Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Shape

Plans & Policies for the Future

City of Cheyenne Parks & Recreation
CHEYENNE MPO – CLARION – LSA – EDAW – AVI
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1. Introduction

Shape is the component of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that establishes how and where the Parks and Recreation system in Cheyenne should grow in the future. The Shape component of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan builds on the inventory and design elements previously presented in Snapshot and Structure.

Shape begins by describing the foundation, principles, and policies that will help guide the parks and recreation system within Cheyenne for years to come. The foundation is the basis for adopting more specific principles and policies to follow. The foundation, “Creating a Legacy of Parks and Open Space,” is one of seven created as part of the larger ShapeCheyenne section of the overall PlanCheyenne document. Foundations represent the values and ideals of the community and are also the organizing elements for this part of PlanCheyenne.

The more specific principles are broad-based directions for the community, much like goals. They carry forward many of the ideals the community seeks – from Vision2020 and as defined during the PlanCheyenne planning process.

The specific policies help to create a blueprint of how the City’s parks and recreation system will accommodate growth and continue to address the ever changing needs of its citizens in the future. They will guide decisions to achieve the principles and help outline future actions.

Additionally, the Shape component presents a Master Plan map. This map identifies conceptual locations for additional community and neighborhood parks to serve the growing population in Cheyenne. Areas that are currently underserved by community and neighborhood parks, and those areas that are most likely to see increased growth in the future were previously identified in Snapshot on Map 2: Neighborhood Park Service Areas and Map 3: Community Park Service Areas, and in Structure on Map 1 Projected Population Increases. The Master Plan map also illustrates potential trail corridors that will provide connections to parks and recreation facilities, as well as desired open land areas to be set aside for the natural, cultural, visual, and recreational benefit of the greater Cheyenne community.

Crafting solid policies and illustrating a visual map provides the community of Cheyenne clear direction for an effective, sustainable, and lasting parks and recreation system for years to come.

Cheyenne has a legacy of community parks that has been the heart of the community for residents and visitors for many years. Residents also value the Greenway and trails system that offer alternative transportation opportunities and provide an active, healthy lifestyle. It has also long been held that part of greater Cheyenne’s sense of place is the undeveloped open spaces and wildlife around and within the area.

This Plan aims to improve the parks and recreation system – providing adequate land and facilities to meet the needs of Cheyenne citizens and provide high quality, accessible parks that carry on the “green” legacy and promote public health and well being. As the Cheyenne community grows, new community and neighborhood parks will be added to the system, and the Greenway and trails network will be extended to serve new neighborhoods and connect parks, recreation facilities, and activity centers. Parks and open space are not amenities that will be “tacked on” to new developments, but rather are an integral piece of the overall development framework.

This Plan also aims to conserve “significant” open space lands – complementing the built environment with the natural environment. Open space adds beauty, creates a unique image and sense of place for the Cheyenne area, provides relief from the built environment, and helps to maintain water and environmental quality for the health of the entire community.
2. Foundation, Principles and Policies

Foundation: Creating a Legacy of Parks and Open Space

The following foundation, principles, and policies support those outlined in the overall PlanCheyenne document. The underlying key concept used to help craft these principles and policies is that parks and open space are not an amenity that is ‘tacked on’ to development within the community, but rather an integral piece of the overall community development process.

Policy 1.1: Additional lands will be acquired and developed as adequately sized Neighborhood and Community Parks in existing underserved neighborhoods and new areas.

Policy 1.2: The City of Cheyenne will provide a level of service of 2.5 acres of neighborhood parkland for every 1,000 residents.

Policy 1.3: Where additional land is not feasible to develop an adequately sized Neighborhood Park, the City of Cheyenne will provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicyclist access to the nearest Neighborhood Park. This will be accomplished through construction of sidewalks, improved crossings of roadways, and grade-separated crossings of barriers, where feasible.

Policy 1.4: The City of Cheyenne will maintain and continue to provide a level of service of 5.8 acres of community parkland for every 1,000 residents.

Policy 1.5: Community Parks will be designed to provide a balance between active sports fields and self-directed activities, naturalized areas, trees, gardens, and other elements with broad community interest.

Policy 1.6: Community gatherings and outdoor cultural events will be accommodated through the provision of performance spaces/facilities and areas for special events.

Policy 1.7: The City of Cheyenne will promote joint planning and operation efforts of park and recreation facilities with Laramie County and Laramie County School District, where practical.

Policy 1.8: Continued support will be given for well-loved regional recreation facilities (i.e., Botanic Gardens, Nature Center, Airport and Kingham Prairie View golf courses).
Policy 2.1: A community-wide primary trail system that connects major destinations (e.g., Community Parks, large open space, recreation centers, shopping districts, employment districts, LCCC, downtown, major event centers, fairgrounds, etc.) will be provided. This will be balanced between trails within the city limits, and those that will reside outside of city limits, such as trails in large open space areas.

Policy 2.2: Emphasis will be placed on protecting trail corridors through the acquisition of easements and rights-of-way in advance of development.

Policy 2.3: Opportunities will be provided for 3- to 5-mile trail loops with areas of interest along the route.

Policy 2.4: Road rights-of-way for trails will only be used in the absence of other suitable corridors.

Policy 2.5: Both paved and non-paved trails will be provided to accommodate a variety of users. As such, trails will strive to provide ADA compliant grades and universal accessibility.

