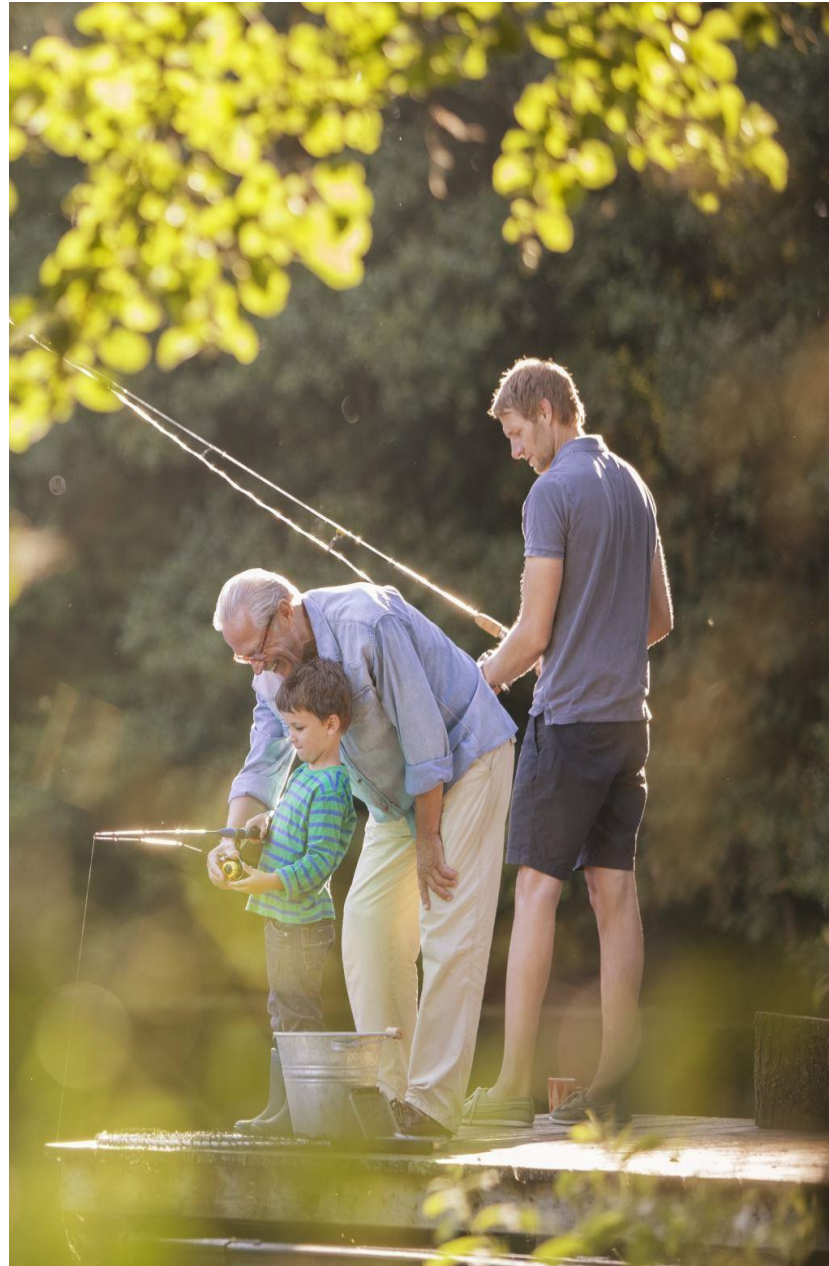


City of Litchfield and Litchfield Park District, Illinois Parks and Recreation Master Plan



