

# The Omaha Suburban Park System Master Plan Update 2010



Adopted by Omaha City Council  
September 14, 2010

# Table of Contents: Omaha's Suburban Park Master Plan Update 2010

## I. Introduction

- A Master Plan for the Omaha Suburban Park System 1
- Master Plan Update 2010 1

## II. Plan Elements

- Parks 3
- Trails 6
- Boulevards 7

## III. Funding

- Neighborhood Park Fee 10
- Trail/Boulevard Fee 10
- Community Park Fee 10

## IV. Policies and Procedures

- Utilizing the S.I.D. Financing Method 11
- Meeting the Park Contribution Requirement 15
- Delaying S.I.D. Contributions 15
- Impact on S.I.D. General Obligation Debt 15
- S.I.D. Partnerships 15
- Utilizing the Park Development Fund 15
- Relationship of Park Location to Contributing S.I.D.s 16

## V. Appendices

- Appendix A – Park Sites and Descriptions
- Appendix B – Boulevard Design Guidelines
- Appendix C – Park Sizes, Facilities and Costs

# I. Introduction

## A Master Plan for the Omaha Suburban Park System

In February, 2001, the Omaha City Council approved a long-term vision for park development in the city's outer fringes. The "Master Plan for the Omaha Suburban Park System" has guided the growth of parks, boulevards, trails and open space since that time. The Plan outlines general locations, facilities, costs and in the case of boulevards, design criteria for the acquisition and development of these services.

Periodic updates of the Suburban Park Plan are called out in the original master plan document. Updates are based on reviewing the successes and weaknesses of the plan and refine specific policies for improvements. It is recommended that future updates occur every three years, concurrently with the Interceptor Sanitary Sewer plan update, in order to coordinate these two closely related efforts.



## Master Plan Update 2010

Since 2001, the "A Master Plan for the Omaha Suburban Park" has been used extensively by both the public and private sectors to help guide the growth of park and open spaces in suburban Omaha.

The main purpose of the 2010 update to the plan is to make revisions to coincide with recent development activities and jurisdictional changes. There are no wholesale changes to the goals and principles of this plan. This plan does, however, provide more detail and direction regarding the design of the suburban boulevard system. Plan implementation costs have been updated to reflect changing market conditions.

Probably the biggest change in the plan is in the implementation strategy. The mechanisms in place to fund the different elements of the plan have been analyzed based on actual expenditures and revenues since the plan took effect in 2001. Revisions were necessary to ensure a financially sound park system.

This 2010 master plan update includes several major undertakings. The "Map", illustrating the location of all parks, trails, boulevards and environmental resources was revised to reflect changes in the city's jurisdictional boundaries due to annexations. The revised map also shows parks, trails and boulevards completed since the original plan was developed. Existing and proposed facilities are distinguished with different symbols to allow quick access to this information.

The “Park Sites and Descriptions” section of this document was updated to include information on additional parks by adding them to the descriptive matrix section of this plan. A matrix developed for each proposed park specifies facilities and acreages to be included that park. For example:

<b>Neighborhood Park P40B</b> Type: A	Size	
Playground	1	Ac
Usable Open Space	2	Ac
Picnicking	0.75	Ac
Walkways/Trails	0.4	Ac
Natural Area Preservation	as req.	Ac
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>Ac</b>
Landscape Buffer Scenic/Open Space		
(20% of Above)	0.83	Ac
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>Ac</b>

Characteristics of the proposed site are described for purposes of siting the park properly. This section of the plan also includes parks that are partially or totally completed since the 2001 plan, along with any sites that have been eliminated from the plan. Lastly, all parks descriptions were updated to scale back the sizes of the parks. This was in response to the high cost of land acquisition and the need to bring expenditures into line with park fee revenues. This section is now separate from the main narrative document and comprises Appendix A.

The “Boulevard System Design Guidelines” section was improved to expand on design concepts described in the earlier plan. It now includes more detailed design guidelines for lighting, plantings and walkways. to avoid confusion and ambiguity. These expanded guidelines are a part of the 2010 update and are located in Appendix B.