Policy 2.6: “Gaps” in the current Greenway system will be closed as soon as practical. If necessary, temporary or natural surface trails will be built until full construction to the ultimate design standard can be completed.

Policy 2.7: New development should be planned to support completion of the City’s trails system and provide permanent right-of-way for planned trails.

Policy 2.8: City departments will work together to establish trail and greenway corridors.

Policy 3.1: Except in rare, special cases, new properties will not be accepted for parks and recreation that do not function as important community-wide public resources.

Policy 3.2: Cheyenne will carefully consider exceptions to Policy 3.1. If there are properties that have special qualities of community-wide significance, such as historic, cultural, archaeological, natural, or other features, the City will potentially acquire parks and conservation lands that do not meet acreage or other standards.

Policy 3.3: Lands shall not be publicly dedicated, but should be owned and maintained by a private organization, such as a homeowners’ association or special district, if they function as:

- Small pocket parks,
- Common areas with limited public access,
- Single purpose stormwater detention ponds,
- Trail connectors with limited access only to individual neighborhood developments,
- Visual green spaces, and
- Other natural or landscaped areas for residents in the immediate neighborhood.
Policy 4.1: Open lands will be protected that preserve unique or sensitive environmental resources, key views, and features contributing to the City’s “Western” identity. Open lands should be publicly owned and may have public access, depending on their purpose (e.g., for recreation or education), or be restricted for continued agricultural uses.

Policy 4.2: Identify key open space resource areas based on community values and update periodically.

Policy 4.3: Cheyenne will preserve significant views to riparian areas, ranchlands, and ridgelines from select locations along the interstate highways.

Policy 4.4: The major drainages in and around the community should be protected and enhanced.

Policy 4.5: The City will work with development to protect strategically-located parcels.

Policy 4.6: A joint City/County program will be developed to identify and address open lands.

Policy 4.7: Funding sources for open land acquisition and stewardship will be identified and pursued.

Policy 5.1: Additional lands will be acquired and developed for recreation facilities/services in existing underserved neighborhoods and new areas.

Policy 5.2: The City will ensure that recreation demands are met through development of new facilities/services in addition to upgrading existing facilities.

Policy 5.3: New residential development shall contribute its fair share for parks and recreational facilities based on the projected population in the development.

Policy 5.4: Parkland or a fee in-lieu of parkland shall be required with each incoming development. The City will accept a fee in-lieu of dedication when the proposed parkland would result in an inadequately sized parcel or otherwise unsuitable area for park purposes.

Policy 5.5: New facilities and parkland will provide an improved quality of life for residents and contribute to the economic development of the community.

Policy 5.6: Parks and recreation facilities shall be in locations that offer visual and vehicular access from major roadways, are accessible by large numbers of users, and offer direct trail system and/or pedestrian connections.

Policy 5.7: The community will pursue opportunities for other active outdoor recreation facilities (such as shooting range or ATV motor sports), as identified in the Master Plan.

Policy 5.8: The community will selectively prioritize and “target” public investment in parks and recreation to help spark private investment that is complementary to a district or neighborhood.
Policy 6.1: The Parks and Recreation Department will annually assess needed maintenance and renovation projects system-wide.

Policy 6.2: The City will support funding for additional parks and recreation department staff positions as the open space, recreation, parks and trails system grows.

Policy 6.3: The City will adequately staff and fund maintenance and operations to increase the quality of maintenance of current park, trail, and recreation facilities to acceptable standards, and adjust staffing levels to keep pace with the addition of recreation properties to the system.

Policy 6.4: Cheyenne will establish management plans for the various types of parks and other properties the Parks and Recreation Department maintains. Management plans will include maintenance and design standards for facilities and properties as decided at the discretion of Parks and Recreation staff.

Policy 6.5: The Parks and Recreation Department will not mow or maintain areas of neighborhood and community parks it has naturalized and returned to native vegetation in order to provide for a natural environment in an urban setting.

Policy 7.1: The City will identify and pursue funding sources for all parks and recreation projects and priorities.

Policy 7.2: The City will retain or increase Parks and Recreation 5th and 6th penny allocations.

Policy 7.3: Impact fees for parks, recreation, open space, and trails will be a city-wide investment in community infrastructure for improved quality of life in Cheyenne. Quality of life fees will be coordinated with other city service impact fees.

Policy 7.4: The city fee structure and parks and recreation fee structure should reflect the level of service standards.

Policy 7.5: The City will aggressively seek grants and other types of funding from available sources.

Policy 7.6: The City will establish public-private partnerships, and or endowments where mutually beneficial and appropriate.

Policy 7.7: Private provision of facilities will be considered a viable option for parks and recreation projects where appropriate.

Policy 7.8: The City will coordinate with other agencies, initiate IGA’s, and seek partnerships to leverage available funding.

Policy 7.9: The City will explore the level of community support for funding parks and recreation projects through use of a special district, property tax, sales tax, or bond sale.

Policy 7.10: The Parks and Recreation Department will periodically update park design standards in subdivision, zoning and other land-use and development regulations to incorporate the Parks and Recreation Plan recommendations.
3. Future Parks and Recreation Plan

The Future Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides a framework for the provision of parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities in the Cheyenne area. Its primary focus is on areas where new development is likely to occur in the future, and the subsequent needs and desires of the residents of these areas. The need for parks and trails in existing developed areas is also addressed.

The Master Plan for Cheyenne includes a map that indicates locations for parks and trails, as well as targeted areas for protecting open space and/or cultural resources in the Cheyenne urban area.

