, sewer, waterlines, parking facilities and park or recreational areas. Also the funds can be used to pay bond related obligations.

Local Sharing of Gaming Funds

Before August 15, 2003 and each year thereafter, the treasurer of state shall distribute the wagering taxes set aside for revenue sharing to the county treasurer of each county that does not have a riverboat according to the ratio that the county's population bears to the total population of the counties that do not have a riverboat. The county auditor shall distribute the money received by the county under this subsection as follows:

1. To each city located in the county according to the ratio the city's population bears to the total population of the county.
2. To each town located in the county according to the ratio the town's population bears to the total population of the county.
3. After the distributions required are made, the remainder shall be retained by the county.

Money received by a city, town, or county under subsection (e) or (h) may be used for any of the following purposes:

1. To reduce the property tax levy of the city, town, or county for a particular year (a property tax reduction under this subdivision does not reduce the maximum levy of the city, town, or county under IC 6-1.1-18.5);
2. For deposit in a special fund or allocation fund created under IC 8-22-3.5, IC 36-7-14, IC 36-7-14.5, IC 36-7-15.1, and IC 36-7-30 to provide funding for additional credits for property tax replacement in property tax increment allocation areas or debt repayment.
3. To fund sewer and water projects, including storm water management projects.
4. For police and fire pensions.
5. To carry out any governmental purpose for which the money is appropriated by the fiscal body of the city, town, or county. Money used under this subdivision does not reduce the property tax levy of the city, town, or county for a particular year or reduce the maximum levy of the city, town, or county.

Rainy Day Funds

In 2009 New Castle established a rainy day fund by the adoption of an ordinance, by the City Council. The rainy day fund is subject to the same appropriation process as other funds that receive tax money. In any fiscal year, a political subdivision may transfer not more than ten percent (10%) of the political subdivision's total annual budget for that fiscal year, to the rainy day fund. A political subdivision may use only the funding sources in the ordinance or resolution establishing the rainy day fund. The political subdivision may adopt a subsequent ordinance or resolution authorizing the use of another funding source.

These funds are raised by a general or special tax levy on all the taxable property of a political subdivision. Whenever the purposes of a tax levy have been fulfilled and an unused and unencumbered balance remains in the fund, the fiscal body of the political subdivision shall order the balance of that fund to be transferred as follows, unless a statute provides that it be transferred otherwise:

Municipal Bonds

There are a number of different types of bonds a municipality can utilize. The most often used are:

- General obligation bonds
- Special district bonds
- Revenue bonds
- Industrial development bonds

General obligation bonds or GOBs are an obligation payable out of local property taxes collected in the political subdivision issuing the bonds. GOB financing is available for a broad range of project and might be available for a particular economic or community development project undertaken for a valid public purpose. There is a 2% cap on the amount of funds bonded under this method.

Special district bonds can be used for projects only authorized by Indiana law relating to special taxing district with authority to finance project by issuing its own special taxing district bonds payable from special debt limit. The project must be a local public improvement that is not political or government in nature and that provide special benefits to residents and properties of the special taxing district. Examples are parks, sanitation, flood control, thoroughfare, and redevelopment districts.

Revenue Bonds refer to obligation payable from revenues of a particular project (e.g. water revenue bonds, sewer bonds, etc.). These bonds do not count against the 2% debt limit and do not require a petition or remonstrance process. They also do not need approval of the Department of Local Government Finance.

Industrial development bonds are used as an incentive to companies located in a certain area. In order to encourage small manufacturing it is permitted for manufacturers to borrow money on a tax exempt basis in order to provide manufacturing facilities. This is the method that is used to address this desire. When issuing these bonds the political subdivision acts merely as a “conduit” for the issuance of the bonds and carries no liability with regard to bond and the bond proceeds. It is a pass through process.

Bond Issue

According to Indiana’s Park and Recreation Law 36-10-3, park boards have the power to levy special benefit taxes for authorized park and recreation purposes. Before bonds may be issued however, the city council must approve the tax. If approved, the park department’s bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the municipality. The total of all bonds issued by the municipality may not exceed two percent (2%) of total assessed property value in the district.

State and Federal Grant Programs

Exhibit H of the Appendix contains a list of state and federal grant programs for local park and recreation projects. In addition to these programs, the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs has the Planning Grant Program that can be used for planning and design of park and recreational projects. The program is a 90% state/federal and 10% local matching program.

XIV. Plan Implementation

This Five-Year Park Master Plan embodies ideals and concepts, policies and directions rather than rigid specifications. Future park and recreation needs have been examined for the New Castle Parks and Recreation Board. Priorities have been established to guide the board and department in meeting needs and accomplishing goals for the next five years. In order for the goals in this master plan to become a reality cooperation and communication between the parks and recreation board, public and private agencies, and local citizens need to continuously occur.

Parks and Recreation Board

Adoption of this Five-Year Park Master Plan by the Parks and Recreation Board assures that the goals embodied in this plan are followed. The priorities and action schedule of the plan will help facilitate achievement of the goals and objectives within the plan.

Private Sector

The citizens of the City of New Castle have had the opportunity to provide input into the Five-Year Park Master Plan before it was adopted. Implementation of this plan will necessitate cooperation between private agencies and groups, and local volunteers.

Financing

It is the responsibility of the New Castle Parks and Recreation Board to budget sufficient funds to carry out the priority goals set forth in this Five-Year Park Master Plan. The board should apply for grants that are available through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources for park improvements and land acquisitions.