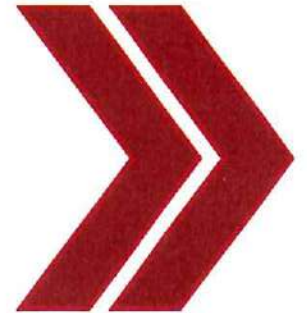


CITY OF KNOX

5-YEAR MASTER PARK PLAN
2024-2028



Knox Parks and Recreation Five Year Master Plan 2024-2028

Community: City of Knox

Address: 101 W. Washington
Knox, IN 46534

Phone: 574-772-4553

Park Board Members: Autumn Ferch, President
Gary Dulin, Vice-President (School Appointment)
Glenn Barnes, Secretary
Ruth Bailey, Member (Library Appointment)
Nathan Bradley, Member
Lora Estok

Mayor: Dennis Estok

Park Superintendent: Kari Swihart

City Council: Jeff Berg, President
Ronald Parker
Donald Kring
Sherry Cowen
Bill Gustafson

Clerk-Treasurer: Cyndi Kidder

Plan Author: Edwin Buswell
Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission
PO Box 127
Monon, IN 47959
219-253-6658
elb@kirpc.net

INTRODUCTION

The City of Knox serves as the county seat of Starke County, Indiana. Knox is located on U.S. 35 approximately and SR 8. (See Map, page 3) It is located approximately 85 southeast of Chicago. The city was founded in 1851 and named after General Henry Knox. The city covers 3.96 square miles and has a total population of 3,662 according to the 2020 U.S. Census.

DEFINITION OF PLANNING AREA

The planning area for the Knox Parks Board includes the incorporated area of the City of Knox. (See Map, page 4) For planning purposes, the Master Park Plan also includes a one mile buffer area around the city since many people in the areas around Knox partake of amenities and programs available at the parks on a regular basis.

GOAL OF THE MASTER PLAN

The goal of the Knox Master Park Plan is to establish the goals and objectives for the Knox Park Department for 2023 through 2027. The planning process will be used to gather public input to assist the park board in making decisions on park programs and upgrades and to assist the park board in allocating the available funding for the parks to the areas that will best serve the public needs.

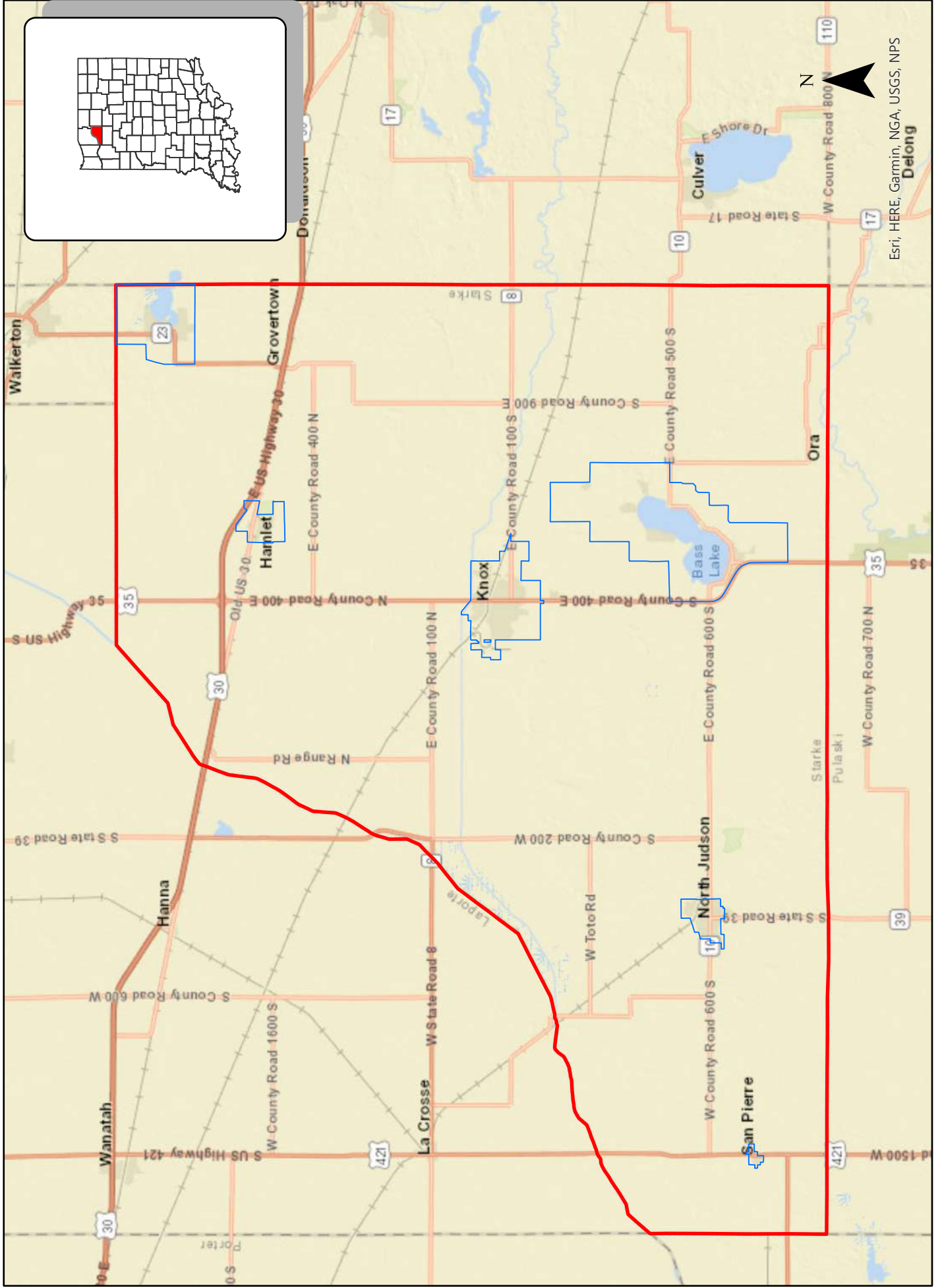
PARK BOARD AND CITY INFORMATION

City and Park Board Structure

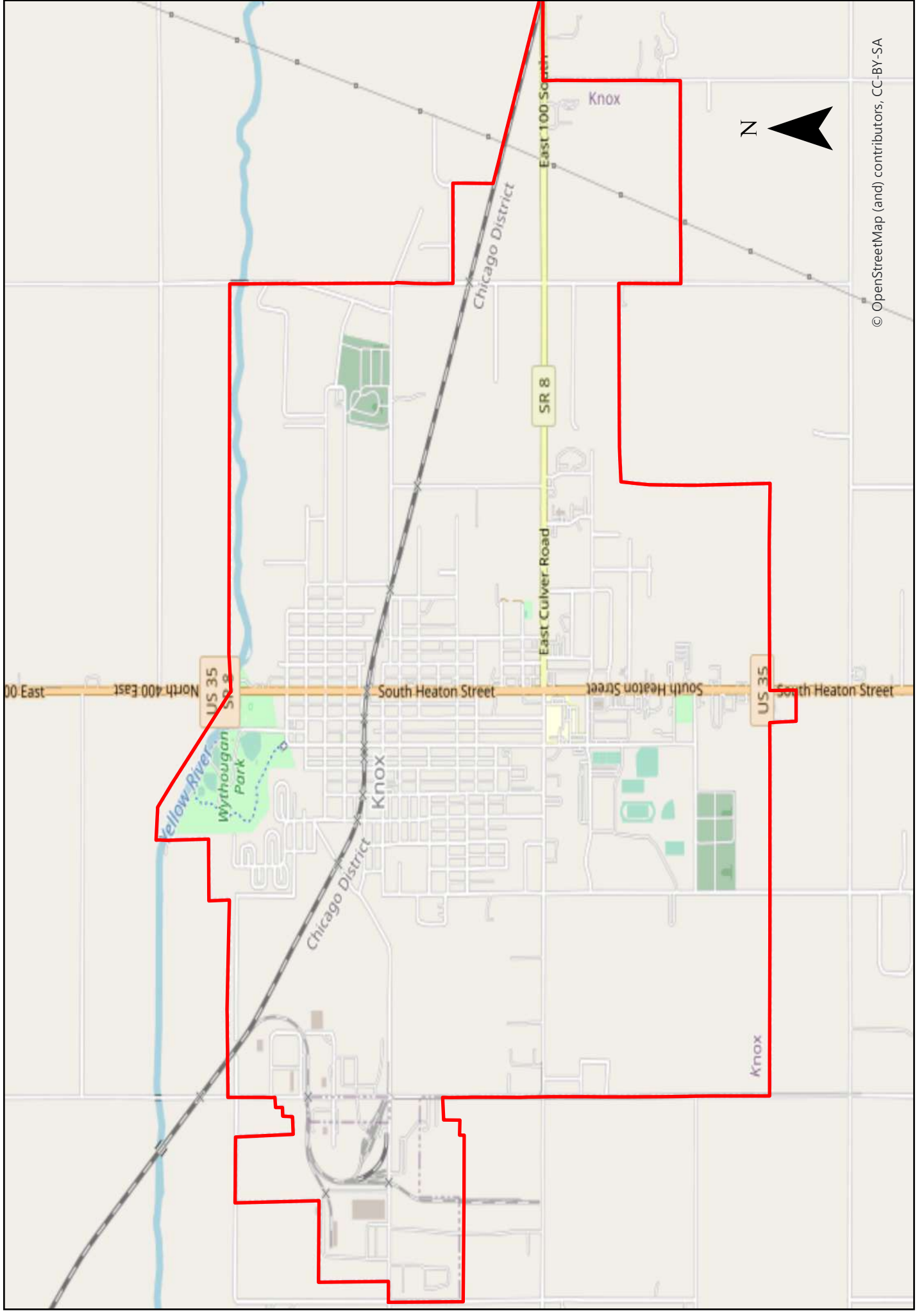
Knox has a government structure typical of small Indiana cities. The voters elect the Mayor, Clerk-Treasurer, and a five-member city council. The council holds meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. These meetings are open and allow for public participation.

The Knox Parks and Recreation Board consists of five members. Three members are appointed by the Mayor, and two ex-officio members; one by the library board, and one by the school board. Appointed board members serve four-year staggered terms. Ex-officio members are appointed by their respective board whenever a vacancy occurs.

Knox Location Map



Knox Map



Knox Parks and Recreation Mission and Philosophy

Mission

To provide residents and visitors of our community with state-of-the-art park facilities and leisure, educational, cultural and physical activities that enhance quality of life and inspire personal growth, self-esteem, pride and respect for the community

Operating Philosophy

In its operations, the Knox Parks and Recreation Department shall:

- Strive to provide affordable recreation opportunities that are accessible to all.
- Celebrate and protect the unique heritage, culture and natural environment of the community.
- Work in partnership with other government entities, community organizations and businesses, and volunteers to provide recreation opportunities and amenities that respond to the needs of the community.
- Provide good stewardship and maintenance of existing park resources and amenities.
- Develop new park and recreation amenities and programs in response to community needs and desires.

Park Staff

The Knox Parks Department staff include a Superintendent and three part-time employees. In addition, the Mayor and his staff provide some administrative assistance to the department.

Hours for park staff vary seasonally, and the part-time staff works only 28 weeks per year. The superintendent oversees day-to-day operations of the parks, including maintenance, mowing, tree trimming, and construction and/ or repair of park amenities. The superintendent reports to the Parks and Recreation Board of Directors.

