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# chapter eight: implementation



## value and phasing

The goals have been identified, concepts created, and policies brought forth. Now, how do you get there? Phasing the actions identified in the policy framework into realistic benchmarks over the next twenty years depends on several factors. First and foremost, Little Rock Parks and Recreation must be organized in such a way that it can effectively implement the plan. Financing must also be identified and obtained before any improvements may follow.

The following phasing plan is divided into three- to five-year segments. Each phase includes existing facility upgrades, land acquisition, general improvements to existing or new parcels or facilities, new facilities construction, and implementation of at least two of the three “systems” (Take it to the Earth, Take it to the Edge, and Take it to the Extreme), so that each can progress in a relatively similar manner. Each phase should be reviewed annually, to benchmark progress and to organize a detailed plan of action for implementing specific items for that year. To predict phasing to an annual level of detail over the next twenty years could result in numerous inaccuracies and is not the intent of this document.

The phasing plan indicates the costs necessary to implement the actions set forth in the policy

framework, see Table 8.1. **It is not an indication of capital expenditures**, nor a commitment on the behalf of Little Rock Parks and Recreation to allocate money thusly. The figures represented in the phasing plan indicate the value of each project (see Table E1: Value Assessment), not the cost to Little Rock Parks and Recreation. Alternate funding measures will reduce the cost of land, capital improvements, and operations and maintenance to the organization (see page 185, Funding Strategies). Estimates relating to operations and maintenance are in addition to the current LRPR operating budget.

NOTE: LRPR anticipates supporting regional attractions; portions of funds are available annually for the development and enhancement of urban streets and parkways.



*Achieving goals is a multi-step process*



***Category Descriptions  
for Table 8.1***

- Existing facility upgrades – includes expansion, renovation, updating to existing facilities
- Land acquisition – acquiring land for new parks and/or trails
- General improvements – improvements to new land acquisitions; includes grading, parking, landscape, lighting, and open play fields. This is an estimate for the average cost per acre of park land. A more detailed cost estimate will be necessary on a per project basis.

Table 8.1: Phase One

PROJECT	ITEM TOTAL	SUBTOTAL	ADDITIONAL OPS / MAINT	REFERENCE	ANNUAL COST
<b>PHASE ONE: Years 1 to 3</b>					
<b>Existing Facility Upgrades:</b>					
15 Existing park upgrades	\$4,500,000		\$225,000	Action 1.3.1	
Hindman Golf Course additional upgrades (\$2,000,000 total - \$1,000,000 general upgrades = \$1,000,000 add'l)	\$1,000,000		\$300,000	Action 1.2.2	
		\$5,500,000			
<b>Land Acquisition:</b>					
Land for trails along "Edge" system: Group 1 (54 acres)	\$2,160,000		\$0	N/A	
Land for greenway and equestrian trails (6.5 miles/16 acres)	\$640,000		\$0	N/A	
		\$2,800,000			
<b>General Improvements:</b>					
Urban Forestry Program (\$807,500/year)	\$2,422,500		\$56,100	Action 3.7.1	
		\$2,422,500			
<b>New Facilities:</b>					
10 practice soccer fields in existing parks	\$50,000		\$29,750	Action 2.6.5	
		\$50,000			
<b>Phase I: "Take it to the Edge" system</b>					
General Improvements: 9 miles of trails (14 improved acres)	\$700,000		\$0	N/A	
9 miles of 12' asphalt trails	\$1,125,000		\$126,000	Action 1.3.3	
		\$1,825,000			
<b>Phase I: "Take it to the Extreme" system</b>					
General Improvements: 60 acres at new 617-acre parcel	\$3,000,000		\$210,000	Action 1.1.1	
6 game soccer fields at new 617-acre parcel	\$600,000		\$66,000	Action 1.1.1	
2 miles of 24' concrete road	\$1,600,000				
		\$5,200,000			
<b>Phase I: "Take it to the Earth" system</b>					
5 canoe landings at Fourche Bottoms parcel **	\$15,000		\$0	Action 1.1.3	AT THE END OF YEAR THREE, ANNUAL COST IS
		\$15,000			
<b>PHASE ONE: TOTAL</b>		<b>\$17,812,500</b>	<b>\$1,012,850</b>		<b>\$1,012,850</b>