The “Park Facilities Development and Costs” section was revised to reflect changes in the “Park Sites and Descriptions”. It not only specifies what facilities and acreage are programmed for each park, but it also provides a cost estimate for park development to serve as a guideline for developers and city staff. This was previously a stand-alone document. It is now included in Appendix C of this document.

Finally, the funding mechanism employed to implement the plan was closely scrutinized. It was quickly found that the current approach was deficient in that expenditures far exceeded the revenues collected by park fees. Economists at HDR Engineering were retained to provide an in-depth analysis and propose options for addressing this problem. This is perhaps the biggest change to the plan. The revised implementation plan is described beginning on Page 10.

## II. Plan Elements

The location of proposed Parks, Trails, Boulevards, Cultural/Historic Areas, and Natural Areas are illustrated on the Locator Plan. These elements are generally sited to take advantage of unique environmental conditions or, in areas that can be anticipated in advance of development, as ideal for optimal public service.

A critical issue, which cannot be anticipated in advance of development, is the exact relationship between the facilities proposed by the Suburban Park Plan and the eventual development that will be introduced into the surrounding area. Therefore, it is anticipated that this Plan will retain a level of flexibility, allowing it to be “fine tuned” at the appropriate time. Successful implementation requires the ongoing cooperation of the City, Omaha’s development community, park user groups, neighborhood associations and many others. Allowing the Suburban Park Plan to adjust to specific issues and the positive input of these groups is necessary to secure the Plan’s success.

Omaha’s Suburban Park Plan is a long-range, visionary document. Every three years, however, the Plan should be re-examined and amended as necessary. Additionally, unique opportunities, not anticipated in the Plan, may become available. Such opportunities are to be immediately reviewed and, if appropriate, added.

### Parks

The following is a listing of each park type illustrated on the Locator Map. The park locations shown in the master plan are diagrammatic in size and configuration. Appendix A describes each specific park in terms of approximate size, content of recreational facilities, and its defining characteristics, including natural features, important site conditions and/or key relationships to adjacent land

**The park facilities are divided into four major categories as follows:**

- **Neighborhood Park:** Neighborhood Parks are intended to serve a specific residential neighborhood within an approximate six block (half mile) radius. Neighborhood Parks are meant to be primarily passive in use containing basic play facilities, landscape enhancements and open space. Some of these parks will contain minor active recreational facilities as needed to meet recreation service requirements. Neighborhood Parks are generally located near the center of the land section to allow for more convenient and equal access by future neighborhood residents. Future residential neighborhoods should allow for pedestrian connections to the park site with permanent easements.





- **Special Use Park:** This park is to provide the region with a high amenity open space. The park is intended to be primarily passive use with grand open spaces and landscape vistas. This park will provide for large public gatherings for community events and may contain signature features such as civic monuments. The park is intended to be a landmark for the community.



- **Community Park:** Community Parks serve a broader purpose than the neighborhood parks. Focus is on meeting community-wide recreation needs. These parks often contain neighborhood and community play facilities, extensive active play/sports fields, recreation complexes and aquatic facilities. These parks are usually a minimum of 50 acres.



- **Regional Park:** Area planned to provide a larger regional population with natural resource based recreation such as hiking trails, equestrian activities, nature interpretation and other passive uses. These parks are planned to preserve and enhance natural resources. They include the three (3) city dam sites, Standing Bear Lake, Cunningham Lake, and Zorinsky Lake, along with Levi Carter, N.P. Dodge Tranquility Park.

In addition to the four major park classifications, the plan proposes other recreational and/or environmental features as follows:

- **Cultural & Historic Sites:** These sites contain features of important historical or cultural value that should be protected and enhanced.



- **Urban Filter/Wildlife Corridors:** These are areas planned along floodplains; they are planned to function as natural filters to urban runoff and serve as linear wildlife corridors.



- **Natural Areas:** These are areas containing significant natural resources such as tree stands, wetlands and native prairies that should be protected and enhanced. These also include floodplain areas that should be restricted to development and preserved as natural green corridors throughout the city.