The primary responsibility of the staff is park maintenance. The board takes much of the responsibility for the administration of the department. During peak periods, board members are required to make frequent decisions about day-to-day operations. Although the parks superintendent and staff are efficient and capable; they do not have any financial decision-making authority; leaving this responsibility with the board

KNOX PARKS

The Parks Department currently has three parks. Each with unique amenities. (see Map, page 7)

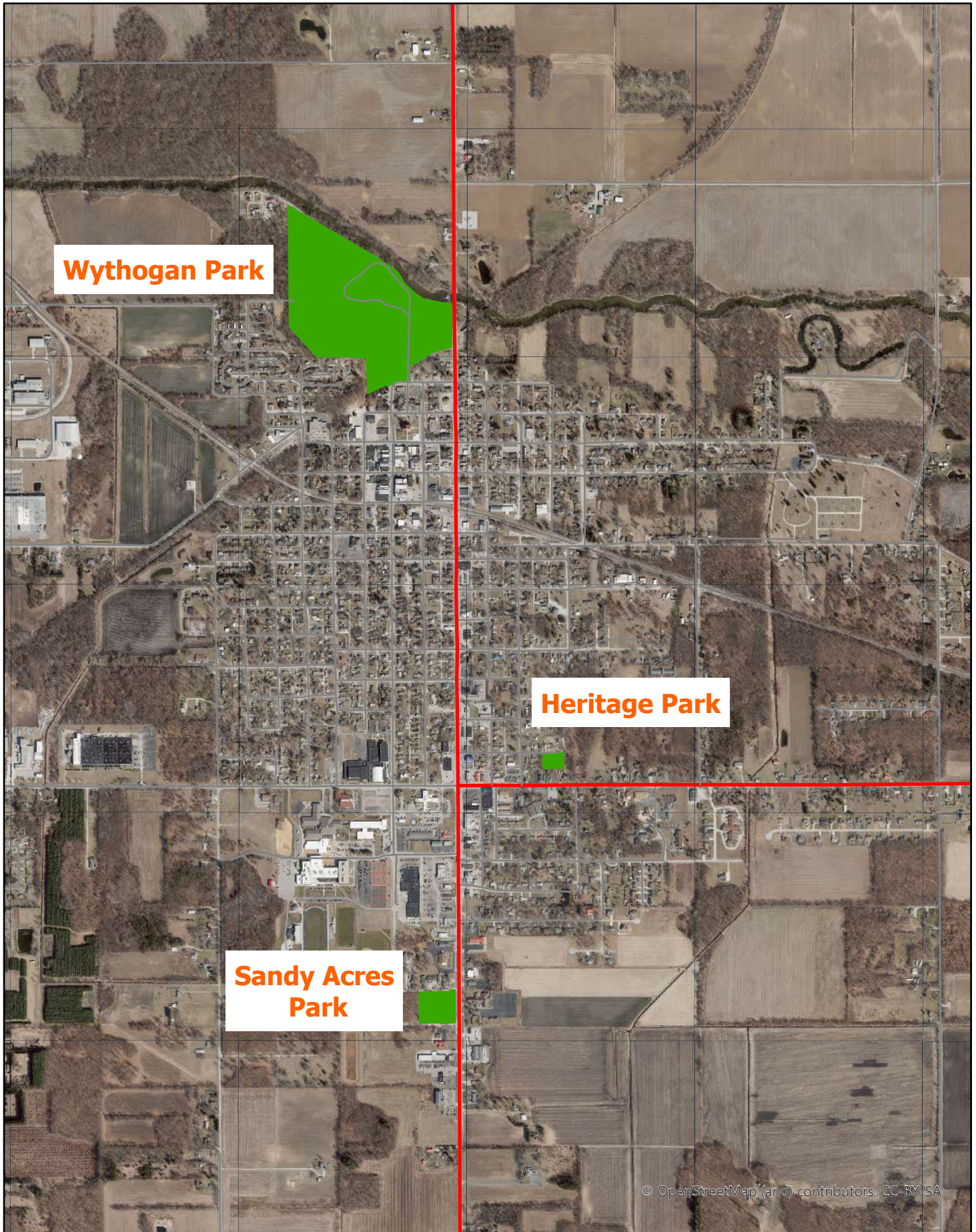
Wythogan Park



Wythogan Park is the largest and primary park which has the most users. The park has approximately 39.20 acres. The park is located in the north part of the city along the Yellow River. The park offers many amenities to the community. (See Map, page 8) These amenities include:

- A splash pad
- 6 picnic shelters
- Performance stage
- Boat Launch
- Concession/Maintenance Building
- New Concession/Restroom Building
- Paved Walking Trail - asphalt pavement - 10' wide
- Skate Park - equipment has been partially updated in recent years
- Basketball Court
- 2 - Sand Volleyball Courts

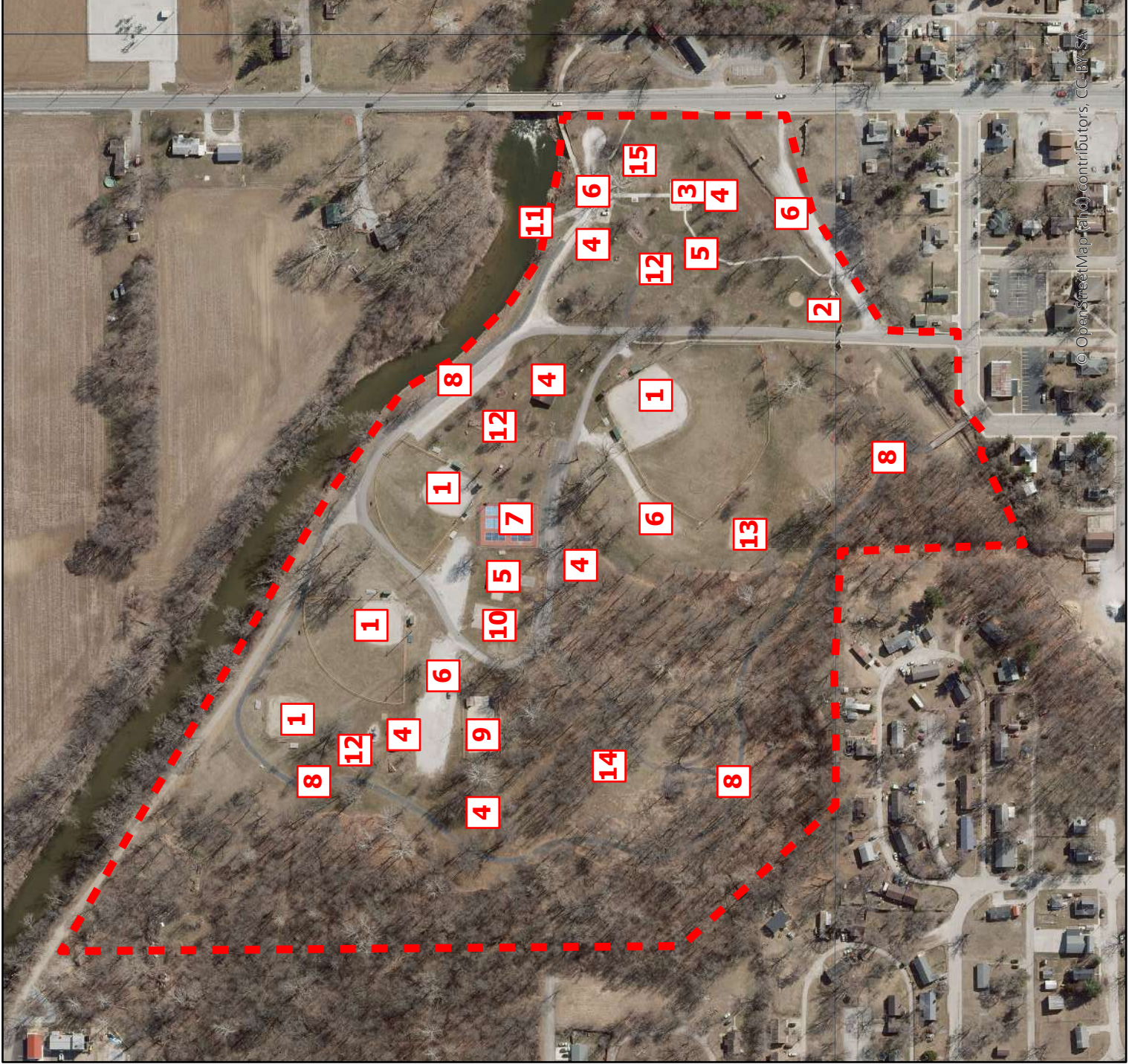
Knox Parks Location Map



Wythogan Park Existing Amenities

Legend

- 1 - Ball Fields
- 2 - Performance Stage
- 3 - Splash Pad
- 4 - Shelter
- 5 - Restroom/Concessions
- 6 - Parking
- 7 - Pickle Ball Courts
- 8 - Multi-use Trail
- 9 - Skate Park
- 10 - Basketball Court
- 11 - Boat Launch
- 12 - Playgrounds
- 13 - Sand Volleyball
- 14 - Disc Golf Course
- 15 - Exercise Equipment
- Park Boundary



- Pickleball Courts - Recently converted previous tennis courts into 6 pickleball courts, excellent condition
- Playground equipment - 3 primary playground areas with various play equipment
- A pedestrian bridge that provides access to the Knox downtown area
- Horseshoe pits
- Disc Golf Course

The newest additions to the parks include the new concession stand building near the splash pad, new shelter by the splash pad, a new parking area and entrance to U.S. 35 on the east side of the park, disc golf course, and pickleball courts. The baseball/softball fields, splash pad, pickleball courts, and walking trail are the most used amenities in the park.

There is also a pedestrian trail under U.S. 35 that provides access to a historic train depot located on the east side of U.S. 35. This could in the future link the park to a potential new park created on the east side of US 35.

The Yellow River is an amenity along the northern border of the park. There is a boat launch and the river is used for fishing by local residents.

The park houses several historic amenities, including the Starke County Bridge #39, which was relocated to the park in 1992, a cannon donated by the American Legion, a stone entrance gate constructed by the W.P.A, and a cemetery.

Sandy Acres Park



Sandy Acres Park is located at the intersection of U.S. 35 and Veterans Parkway in the southern part of the city. To the north of the park is an assisted living facility for seniors. Knox school campus is located to the northwest of the park and is accessible by sidewalks to the park. The park is smaller than Wythogan with only 3.5 acres. The park received a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant in 2020. The project included new permanent restrooms, a new shelter, blacktopping the parking lot, sidewalks to park amenities, and new lighting. Amenities now offered at the park include (See Map, p 11):

- Two picnic shelters
- Restroom facility
- Playground equipment
- Sidewalks
- Exercise equipment
- Benches
- Grills



Sandy Acres Park Existing Amenities

Legend

- 1 - Shelters
- 2 - Restrooms
- 3 - Parking
- 4 - Playground
- 5 - Exercise Equipment
- 6 - Horseshoe Pit
- 7 - Grill & Seating
- Park Boundary



Heritage Park



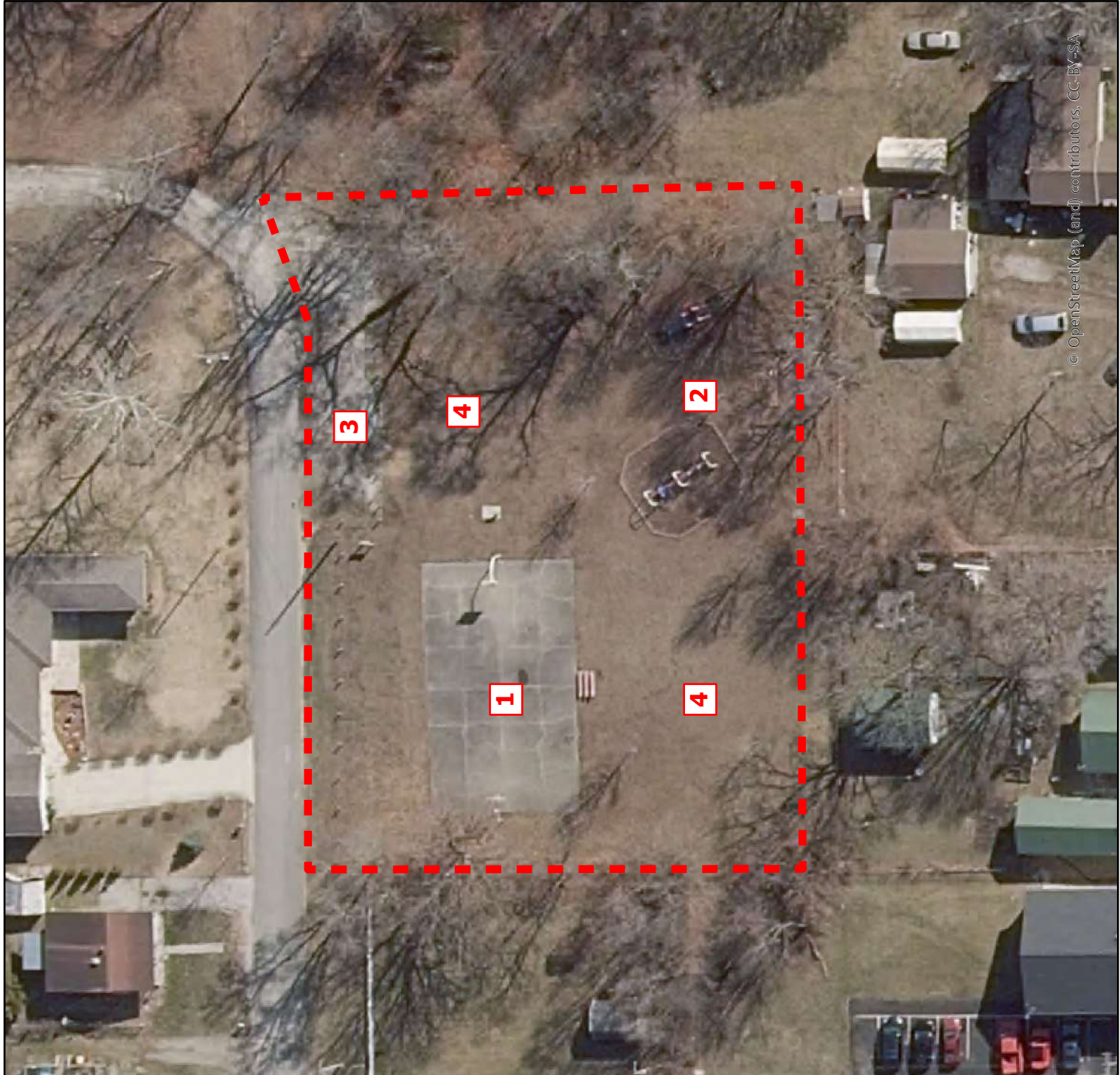
Heritage Park is a small neighborhood park located along Ellis Street in the eastern park of Knox. The park has approximately 3.5 acres and does not get as much use as the other two parks due to limited amenities (See Map, p 13). Amenities include:

- Basketball court in need of resurfacing
- Playground equipment- slide, swings, and monkey bars
- Water fountain
- Parking area

Heritage Park Existing Amenities

Legend

- 1 - Basketball Court
- 2 - Playground
- 3 - Parking
- 4 - Open Space
- Park Boundary



Future Potential Park Across US 35 from Wythogan Park

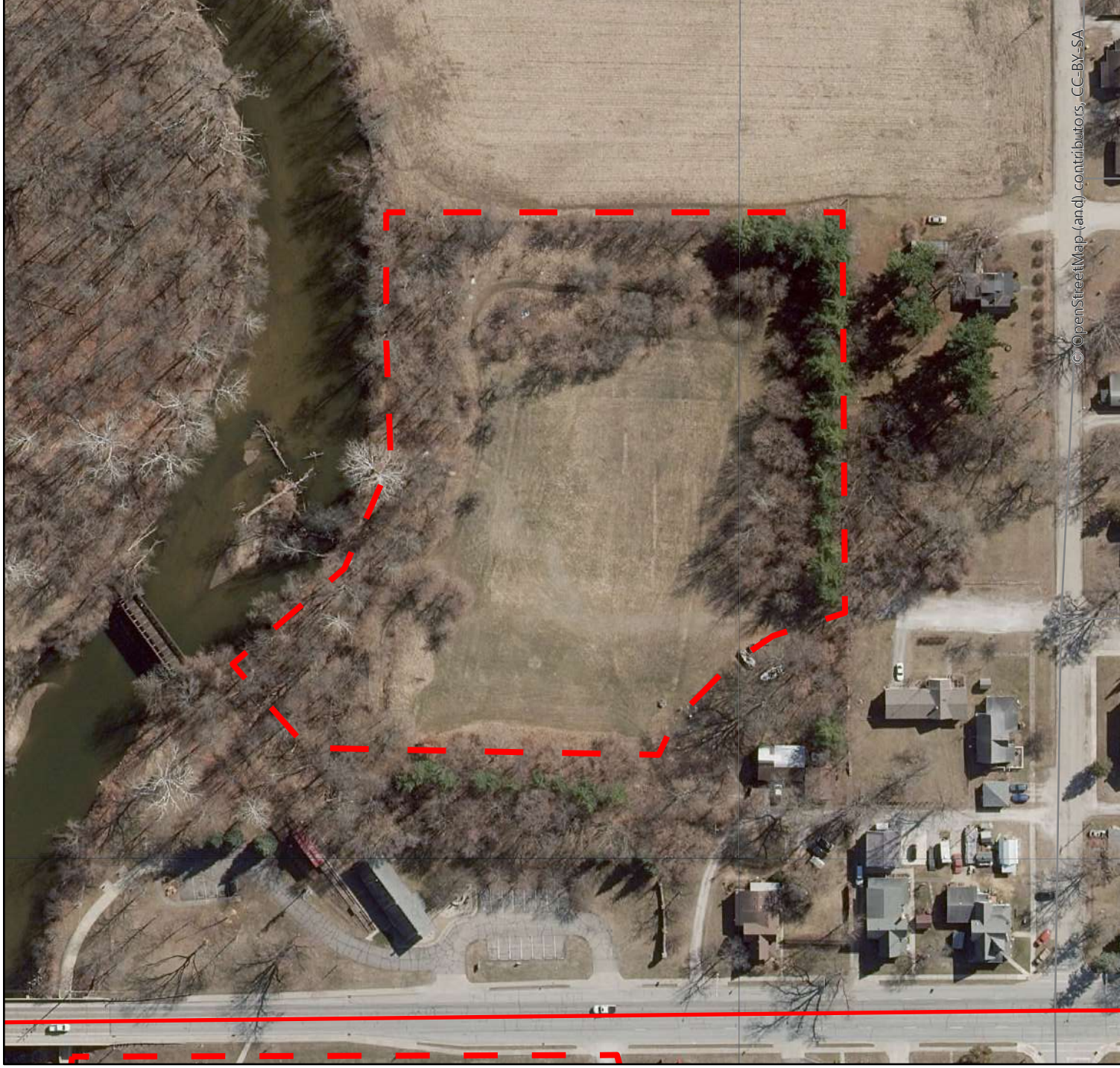
The Park Board has identified a potential property east of US 35 across from Wythogan Park for a future park. (See Map, page 15) This property already is connected to Wythogan Park by the multi-use trail and tunnel under US 35. The property is also adjacent to the restored Railroad Depot, which is home to offices for the Starke County Chamber of Commerce and Starke County Tourism Commission. Currently the land is a grass area with woods along the edges and is adjacent to the Yellow River.

Potential amenities considered for the future park include a dog park, kayak launch, picnic shelter, and nature observation deck/fishing pier. The walking trail from Wythogan Park would also be extended into the new park. This would improve connection to Wythogan Park from neighborhoods to the east of US 35.

Potential Future Park

Legend

- Proposed Future
- Park Boundary



NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPE

According to the US. Department of Agriculture Soil Survey of Starke County, “Starke County lies mainly on a flat plain dissected by the Yellow River. It is a nearly level and gently sloping outwash plain with intermittent steeper ridges.” The flood plains are located along rivers and major drainageways. Much of the county was a swampy marsh area until it was drained to create farmland in the early 1900’s.

Soils

The general soil map provided in the Soil Survey shows that Knox has three main soil types. Plainfield-Brems-Morocco association, Alganssee association, and Craigmile association.

Plainfield-Brems-Morocco association soils are in upland areas characterized by swale and swell topography. These soils are generally good for building sites.

Alganssee association soils are somewhat poorly drained, formed in sandy and loamy sediment over sandy deposits in floodplains. Alganssee soils are generally not good for building sites. Wythogan Park is primarily Alganssee Fine Sandy Loam.

Craigmile soils are typically deep, very poorly drained soils. The permeability is moderately rapid in the loamy materials and rapid in the sandy material. These soils are in floodplains and not generally good for building sites.

Water Resources

Ground water is the main source of water in Starke County and there is an adequate supply in most areas. The primary sources are sand and gravel deposits; sand and gravel deposits intermixed with glacial till; shale of Upper Devrian age; and limestone and dolomite of Middle Devonian age. City of Knox residents are served by the municipal water system which provides water service to residents from the city’s wells.

The county has two large lakes Bass Lake and Koontz Lake which provide recreational opportunities to the area residents. Bass Lake has a county owned park with a public beach. Koontz Lake has a small public beach. Each provides public access points for boats which provide people with recreational boating and fishing opportunities.

The Yellow River forms the northern edge of Wythogan Park. Most of the park is located in the floodplain of the river. Major flooding of the park occurred in 2008 and 2018. Wythogan Park was closed for several days in 2018 due to the flooding. Improvements to the park should take the possibility of flooding into account.

Climate

Knox has a humid continental climate with cold winters and warm summers typical in Indiana. The average temperature in January is around 28°F with temperatures rarely dropping below 0°F. Summer temperatures average between 75°F to 83°F with relatively high humidity. Knox gets precipitation about 119 days per year with spring and summer storms common. On average the city receives about 40 inches of rain per year.

Park Conditions

The natural conditions of the parks are primarily good. The park superintendent reports no issues with the grass in the parks and many of the trees that were in poor condition have been removed. Recent strong storms did not produce much damage to trees in the parks. The superintendent also does not see a significant problem with invasive species but the city is not a member of a weed management area that provides expertise in this area.

MAN-MADE, HISTORICAL, AND CULTURAL

History

The city was founded in 1851 and named after General Henry Knox. The Starke County Interim Report Historic Sites and Structures provided the following history of Knox:

“The draining of the marshes and dredging of the Kankakee and Yellow Rivers between 1885 and 1910 greatly impacted the economy of Knox...Increased agricultural activity and rising prosperity resulted in population growth and higher demand for goods and services. New railroad development helped meet that demand...Before the 1940’s agricultural activity in nearby areas resulted in slow but steady growth in the city fo Knox. However, the onset of World War II and the creation of the Kingsbury Ordinance Plant in nearby LaPorte County resulted in the city’s greatest population growth.

Man-Made Features

The City of Knox and the Parks Department have accomplished much in the community to provide quality of life improvements and recreational opportunities to the residents. One of the focuses of the City has been the development of the downtown area which is adjacent to Wythogan Park. In 2019, the city purchased a blighted building and renovated it. The Knox Redevelopment Commission renovated the building and used it for a pop-up storefront. A coffee house moved into the building and the business recently purchased the building from the city. The city has purchased another building in the downtown, demolished part of the structure that had collapsed and is currently evaluating options for the redevelopment of the rest of the structure. A third blighted building was purchased and was recently demolished due to its poor condition. The city hopes to utilize the site for events such as a farmer’s market or pop up art displays. A fire in 2022 destroyed a building in the downtown area. The city will be

The city and Starke County have been working to address the economic development needs of the community. The City of Knox partnered with the Starke County Convention and Visitors Commission to fund a feasibility study on the development of a new hotel in Knox. The study found that Knox could support a 50 to 60 room hotel. The City is now working with the Starke County Economic Development Foundation to find developers to develop a hotel. This could attract more visitors to the area who could take advantage of the Knox parks.

The City has been making efforts to improve the transportation network within the city. The city sponsors a sidewalk program that will provide 50% of the costs to property owners who replace their sidewalks. The city was recently awarded a Community Crossings grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation to repave some streets in the community. The City announced in January, 2023 that it was awarded a Railroad Bridge and Crossing grant from

INDOT. This will go toward having new thermoplastic pavement markings installed at all of the city railroad crossings.

A major economic development opportunity for the area is the Opportunity Zone located just north of the City of Knox. An opportunity zone is federal designation that provides incentives for private-sector investments in the designated zone. The Starke County Opportunity Zone encompasses most of northeast Starke County with its southern border being the Yellow River which is the northern boundary of the City of Knox. The Starke County Economic Development Foundation released in 2022 completed a marketing prospectus to use the designation to attract new investors to the area. Additional housing is one of the primary investments the Opportunity Zone task force is pursuing.

Park Improvements

Since the last park plan was completed in 2017, the Parks and Recreation Board has completed several updates to the parks. At Wythogan, a new entrance into the park from US 35 was completed that allows better access and additional parking. The parking lot is now paved and has ADA compliant accessible parking spots. The skate park has had some upgrades to the equipment that was in poor condition previously. A new picnic shelter was constructed next to the splash pad. This shelter has sidewalk access from the splash pad and the parking lot. The tennis courts that were seldom used were transformed into six pickle ball courts. There is an active pickle ball 2 on 2 league. A new disc golf course was added to the park. Security cameras have been installed in the park. A temporary ice rink is now constructed in the winter months to allow for ice skating.

At Sandy Acres Park, the city received a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for improvements. The project included a new permanent restroom facility, two new picnic shelters, paving the parking lot, ADA compliant accessible parking spot, and new sidewalks to the shelters and playground equipment.

The park board has also created a Facebook page and use the city's website to post events and information for the parks department. A full time program director position has also been created.