NOTE: This table does not reflect anticipated decreases in overall costs through alternate funding methods; it only reflects the total value of all improvements

Table 8.2: Phase Two

PROJECT	ITEM TOTAL	SUBTOTAL	ADDITIONAL OPS / MAINT	REFERENCE	ANNUAL COST
<b>PHASE TWO: Years 4 to 6</b>					
<b>Existing Facility Upgrades:</b>					
15 Existing park upgrades	\$4,500,000		\$450,000	Action 1.3.1	
Improve 5 school parks	\$375,000		\$33,750	Action 1.3.2	
		\$4,875,000			
<b>Land Acquisition:</b>					
Land for trails along three systems: Group 2 (60 acres)	\$2,400,000		\$0	N/A	
Land for greenway and equestrian trails (6.5 miles/16 acres)	\$640,000		\$0	N/A	
		\$3,040,000			
<b>General Improvements:</b>					
Urban Forestry Program (\$807,500/year)	\$2,422,500		\$56,100	Action 3.7.1	
13 miles of greenway and equestrian trails (16 improved acres)	\$800,000		\$0	N/A	
Hindman South: 35 acres	\$1,750,000		\$122,500	Action 1.2.1	
		\$4,972,500			
<b>New Facilities and Expansions:</b>					
10 competition baseball/softball fields in existing parks	\$200,000		\$45,000	Action 2.5.3	
Expand Dunbar, include indoor pool	\$3,900,000		\$100,000	Action 2.2.1	
8 miles of greenway trails	\$676,000		\$84,000	Action 1.7.2	
5 miles of equestrian trails	\$30,000		\$6,000	Action 1.7.2	
		\$4,806,000			
<b>Phase II: "Take it to the Extreme" system</b>					
General Improvements: 40 acres at new 617-acre parcel	\$2,000,000		\$140,000	Action 1.1.1	
8 tournament baseball/softball fields at new 617-acre parcel	\$1,120,000		see next line	see next line	
6 soccer game fields at new 617-acre parcel	\$600,000		\$154,000	Action 1.1.1	
1 playground at new 617-acre parcel	\$75,000		\$2,000	Action 2.9.2	
		\$3,795,000			
<b>PHASE TWO: TOTAL</b>		<b>\$21,488,500</b>	<b>\$1,193,350</b>		<b>AT THE END OF YEAR SIX, ANNUAL COST IS \$2,206,200</b>

NOTE: This table does not reflect anticipated decreases in overall costs through alternate funding methods; it only reflects the total value of all improvements

Table 8.3: Phase Three

PROJECT	ITEM TOTAL	SUBTOTAL	ADDITIONAL OPS / MAINT	REFERENCE	ANNUAL COST
<b>PHASE THREE: Years 7 to 10</b>					
<b>Existing Facility Upgrades:</b>					
20 Existing park upgrades	\$6,000,000		\$600,000	Action 1.3.1	
Improve 5 school parks	\$375,000		\$33,750	Action 1.3.2	
		\$6,375,000			
<b>Land Acquisition:</b>					
Land for trails along three systems: Group 3 (120 acres)	\$4,800,000		\$0	N/A	
Neighborhood Parks Group 1: 40 acres	\$4,800,000		\$0	N/A	
Land for greenway and equestrian trails (8 miles/20 acres)	\$800,000		\$0	N/A	
		\$10,400,000			
<b>General Improvements:</b>					
Neighborhood Parks Group 1 (40 improved acres)	\$2,000,000		\$180,000	Action 1.3.1	
Urban Forestry Program (\$807,500/year)	\$3,230,000		\$74,800	Action 3.7.1	
8 miles of greenway and equestrian trails (10 improved acres)	\$500,000		\$0	N/A	
		\$5,730,000			
<b>New Facilities and Expansions:</b>					
6 miles greenway trails	\$507,000		\$63,000	Action 1.7.2	
2 miles equestrian trails	\$12,000		\$2,400	Action 1.7.2	
		\$519,000			
<b>Phase II: "Take it to the Edge" system completion</b>					
General improvements: 15 miles of trails (23 improved acres)	\$1,150,000		\$0	N/A	
15 miles of 12' asphalt trails	\$1,875,000		\$210,000	Action 1.3.3	
		\$3,025,000			
<b>Phase II: "Take it to the Earth" system</b>					
General Improvements: 60 acres at Fourche parcel	\$3,000,000		\$90,000	Action 1.1.3	
General Improvements: 13 miles of trails (20 improved acres)	\$1,000,000		\$0	N/A	
11 miles of earthen trails	\$66,000		\$9,350	Action 1.7.2	
2 miles of boardwalk trails **	\$370,000		\$28,000	Action 1.3.3	
Interpretive stations **	\$25,000		\$0	Action 1.1.3	
		\$4,461,000			
<b>PHASE THREE: TOTAL</b>		<b>\$30,510,000</b>	<b>\$1,291,300</b>		<b>\$3,497,500</b>