## Trails

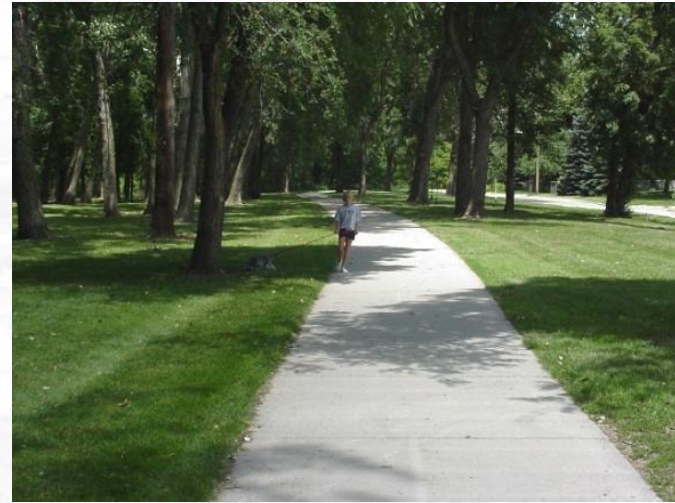
Omaha is developing an extensive system of trails. Trail development is an important component of the Suburban Park System. The trail system should continue growing, allowing more access throughout the city. The goal would be a linked city with a more pedestrian feel.

The Suburban Park System Master Plan follows the basic premise of linking parks with trails as was originally envisioned by H.W.S. Cleveland. Specific trails include: Old Lincoln Highway Trail, West Papio Trail, Old Military Linear Park, Ponca Multi-use Equestrian Trail, Cunningham Nature Preserve Trails, Big Papio Trail, and Standing Bear Lake Trail.

The birth of Omaha's modern day trails can be traced to 1990. On July 4, 1990 of that year, Omaha opened the first phase of the Keystone Trail. The success of this initial three-mile section of paved, recreational trail fostered a record of trail construction, which is unmatched in the United States. Over a period of less than 10 years, more than 67 miles of paved, interconnected trails were constructed! Omaha became a City of trails and greenways.

The success of the Omaha Metropolitan Area trails can be traced to a unique, coordinated effort between the area's governmental agencies. In planning and developing trails, each agency set aside their individual interests to ensure an orderly, "common sense" approach, resulting in a trail system larger than any individual organization could accomplish alone. The original trail partners, Douglas County, the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District and the City of Omaha has been expanded to include all other surrounding Nebraska cities as well as Council Bluffs, Iowa. This unique, cooperative approach continues to serve residents of the entire Metro area in an exemplary fashion.

Omaha's trail system fulfills different needs. Trails provide unique opportunities for recreation. They link citizens to nature, and present an opportunity for families to relax and enjoy the outdoors. In a complex world, Omaha's trails invite users down a path of discovery and renewal, allowing them to break away for a moment and set their own pace.



Omaha's trail system is accessible to a wide variety of user groups, such as joggers, bicyclists, skaters, cross-country skiers, hikers, persons with disabilities and nature lovers. They connect parks, sports complexes, swimming pools and lakes in a seamless fashion.

The function of Omaha's trails, however, extends beyond providing recreational opportunities. Today, residents utilize trails as an alternative to the automobile and other more traditional methods of transportation. They use the trails to get to work. Schools have developed along trails, and now boast "you can walk your children to school on the West Papio Trail." Shoppers and others have discovered that using the trails, as transportation, is as fast, and certainly more fun, than driving!

The Suburban Park System Master Plan continues this philosophy of trails, both as a recreational opportunity and a transportation alternative. The Map indicates the proposed location for trails within the Suburban Park planning area.

## Boulevards

The 1889 Cleveland Plan proposed the integration of open spaces through the construction of “broad ornamental avenues, known as boulevards or parkways” designed “with a tasteful arrangement of trees and shrubbery at (their) sides and in the center”. This vision resulted in the development of some of Omaha’s most scenic neighborhood streets such as Florence, Happy Hollow, and Hanscom Boulevards. Nearly 100 years later, these types of streets in Omaha and across the country are some of the most desirable places to live and often hold higher real estate valuations. They weave neighborhoods together while providing scenic streets which link parks together. They provide comfortable places for people to walk. Their very form speaks of family and tradition.