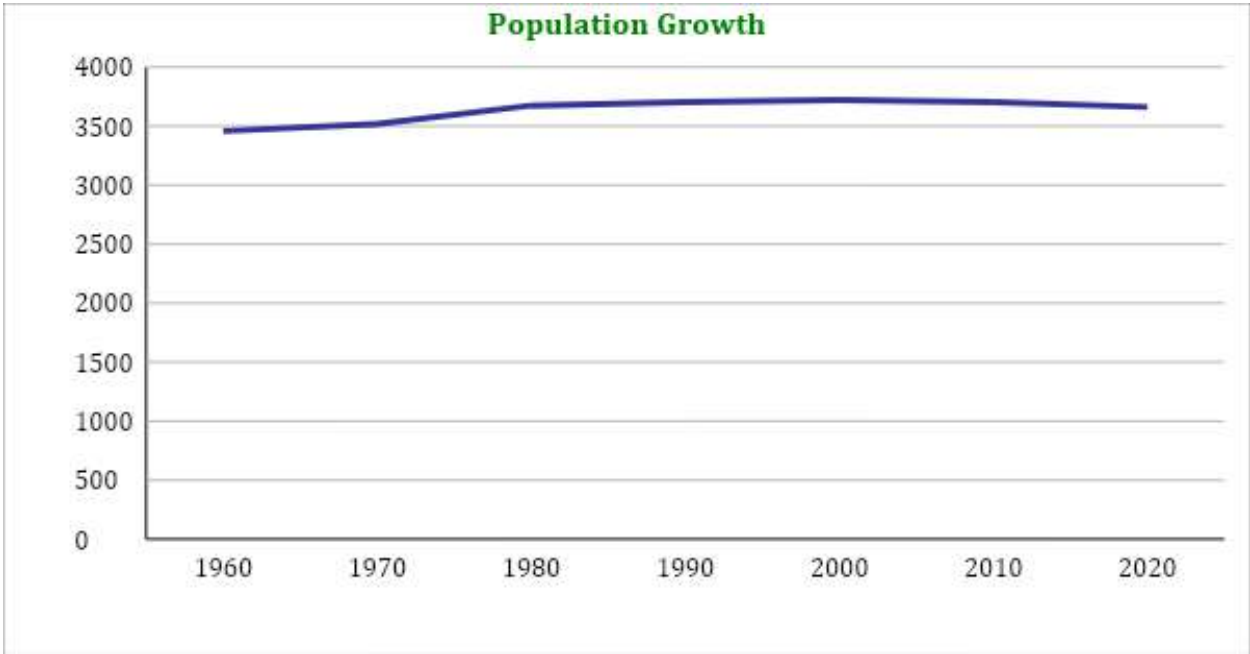
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

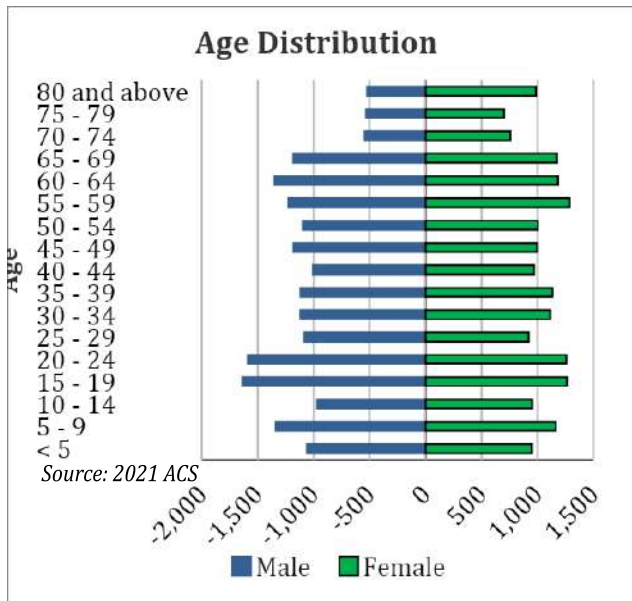
In order to plan for the future, it is essential to understand the community’s characteristics and the population being served. Population growth trends, income levels, age levels, and other characteristics all affect the recreational needs of a community.

Total Population and Population Growth

Year	Population
1960	3,458
1970	3,519
1980	3,674
1990	3,705
2000	3,721
2010	3,704
2020	3,662

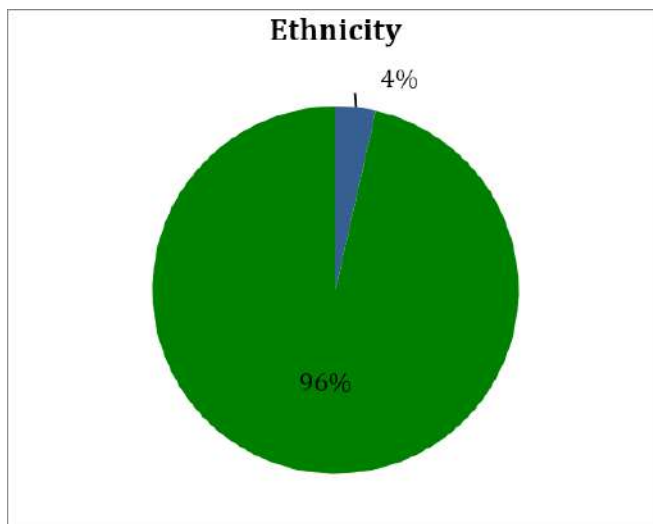
The 2020 US Census reported Knox’s population as 3,662 residents. This is just over a 1% decrease in the city’s population from the 2010 Census. Overall, the population of the city has remained relatively stable during the last 60 years. The average population over the last seven census reports is 3,635. The City of Knox and Starke County are pursuing economic development opportunities but the effect of these efforts on future population growth cannot be accurately projected. It is presumed that the city’s population will continue to remain relatively stable for the foreseeable future.





Age

The median age for the Knox population is 41.4 years. This compares to an average age for the State of Indiana of 37.6 years. Approximately 20% of Knox’s population is below the age of 18, and 15% of the population is over the age of 65. For Indiana, 24% of the population is under age 18 and 15% is over age 65. The age of the population is an important consideration when planning for parks as people in different age brackets tend to enjoy dissimilar recreational activities. With an older than average population, the demand for activities for seniors may be high.



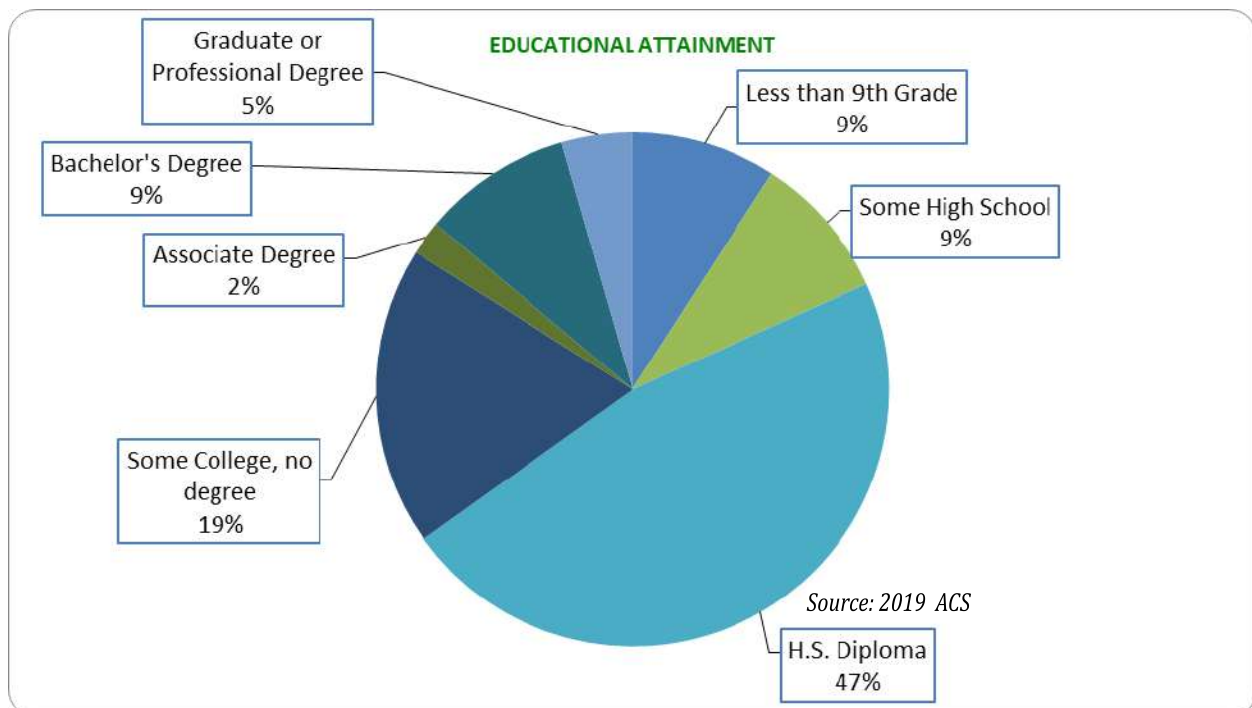
Race and Ethnicity

A community should evaluate its racial and ethnic composition when preparing a park plan. Different cultures often prefer different recreational activities.

Knox has a small minority population. Over 96% of the population is reported as white, non-Hispanic. Hispanics comprise the largest minority population and account for almost 4% of the total population.

Educational Attainment

Approximately 81% of Knox’s population 25 or older has a high school diploma compared to 89% of Indiana’s population. Approximately 14% of the population in Knox has a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. The state’s percentage with a bachelor’s degree or higher is 26%. Educational attainment may influence the kinds of recreation demanded, the type of volunteer services provided, park donations, and other important factors for the park board to consider.



Disabled

The size of the disabled population is important to plan for in park development. Programs, equipment, and facilities need to meet the special needs of the disabled population. Data from the 2021 American Community Survey reports that 17% of Knox residents have a disability.

Economic Indicators

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, the median household income for Knox was \$39,603. This was below the Starke County (\$52,802), state (\$61,944) and national (\$69,021) median household income levels. The poverty rate in 2021 was 26.2% for Knox compared to 12.5% for Indiana. The unemployment rate for Starke County in November, 2022

was 3.6% which was higher than the state unemployment rate of 2.8%.

Economic indicators can be a sign of the potential for donations within a community for park services. Based on income information it is likely that Knox will need to rely on grants and other outside income sources to fund many of their proposed projects.

Economic Development

The City of Knox and Starke County are trying to address the issues of an aging and slightly declining population. Quality of life such as park improvements are major factors in economic development. Being attractive to the workforce has become vital to employers. With the current high demand for labor throughout the country, a quality place to live and work is essential to attracting employees for businesses and residents for communities. Parks and recreation are important elements to quality of life. The City of Knox and the Park Board are addressing the quality of place in Knox.

The City of Knox has done extensive work to help develop the downtown area of Knox. The city's redevelopment commission purchased an old blighted building in 2019 that they renovated and used for pop-up businesses. One of those businesses, a coffee shop, purchased the building and is now operating their business. In 2020, Ball State Urban Planning students completed a downtown revitalization study for the city. The city has purchased two additional blighted buildings and demolished one and is evaluating uses for the other. The community created a \$250,000 Veterans Memorial on the courthouse property which has improved the downtown aesthetics. The redevelopment commission has also started a façade program to help business owners improve their downtown buildings. A Main Street group has been organized to further help with the development of downtown.

A task force was formed to help market the Opportunity Zone that encompasses a large area just north of the City of Knox. The task force received assistance from the state to help develop marketing tools to market potential development sites within the opportunity zone. It is hoped that this will help lead to future economic development within Starke County and the City of Knox.

During the pandemic, the City of Knox received two grants from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs to provide grants to businesses to help them stay in business. These were successful as most businesses were able to remain in business through the worst parts of the pandemic.

The Knox High School just completed a new vocational wing to the school building to help increase the readiness of high school students for employment after school. The new vocational wing features agricultural classrooms and labs, a welding classroom and lab, and a robotics classroom and lab.

ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN

With an aging population, many Indiana municipalities are taking greater measures to make trails and facilities accessible to all populations. In many cases, municipalities are restructuring current maintenance projects to include accessibility features.

The Knox Parks and Recreation Board has acknowledged this trend and intends to include accessibility in all new projects. Several Knox residents with mobility disabilities expressed a desire for more ADA accommodations, especially at Wythogan Park. Wythogan Park accessibility has been improved within the last few years, but continued effort to improve accessibility is needed. ADA compliant parking was included with the new parking area near the stage. The splash pad, new concession/restroom building, and new shelter are both all ADA compliant and have sidewalks that meet ADA requirements to access them from the ADA parking. The walking trail is paved. One shelter at Wythogan has sidewalk access.

Sandy Acres park now ADA compliant parking, restrooms, and both shelters have new sidewalk access that is ADA compliant. Most of the play equipment also has sidewalk access.

Heritage Park lacks ADA accessibility. Lumber edging presents a barrier around the equipment, and no sidewalk access is provided. There is parking signed for those with disabilities but it does not meet ADA requirements.

With the potential addition of a new park to Knox considerations for accessibility should be explored during the planning and design process.

An ADA notice is posted at the City Hall. Information about the park's accessible facilities, amenities, programs, and services can be obtained from the Park Superintendent or by contacting the Mayor's office during regular business hours.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public input is an essential element in preparing a plan for the Knox Parks Department. The park and recreational programs are provided for the public and are intended to meet the public's recreational needs and desires. In order to learn and understand those needs and desires, one method the Knox Park Board utilized was a public survey.

Public Survey

Knox conducted an online public survey to gather public input and ideas about the parks. The survey was open from October 24 until November 30 in 2022. This enables the public to give their opinion on current facilities and thoughts for future plans and upgrades. The 2022 survey has been made available in the City Hall and a link was posted on the city's social media site. An announcement on the survey was also given on the local radio station and the radio stations' website.

The 2022 Survey had a total of 198 responses. All responses were received online. The survey showed that Wythogan was the most utilized park, followed by Sandy Acres. Respondents did not visit Heritage Park often. Most of those surveyed rated the parks highly. On a 1-10 scale, over 66% rated the parks an 8 or higher. The typical uses of the parks were walking/jogging, the splash pad, picnics/gatherings, and baseball/softball. People felt the most important programs or activities for themselves or their families at the park were the splash pad, youth baseball, and adult softball and other youth sports. Most people received information about the parks from social media. The programs or activities of most interest on the survey were music in the parks, fitness classes, hiking excursions, and active retiree programs. For the question on what new, renovated, or expanded park facilities they would support, respondents most wanted to see more playground equipment, new trails, canoe/kayak launches, and fishing access.

