



## *Introduction*




**H**istorically, the development and evolution of the Dublin park system has been a combination of sound planning, policy-formulated development directives and market/product awareness.



This occurred with an intuitive, non-technical sense of community needs and opportunistic events. With advancements in technology, we now are better equipped to evaluate and assess all components of the park system as we move forward. As a result, this master plan study has produced a more focused, strategic planning document, integrated with the Dublin Community Plan. There are various recommended ongoing study elements (i.e., research data, surveys, etc.) that will be completed in the future and will supplement this study document.

This master plan encompasses three key concepts: Understand the past, assess the present and envision the future. Within each concept, we address the physical aspects (i.e., land, facilities and built environment); recreation services; and operations and maintenance components.

This study planning document has been formatted to easily accommodate internal, ongoing updates. Revised and new information and data can be introduced; recommendations and adjustments can be implemented in real time.



As its primary focus, the Department of Parks and Recreation will continue to deliver a broad range of innovative parks, recreation programs and facilities to provide a variety of life-enriching opportunities that will meet the diverse needs of the community. The growth of consistent and quality mixed-use development throughout the community, along with the emphasis of the parks and recreation infrastructure, offer tremendous returns on investment for a city that values and promotes a healthy, balanced community lifestyle.



This document, in conjunction with supplemental information, will summarize existing conditions and findings, present prioritized recommendations and provide logical courses of action. As a result, additional changes to the City’s philosophies and additional commitments of resources are probable; however, significant determinations may require additional research, user survey data and focus group participation to adequately define the final and most appropriate courses of action.

## Background

As Dublin evolved from a rural, agriculture-based village into a dynamic, diverse and economically vibrant city, community leaders were determined that both its rural character and valued natural resources would not be compromised. The framework for ensuring that the character, image and quality of the community environment was protected and appropriately enhanced in the face of outside development pressures required both civic commitment and enforceable development policy guidelines.

The evolution and sophistication of the parks and recreation system today is thus based upon the following internal influences and external factors:

- Civic leadership directives and commitment
- Environmental awareness and stewardship (the greenwave in its infancy)
- Public needs, involvement and expectations
- Community pride and recognition
- Regional market competitiveness
- Maintaining the status quo and anticipating national park and recreation industry trends (facilities and services)
- Recognizing and accommodating the maturation of the community, the rich and healthy diversification of our population and our residents’ ever-changing needs and desires

Throughout the years, the City of Dublin has diligently and persistently acquired open space and parklands within the city corporate and school district boundaries. Most of these acquisitions have been accomplished by direct land purchases or by using land dedication requirements and open space development ordinances. To date, this effort has resulted in more than 949 acres of designated parks and more than 435 acres of open space. The National Park and Recreation Association and National Park Service recognize a standard (or



national average) of 10 to 20 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. As a point of reference, the City of Dublin currently provides 34 acres per 1,000 residents. This ratio is evidence of Dublin's successful, community-supported policies and implementation strategies.

It is important to recognize that during the past 20 years, the City of Dublin has been both proactive and responsive as a steward of natural resources as well as an industry leader in providing recreation facilities and programs throughout the community.

Engaging community stakeholders and the public throughout the Parks and Recreation Master Plan development process revealed a less tangible perspective of how the park system has performed so far: The community has been and remains extremely satisfied with the performance of the parks and open space, recreation facilities and services the City provides. General public opinion is that City government has prioritized parks and recreation as a highly visible foundation of the community's growth and development. The public's satisfaction is evidenced by its support of financial investments in park land acquisition, facility development, recreation program services, operations and maintenance.

In addition, the City recognizes the value of and has supported other public and governmental

entities, private recreational facilities and private providers within the study area. The most noteworthy example is the 1,037-acre Glacier Ridge Metro Park, which is adjacent to the city's northwest boundaries.

The quantity and size of the 52 parks and 371 acres of open space currently managed by the city provide a limited perspective from which to assess the park system. The location and quality of the parkland resources also are indications of how the system is performing relative to the following criteria, which is unique to the City of Dublin's growth and development philosophy:

- Provides programmed and non-programmed recreational opportunities
- Is instrumental and effective in preserving water quality throughout Dublin in coordination with City's storm water master plan
- Is instrumental and effective in preserving and protecting natural resources, including both flora and fauna
- Aids in maintaining the area's rural character by lessening the visual and physical impact of development
- Provides the ability to reclaim, enhance and manage open space and



parklands to better and more effectively achieve all or some of the above

- Ensures proximity and adjacency to residential, institutional, public and civic facilities
- Accommodates critical pedestrian-oriented community linkages by using a hierarchy of interconnected systems to facilitate both internal (community) and external (regional) pedestrian accessibility

The planning process included involvement of internal staff from all levels of the organization and multiple departments throughout the City. Involvement included interviews, brainstorming sessions, and data collection which, at times, included key staff with focused perspectives and study topics that included written contributions to the master plan text. We successfully maintained a core group of City employees (the study steering committee), representing staff, supervisors and administrators. This diversity ensured an accurate and broad-base perspective of existing conditions and future needs.

Integral to the Parks and Recreation Master Planning Initiative was the City of Dublin's Long Range Planning Committee, which was simultaneously updating the comprehensive Community Plan. The continuity of staff

participating on both projects ensured common community initiatives and goals that were influenced and supported by both plans. The following study elements represent some of the more significant coordination efforts throughout the planning process:

- G.I.S. mapping
- Transportation / bikeways
- Natural resource assessments / land use development scenarios
- Historical / cultural overview
- Storm water management practices / stream corridor protection,
- Green initiatives / sustainability

The assessment of the park system and parkland resources was defined by a study area that included the boundaries of both the City of Dublin corporation limits and the City of Dublin School District boundaries. The overlap and inclusion of both of these boundaries was chosen due to the existing and probable continued relationships with the school system and adjacent municipalities, as well as the physical and geographic extents into which joint efforts of protection of natural resources, acquisition of parkland, community linkages and development are needed.

# Using the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

This plan is a guiding document, intended to assess the current status of our parks and recreation services and resources and provide a strategic analysis of our strengths, opportunities and future needs. This plan will identify broad strategic goals and lay the groundwork for implementation of projects and programs designed to meet the community's parks and recreation needs.