In an effort to more closely tie central Omaha development patterns to the suburban areas, this parks plan recommends the continuation of H.W.S. Cleveland’s original boulevard concept to link parks and open spaces. The boulevards shown in this plan are designed to provide a variety of experiences for the user. The boulevard streets generally follow the natural contour of the land, often progressing from low areas to high points. They often follow valleys and ridgelines to provide a variety of views and scenic vistas. Following the natural contour of the land also minimizes grading. These routes should be as continuous as possible and contain long curves and short tangents for a more pleasant route.

The routes shown on the plan are intended be diagrammatic. Slight adjustment in their location may occur if the general intent of their routing (proximity to low area vegetation, high point vistas, etc.) is preserved.

The following are the three types of boulevards recommended in this plan and a general description of each.



Happy Hollow Boulevard is a great example of the Grand Boulevard.



Center Green Space

**The Grand Boulevard: H.W.S. Cleveland Boulevard.** This is the grand boulevard which links parks, open spaces, historic features and residential neighborhoods together. The boulevard is designed with a wide right-of-way (100') to create a scenic "green corridor" for both automobiles and pedestrians. The standard 100' R.O.W. can be increased if necessary due to physical constraints or design related problems such as the protection of drainage ways, natural vegetation and steep slopes, proper sight distance, street alignment, street design needs, and/or other similar situations. There must be a 35' no-build easement along either side of the boulevard, in which no structures, including parking lots, may be constructed. The boulevard is characterized by an expansive parkway lawn with large shade trees forming a continuous canopy over the street. Tree species may vary, but should be of similar form, height and scale. The majority of the boulevard should have a center median with large shade trees, small ornamental trees, floral displays and turf areas. The center islands may vary in width and length, but when completed should provide a continuous appearance. Trees should not be planted within sight triangles at traffic intersections and at ends of center medians. Sidewalks are 6' wide for more comfortable walking. Amenities such as interpretive plaques and signage shall be of a consistent yet unique style to create a unique signature appearance for the boulevard. Trees, light fixtures, signage and amenities should be in conformance with the Boulevard Standards contained within this document.



Street offset in R.O.W.

**The Parkway.** The parkway is the most common of the boulevards. It is the primary type of boulevard used to link the park system together. The parkway is designed with a 65' right-of-way section. Like the Cleveland boulevard, a 35' no-build easement is required on either side of the parkway. Centered in the parkway lawn are shade trees forming a continuous canopy over the street. Tree species may vary, but should be of similar form, height and scale. Sidewalks are 6' wide for more comfortable walking.



Park abuts boulevard on right

A variation of the Parkway occurs when the Parkway abuts a public open space, park or natural area. The parkway should immediately abut the public open space forming a contiguous public green space. The parkway provides high visibility to the park or open space setting thereby creating a public amenity for all who drive or walk by. The park or open space should have a well landscaped image from the parkway. Signage for the park or open space should be highly visible, and shall conform to City of Omaha Department of Property and Public Property Standards, and the Boulevard Standards contained within this document.

### III. Funding

The 2001 Plan called for park fee contributions to fund the acquisition and development of the parks, trails and boulevards. Fees were based on acreage of a development and varied between residential and commercial/industrial types of development. Neighborhood park and trail/boulevard fees were paid to the City at the time of final platting. A community park fee was specified in the Sanitary and Improvement District's subdivision agreement, to be paid at the time when the S.I.D.'s debt ratio reached 10% or under. All fees were allowed to be a general obligation of the district.

This system was analyzed by economists at HDR Engineering. The primary basis of their review were the actual expenditures and park fee revenues since the 2001 plan was implemented. Their findings are as follows:

- Fees were not adequate to repay expenditures for neighborhood parks and trails/boulevards
- The fees were not tied to inflation
- The funding deficit was increasing over time
- The community park fees were inadequate to repay cost of land acquisition and park development
- The City had to wait too long until the S.I.D.'s debt ratio reached 10% or less; it is usually upward of 10 years before that occurs; meanwhile, repayment of community park acquisition fell on the City
- The fee structures would have to change in order to keep general obligation debt under the 4% threshold set by bonding agents

Many options to both lowering expenditures and raising revenues were explored including:

- Adjusting fees to inflation
- Raising platting fees
- Increasing building permit fees to bolster the community park revenues
- Decreasing the size of neighborhood parks to reduce cost of land acquisition
- Utilizing capital improvement project (CIP) funds for community park development
- Special assessing property owners
- Design of park facilities by City Park Planners rather than design firms to keep soft costs down
- An S.I.D. incremental tax levy similar to the "Arterial Street Improvement Plan" implemented by Omaha Public Works in 2005
- Require the community park platting fee to be paid upfront at the time of final platting

Meetings with Metropolitan Omaha Builders Association (MOBA) members also resulted in a number of ideas:

- Have neighborhood parks funded with fees based on actual land costs and park development costs for each park. This would address the variable land costs throughout the urban fringe
- 3-year ramp-up of fees instead of increasing all at once
- Have the community park fee be 50% general obligation fee, 50% increased building permit fee
- Assess building permit fees for trails as well as community parks
- Increase the period of time for repayment of land acquisition for the community park containing Damsite 13 (Lawrence Youngman Lake) from 5 years to 10 years

All options were explored in detail. Several of the options were eliminated as being infeasible, impractical or unacceptable by the City or the development community.

It was determined that different funding mechanisms were most appropriate for each of the type of park facility. The neighborhood park fee would be adjusted to reflect actual expenditures and the platting fee per acre would remain, with some changes. The trail/boulevard fee would become a valuation-based fee to be paid at the time of the building permit. The community park fee would be a combination of the two, with half the fee being paid by the S.I.D. and half as a valuation-based fee paid at the time of the building permit. The following sections explain in greater detail.

**Neighborhood Park Fee**

Neighborhood park expenditures will be determined on a case-by-case basis to allow for variances in land costs. Park construction estimates and land costs will be developed at the time of platting by the S.I.D.(s) acquiring the park land. Depending on the cost of the land, the fees could range between \$1,308/acre for land value of \$25,000/acre to \$1,683/acre for land value of \$50,000/acre. This includes the estimated cost of developing the park.

Contributing S.I.D.s will have their contribution written into their subdivision agreements. The S.I.D.s will be responsible for paying differences in escalated costs to ensure that the S.I.D. that constructs the park remains whole. The S.I.D.s will reimburse each other directly in terms set out in an inter-local agreement. This eliminates the need for the City’s role as the receiver and distributor of the fees. Fees will remain eligible to be general obligations of the District. The City must approve the final agreements.

**Trail/Boulevard Fee**

This fee has been adjusted for both inflation and to cover full costs of land acquisition and construction of the remaining trails and boulevards. Instead of fees being paid at the time of platting by the

S.I.D., a 0.158% TAB (Trail and Boulevard) fee will be assessed at the time of building permits for residential lots within the present development zone. For example:

<u>Valuation</u>	<u>Per Lot Fee</u>
\$150,000	\$ 237
\$250,000	\$ 395
\$500,000	\$ 789

Commercial and industrial developments will be charged a \$1,170 TAB fee per acre of development. This, too, will be collected at the time of the building permit. There will be no S.I.D. platting fees for the trails and boulevards.

**Community Park Fee**

This fee will be adjusted for both inflation and to cover costs of future payment and repayment of community park land acquisition. The development of the community park itself will be funded by the City’s Capital Improvement Plan.

For residential developments, \$450 (approximately fifty percent of the fee) will be paid by the S.I.D. at the time of final platting and will qualify to be a general obligation of the District. This is a change from the previous plan, where the fee wasn’t paid until the S.I.D. attained a 10% debt ratio. For commercial and industrial developments, the platting fee will be \$800, to be paid at the time of final platting.

In addition, a 0.06% CP (Community Park) fee will be assessed at the time of building permits for individual lots within the present development zone. For example:

<u>Valuation</u>	<u>Per Lot Fee</u>
\$150,000	\$ 90
\$250,000	\$ 150
\$500,000	\$ 300

This assessment will apply to all development types.

## IV. Policies and Procedures

This section of the Plan describes a system of policies and procedures for the implementation of the Suburban Park Plan.