Adopted April 21, 2021

Updated: __/__/____

Table of Contents

Resolutions in Support of Planning and Adopting the Plan	3
Purpose and Goals of the Plan.....	8
Process	9
Citizen Involvement.....	10
Community Wide Survey	10
Community Forum.....	16
Demographics.....	17
Market Characteristics.....	18
Trends, Issues and Needs Affecting the Community	23
Responsibility for the Provision of Open Space and Parkland	29
Open Space/Park Land Purpose, Classification, and Standards	30
Boundaries and Study Area	33
10 Minute Walk Assessment	44
Inventory	45
Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory Comparison	48
Potential Participation in Outdoor Recreation Activities	49
Attractions, Cultural, Scenic, Historic and Natural Sites	50
Existing Recreational Offerings.....	51
Needs and Priorities	52
Fiscal and Budget Considerations.....	59
Plan Participants.....	65
Sources	66

Resolutions in Support of Planning and Adopting the Plan

RESOLUTION NUMBER 13-20

CITY OF LITCHFIELD, Illinois
Resolution in Support of Developing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan

WHEREAS the City of Litchfield recognizes the importance of parks and recreation to the quality of life for the residents of Litchfield, Illinois, and

WHEREAS the need to provide quality park and recreation services for everyone in the community is recognized and valued, and

WHEREAS the importance of sound planning in order to effectively meet the park and recreation needs of its citizens is understood, and

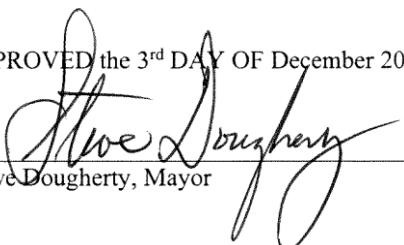
WHEREAS the City of Litchfield desires to partner with the Litchfield Park District to produce a joint Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the community, and


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE City of Litchfield supports the preparation of a joint Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the Litchfield Park District, to be used upon adoption by this body as its official plan for the future, to guide and shape the development and provision of park and recreational services in our community.

Passed and signed this yct day of December 2020.

ALDERMEN:	AYES	NAYS	ABSENT
Marilyn Sisson	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Dwayne Gerl	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Mark Brown	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Dave Hollo	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Tim Wright	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Kassidy Paine	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Ray Kellenberger	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Woodrow Street	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

APPROVED the 3rd DAY OF December 2020.


Steve Dougherty, Mayor


ATTEST: Carol Burke, City Clerk

LITCHFIELD PARK DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 424
Litchfield, Illinois
62056

Litchfield Park District, Litchfield, Illinois
Resolution in Support of Developing a Parks
and Recreation Master Plan

WHEREAS the Litchfield Park District recognizes the importance of parks and recreation to the quality of life for the residents of Litchfield, Illinois, and

WHEREAS the need to provide quality park and recreation services for everyone in the community is recognized and valued, and

WHEREAS the importance of sound planning in order to effectively meet the park and recreation needs of its citizens is understood, and

WHEREAS the City of Litchfield desires to partner with the Litchfield Park District to produce a joint Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the community, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT
THE Litchfield Park District supports the preparation of a joint Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the City of Litchfield, to be used upon adoption by this body as its official plan for the future, to guide and shape the development and provision of park and recreational services in our community.

Passed and signed this 6th Day of January, 2021



Jeff Heyen – Board President

INSERT ADOPTION RESOLUTIONS



Purpose and Goals of the Plan

The City of Litchfield and the Litchfield Park District have joined forces to develop a parks and recreation master plan. This intergovernmental collaboration has a mutual interest in serving the residents of Litchfield. The City and Park District shared resources to produce the planning document, which both organizations will use to make informed decisions and govern parks and recreation services effectively and efficiently. The parks and recreation services provided by these entities will mutually benefit the health of the community.

Goals:

- Create a community-driven planning document for parks and recreation.
- Establish a reference point for park acquisitions, amenities, developments, and improvements.
- Establish a reference point for recreation programs, facilities, and services.
- Create a planning document that favorably positions the agencies to obtain grant funding.
- Identify actions that will help shape Litchfield into an attractive, healthy, and vibrant city.

This plan is both a guide and a tool for shaping the future of Litchfield. It is a guide for the public, the electorate, and staff to conceive and define future directions for parks and recreation in the community.