ADDITIONAL OPS / MAINT	REFERENCE	ANNUAL COST
\$600,000	Action 1.3.1	
\$33,750	Action 1.3.2	
\$0	N/A	
\$0	N/A	
\$0	N/A	
\$180,000	Action 1.3.1	
\$74,800	Action 3.7.1	
\$0	N/A	
\$63,000	Action 1.7.2	
\$2,400	Action 1.7.2	
\$0	N/A	
\$210,000	Action 1.3.3	
\$90,000	Action 1.1.3	
\$0	N/A	
\$9,350	Action 1.7.2	
\$28,000	Action 1.3.3	
\$0	Action 1.1.3	
		AT THE END OF YEAR 10, ANNUAL COST IS
<b>\$1,291,300</b>		<b>\$3,497,500</b>

NOTE: This table does not reflect anticipated decreases in overall costs through alternate funding methods; it only reflects the total value of all improvements

*Table 8.4: Phase Four*

<b>PHASE FOUR: Years 11 to 15</b>
<b>Existing Facility Upgrades:</b> 3 Existing park upgrades Improve 10 school parks
<b>Land Acquisition:</b> Land for trails along three systems: Group 4 (80 acres) Community Parks Group 1: 60 acres Neighborhood Parks Group 2: 40 acres Land for greenway and equestrian trails (11 miles/26 acres)
<b>General Improvements:</b> Neighborhood Parks Group 2 (40 improved acres) Urban Forestry Program (\$807,500/year) 11 miles of greenway and equestrian trails (13 improved acres)
<b>New Facilities:</b> 10 competition baseball/softball fields in existing parks 10 playgrounds (one in each new neighborhood park) 8 miles greenway trails 3 miles equestrian trails
<b>Phase I: Two Rivers</b> Basic Improvements: 40 acres
<b>Phase III: "Take it to the Extreme" system</b> General Improvements: 100 acres at new 617-acre parcel Outdoor recreation center at new 617-acre parcel
<b>Phase III: "Take it to the Earth" system completion</b> Interpretive center/pavilion

*Table 8.5: Phase Five*

<b>PHASE FIVE: Years 16 to 20</b>
<b>Existing Facility Upgrades:</b> Improve 15 school parks
<b>Land Acquisition:</b> Community Parks Group 2: 60 acres Land for greenway and equestrian trails (11 miles/26 acres)
<b>General Improvements</b> Community Parks Groups 1 & 2 (60 improved acres total) Urban Forestry Program (\$807,500/year) 11 miles of greenway and equestrian trails (13 improved acres)
<b>New Facilities:</b> 8 miles greenway trails 3 miles equestrian trails 1 spray pool 1 aquatic center/skate park Expand Southwest, include fitness center Community center with indoor pool Equestrian center Fitness center, market rate 4 playgrounds (one in each new community park) 7 competition baseball/softball fields in new community parks
<b>Phase IV: "Take it to the Extreme" system completion</b> General Improvements: 14 miles (22 improved acres) 14 miles of earthen trails

## funding strategies

With all master plans involving parks and recreation agencies, there are over thirty methods to fund and finance projects and operations. Funding options are more successful if they are based on what meets the needs of the community in which they are created. To determine the methods that are best suited for Little Rock Parks and Recreation, the development of weighted criteria for each type of funding as it relates to the project will assist in ranking those funding sources. Some funding and financing options have worked very well in other cities while some have proven to be controversial and not supported by the city leaders or the community. Little Rock Parks and Recreation will need to substantiate the pros and cons of each option and the appropriateness to their community and projects.