The elements shown on the Master Plan are based on meeting the needs of the community that were identified in Snapshot, the park typologies and physical opportunities presented in Structure, and proposed future land uses for the entire Cheyenne area as determined through the PlanCheyenne process.

It is estimated that there could be an average growth rate of approximately 2%, for a future population of approximately 102,000 in 2030 in the City of Cheyenne and over 132,000 for the entire Cheyenne area in about 50 years. This parks plan is being produced concurrently with other elements of PlanCheyenne, including the transportation plan. It is highly beneficial that these plans are being created at the same time because it allows for coordination of planning projects and will lead to a more efficient and effective building process when this plan is put into action.

The Master Plan map shows the locations of existing public parks and recreation assets, as well as targeted areas for protecting open space and/or cultural resources in the Cheyenne urban area.

- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Open Space
- Trails

Cemeteries and golf courses are also shown on the Master Plan map and addressed briefly in subsequent text. Specific recommendations for recreational facilities and general recommendations for the Forestry Division, and Cheyenne Botanic Gardens are also provided.

The elements shown on the Master Plan are based on meeting the needs of the community that were identified in Snapshot, the park typologies and physical opportunities presented in Structure, and proposed future land uses for the entire Cheyenne area as determined through the PlanCheyenne process. The proposed PlanCheyenne land use plan builds upon the earlier Vision 2020 process, which helped to identify the community's destination. PlanCheyenne will expand upon that vision and build the roadmap to transport the community to 2030.
3. Future Parks and Recreation Plan

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
Cheyenne Area Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Neighborhood Park Recommendations

Recommendations for Neighborhood Parks are categorized into three groups:

- Improvements to existing parks,
- New parks or improvements to existing parks to meet the needs of existing residents in underserved areas, and
- Proposed future parks to meet the needs of the community as it grows.

The Master Plan map shows locations of existing parks, and includes conceptual locations for 18 new Neighborhood Parks based on the proposed build-out land use plan adopted as part of the PlanCheyenne process.

Improvements to Existing Parks

The condition of existing Neighborhood Parks was discussed in detail in the Snapshot section E of this plan. Many parks could use enhancements and upgrades to improve their quality and function. The City should aggressively address the issues in each of the existing parks by developing a detailed comprehensive list of improvement projects, and developing design documents for their renovation.

Civitan Park

Parks to Serve Underserved Neighborhoods

Several Neighborhood Parks are needed today based on existing residential development that does not have adequate access to parks, including residents south of the UP Railroad, and certainly south of I-80. Map 2 in Snapshot graphically shows the level of service areas for Neighborhood Parks in Cheyenne and those areas that are not adequately served by existing parks. The neighborhood east of North College Drive, adjacent to the Dry Creek Greenway, would benefit from the development of neighborhood park amenities on Greenway land, or potentially adding some land adjacent to the Greenway to develop a park.

Cahill Park at Section 28.
Existing Undeveloped Parks
Development of Western Hills Park in the far northwest area of the City is essential to meeting the needs of those residents. Development of this park would serve approximately half of the residents in this area. Those to the south would not be in the half-mile service radius, and it appears that the possibility of acquiring additional land in this area is limited.

Bar X Park, which is currently a detention pond with turf grass, should be improved to be more of a full-service Neighborhood Park for the area east of I-25.

The Hebard neighborhood is underserved on its east side. However, there are opportunities for new park amenities associated with the new green space that will be created as part of the Norris Viaduct project adjacent to the refinery.

When David R. Romero South Cheyenne Community Park is developed, the entire Goins neighborhood will be well served. The west portion of the Goins neighborhood is not currently served by a Neighborhood Park. The development of David Romero Community Park should include elements of a Neighborhood Park to serve these residents.

Improving Access and Integrating Parks with Redevelopment
Some areas of the city that do not have adequate access to Neighborhood Parks also lack undeveloped vacant lands for development of new parks.

The following map depicts these residential areas of the city where there is not currently adequate service by neighborhood parks and a lack of vacant land for park development. These areas are highlighted by light blue bubbles. In these areas (e.g., near East Lincolnway, south of the airport, north of Hilltop Avenue, south of Vandehei, between East Lincolnway and Pershing Boulevard), a variety of strategies could be pursued. These may include improving pedestrian and bicycle connections to the nearest Neighborhood or Community Park, and establishing cooperative agreements to improve school properties in underserved areas. Furthermore, redevelopment plans should recognize the need for Neighborhood Parks. Opportunities for acquisition of parkland associated with redevelopment or acquisition of smaller vacant areas should be pursued.

Residential Areas Lacking Neighborhood Parks and Undeveloped Park Lands
Future Neighborhood Park Locations

In addition to meeting the needs of existing Cheyenne residents, 9 to 15 of the 12 to 18 total new Neighborhood Parks will be needed by new residents in developing areas by 2030. The actual locations for these parks are not known today; however, potential areas have been identified based on TAZ population projections and the Future Land Use Plan. Map 1 (below) graphically shows current Neighborhood and Community Park service areas overlaid on the TAZ population projections for 2030. Specific park locations will be determined as areas develop. The locations for Neighborhood Parks should be coordinated with the location of future trails and open space, and be developed according to the best practices described in Structure.

Map 1: PROJECTED POPULATION INCREASES
Cheyenne Area Master Plan

Map 1. Projected Population Increases
The Master Plan includes recommendations for improving existing Community Parks as well as new parks that may be needed for future residents.