In addition to meeting the goals of this local plan, the agencies embrace and strive to meet the priorities established through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) statewide outdoor recreation planning process. IDNR prepared this Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to comply with Chapter 630 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants Manual produced by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

The priorities of the SCORP are as follows and are important to note because the OSLAD/LWCF evaluation instrument, Statewide Outdoor Recreation Priorities and Project Need, comprise 60 percent of the grant evaluation. The 2015–2019 SCORP priorities, discussed in chapter 5, page 31 in that document, are incorporated in the updated grant evaluation process. Successful OSLAD and LWCF project proposals address at least one and usually multiple SCORP priorities. The 2015 SCORP priorities and example actions to support them are:

- **Healthy People and Communities:** Provide, encourage, and promote opportunities for people to be physically active in parks, advancing healthy lifestyles and physical fitness.
- **Access to Outdoor Recreation:** Expand opportunities on new lands and develop/revitalize facilities, providing access for people of all abilities and income levels.
- **Natural Resource Stewardship:** Respond to recreational needs and preferences while ensuring resource conservation and protection.
- **Conservation Education:** Promote environmental ethics and provide resource education opportunities, engaging youth, and adults in the outdoors.
- **Cooperative Partnerships:** Coordinate to share costs and leverage additional funds to use grant monies most effectively.

Process

1. Gather data about the population, parks, and recreation programs.
2. Analyze data to identify issues, trends, and needs.
3. Synthesize information and organize a plan of action.
4. Recommend actions that meet the goals of the plan and achieve the desired results.
5. Organize implementation of the recommendations into a plan of attack that is practical and affordable.

We are developing the plan to be both responsive to the needs of people and consistent with the future vision of Litchfield. For the plan to be effective, it must be a synthesis of ideas and facts, not merely a combination of opinions and conjectures. To achieve this end, the planning process has included several methods. A community-wide survey established public opinion. A community forum served as a focus group and sounding board to validate the plan. Community data were analyzed and incorporated into the plan.

In all, this process seeks to ultimately uncover the elements that will advance and improve the quality of life in Litchfield. This plan will be the basis and a tool for accomplishing that end.

Citizen Involvement

Community Wide Survey

A community-wide survey was conducted in December 2020. Using Survey Monkey, we created and distributed a survey via a weblink. The City and Park District promoted community participation through advertising and social media campaigns.

This nonprobability sample was used to gather information in a convenient and affordable manner. However, the data were collected from 439 households representing 905 residents out of a population of 6,930. The data allow for strong generalizations, indications, and references from the sample to the population being studied. The population is rather homogenous with racial makeup being over 98 percent white.

Highlights of the survey include:

- Ninety-five percent of those who responded use the parks, facilities, or open spaces.
- Those who do not use the parks, facilities, or open spaces felt the spaces were more for children, lacked amenities for older people, or the condition of the amenities was lacking.
- Sixty-six percent indicated that their household participated in recreational program offerings in the community.
- Most respondents who indicated they did not participate in offerings said it was because of a lack of interest or awareness.
- Most people were very satisfied or satisfied with the number of parks throughout the community, quality of parks, and proximity of parks to their home.
- People were generally satisfied to neutral about the number and quality of recreational program offerings.
- Ninety-two percent indicated support for having the parks open all year round.
- Trails, walkways, and bikeways were the most important types of park amenities/facilities/spaces in meeting the needs of households.
- Walking was the most important type of recreational program in meeting the needs of households.
- People are satisfied with Davis Park. The most frequently mentioned improvements included restrooms, playground equipment, spray pads, and walking paths.
- People are generally satisfied with Memorial Pool. The most frequently mentioned improvements included a complete upgrade and adding a kiddy pool and splash pads.
- People are generally satisfied with the Community Center. The most frequently mentioned improvements included a complete remodel, upgrade, and expansion and adding more activities and programs.
- People are satisfied to neutral with Echlin Park. The most frequently mentioned improvements included better maintenance and a general upgrade of all amenities.