Almost 10% of respondents said there was an issue that prevented or restricted their use of the parks. Of those that responded yes, 63.5% said lack of accessible parking was the limitation. Other responses were physical access to the park or its programs and the parks were too far away. The biggest reason people gave that prevented people from using the parks more often was lack of time. Seven percent said they couldn't afford the programs. Respondents said they would be more likely to use the parks if a new large amenity such as a pool/aquatic center were available. Other additions that would lead people to use the parks more often included more walking trails, more adult programs/activities, and more youth programs/activities.

Only 2% of respondents said they would not like the city to invest more money in the parks. Fifty-four percent said it would depend on the investment and 44% said they would like to see the city invest more in the parks.

Public Forum

A public forum was held on March 6, 2023 at the Nancy J. Dembowski Community Center in Knoxville. The forum was publicized in the newspaper, on the local radio station, and on the Parks Department Facebook page. There were 17 people in attendance at the forum. Attendees were led in discussions on the parks and were asked to write comments on several large pages around the room. The main need expressed at the forum was the need for a dog park in the city. The location of the dog park was a major factor. A fishing pier was also a need mentioned frequently at the forum. Upgrading and expanding trails was also seen as a priority. (See Appendix 3)

NEEDS ANALYSIS AND GOALS

The needs analysis section of the plan combines the previous supply and demand sections of the plan to analyze what additional recreational opportunities or improvements to existing amenities should be provided by the Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department and will set goals to meet these opportunities.

Method

The Issue Analysis method of needs analysis was chosen to evaluate the recreational needs of the community. This form of analysis uses information collected for the plan to identify and resolve needs, problems, and conflicts. The Issue Analysis method was chosen because of the city's limited finances to do a more technical evaluation. There were also obvious issues the board believed needed to be addressed.

Needs Identified

Information collected for the plan indicates several issues that need to be evaluated by the Parks and Recreation Board:

Playground Equipment: Upgraded and additional playground equipment was identified in the survey as a top need.

Continued ADA upgrades: ADA upgrades, specifically at Wythogan and Heritage Parks are needed to allow everyone to utilize the amenities available in these parks

Additional Walking Trails: The walking trails are heavily used and the public has indicated a desire for additional trails.

Fishing Access: Fishing access on the Yellow River was identified as a need.

Improvements to the Hill: Wythogan park has a hill that is popular for sledding in the winter. The board has considered improvements to the hill to be used more in the winter and possibly for more year round activities.

The creation of a dog park was a need identified by the public.

Goals

After evaluating the existing park facilities, the local features, the population, and public input, the park board has identified five major goals.

Goal 1: Create a new park across US 35 from Wythogan Park. The priority long term goal for the parks department is to acquire property and construct a new park to better serve the recreational needs of the community.

Goal 2: The board will continue to work to make the park and park amenities accessible to all.

Goal 3: The board aims to add new recreational amenities to the park for the public's enjoyment and recreational needs. This may include a dog park, sledding hill improvements, new playground equipment, and other improvements.

Goal 4: The Parks Department will strive to improve and upgrade existing facilities and amenities.

Goal 5: Expand the trail network and connect to regional trails.

PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

To accomplish the stated goals the city will establish a plan of action. Projected costs and possible funding sources have been identified where possible.

5-Year Action Plan

Year	Project	Potential Funding Source	Projected Cost
2024	Dog Park at Heritage Park	Park Board ,City, Donations	\$25,000-\$37,500
2024	Wythogan Park Sledding Hill Improvements	Park Board, City, Donations, Local Grants	Unknown
2024-2026	Create New Park		
2024-2026	- acquire property	Park Board, City, LWCF Grant	Unknown
2024-2026	- kayak launch	Park Board, City, LWCF Grant	\$20,000-\$35,000
2024-2026	- observation deck/fishing pier	Park Board, City, LWCF Grant	\$25,000-\$35,000
2024-2026	- trail extensions	Park Board, City, LWCF Grant	\$44,000-\$62,500
2024-2026	- picnic shelter	Park Board, City, LWCF Grant	\$50,000-\$62,500
2024-2026	- Extend trail from Wythogan into New Park	Park Board, City, LWCF Grant	\$44,000-\$62,500
2025	New Picnic Shelter - Heritage Park	Park Board, City, Donations	\$50,000-\$62,500
2025	New Accessible/Universal Design Playground-Wythogan Park	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	\$250,000 - \$375,000
2025	Upgrade water fountains and trash receptacles in all parks	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	Unknown
2025	Replace/Upgrade traffic barriers	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	Unknown
2026	Skate Park upgrades	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	Unknown
2026	Replace Basketball Cour Concrete - Heritage Park	Park Board, City, Donations, Local Grants	\$31,000-\$44,000
2027	ADA Parking Improvements/Access to Amenities	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	Unknown
2027	Natural Elements Playground-Sandy Acres	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	\$37,500-\$100,000
2027	Pickeball Court Upgrades	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	Unknown
2027	Splash Pad Improvements	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	Unknown
2028	New Playground Equipment - Wythogan Park	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	\$62,500-\$125,000
2028	Sidewalk/ADA Access to Amenities - Wythogan Park	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	\$20,000-\$50,000
2028	Park Lighting and Security Camera Updates	Park Board, City, Donations, Grants	\$125,000-\$187,500

PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF PLAN

A draft copy of the Knox Park Plan will be made available to the public to receive comments and suggestions. The plan will be placed at the City Hall and online to provide residents an opportunity to review the plan. A public hearing will be held.

Appendix 1

Knox Parks Survey

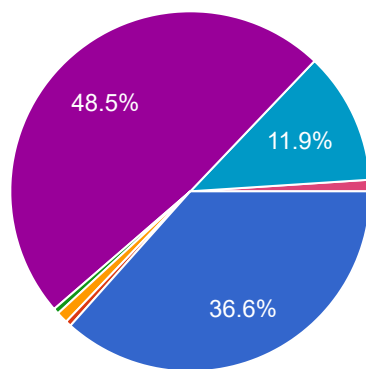
195 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

Which Knox park(s) do you use? (Select One)

 Copy

194 responses

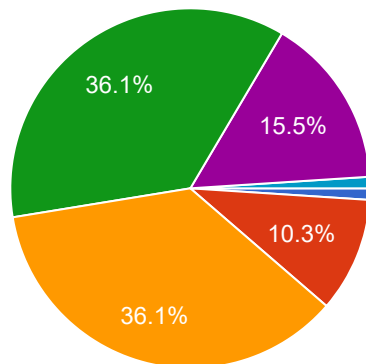


- Only Wythogan Park
- Only Heritage Park
- Only Sandy Acres Park
- Wythogan and Heritage Parks
- Wythogan and Sandy Acres Parks
- Wythogan, Heritage, and Sandy Acres Parks
- I don't use any of the parks

How often do you use the Knox Parks? (Select One)

 Copy

194 responses



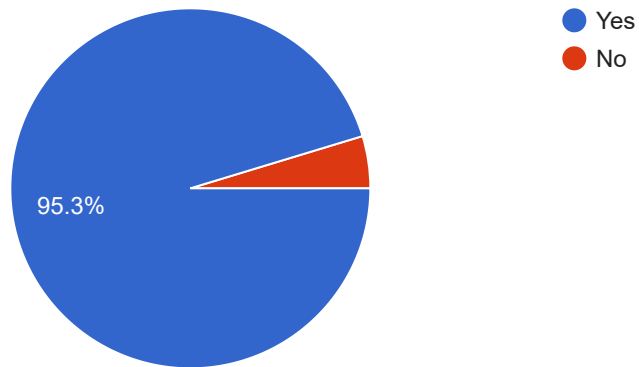
- Every day
- 4-5 times per week
- 1-3 times per week
- 1-2 times per month
- 1-3 times per year
- Never



Do you believe Knox Parks provide an essential service in the community?

 Copy

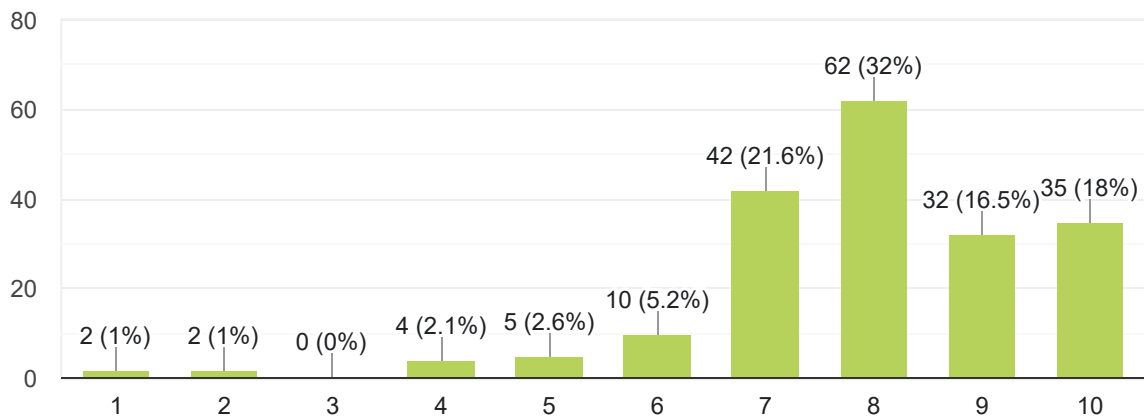
192 responses



How would you rate the Knox Parks?

 Copy

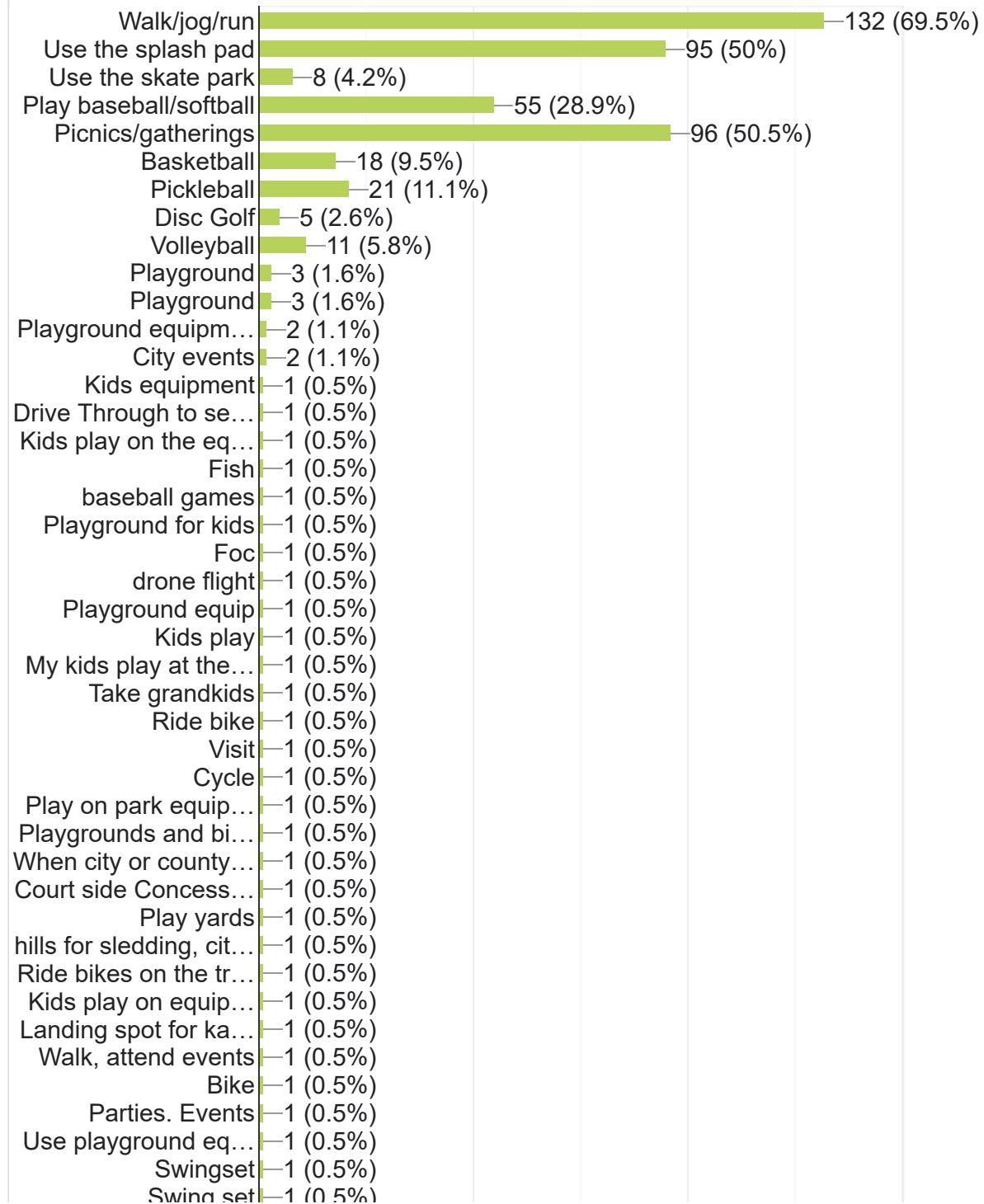
194 responses

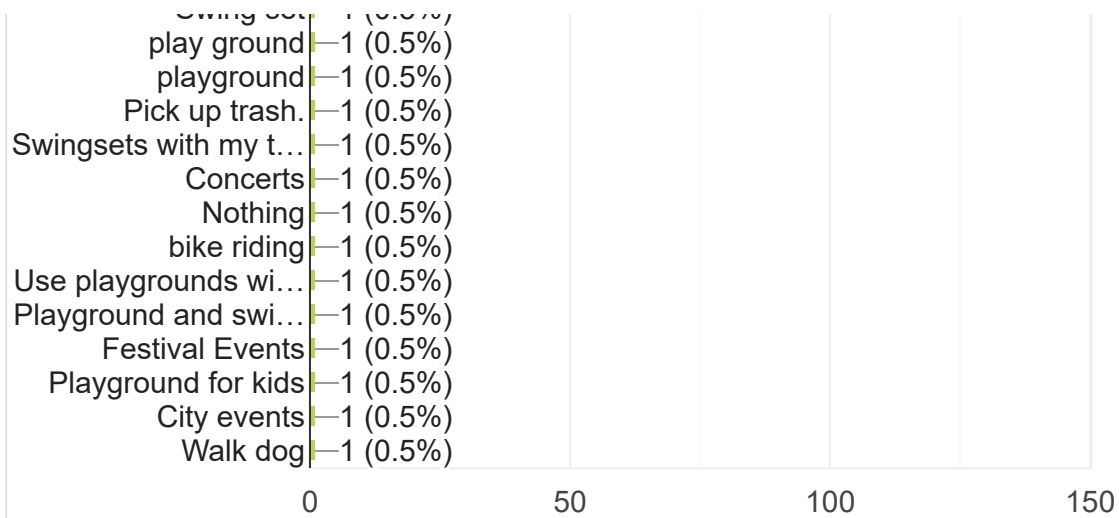


What do you typically do in the Knox Parks? (Mark all that apply)