**Improvements to Existing Community Parks**

The condition of existing Community Parks was discussed in detail in the Snapshot section E of this plan. Many parks could use enhancements and upgrades to improve their quality and function. In addition to the new parks and enhancements mentioned in the previous sections, the overall parks system is facing the need to replace many of the aging irrigation systems throughout the City.

Cheyenne should evaluate the design of each of its parks to determine if there are design changes that could reduce the amount of irrigated turf or improve water use efficiency.

The City is also developing an irrigation water system throughout the City that uses reclaimed water, rather than potable water, for its large irrigated turf areas. When complete, this system will result in significant savings in the cost of water for irrigation.

The sports complexes and parks located in Section 28 could be enhanced by looking at the entire area holistically and developing the area as a cohesive park unit, rather than the individual areas that exist today. Amenities for use by the adjacent neighborhoods as Neighborhood Parks should be included in the plans for this area. One such amenity is a Public Recreation Center for the City of Cheyenne. Refer to Page 28 for additional discussion on a Recreation Center. A new, consolidated maintenance facility is also recommended to be included in this plan.

Master plans for improvements to several other existing community parks have been adopted (Lions Park, North Cheyenne Community Park), but some other Community Parks need plans to determine specific improvements that are needed (e.g., Holliday, Pioneer). Expansion of North Cheyenne Community Park has been seriously considered; however, this is not where the need for Community Parks is the greatest.

The City should consider deferring development of this parkland in order to concentrate its efforts on other areas of the community that are in greater need. The City should aggressively address the issues in each of the existing parks by developing a detailed comprehensive list of improvement projects, and developing design documents for their renovation.
3. Future Parks and Recreation Plan

New Community Parks

It is anticipated that an additional 44,000 people will be added to the City’s population by 2030. In order to meet the community parkland standard of 5.8 acres per 1,000 population, 258 acres of community parkland will need to be developed by the year 2030. To meet this need, 5 new Community Park sites are shown on the Master Plan, including 4 sites that have not yet been acquired. Each of these potential parks is discussed below.

South Cheyenne Community Park

Additional community parkland is not currently needed based on existing population and a 5.8 acre per 1,000 people standard, but residents south of the UP Railroad, and certainly south of I-80, do not currently have easy access to Community Parks. Therefore, the next Community Park to be developed should be located on the existing 29 acres of parkland within the Goins Neighborhood, which has already been named David R. Romero South Cheyenne Community Park.

At 29 acres, this Community Park site is undersized and additional opportunities for parkland should be pursued. A master planning process should be conducted to determine the desired program and design of this site.

Dry Creek Community Park

This park site is located conceptually on the Master Plan just upstream of the railroad along Dry Creek. This park would serve the East Cheyenne area and would ideally be located along the Dry Creek drainage, connecting with the planned trail expansion at Dry Creek Greenway. The construction of this park should be coordinated with regional water detention needs, existing floodplains, and other environmental considerations. Additionally, the design of this park should consider enhancement of the natural qualities of the drainageway.

Lower Allison Draw Community Park

This park is conceptually located to serve future residential developments in southeast Cheyenne. It would be located along the Allison Draw Greenway and thus will be served by a primary trail. Among other attributes, this park could potentially be integrated into the proposed Natural/Cultural Resource District along the adjoining ridgeline.

Upper Allison Draw Community Park

This park is conceptually located upstream along Allison Draw, west of the S. Greeley Highway to serve future residential development planned for south Cheyenne. Its location in Allison Draw would allow it to adjoin the Greenway and connect with the planned adjacent trail system.

West Cheyenne Community Park

This park is conceptually located west of I-25 and south of I-80 near existing ponds, natural features, and a historic ranch. This park could be incorporated into the adjoining Natural/Cultural Resource District, and could be designed to preserve and interpret the historic ranching operations of the area. It also has natural surface water that could be incorporated into the design and add visual interest. This park would also be connected to 2 segments of the primary trail system.
3. Future Parks and Recreation Plan

**OPEN SPACE**

**Natural / Cultural Resource Areas**

The Master Plan shows a regional system for open space. Natural/Cultural Resource Areas represent the largest land areas shown. These areas represent priorities for future open space preservation efforts. It is not intended that all areas under these districts will be protected, but rather indicate areas that offer a unique potential opportunity to preserve open space.

**Recommendations**
- Preserve important attributes of Natural Cultural Resource areas

Several large areas have been identified as locations where natural landscape and habitat values are combined with historic or cultural resources. These areas were identified on the Parks and Recreation Structure Plan and the Community Structure Plan. The Natural and Cultural Resource Areas should be preserved as they are, or developed in a manner that does not compromise these resources. A particularly important area is where Crow Creek and Dry Creek converge, including the Wyoming Hereford Ranch historic site. This area has irreplaceable wildlife habitat and historic values. Other areas include:

1) The ridge that runs southwest to northeast, south of I-80. The ridge is a highly visible landform that has archaeological value.

2) Child Ranch. This is a beautiful high plains ranch with rolling topography, high quality grasslands, and historic resources.

3) The relatively intact prairie and ranchland west of I-25, south of I-80. The area has natural water, archaeological, historic, and important wildlife habitat values.