The criteria to validate a funding source can include such measurements as compatibility to project, use in other similar projects, priority in the plan and time frame match. The following are examples of funding sources that may work in Little Rock to support the Master Plan.

- **Parks Foundations** can accept land donations and allow donor a tax deduction on the value of the land. This method can allow for donations with tax deductions for

the donor. Land donations can be a tax deduction for individuals and businesses. Little Rock Parks and Recreation can create parks foundation to assist in acquiring land, developing facilities, purchasing capital equipment or supporting programs. The foundation can leverage many opportunities for the department.

- **General Foundations** can be sought for land acquisition, develop and construction of facilities, providing programs and cause promotion. These foundations can include general-purpose foundation that have relatively few restrictions, special program foundation for specific activities and corporation foundation with few limitations and typically come from local sources. To understand the criteria for gift giving, the foundations should be researched prior to approaching them for donations.
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund** is a grant available to purchase of land, water and wetlands for the benefit of the community. It is available for local governments through the USDA Forest Service. This is the most widely used form of grants for many parks and recreation agencies.
- **Real Estate Transfer Fees** are an increasingly popular funding source in many communities around the country for acquisition, upgrade and upkeep of parks. The basis for the fee is the intrinsic value existing parks provide for the property values in the community. The fee amount, who pays it (seller or buyer), and at what value level the fee initiates are all matters for negotiation as the fee is instituted.
- **Developer Impact Fees** (see prior page on land ordinance fees) to be used for various purposes.
- **Easements** can be used to create parkland through leveraging the property without actually purchasing the land. There are different types of easements for parks to use. Each instrument provides the landowner title to the property while for consideration of a fee, the land owner agrees to the conditions of the easement
- **TEA-21** is a funding program, formerly known as ISTEA, where enhancement revenues are available for transportation related projects, including bicycle and pedestrian trails.
- **Community Development Block Grants** are federal grants, which are distributed to cities and can be used for a wide variety of municipal projects within designated geographic areas, which meet program guidelines, such as income levels of area residents.

- **Land Trusts** are nonprofit organizations that work with landowner who want to protect land for conservation, recreation and other public benefit. Land trusts may acquire land through donation and purchase, hold negotiated easements and work out other plans to maintain open space. Most serve a community, region or state. Land trusts protect open space of all kinds. Land trusts are able to operate in the private sector and use flexible, voluntary methods of land conservation.
- **Federal and State Grants** exist through the governmental systems that will need to be researched based on each project. There are multiple grants that are available each year.
- **Local Option Tax Revenues** are in the form of sales tax. This tax is usually limited to a specific amount through voter approval and usually adopted for a specific purpose or project or for a specific county or city. A possible sales tax purpose can be recreation, open space acquisition or greenways.
- **Fees and Charges** are market-driven pricing of programs and services based on direct costs of providing the service and/or acceptable cost recovery rates. These can also include resident and non-resident fee differentials.
- **Reservation and Permits** are fees that are based on market value for time and use of park-related amenities or locations.
- **Revenue Bonds** are used for capital projects, which will generate revenue for debt service. This is a popular method for financing high use specialty facilities like golf courses, tennis centers, fitness facilities and athletic complexes. In order for this method to work effectively, it must produce enough excess revenue to cover its operational costs and service its bond debt.
- **General Obligation Bonds** are bonded indebtedness issued with the approval of the electorate for capital improvements and general public improvements.
- **Naming Rights** are solicited to corporations, foundations or individuals in which the department allows their name to be used as the title of the facility for a specified time period. The naming rights are based on market value of the ongoing promotion of the facility and include dollars to maintain the facility to a high level.
- A **Hotel/Motel Tax** is based on gross receipts from hotel services, which may be used to build and operate recreation opportunities. This type of tax is by approval of the voters.
- **Sponsorships** for programs and events are supported by donations of money, supplies, or services from businesses and individuals to permit limited exposure to the targeted audience.
- **Partnerships** can be developed that share the operational, maintenance and capital costs of a program, service or facility. There are generally three types of partnerships that can be formed with the parks and recreation department: public-public, public-private and public-not for profit.
- **Advertisement sales** can be calculated based on location, size of placement, targeted audience, and length of time advertisement is in place within areas of a facility, in publications, on t-shirts, fences, etc. These sales can assist with funding a program, facility or event.
- **Merchandise sales** are available to a department who wants to sell retail items through a gift shop or other retail establishments and revenue is funneled directly to the operations of the facility or program.
- **Concession and Catering Management sales revenues** are generated through the operations of these areas by private contractors. A negotiated return from the net amount is included in the contract that can

be targeted towards operations of a facility, event or program.