-
- People are satisfied with Lake Lou Yaeger. The most frequently mentioned improvements included improving restrooms; adding a restaurant; enhancing the boat launch area and marina; and adding more camping, walking trails, and boat rentals.
 - People are satisfied with Henry Eilers Shoal Creek Nature Preserve. The most frequently mentioned improvements included informational and interpretive signage.
 - People are satisfied with Madison Park. The most frequently mentioned improvements included better safety and security, more frequent trash pickup, and better restrooms.
 - People are satisfied or neutral with Plummer Park. The most frequently mentioned improvements included enhancing and maintaining existing amenities.
 - People are satisfied or neutral with Schalk Park. The most frequently mentioned improvements included restrooms, parking, and playgrounds.
 - People are very satisfied or satisfied with Walton Park. The most frequently mentioned improvements included improving restrooms, the boat ramp, the pavilion, and playgrounds, and many requested it be open year-round.
 - Future development of Lake Litchfield should include access to the beach area, walking trails, picnic areas, and access to the lake for fishing and water activities.
 - The City of Litchfield should include shade areas, restrooms, soccer and baseball/softball fields, and walking trails when it develops the outdoor sports complex.
 - Participants identified several areas to consider for future parks and open spaces.
 - If there is anything we missed or you would like to make a comment, please feel free to do so. Responses included:
 - “Quit reaching so far. Lacrosse? Nobody in town has even heard of this. Update and keep up what we already own. Let the Park District do their thing and let the City do THEIR JOB with fixing roads, sidewalks, etc., and leave the parks to the Park District”.
 - “Addresses for the parks would have been helpful!”
 - “More tourism events year-round.”
 - “Why is Walton Park closed for six months now? I understand [it is a] safety [concern], [but] if [the] lake is freezing, just put the chains up around [it]. Lake Lou is not blocked off. Best memories for generations were made at Walton in the fall and [on] a warm winter day. April 1st is too late to open, and October too early to close.”
 - “Close Davis, Plummer, Echlin, and Walton ball fields.”
 - “We do not agree to making a soccer park in the middle of a commercial area. This area should be left for businesses to bring in more jobs for our community.”
 - “Maintaining and improving our sports facilities and adding an indoor complex will only draw more people to this city. The rising popularity of club sports will draw people in, only benefitting the surrounding businesses that support our town.”

-
- “I think the lake and camp folks who maintain the area do a fine job. [My] only active gripe [that needs to be] addressed soon is speeding on Arrowhead Street.”
 - “I think the city has done an excellent job in trying to generate activities and places to enjoy in the Litchfield area. Keep up the good work! I enjoyed filling out this survey.”
 - “Develop bike and walking paths—safer than streets.”
 - “A lifelong Litchfield resident. Getting homeowners and landlords to take pride in their properties would be a great thing [because] it reflects on the community with nice parks and recreation. A great school system and health-care system [are] all part of the equation for a great community.”
 - “I think part of the problem is neglect. We have nice things, then they are not updated or kept clean, then they turn to crap.”
 - “We need better sidewalks to walk on. Clark Street Extension.”
 - “Understand the tax implications to citizens prior to developing the plan. The pat answer that it will not raise taxes is not acceptable. Truly know what it will cost and make it known up front.”
 - “Thank you for always trying to improve!”
 - “The outdoor archery area needs to be kept up. The community center could offer game nights, free movies, bingo, or something fun for families and people of all ages.”
 - “We appreciate the park options in Litchfield. Thank you for continuing to improve Litchfield and the opportunities for its residents.”
 - “If it can be done without raising our taxes, I am in favor of it.”
 - “More industry.”
 - “We need to build up our downtown like Hillsboro is doing. Make it more affordable to rent building space downtown. We should be building up the east Industrial Park before EVER purchasing and trying to build up the west side. So many buildings and warehouses [are] vacant. We need to make it more affordable for companies to utilize those buildings as well.”
 - “It would be great to have bike lanes and more sidewalks to safely walk with children.”
 - “Please keep Walton Park open!!!??? It is the safest place to walk my dog off leash. Thank you so much for this survey.”
 - “Census figures will be lower. Do not overbuild. Make sure you can maintain what you have currently. Tax base will be lower.”
 - “Leave parks to the Park District.”
 - “We are proud to live in Litchfield and feel Walton Park needs some major ‘attention.’”
 - “Need [to] expand the pool area [so it’s] almost like a [mini] water park and make more room for people to have a little space.”
 - “More indoor activities for kids [such as] roller skating and bowling.”