Area west of I-25, south of I-80

South Cheyenne Ridge, a Natural Cultural Resource Area
OPEN SPACE

Regional Open Space

Recommendations
- Create a regional park at the USDA grassland Research Station and/or Roundtop Park.
- Develop master plans to determine appropriate uses for the Belvoir Ranch and Big Hole properties.

The City owns 3 large Regional Open Space areas: The 2,140-acre USDA Grasslands Research Station, the 17,000-acre Belvoir Ranch, and the 1,800-acre Big Hole property.

USDA Grasslands Research Station
The City has partnered with the USDA Grasslands Research Station for development of a 62-acre High Plains Arboretum on the site of the research station.

The arboretum is a historic site, established in 1928 and its mission was to increase livability on the High Plains through release of adapted fruits, vegetables, ornamental plants, and windbreaks. In 1974, the station’s mission shifted to grasslands research. In 2000, a group of citizens concerned about the decline of the plants, formed the Friends of the High Plains Arboretum. The goal is to preserve, restore, and enhance this historic site as the High Plains Arboretum. The vision is to see it become a vital resource for regional and community landscaping, research on drought tolerance, and, finally, the creation of more attractive and livable communities on the High Plains. Since 1975, the trees and shrubs relied mainly on natural precipitation to survive, receiving minimal care, water, and maintenance.

Over fifty percent of the plants inventoried in 1974 are gone, and many more are in decline. But there are still thousands of trees and shrubs that grace this unique and historic site. It is clear that this arboretum is in need of an intensive effort to prevent yearly losses of valuable plant material. In addition to water, these plants require pruning and weeding. A master plan developed for the site calls for a phased in process of developing the property which will take between 15 and 25 years. It includes:

- Preservation and inventorying of the existing plants
- Setting up staging areas
- Restoring many of the plants that once existed on the site
- Planting of new plants that may help enhance the quality of life on the High Plains
- Development of walkway and bikeway paths throughout the acreage
- Development of new areas to display woody plants
- Vast amounts of public interpretation (signage and other media) that will tell the historic story of the many plants and plant explorers and horticulturist that worked to make the High Plains more habitable.
- Creating a visitor center to introduce visitors to the site, its history and ongoing research and development that is occurring.
- Picnic and event areas
- Shared use of the existing historic greenhouse and lath house with the USDA/ARS staff
- Further compilation of the history of the site
- Tie-ins with the nearby Roundtop park

Other possibilities mentioned for this site include the development of a regional park. This should be considered and planned for on a regional level including coordinating with other agencies such as Laramie County and the State of Wyoming.

While the first five years of the master plan calls for minimal activity, an effort must be made during this time frame to provide water to the existing trees and shrubs as well as pruning, weed control and mulching around the plant collection. These activities will require the use of staff and equipment and should be included in future Parks and Recreation and City budgets. Forestry staff may also be required in the pruning activities.

The six to ten year master plan timeframe will require even more financial inputs. Some of the needed funds will likely be provided through fundraising from the non-profit Friends of the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens.

The development of the High Plains Arboretum is contingent upon an agreement between the USDA and
the City of Cheyenne which would allow this 62 acre site to be legally removed from the original lease. This would allow it to come under full City of Cheyenne control.

Also on the grounds of the USDA High Plains Grasslands Research Station and north and slightly east of the High Plains Arboretum is a site known as Roundtop Park. This park was developed in the 1930s and includes a fully mature landscape, picnic tables and fire pits as well as a rustic restroom. The site also has two historic rock bridges. Roundtop park sits on approximately 5 acres and is currently used by the Girl Scouts on a revocable permit basis with the USDA. It is anticipated that the Girl Scouts will be able to continue to use this site for the next few years, however, as Cheyenne’s needs for increased green space grows this park will provide a ready made park that would require no new landscaping. For this site to be opened up to the public as a usable park it will need:

- Parking
- Automated Irrigation system
- Potable water
- Storage (for mowers and maintenance equipment)
- Upgrades to the facilities (i.e. new picnic tables, etc)
- Maintenance staff
- Some occasional security presence (police or private security)

Adjacent to the park is Roundtop reservoir. This may also someday be a part of the park and could provide some additional recreational opportunities in the future. Another possibility is further developing this area into a regional park with other cooperating agencies.

The development of Roundtop Park (and Roundtop reservoir) is contingent upon an agreement between the USDA and the City of Cheyenne which would allow this site to be legally removed from the original lease. This would allow it to come under full City of Cheyenne control.

Belvoir Ranch

The Belvoir Ranch was purchased with the intended uses of a new landfill, water development, and public access for recreation. Though the ranch is not within the study area of this plan and the future uses of the ranch have yet to be determined, the ranch should be developed to provide public access and managed in a way that emphasizes resource conservation while recognizing other city needs.

Big Hole

The Big Hole was recently purchased by the city in a joint effort with Larimer County, Colorado, and the Nature Conservancy. The property was identified as an important piece of property in the Nature Conservancy’s Mountains to Plains Project. The Big Hole is on the border of Colorado and Wyoming and was purchased with the intent of preserving scenic beauty, habitat and the unique ecology of the area. Though the property is not within the study area and the uses have yet to be determined, the Big Hole should be developed to provide public access, and managed in a way that emphasizes resource conservation. Use of the property should be coordinated with Larimer County Colorado and the Nature Conservancy.