### Utilizing the SID Financing Method

Historically, an important part of the City of Omaha's analysis of proposed developments and subdivision plats is the evaluation of park related needs. The Suburban Park Plan guides this review. For those developments in which parks, trails or boulevards/parkways are indicated in the Plan, the SID financing mechanism may be authorized to purchase this property and develop the associated recreational facilities. The policies and procedures governing this process are as follows:

#### A. Parks

1. City approval is required and shall include approvals from the Park & Recreation Advisory Board, the Planning Board and the Omaha City Council.
2. Acquisition expenditures are restricted as follows:
  - a. *Maximum Per Acre Payment* – the purchase price shall not exceed the per acre, raw land price paid for the entire area being preliminary platted.
  - b. *Floodway Property* – should a park include floodway land, no reimbursement for the acquisition of this property will be approved. This property shall be donated.
  - c. *Floodplain Property* – payment for property, within designated flood-plain and proposed for acquisition within a Suburban park, shall not exceed 50% of the full per acre raw land price.
  - d. *Wetlands* – wetlands property, when contained within a Suburban Park, shall be donated without reimbursement.



The vision for future Suburban Parks

- f. *Easements* – occasionally portions of park property being purchased may be formally encumbered with easements. These include easements for sewer lines, gas lines, power lines and others. Property restricted by these easements shall be donated without compensation.
- g. *Post-Construction Stormwater Practices* – if any post-construction stormwater best management practices are proposed and approved for location in a park or boulevard, these practices shall be located in outlots or easements and designated as such on the plat and in the subdivision agreement. Said outlots and easements shall not be considered parkland.
- h. *Street Frontage* – all parks shall have a minimum of 35% of their perimeter adjoining streets. Expenditures associated with one-half the width of the street pavement and any sidewalk associated with the street frontage of a park shall be general obligation expenditures of the District.
- h. *Soft Costs* – soft costs, associated with the acquisition of parkland may be paid by the SID and shall not exceed 20%.
- j. *Open Drainage Ways* – open drainage areas may be included within a park. These lands will be donated at no charge and shall be determined by the greater of the 3:1 plus 20, 3:1 plus 50 on larger tributaries feet or the passing of the 100-year storm.



Upgrading of existing City Parks preceded this planning effort and continues today

- 3. Development of recreational facilities identified in the Plan:
  - a. *Facilities Program*. The Plan specifies the facilities to be included in each Park, Trail, Boulevard, and Cultural/Historic Area. SID expenditures shall be limited to these specific facilities unless changes are authorized during the development of the Park Plan.
  - b. *Park Master Plan*. Neighborhood Parks being developed through direct SID financing shall begin this process with the creation of a Park Master Plan. A Registered Landscape Architect shall develop this plan with direction provided by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property (PRPP). The PRPP reserves the right to conduct all design and construction administrative activities with Park Planning staff in lieu of a designer retained by an SID. Each Park Master Plan shall also include detailed cost estimates and require approval of the Park and Recreation Advisory Board. Park Master Plans are to be prepared and submitted with the preliminary plat submittals, and approved prior to the final plat being presented to the City Planning Board.
  - c. *Soft Costs* – appropriate soft costs, associated with the design and construction of parks, trails, and boulevards may be paid by the SID and shall not exceed 40%. In the case that City Park Planning staff designs and administers construction of a neighborhood park, the SID's soft costs shall not exceed 20%.

## B. Trails

1. City approval is required and shall include approvals from the Park & Recreation Advisory Board, the Planning Board and the Omaha City Council.
2. Trail corridors must include acquisition of a 40' wide linear trail easement within which the trail is to be constructed. SID expenditures associated with Trails acquisition costs shall be as follows:
  - a. *Storm System Easement* - the Suburban Park Plan utilizes the Papillion Creek System as a major vehicle for constructing a trail system. A current storm water easement requires the dedication of that portion of a stream way determined by the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District or a minimum of a horizontal distance equal to three times the depth of the creek plus 20 or 50 feet measured from the creek centerline. Along the edge of this easement, within those streams proposed for a public trail, 40 feet of additional property will be acquired for trails and should be a general obligation expenditure of the District.
  - b. *Other Property Along Streams or Waterways* – any additional property required for the construction of a trail or trail related amenities in excess of the property described in II.2.a, may be acquired by the SID under the same restrictions as Park property.
  - c. *Acquiring Additional Right-of-Way for Road Side Trails* – land and development costs for trails that are designed to adjoin roadways shall be incorporated into the right-of-way and roadway improvement costs.