190 responses



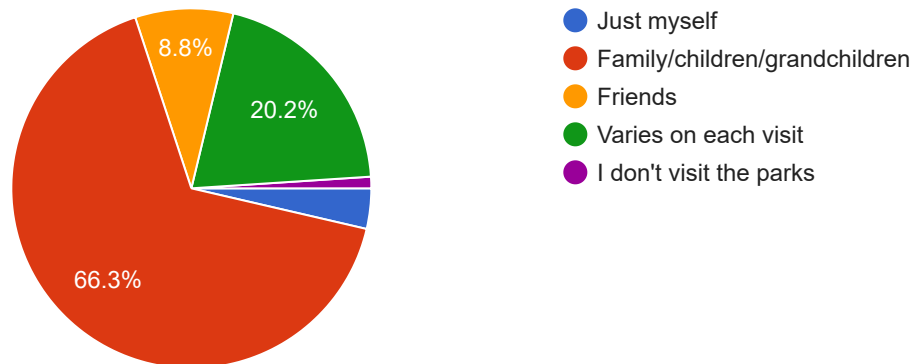


Please select the people with whom you most often use the parks.

Copy

(Select One)

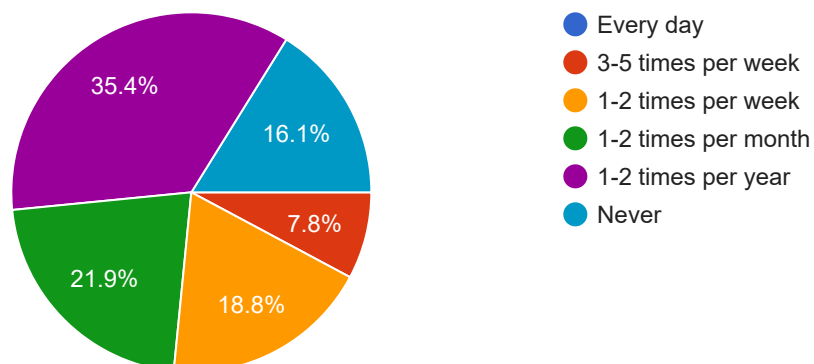
193 responses



How often do you use Knox Parks, programs, and activities? (Select One)

Copy

192 responses

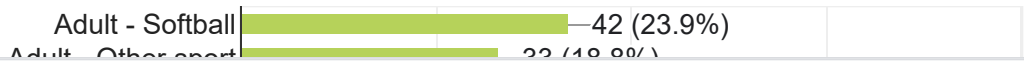


Which of the following programs/activities are important to you and/or your family? (Mark all that apply)



176 responses

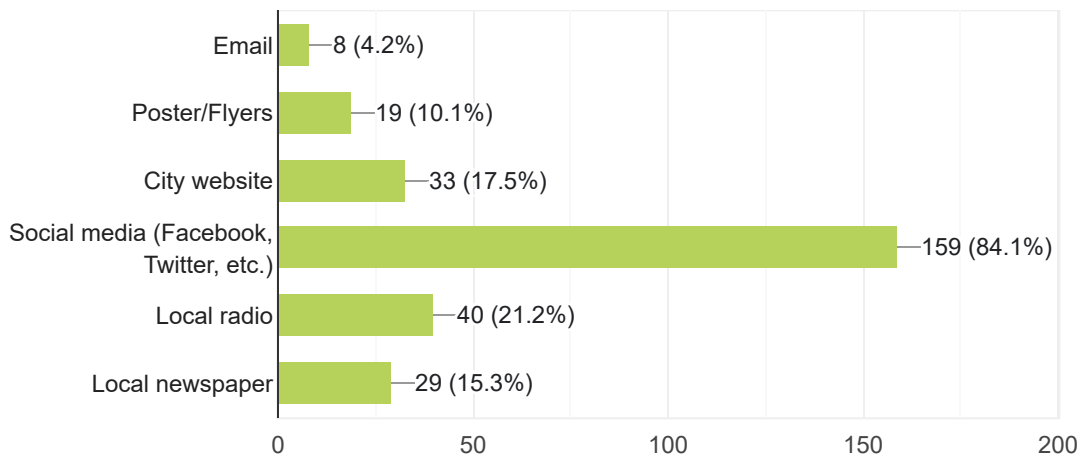




How are you currently informed of Knox parks activities and programs?
(Mark all that apply)



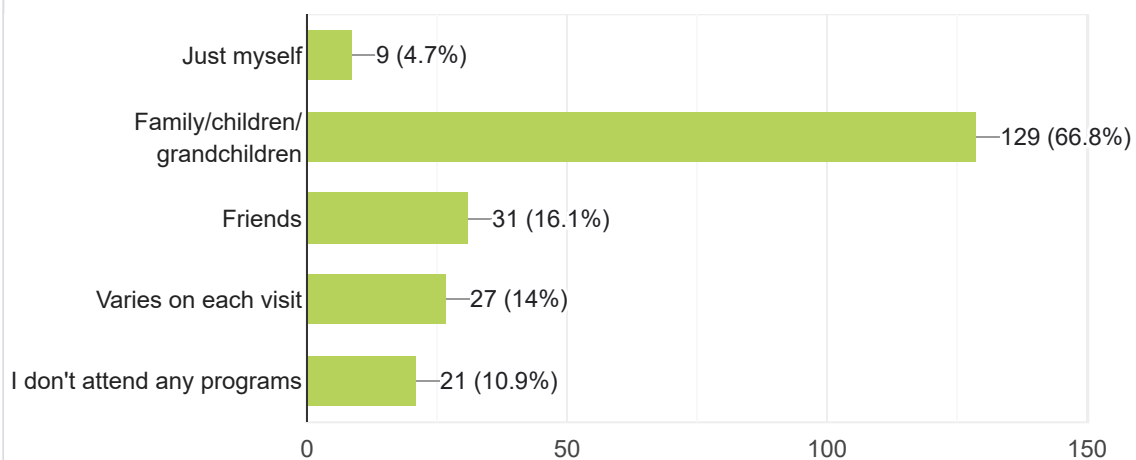
189 responses



If you attend any of our programs, with whom do you most often attend?
(Select One)

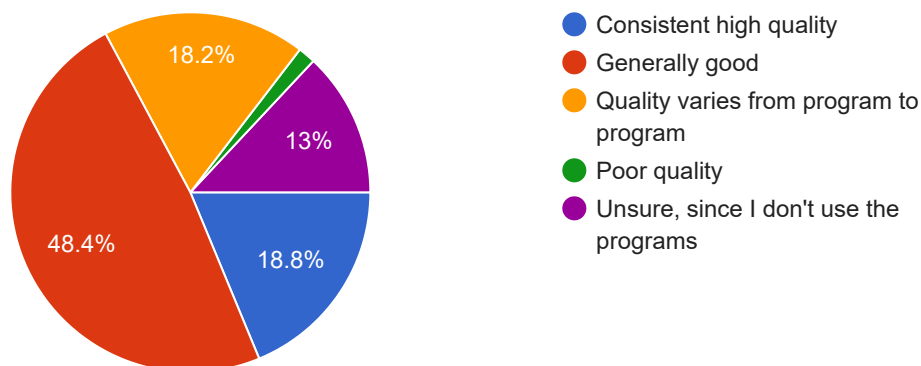


193 responses



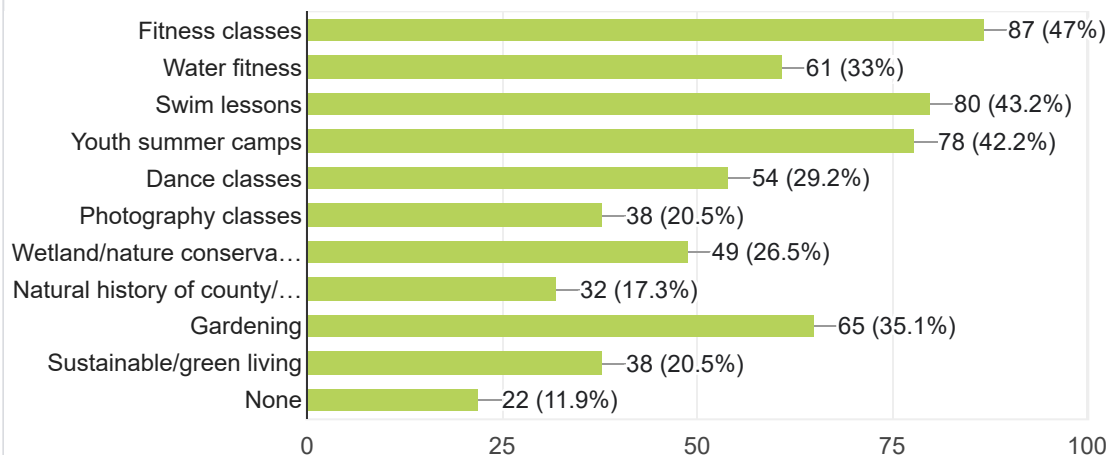
How would you rate the Knox Parks programs and activities? (Select One) [Copy](#)

192 responses



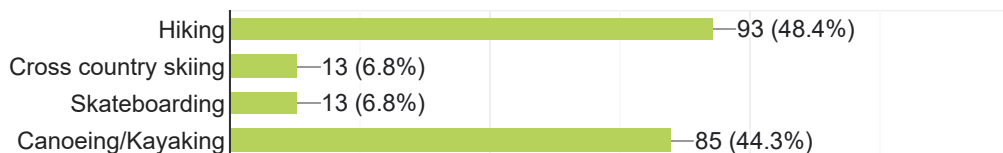
What indoor programs and activities are important to you and/or your family? (Mark all that apply) [Copy](#)

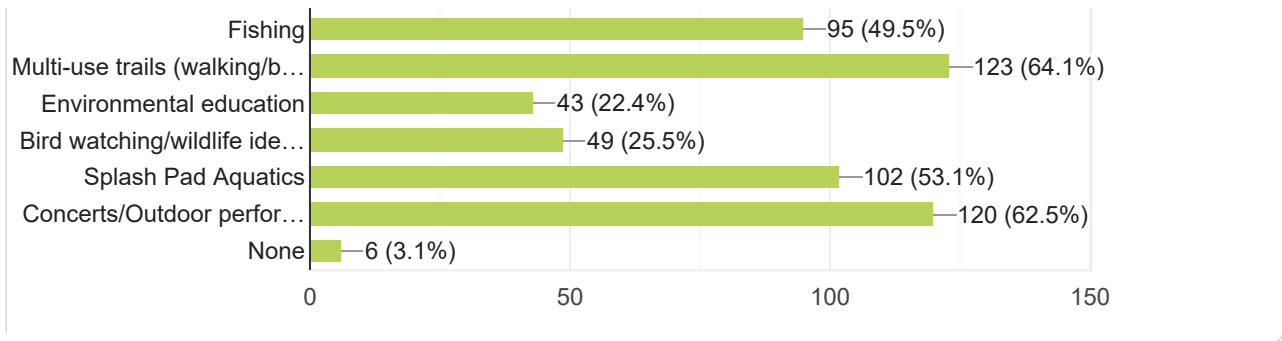
185 responses



What outdoor programs/activities are important to you and/or your family? (Mark all that apply) [Copy](#)