In addition, the Big Hole and the Belvoir Ranch are located adjacent to Red Mountain Ranch, a large open space property in Larimer County, Colorado. The properties span the state line, creating an important regional connection for wildlife, open spaces, and preservation of scenic vistas and habitat. Opportunities for providing trail connections between the properties and the two states should be explored.
OPEN SPACE
Natural Areas

Recommendations
- Proactively preserve drainages as natural areas.
- Connect existing natural areas, such as Abscarraca, with other natural corridors and open space.

Continuous links of open space are essential to maintain biodiversity links that ensure the genetic health of plant, aquatic, microbial and wildlife species. Urban development that disrupts connections also isolates populations and creates unstable ecological systems. The Cheyenne Parks Master Plan map shows recommended locations for Natural Areas. Most of these are located along drainageways, including Dry Creek, Crow Creek, Allison Draw, Child’s Draw, and along drainages west, southwest and north of the existing City. The City currently owns and maintains 111 acres along existing Greenway Trail corridors and in two isolated locations (Abscarraca and Centennial). Additional Natural Areas, like Abscarraca, are important to preserve and their value would be enhanced if connected with an open space corridor to other habitats.
3. Future Parks and Recreation Plan

TRAILS

Community-Wide Trail System

Recommendations

- Continue development of the Cheyenne Greenway and primary multi-purpose trail system
- Provide 3-5 mile trail loops
- Coordinate Trails with development plans and work with other city departments
- Provide a natural surface trail along the south Cheyenne ridge.
- Secure right-of-way for future trail corridors
- Investigate possibilities for regional trail connections to the south and east of Cheyenne.

The Plan For Trails

The Master Plan map shows the vision for trails throughout the Cheyenne area. Two types of trails that are of community-wide significance are identified on the Master Plan: primary multi-purpose trails and a natural surface trail. The design criteria for these and additional trail categories are described in the Structure section of this plan. The trail types not shown on the Master Plan (secondary multi-purpose trails, neighborhood trails and soft-surface trails) are important neighborhood-scale features, and should be integrated into specific plans for development throughout the community. It is important that these local systems connect to the larger, community-wide trail system.

As summarized in the Snapshot section of this plan, the City has been proactive in planning for trails along drainages, and has an established Greenway Trail system and plan. The Master Plan was created in coordination with this plan. This plan should continue to be implemented, and supplemented with new trails as shown on the Master Plan. This system of primary, multi-purpose trails, supplemented with the local trails systems, will provide looped routes for bicyclists, skaters, walkers, runners and non-motorized users of all types. The comprehensive trail system should provide connections between residential areas, parks, open space, schools, recreational facilities, commercial areas, and other key destinations.

Approximately 16 miles of primary multi-purpose trail has been constructed through the Cheyenne Greenways program. The extent of existing trails is illustrated in Section E of the Snapshot section of this plan. The Master Plan shows vision for the entire primary multi-purpose trail system. These locations of the trails are conceptual, and will be defined in more detail as specific planning is accomplished for each segment.

The Master Plan shows trail spines along the Natural Areas and Corridors associated with primary drainages. These trails should be located sensitively in an effort to retain the habitat values of riparian corridors. Potential trail corridors include the Dry Creek corridor to the proposed southeast ridge open space, the Crow Creek corridor, the Allison Draw corridor, extension of the Storey Boulevard greenway corridor to make a loop connection with the proposed Dry Creek corridor, and the railroad corridor from Dry Creek to the Logan Avenue area. Three- to 5-mile trail loops are proposed through new development areas to connect parks, other trails, and open space areas to each other. Other loops and spurs are also proposed in order to effectively connect neighborhood parks.

Long trails around the perimeter of the future developed area of the city connect the urban area to destinations beyond the city limits. Although it would be desirable to connect directly to the High Plains Arboretum on the
USDA Grasslands Research Station, trails are not shown through FE Warren because of the security concerns that this installation has over allowing public access through its property. A trail segment is shown that would travel south from the proposed regional park at the USDA Grasslands Research Station to the proposed neighborhood park just north of Happy Jack Road. The trail would continue south across I-80 to the proposed West Cheyenne Community Park.

From here the trail would split, with one segment looping south through two proposed neighborhood parks, and the proposed Upper Allison Draw Community Park. It would then continue north, eventually connecting with the Allison Draw Greenway and lead to the proposed Lower Allison Draw Community Park. A spur would also connect to a proposed natural trail within the proposed open space near the southeast ridgeline.

The other split from the West Cheyenne Community Park would travel north to the new David R. Romero South Cheyenne Community Park, where it would connect with the Crow Creek Greenway and other proposed trails.

A trail has also been shown along the northern edge of the community, but the majority of this area has already been planned or actually developed into large-lot residential subdivisions, which may be potentially prohibitive in the acquisition of trail right-of-way.

The trails shown on the Master Plan map are Primary Multi-purpose Trails that should be publicly accessible. The trail across the southern ridge Conservation Area may be an exception to this, and could be a natural surface trail, if this area remains in a natural condition.

**Coordination with Transportation Projects**

Future trails and connections will be coordinated with other development plans, such as the transportation plan. Even though the exact locations of trails cannot be determined until the specific areas are studied in more detail, the following locations have been identified as being critical in coordinating planning and construction with the transportation plan:
As Community and Neighborhood Parks are developed, additional recreational facilities can be developed within them to meet the needs of the growing population. Programmed recreational activities that are geared to the community at-large, such as soccer, football, or baseball/softball tournament game fields, should not be included in Neighborhood Parks. Appropriate facilities and activities in parks are described in Structure. The largest space requirements in Community Parks are associated with the programmed, athletic sports fields such as baseball, softball, football, soccer and lacrosse. Neighborhood Parks should contain multi-purpose field areas to accommodate youth and adult practices.