Trails are an important part of Omaha's future

3. Development of trails associated with the Suburban Park Plan:
  - a. *Trail Location* – the Plan specifies the general location of all major recreational trails. SID financing for trails shall be limited to the trails specified in the Suburban Park Plan.
  - b. *Trail Design* - the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property shall provide standard details to those SIDs developing trails as part of the Suburban Park Plan. A Registered Landscape Architect shall develop a trail master plan with direction provided by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property. Each Trail Plan shall include a detailed cost estimate. Trail Master Plans are to be prepared and submitted with the preliminary plat submittal and approved by the Park and Recreation Advisory Board prior to consideration by the Planning Board.
  - c. *Soft Costs* – appropriate soft costs, associated with the development of trails may be paid by the SID and shall not exceed 40%.



Omaha's Historic  
Boulevard system



### C. Boulevards and Parkways

1. City approval is required and shall include approvals from the Park & Recreation Advisory Board, the Planning Board and the Omaha City Council. The City will work with SID on phasing the purchase and development of parks, boulevards and trails to help keep the SID debt ratio within city guidelines.
  2. Acquisition expenditures shall be as follows:
    - a. *Dedication for Public Streets* – a dedication of a minimum 100' right-of-way shall be provided for those streets designated as the H.W.S. Cleveland Boulevard. A minimum 65' right-of-way shall be dedicated for those streets designed as parkways or greenways. Right-of-way acquisition requirements over 65' may be financed as a general obligation of the District.
3. Development of Boulevards and Parkways:
    - a. *Locations* – The Plan specifies the routing of all boulevards and parkways which will guide the general placement of boulevard and parkways; however, minor location adjustments to accommodate traffic issues, topography or development limitations may be approved by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property. SID financing for boulevards/parkways will be limited to those shown in the Plan.
    - b. *Boulevards/Parkways Design* - The Suburban Park Plan provides standard design criteria for various configurations of boulevards/parkways. SID expenditures associated with the development of these transportation facilities shall be limited to tree planting, additional cost of special lighting (boulevard only) sidewalks, trails and trail signage. The cost of the first 5' width of sidewalk are to be specially assessed to adjacent lots, while the remaining 1' width should be included in the cost of the boulevard. A Registered Landscape Architect shall develop the Boulevard and Parkway Plan at a preliminary plat submittal stage, and shall continue to work with the engineer of the District throughout the final planting and construction process. Detailed plans and costs estimates shall be provided for the approval of the Park and Recreation Advisory Board. Expenditures of SID funds for the development of boulevards and parkways requires City Council approval.
    - c. *Soft Costs* – Soft costs associated with development of boulevards/parkways may be paid by the SID and shall not exceed 40%.

#### **D. Meeting the Park Contribution Requirement**

Contributions by SID's or other development related mechanisms toward the purchase of property or development of recreation facilities will be credited toward the District's required contribution. All contributions, including those described in this paragraph shall be paid prior to the City's signature on the final plat unless payment is delayed in accordance with paragraph V or VI of this section, or if a delay is specifically agreed upon by the City. For example, an SID in which the Plan has programmed a neighborhood park, may, with the City's approval, purchase that park property. The total cost of that purchase and approved soft costs shall then be applied to the park contribution assigned to that SID.

#### **E. Delaying S.I.D. Contributions**

Sanitary and Improvement District ("SID") contributions or similar payments by other development mechanisms shall be formally incorporated into the Subdivision Agreement as part of the platting process.

#### **F. The Plan's Impact on S.I.D. General Obligation Debt**

All payments to be made by SIDs, either for property purchase, facility development or those paid into the Park Development Fund shall be a General Obligation of the District.

#### **G. S.I.D. Partnerships**

Occasionally, two or more SIDs may be permitted, following approvals from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property, the Park and Recreation Advisory Board and the City Council, to jointly fund the land purchase or facility development of a park or other facility contained within the Suburban Park Plan. Such arrangements must be supported by Inter-Local Agreements, clearly defining each party's obligations.

#### **H. Utilizing the Park Development Fund**

At the City's sole discretion, funds available within the Park Development Fund may be utilized to purchase property for parks, trails and boulevards/parkways in accordance with the Suburban Park Plan.