- **Creation of an Authority** is a method to use when the pursuit of sports tournaments is desired for their economic impact within their community. The agency creates an authority that acts autonomously of any organized sporting association to enhance the tournament opportunities of the community while financing it through private donations or memberships. This method allows more flexibility with bidding, organizing, managing and operating events that are normally not available to city governments.
- **Maintenance endowments** are monies set aside to maintain a park or facility. The maintenance endowments should be included when funds are raised to develop or acquire a park or land. Using conservative formulas, the endowment should be built anticipating a payout of 4-5% annually with no invasion of the corpus.

For developed park land the department should project an average \$3,000 per year maintenance budget per acre. Using a 40-acre park as a model and assuming a 60% development, this assumes a 24-acre developed park. At \$3,000 per acre times 24 acres one would need \$72,000 per year for maintenance. Using a 5% payout, the

endowment to fully support this park for 20 years will be \$1,440,000. The creation of this endowment should fall under the park foundation and be established as a designated fund.

## benchmark cities comparison

For purposes of comparing Little Rock's existing and proposed parks and recreation system, eight cities were selected as benchmarks. These cities were chosen based on their population, their location, their status as a capitol city, or as an example of an exemplary parks and recreation system.

These cities were compared based on their total number of parks, total park acreage within the system, operating and capital budgets, percapita incomes, and population. From budget and population numbers, park expenditures per resident were derived as a basis for comparison.

Minneapolis, Minnesota, is known for its high-quality parks and recreation system. Likewise, the city has the highest per capita expenditure (in this comparison) on parks, \$154. Louisville, Kentucky, ranks second in this comparison with \$129 per person spent. Chattanooga, Tennessee, ranks third with \$89 per person. These numbers consider expenditures made within local jurisdictions and do not consider state or national parks or forests. This may explain Salt Lake City's low expenditure on local parks on a per-person basis.

Little Rock's current parks expenditure per resident falls slightly lower than average, at \$61 per capita. With the implementation of the "City in a Park" plan, the per capita expenditure rises to \$95, placing the city third in this comparison, behind only Minneapolis and Louisville.

See Table 8.6 for details.

*Table 8.6: Benchmark Cities Comparison*

CITY	Total Parks	Total Acres	Operating Budget	Capital Budget	Total Budget	Per Capita Income*	Population	Park \$ Spent per Person
Chattanooga, TN	57	1,495	\$10,445,220	\$3,753,000	\$14,198,220	\$12,332	159,000	\$89
Jackson, MS	52	1,250	\$5,600,000	\$1,725,000	\$7,325,000	\$12,216	180,600	\$41
Louisville, KY	276	10,274	\$22,633,000	\$11,967,500	\$34,600,500	\$11,527	269,000	\$129
Minneapolis, MN	133	5,694	\$44,200,000	\$10,000,000	\$54,200,000	\$14,830	353,000	\$154
Nashville, TN	92	9,345	\$24,654,000	\$10,854,000	\$35,508,000	\$14,490	506,000	\$70
Norfolk, VA	42	n/a	\$10,500,000	\$0	\$10,500,000	\$11,643	225,000	\$47
Salt Lake City, UT	126	1,914	\$5,700,000	\$1,500,000	\$7,200,000	\$13,482	171,000	\$42
Topeka, KS	98	1,400	\$8,300,000	\$750,000	\$9,050,000	\$13,680	124,500	\$73
Little Rock, AR	53	5,771	\$10,500,000	\$0	\$10,500,000	\$15,307	173,500	\$61
City in a Park Plan	n/a	6,400	\$12,000,000	\$4,500,000	\$16,500,000	n/a	173,500	\$95

\* Per capita incomes taken from the 1990 census; 2000 numbers not available at the time of this comparison