Section O of the Parks Snapshot chapter describes the number of specific recreational facilities that are needed now and in the future to meet an average level of service. These numbers illustrate average need, as specific levels of service for Cheyenne for each type of recreation facility have never been established. For example, Cheyenne currently serves its population with almost twice as many softball/baseball fields as other communities, and 1.5 times as many outdoor basketball courts. Cheyenne may decide that it wants to provide a higher level of service than average, in which case, the numbers of needed facilities would be higher than stated below.

Using average levels of service that are being provided by peer communities, the Cheyenne parks system is deficient with facilities in the following categories:

- Football Fields – 2
- Full-size gymnasium – 1
- Tennis courts – 3
- Swimming pools – 1
- Ice rink – 1

By the year 2030, if no facilities have been added to the current parks system, the following additional facilities will need to be provided to meet the average level of service for an anticipated population of 102,000:

- Soccer fields – 10
- Football fields – 4
- Outdoor basketball courts – 2
- Full-size gymnasium – 2
- Tennis courts – 15
- Swimming pools – 3
- Ice rinks – 3
- Skateboard parks – 3
- In-line hockey rink – 1

In addition to these averages, the need for additional soccer and baseball/softball fields should be considered. Average levels of service do not acknowledge the fact that some communities are not adequately meeting the needs of their residents, and are behind on constructing community parks and sports complexes. Many communities target a level of service of 1 field per 3000 to 3500 people for both of these types of facilities. Using this range, in the year 2030 (population 102,000) Cheyenne would need a total of an additional 16 to 21 soccer fields, and 0 to 8 additional baseball/softball fields.

Many of the needed soccer fields can be accommodated by constructing multi-purpose play fields in neighborhood parks. Practice ballfields are also appropriate facilities for neighborhood parks. Game fields should be limited to Community Parks and Sports Complexes because of the impact of vehicles and parking. The need for specific numbers of recreational facilities in each park should be determined based on periodic reassessment of the user groups and community at large.
The City prepared a Recreation Feasibility Study in November 2005 for a multi-purpose recreation center. The feasibility report recommends a large facility that includes a large warm-water leisure pool, multiple gymnasium space, youth fitness, boxing, gymnastics center, and rock climbing wall among other features. The feasibility report also recommends that the facility be located in the northeast quadrant of the Section 28 complex (see photo page 17) due to its central location and availability of space. Additionally, the feasibility report recommends combining the Recreation and Aquatic divisions into one to streamline efficiency and lower operation costs. At two public meetings and in the most recent citizen survey from 2005, the community has endorsed the concept of a recreation center. Sixty-three percent of survey respondents indicated they were in favor of a new indoor recreation center and of those, 80% were willing to pay for it. This Master Plan concurs with the feasibility report that the community constructs the multi-purpose center in a centralized location.

Closing Johnson Pool has been recommended by the feasibility study because it is in need of major capital repairs to the bath house and has recently had a small decline in participation. The Municipal Pool in Lions Park is currently a very important facility for the City as it currently contains the only indoor public pool. The future role of this facility was not discussed in the feasibility study; however, its role in providing aquatics activities should be evaluated as well. The Aquatics Division also manages the Sloan’s Lake swim beach in Lions Park. The swim beach is an important part of the summer experience in Cheyenne and should only be closed if the beach develops maintenance problems that cannot be solved.

Although applying an average level of service standard results in a deficit of 3 swimming pools in the year 2030, most communities are transitioning from numerous smaller pools to fewer, but larger, multi-activity indoor pools. Constructing a large leisure pool with slides, lap lanes, and other features that appeal to a broad spectrum of users, would meet the needs of the community for the foreseeable future.

The future of existing indoor recreational facilities, such as the Old Community House, Neighborhood Facility and Pioneer Park Center, should be defined after determining the program for the future multi-purpose recreation center.

In addition to activities that are traditionally provided by public parks and recreation agencies, there is demand for high intensity uses such as paintball, mini-golf, go-carts and BMX bicycling that could be considered for inclusion in convenient locations throughout the city. One non-traditional facility, indoor paintball, will likely be available to residents as early as January 2007. The City should investigate possibilities for providing the remaining activities, either privately or as a responsibility of the City. Possible locations for consideration include the old Kiwanis building, the IKON center, and the old Saddle Tramps facility in Section 28.
Facility Timeline
RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Golf Courses

Recommendations

- Conduct a specific study on the needs for additional golf opportunities in Cheyenne
- Implement improvements to existing golf courses

The scope of this Master Plan does not include a detailed study on Golf needs in the community, however, through reviewing the Golf Course Market Analysis prepared in 2001, interviews with staff and public input, this Master Plan does not recommend additional golf courses within the existing City of Cheyenne currently.

As mentioned in the Snapshot section, the feasibility and desirability of a links-style golf course at the Belvoir Ranch should be determined through a separate study. Additionally, if the population almost doubles in 25 years, it is likely that an additional golf course could be supported within the urban area itself. If the existing level of service (including the FE Warren golf course) were provided to a population of 102,000, the City would need an additional 56 holes of golf (1 golf hole per 797 people) by 2030. The entire state of Wyoming provides 1 golf hole per 617 people. If this level of service is used, Cheyenne would need an additional 93 holes by 2030. This level of service does not seem to be appropriate for Cheyenne, as the Wyoming figure includes very small, rural communities that provide a golf course because the nearest golf course is far away. As Cheyenne continues to urbanize, a more appropriate comparison may be the level of service provided in Colorado, which is 1 hole of golf for every 1035 people. If this level of service is used, Cheyenne would need an additional 26 holes of golf by 2030.