192 responses

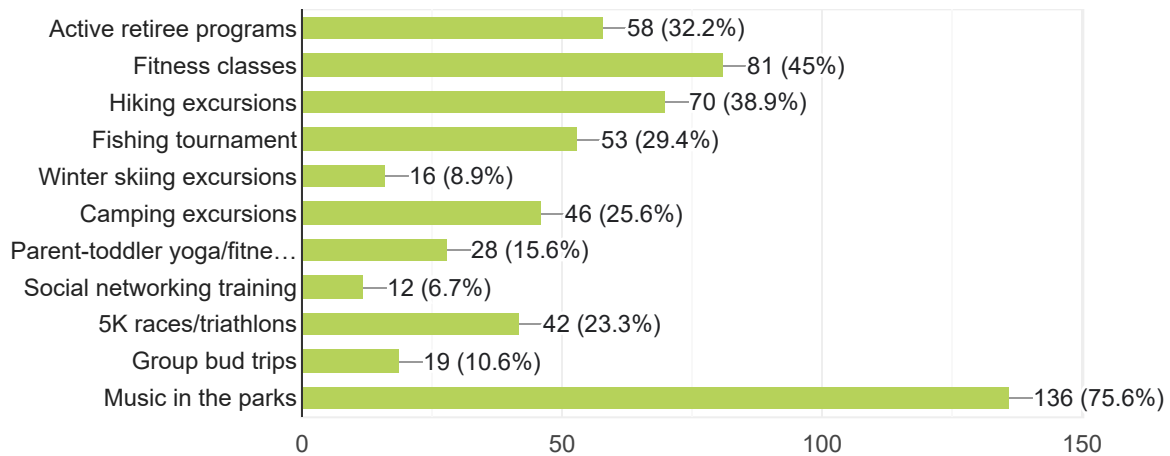




Would any of these programs or activities interest you? (Mark all that apply)



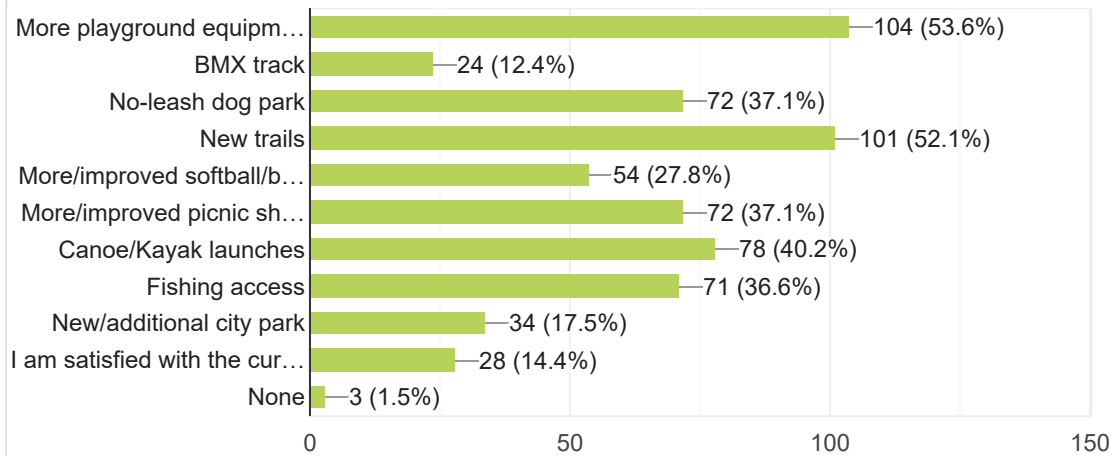
180 responses



What new, renovated, or expanded park facilities would you support? (Mark all that apply)



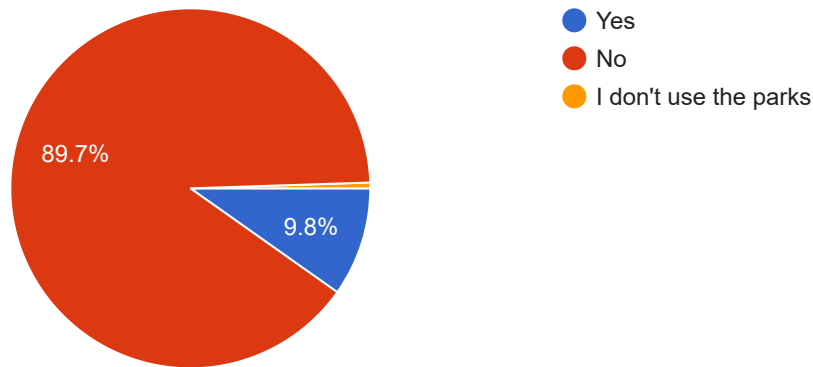
194 responses



Is there anything that prevents or restricts your use of the parks? (Select One)

 Copy

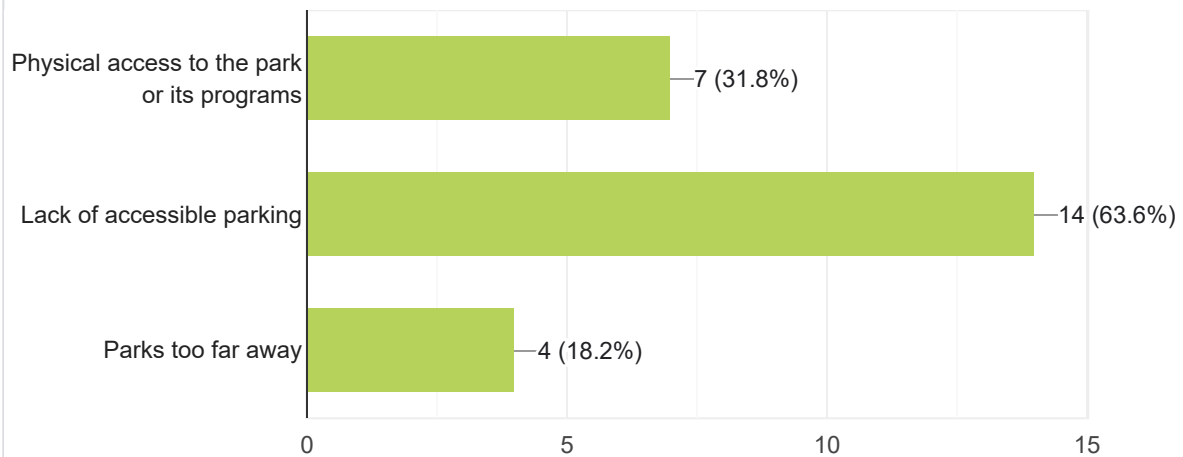
194 responses



If yes, do any of these physical barriers restrict or prevent your using the parks or programs? (Mark all that apply)

 Copy

22 responses

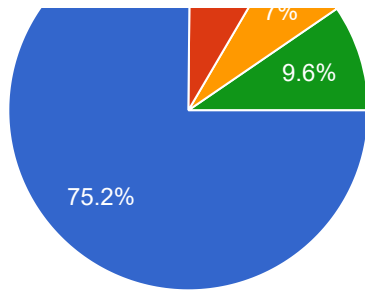


What is the single most important thing that prevents you from using the parks or programs more often? (Select One)

 Copy

157 responses



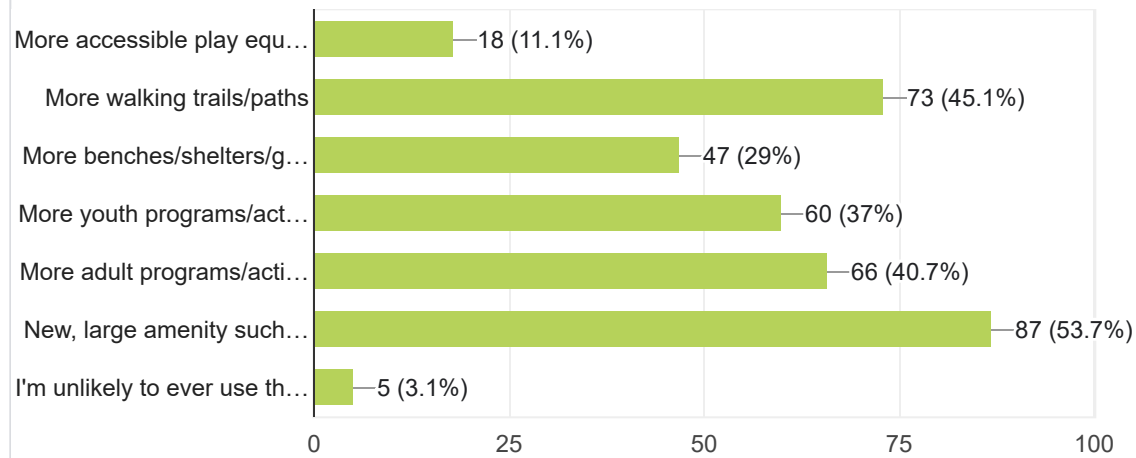


- Can't afford the programs
- Lack of interest/don't want to

I would be more likely to use the parks if the following were available:
(Mark all that apply)

[Copy](#)

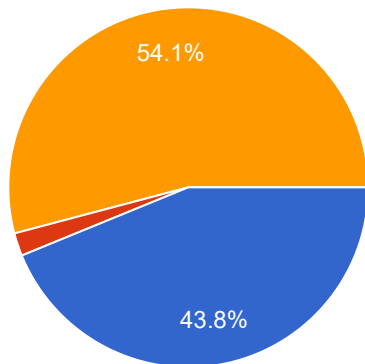
162 responses



Would you like the City of Knoxville to invest more money in the parks?
(Select One)

[Copy](#)

194 responses



- Yes
- No
- Depends on the investment
- Doesn't matter - I don't use the parks

After first utilizing all available grants and donations, how would you like Knoxville to pay for new amenities in the parks? (Select One)

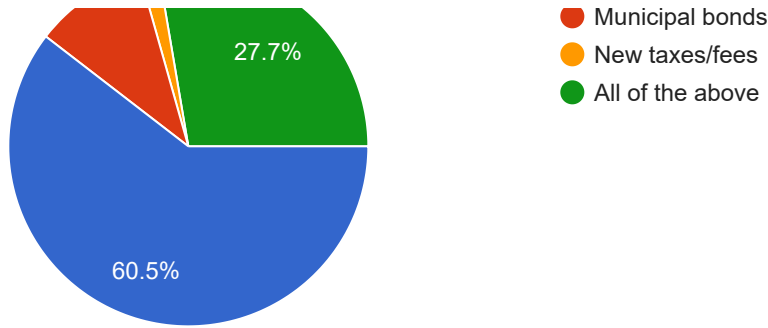
[Copy](#)

177 responses



- Use existing budget

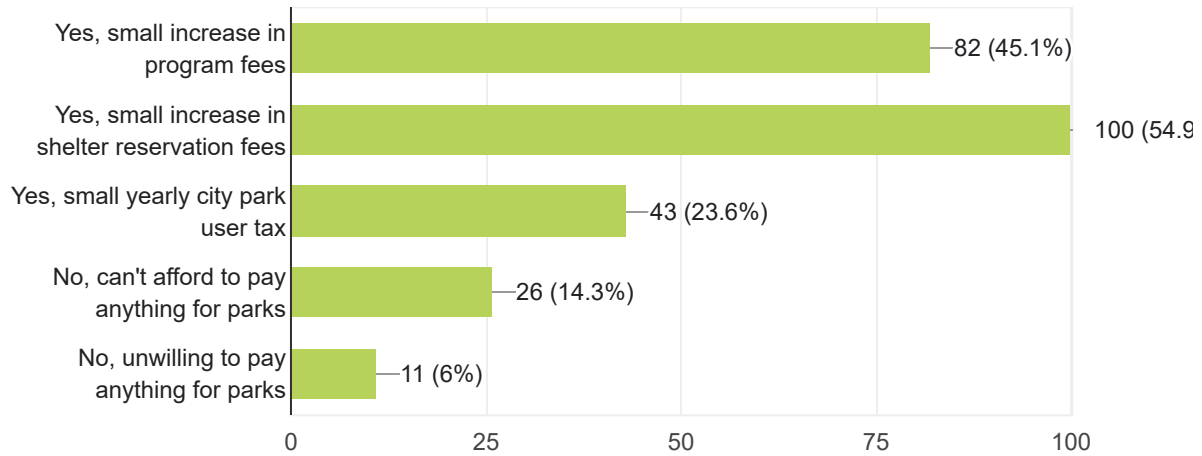




Are you willing to pay for improvements in Knox Parks using any of the following methods? (Mark all that apply)

[Copy](#)

182 responses

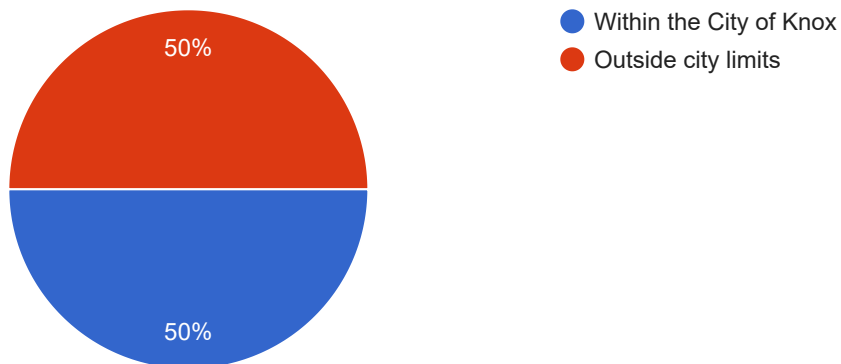


About You

Where do you live?

