ODDFELLOWS PARK

Classification: Community Park — 13 acres

Character: The park property is extensively wooded, with much of the existing development clustered in the northwest corner. Pull-in style parking, which is less than ideal due to vehicles backing into traffic, is provided near the developed area. A large picnic shelter, which is fairly old, provides a group gathering space and adds an interesting architectural character to the site. A small restroom building, which is old and in poor condition, is located near the road, as are portable restrooms. A children’s playground, which is still in good shape, is tucked into some mature trees, which provides a nice setting and shade for the playground. A small gazebo is located between the large picnic shelter and the children’s playground. The park is located next to senior housing. Within the wooded area, nature trails are the only developed facilities.

Development Considerations: This park is classified as a community park due to its size, the facilities that are offered, and its proximity to nearby Way Park, which is defined as the neighborhood park for this area. Under a community park designation, future development of Oddfellows Park can be more flexible and accommodate facilities that serve a broader array of user groups or more specialized uses. With the existing facilities, ongoing maintenance is one of the key issues, especially with respect to the large picnic shelter and restroom facility.

In the nearer-term, the site is best viewed as reserve land since no formal program has emerged to guide future development of this site. With Way Park’s master plan robustly addressing neighborhood park needs in this area, there is little justification to duplicate those amenities in this location in the long term. In the shorter term, maintaining the current facilities is appropriate until they reach the end of their effective lifecycle. Once the Way Park master plan is implemented, it will be easier to discern how this park factors into meeting the needs of local residents.

Potential Development Costs to Optimal Level: None.
Par Meadow Park

Classification: Conservation (Nature) Area — 7 acres

Character: This park primary consists of stormwater ponds surrounded by limited upland along Woodley Street. An asphalt trail traverses through the site.

Development Considerations: Adding a simple bench overlook at select locations along the trail would allow park users to stop and enjoy the view across the ponds. Naturalizing more of the mowed turf would add to the natural aesthetic quality of the park and help reduce maintenance costs.

Potential Development Costs to Optimal Level: $5,000 - $10,000.
**RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK**

**Classification:** Community Park — 19 acres

**Character:** Although a somewhat eclectic collection of land parcels and uses, Riverside Lions Park remains a viable park unit that serves both community and neighborhood functions. The northern end of the park is routinely used for a seasonal farmers market along 7th Street. An interesting wood pergola/arbor structure with seating adds an appealing architectural feature to this area of the park. A children’s play area is also provided adjacent to the arbor. Although the play equipment is in good condition, the surface area is oversized and not well sited relative to the arbor structure. An asphalt trail, which is in need of upgrading, traverses through this and other areas of the park and provides a connection to Babcock Park via a grade-separated crossing under the TH 3 bridge. Although functional, the connection is visually unappealing and lacks clear sight lines, which might intimidate some users. The trail also dead ends on the north end of the park into a parking lot on the back side of a commercial building.

The middle section of the park includes an open grass area and a large concrete pad with lights previously used for a skateboard park. An older picnic shelter with some picnic tables and grills scattered around along with an older restroom building are located further to the south. On the southern-most end of the park is the well-maintained Vets Memorial, which was dedicated in 2005 and is a highly visible and compelling architectural feature. Parking is currently limited and primarily along 7th and 8th Streets.

**Development Considerations:** As with the other riverside and downtown area community parks, a new master plan is needed for Riverside Lions Park to better organize site uses and determine the mix of facilities and amenities needed to best serve the community. Importantly, the park’s design needs to accommodate neighborhood and community park amenities since it serves both functions. A new master plan should also focus on ways to better support the farmers market and continue to provide space for the annual car show. Particular attention needs to be paid to the vehicular access and parking issues, especially along 7th and 8th Streets and the southern end of the park. The relationship of the park and adjacent housing also needs to be addressed as part of a new master plan, including determining the cost-benefit of acquiring select properties on the southern end of the park as related to the Vets Memorial. As with Babcock, taking full advantage of the scenic values of the river corridor should be a top priority, as is the need to enhance the general aesthetic quality of the park through good design, landscaping, and architectural elements. Extending the trail on the northern end of the park into the downtown business district is also an important design consideration.

**Potential Development Costs to Optimal Level:** $300,000 to $800,000, which ranges from limiting enhancements to neighborhood park-type features and trails to more robust enhancement of community park features associated with the farmers market, arbor area, and trail connection to 5th Street.
ROOSEVELT PARK/ROOSEVELT RIDGE PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park — 12 acres

Character: These combined parks include a ballfield and general open space for active neighborhood use. An asphalt trail connects Roosevelt Park with the surrounding neighborhood. In addition to the active use area, an extensive linear wooded area left in its natural state provides a nice buffer and opportunity for additional trail connections.

Development Considerations: Given the park distribution in this area of the city, these two parks function in concert with Truman and Heritage Parks to fully service local neighborhood park needs. As such, any improvements made to any of these parks should take consideration how they interrelate to ensure that a good balance of amenities is collectively provided in this neighborhood area. With this park, development considerations are limited, with the primary focus being on completing trail linkages to local streets through the wooded areas. Providing additional landscaping in select locations along Adams Street should also be considered to add to the park’s visual appeal.

Potential Development Costs to Optimal Level: $30,000 to $40,000 for trails and landscaping.
**SECHLER PARK**

**Classification:** Athletic Complex — 105 acres

**Character:** Sechler Park is an athletic complex located along the Cannon River, although the river itself is hard to even see from the active use area. Facilities include ballfields, limited open field area, parking, batting cages, concessions/restroom building, picnic shelters, and children’s play area. Although in generally good shape, some of the fields are in need of upgrading. The main baseball field is in excellent shape with large bleachers, a nice flagpole display area and adjacent concessions. The park lacks a sense of entrance and can be difficult to find for those who are not familiar with it. The park drive is narrow and an adjacent trail is separated by bollards, which is not especially appealing for trail users. The newer playground structure is appealing.

**Development Considerations:** As defined in Section 3, Sechler Park is designated as a ballfield complex to service various local associations. Although nearly fully developed, working with local associations to add a ballfield in lieu of the open field space is appropriate, assuming that any previous use of this area can be accommodated elsewhere in the system. Otherwise, general maintenance and upgrading as facilities reach the end of their effective life are the primary development issues facing the park, along with improving the aesthetic qualities of the park with additional landscaping in select locations. The park entrance points should be enhanced to be more easily identifiable, attractive, and improved sense of entrance into the site. (Rerouting of the asphalt trail through the property is also a development consideration, as defined in Section 4.) Prior to any major upgrading, the City and local associations should collaborate on creating an updated master plan and phasing program to ensure that all improvements are duly considered.

**Potential Development Costs to Optimal Level:** $100,000 to $200,000 for ballfield improvements.