Given the potential range of future needs for golf in Cheyenne (between 26 and 93 additional holes) The City should conduct a study specific to golf that determines the short and long terms needs.

Improvements to the existing golf courses are needed and are described in the Snapshot section of this plan.
CEMETERIES

Recommendations

- Conduct a specific study on the needs for additional cemeteries in Cheyenne
- Implement improvements to existing cemeteries

The Master Plan does not address specific recommendation regarding Cemeteries and a study by cemetery planners has not been conducted. However, the number of existing spaces are declining quickly, and an additional cemetery may be needed some time in the future. Without detail on the size, siting criteria and needs associated with a new cemetery, this planning process could not identify potential locations. The City could consider any number of sites in the study area, and needs to determine its policies regarding the long term provision of this service.

The physical Issues with the existing cemeteries are identified in the Snapshot Section of this plan. One action that is clearly needed is to convert existing bluegrass turf to lower water-requiring turf or other materials over time.
BOTANIC GARDENS

The Botanic Gardens is one of the most popular park amenities in the City. It should continue to be developed and improved according to the adopted master plan, and coordinated with ongoing plans for Lion’s Park.

Building expansion plans for the Botanic Gardens include adding more production space, creating a larger public conservatory area, building interactive stations throughout the greenhouse for children, adding a meeting room and public library, expanding office space, installing more bathrooms, and increasing handicapped access to the entire building. There are also plans to add a “Museum” store and develop an Outside Children’s Garden. This would require moving the shop area to an alternative site, as outlined by the Lions Park Master Plan. The most current initiative is called “The Children’s Initiative”, which includes construction of a children’s garden.

Recommendations
- Implement the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens Master Plan
PARKS

Recommendations

- Implement improvements to existing parks.
- Expand the maintenance facility.
- Increase staff and funding as acreage and responsibilities of the division increase.
- Create an equipment replacement plan.
- Set a policy about percent of native areas in parks.
- Set a policy on park naming.
- Create a parks infrastructure replacement plan.
- Continue to expand the possibilities of reusing water.

As the park and recreation system in Cheyenne continues to grow, the Parks Maintenance division must grow accordingly to ensure that a continued high level of maintenance activity is upheld for all facilities. This will require annual assessments by the Parks and Recreation Department of staffing, equipment, and budget to ensure they have the resources necessary to accomplish this. An expanded maintenance facility near the Dutcher Fields Complex would centralize many activities and increase efficiency of operations.
Administration

Recommendations
- Expand operations to include a Natural Areas/Open Space division or program
- Implement regulatory and legislative tools to enhance department ability to meet current and future needs of the community.
- Implement a land dedication ordinance.
- Re-define the structure of the administrative division.
- Re-define positions within the administrative division.
- Produce more public relations material.
- Create procedures manual.
- Create policies for the divisions.

The administration division should continue to integrate with other city departments, learn city policies and procedures, identify problems in procedures and work to change them over time. The division should set policies for other parks and recreation divisions and prioritize projects for the department. Projects should be delegated out to divisions and all divisions should assist on projects as necessary.
As described in the Snapshot section of this plan, the city has an Urban Forestry Division that manages trees throughout the city. The municipal forest is comprised of two distinct populations, those managed and maintained entirely by the Division (city trees) and those overseen by the Division but predominantly maintained by private property owners (right-of-way trees). Areas cared for by the Division include trees along city right-of-ways, trees on city properties such as parks, golf courses, cemeteries, greenways, the Fire Training Center, the Police Station, the Depot, and water department facilities. Various issues and needs facing this Division are outlined in Snapshot.

The Division adopted an Urban Forestry Management Plan, developed in 2004, that highlights several recommendations for the Division and associated forestry programs. The division also receives guidance from a study conducted by the Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California, Davis. The study provides a tree resource analysis of Cheyenne’s trees along with recommendations. The recommendations from both plans should be implemented as soon as practical.

Additionally, in general, the Forestry Division should continue to work with the Parks Division to plant and maintain trees in parks, natural areas, and greenways.

The Forestry Division continues to grow as the city expands its land and acreage, encompassing new recreational areas. As residential and business development continues in Cheyenne, the right-of-way areas needing forestry attention continue to increase. Additionally, a city ordinance requires this division to be involved with the code enforcement of these new areas and existing right-of-ways. The city needs to ensure that the personnel needed to maintain these areas keep up with the increased demand of maintenance. These trees add tremendous value to the aesthetics, climate and environment, and their importance should be acknowledged. This Master Plan, however, does not have specific project recommendations regarding this program.

Potential changes to operations or responsibilities of the Division are listed in the Build section of this plan.

Recommendations

- Continue to work with the Parks Division to plant and maintain trees in parks, natural areas and greenways.
- Implement the 2004 Urban Forestry Management Plans in a timely manner.
- Modify the responsibilities of the Forestry Division to include maintenance of right-of-way trees.
- Continue to work on public education to enhance the fundamental knowledge of tree care and conservation measures within an urban forest.