[Copy](#)

194 responses

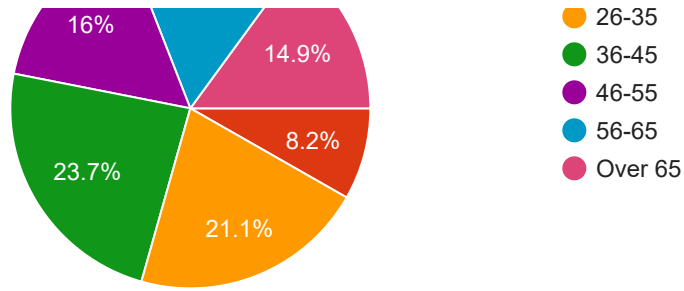


How old are you? (Select One)

[Copy](#)

194 responses

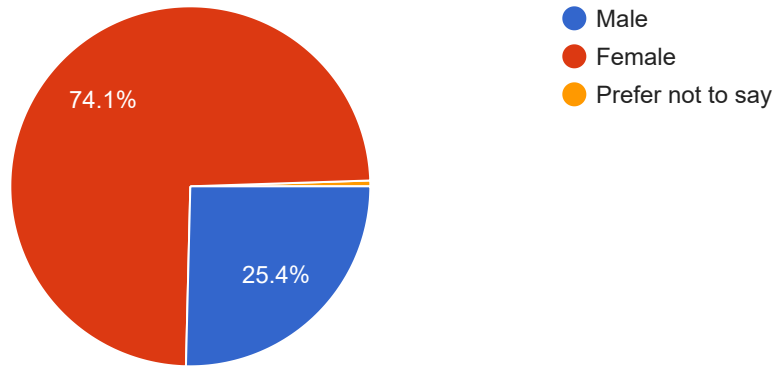




What is your gender?

Copy

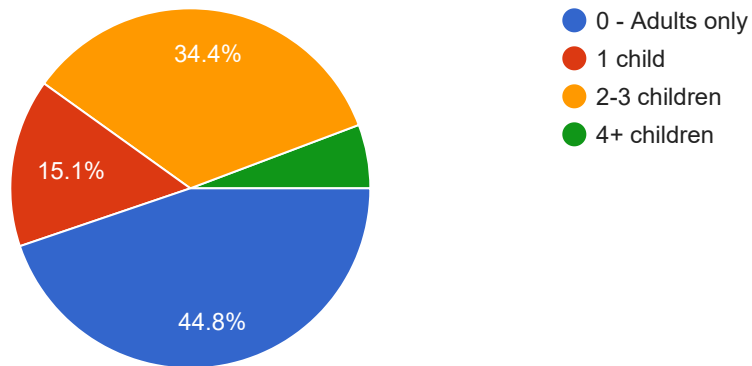
193 responses



How many children are in your household? (Select One)

Copy

192 responses



What are your children's ages?

Please list each age separated by a comma (for example: 2, 5)

111 responses

10

8

1

2

9

13

5

7

14,12,10

38 and 41

18, 14, 10, 8, 7

12,8,3

5, 7

42

6,7,9

old



17,3

1 month, 3 years, 4 years

16, 13

7,5,4,4

3, 5

19, 22

9,14,15,21

7, 5, 16 months, due soon

6,7,10

10,8

7,9,11,11

12, 15

9,6

10, 18

6months, 6, 9

6,8

1,3,5

15

13, 15. 17

20,12,9

11

1, 6, 8



5, 11, 13

5,12,14,17

1, 5, 7

14, 11

7, 9, 11

17, 14, 12, 10

8,15,17

6

1, 5

7,16

7,8,11

8,5

Grandchildren 31,21, 22, 19, 19, 18, 16, 14, 8

14, 11, 7

3,5

9, 15

1,7,10,12,15

2 and under 1

2,7

1, 4

6,4 and newborn

40, 37, 28, 26



Children are adults. Grandchildren are 5 and 14.

12, 10, 4

6,8,13,14

1,6,8

7 & 10

7, 3

18,14

21, 14

13, 14

8, 11

14, 15, 18

3 and 5

17,15,12

9, 10

10, 8

10,7,5

21

9,8,5

3, 5, 7

grandchild 4 and one on the way

12,9

0,3

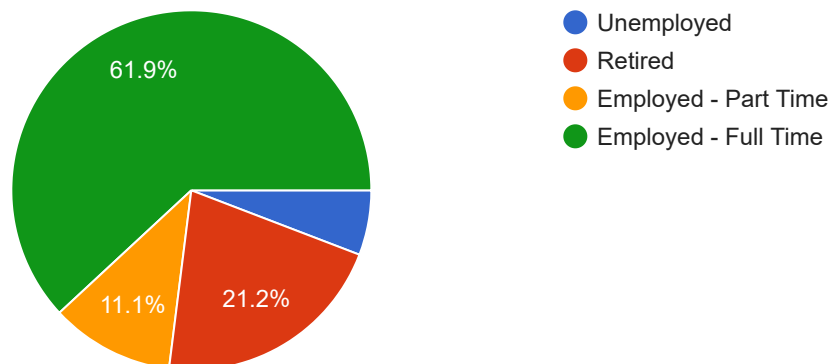


13,15
14
7,9
21,17,11,10,2
19
7,6,4
4
1 and 6
13,16,19
1
4,2
8 11
16
5,6,16
9,11
38,42

What is your employment status? (Select One)

 Copy

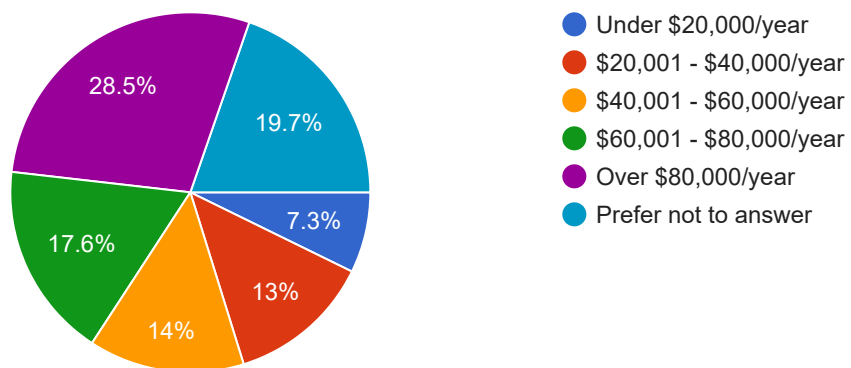
189 responses



What is your approximate household income? (Select One)

 Copy

193 responses



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Google Forms



Appendix 2



5 Year Park Master Plan Community Input Meeting

- Monday, March 6th; 5:00 pm
- Knox Community Center



What to Expect:

- Provide input on the existing parks network.
- Help us plan for the future of our parks.

Questions? Call Edwin Buswell, K-IRPC (219) 253-6658, elb@kirpc.net

City of Knox Park and Recreation Department to Hold Planning Session

 February 7, 2023  Mitch Columbe



The City of Knox Park & Recreation Department is currently working on the department's five year plan.

The Parks and Recreation Department is now asking the community for input. They want to know what the community wants to see in Knox's parks.

A planning session has been scheduled for Monday, March 6 starting at 5pm CT at the Nancy J. Dembowski Community Center in Knox.

Everyone is welcome to attend and contribute to this planning session.

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City of Knox Park and Recreation Department



March 6 · 🌐

Just a reminder for anyone that is interested in attending tonight's Public Input Meeting from 5pm-8pm at the Knox Community Center. This is your opportunity to give your thoughts and ideas on the City Parks 5 year master plan. If there are different things you would like to see within the City's Park system, please attend



7

3 shares



Like



Comment



Share



City of Knox / KIRPC
 5-Year Park Master Plan - Community Input Meeting
 March 6, 2023 at 5:00 pm

Name	Business	Address	Phone	Email
Shae Getto		1807 Buchanan Ave Troy	574-806-0585	
Buddy Johnson		53 E Water St Knoxville	(574) 772-5968	
James E. Johnson		53 E. Water St Knoxville	(574) 772-5968	
Harl Swihart		5139 Johnson St	574-806-7727	
Autumn Ferch		904 S. Main	574-806-2105	
Bullabintthead		1515 S Heaton	574-205-0244	
Jeff V Berg		106 S. Pearl	772-7255	
Patrick E Melody Day		1915 N 300E	249-0064	msday3@gmail.com
Michael Wilson				
Steph Bortler		19N Main St	219-508-7474	
Debbie's Estate		1307 EUPHONIA AVE	574-806-3157	
Jim Brown		1445 SHORT DR.	219-324-5181	
Brent Van Norman		103 E Mound St	574-249-1083	brentlinda3@mehsi.com
Linda Van Norman		" "	574-249-1082	mehsi.com
Dany Dulin		601 E. Mound St.	219-252-3597	

City of Knox / KIRPC
5-Year Park Master Plan - Community Input Meeting
March 6, 2023 at 5:00 pm

Name	Business	Address	Phone	Email
Marvin McDaniel	Hill excavating	Knox	574-806-4621	
Glenn Barnes	KHS Principal	Knox	574-806-2593	gbarnes@KHS-KIRPC.Mn.us
Emily Baugh	KIRPC			
Edwin Buswell	KIRPC			

What Programs would YOU like to see?

(USE THE DOTS FOR YOUR ANSWERS!)

Arts/Crafts
 Family based EDUCATIONAL
 MUSIC
 Nature Based
 Other
 Dog Park!

Would YOU Pay for Programs?

YES NO

What Do YOU Like MOST about Knox Parks?

Trail, trees, scenic views, River
 Concerts
 Fishing pier
 Views
 Dog park

What Do YOU Dislike?

Vandalism
 No dog park
 Need pier
 No dog park

In the Next 5 Years the Park Board should consider...

(Place a dot for YOUR top priority)

TRAILS
 Improve Current Properties
 Development of New park properties
 Expand/Develop Programs
 Other

Repair
 Define park line
 mowing, picking up trash
 paved parking lots
 Barbare Grills
 dog park!

What's Missing in Knox Parks?

- dog park
- Fishing pier
- dog park!
- Sledding Hill
- Small fenced area to Run dogs
- More Cameras

Wythogari Park

Things I like at this Park...

Community get-together
 LOVE PARK - BEAUTIFUL w/ SLASH PAD, AMPHITHEATRE (M)
 HIRE, BIKE PATH
 FAMILY ACTIVITIES + SPORTS
 JUMP + HUNTER
 6/10/10

Things to improve...

Dog park!
 Yes DOG PARK! 
 2nd splash pool
 Fishing pier
 larger skate park

Need to be able to reach the 100m
 Need to be able to reach the 100m
 ease the gate on Ball Diamond
 Need fenced area for running dogs.
 chess/reading area
 parking
 electronic music screening

Sandy Acres Park

Things I like at this Park...

NEAT + WELL MAINTAINED
 the playground, Pavilion
 very nice!

Near Apartments 50'

Things to improve...

BASKETBALL COURT - ADD
 dog park! 


- Grant
- digouts on T ball fields
 - 2 chess tables
 - 3 Ben Hill benches
 - ball diamond improvements

Heritage Park

Things I like at this Park...

private park
 Thanks
 LESS DRIVE THRU TRAFFIC

Things to improve...

- put dog park here
- shelter dog park!
- DOG PARK 

Appendix 3



City of Knox Park and Recreation Department

2d · 🌐



The Knox Park Board has completed a draft of the 5-Year Parks Master Plan with assistance from the Kankakee Iroquois Regional Planning Commission. A public input session will be held on October 23, 2023 at 5:30 pm in the Knox City Hall, 101 W. Washington Street, Knox, IN. Attendees will hear the draft action plan and can provide comments on the draft plan. For additional information please email Edwin Buswell, KIRPC, at elb@kirpc.net or call 219-253-6658. 📧



2

4 shares



Like



Comment



Share



Write a comment...



Park Board Public Meeting - Draft 5-Year Master Park Plan

On Monday, October 23, 2023, at the Knox Park Board Meeting, the park board presented the draft of the 5-Year Master Park Plan and Action Plan and asked for public input, comments, or questions.

A member of the public in attendance asked, it says here on the action plan to acquire property. Is that under the creation of a new park or is that for expanding Wythogan Park. Knox Mayor Estok answered, yes, acquiring property would be for a new park.

An attendee asked, the fishing pier/observation deck, is that only for a new park? Autumn Ferch, Park Board President, said the goal would be to have it in a new park. If that doesn't move forward, that is something that could be put in Wythogan as well.

Another person asked, would we apply for a grant for these projects. Mayor Estok replied, the large grant is the LWCF grant. We used that grant for Sandy Acres Park a few years ago. That would be a grant we would most likely use to build a new park. There are limits on how often you can use that grant for each property so you have to plan on how we can apply for that grant and for which property.