The City may elect to utilize the Park Development Fund to purchase property within a developing or existing SID. On these occasions, this Fund may be utilized for the entire property purchase or in a joint funding agreement. Any purchase of property associated with a SID, utilizing the Park Development Fund in total or in part, will be governed by the restrictions controlling SID property purchases as represented in the Plan.

The Park Development Fund may also be utilized, by the City, to purchase property, independent of SID lands. The City is restricted in this use by the requirement that the property being purchased must be included in the Suburban Park Plan. Advanced acquisition is encouraged to reduce cost.

Lastly, the Park Development Fund may be used to retain consultants as necessary for the periodic update of the Plan.



Amenities are important to the Park's enjoyment

## I. Relationship of Park Location to Contributing S.I.Ds

- a. *Neighborhood Parks* -- Service standards based on anticipated population and on travel distance provided the basis for locating park facilities. The result is that, generally, every section of land contains a neighborhood park that will serve residents living within that section.

The primary functions of neighborhood parks are to provide basic play facilities, open space, and landscape enhancement. In addition, some of the neighborhood parks will contain minor active recreation facilities, based on service standards. Some sections of land do not contain a neighborhood park, but instead, contain a community or regional park that will serve the same functions as a neighborhood park to the residents in that section.

The Neighborhood Park contribution will be utilized primarily for those expenditures located within that section occupied by the contributing SID. In cases where the neighborhood park in an adjacent section contains recreation facilities that will serve residents of the contributing SID (i.e. the facility is not in the contributing SIDs neighborhood park, but will provide recreation to the contributing SIDs residents), the neighborhood contribution may be applied toward that adjacent section's neighborhood park. In sections that have a community park instead of a neighborhood park, the neighborhood park contribution will be used toward the community park.

Payments may be made at City discretion at the final platting stage or as set out in the subdivision agreement, which may require payment directly into the Park Development Fund or, through Inter-Local Agreement, directly to another SID responsible for incurring the expense. Payments shall be made by the SID at the time of the property purchase or the development of the park facility.

- b. *Community* – Community parks provide for the community-wide recreation needs. They may include sports complexes, extensive active play fields, recreation centers and aquatic facilities. Where the park provides an opportunity to preserve and enhance historic or natural resources, unique activities such as hiking trails, equestrian activities, historic or nature interpretation and other passive uses may be included.

Organized sports leagues and teams will use different locations throughout a season, and historic and natural resource based activities are dependant on unique features. Therefore, the locations of the community parks are not based on specific travel distance service standards. Instead, the Parks and Recreation Element states that “Equitable accessibility for area residents can be achieved by distributing sports complexes as evenly as possible throughout the city.”

Due to the imminent need to purchase the land where it is in the path of foreseeable development, and the significant acquisition costs associated with these larger parks, it will be wise to initially prioritize and target Community Park funds toward purchase of specific park sites. This Plan provides a method that, in the long-term, will provide equitable services through the geographic distribution of community parks.

Community Park fees shall be made at City discretion at the final plat or as set out in the subdivision agreement, which may require payment directly into the Park Development Fund or, through Inter-local Agreement, directly to another SID responsible for incurring the expense. Community/Regional contributions shall be made by the SID at the time of the property purchase or the development of the park facility.

- c. *Trails and Boulevards* - The Plan illustrates that the network of trails, boulevards, greenways, and parkways meets the 1-1/3 to 1-1/2 mile service standard for trails set forth in the City's Parks and Recreation Element of the Omaha Master Plan. The result is a system that serves SID residents and businesses throughout the Plan area. Most sections of land incorporate segments of this system, with a few areas served by segments in adjacent sections.

However, due to their linear and lengthy nature, trails and boulevards are enjoyed by residents and employees far outside of this service standard, and are actually more of a regional recreational resource. Therefore, unlike the Neighborhood Park fee, the Trail/Boulevard fee will not be designated to a certain segment of trail. Instead, the fee will be used to compensate SIDs which have constructed trails, in chronological order of the trail expenditures.

Payments to the trail fund will no longer be paid by the S.I.D. upon platting. Instead it will be assessed to individual lots upon obtaining a building permit.