-
- “I love that Hillsboro has a plan to demolish derelict homes. We should try to do this too.”
 - “I feel like there should be more for the kids to do. I am excited to see what is going to be developed and see how our community is going to benefit from this.”
 - “Restrooms need to be kept up. [They are] nice at [the beginning] of [the] season then [they] fall off as [the] year goes on. You have and do this gs then there is never any upkeep. Sad how money is wasted.”
 - “We need a walking path.”
 - “Thanks for all your hard work in our city. Thanks for working hard to give us beautiful parks and recreational areas. [I] appreciate [our] City trying to provide [a] beautiful environment [while being] fiscally responsible. Thanks! THANK YOU!”
 - “A dog park.”
 - “I would really like see better soccer fields with concessions [and] bathrooms since we are [the] only town in [the] Central Illinois Youth Soccer League that does not have this.”
 - “I would really like the city to focus on kids and giving them safe and fun activities all year round!!”
 - “Indoor facilities like a YMCA would be awesome!”
 - “Would love to see programs for youth to young adults.”
 - “Very thorough.”
 - “Keep improving. We have a good thing going, let us make it better. Get a Buffalo Wild Wings, Cracker Barrel, or Texas Roadhouse-type restaurant or two to come in and make Litchfield a must-stop destination.”
 - “The waste of taxpayer money on the new library.”
 - “Most activities are focused on youth. This is natural when thinking of a sports complex, but [it] would be nice if there were more activities or programs for adults and senior citizens.”
 - “Library Park and the Carnegie Library. Hate to see it just sitting there empty. Heard through the grapevine that [the] Chamber of Commerce was moving in there. Would like for it to be more of [a] place for community members and visitors to interact. Possibly a branch of the museum; an art gallery for local artists; a small reception space for baby and bridal showers, small parties, and events; [and] small business start-up areas (two floors and [a] basement). The possibilities are endless!”
 - “Downtown Main Street, would be nice to see more business opportunities.”
 - “More indoor options . . . more theater outdoors and outdoor options.”
 - “The fitness/weight loss community could use some more love! We have [a] great track and nice weightlifting facilities, but we are lacking in athletic diversity. Let us see more martial arts, yoga, adult rec leagues, etc.”
 - “We need an adult park where teens are not smoking and cursing, and small children are not screaming.”

-
- “Would love to see more community events and see the lake areas used for more community events.”
 - “Really want you to focus on the lake. Litchfield has a great lake, and it needs [to be] invested in.”
 - “More areas for dumpsters in picnic areas with daily pickups so wild animals don’t drag it out and [make a mess] all over when they are overflowing.”
 - “We need an indoor health and wellness facility that is dedicated to low-income/ underprivileged [people] in this community.”
 - “Our family cannot emphasize enough the need for a path. Either a small loop in town or on a much larger scale. Ideally one that could extend outside of Litchfield conjoining to another major path would be fabulous. This would also open opportunities for tourism to our area by long-distance day cyclists. Our family, as well as other friends, frequent the pads that run through Edwardsville and through the Bethalto and Staunton area. They are always busy, and we are certain they would draw activity to our community if we had the opportunity to conjoin.”
 - “Keep up the good work.”
 - “Great work to be preparing this plan for parks/recreation. Outdoor places are important for area residents as well as those in the city.”
 - “We have beautiful parks. We need to advertise what we offer. Perhaps add a minigolf course or a few holes, splash pad, handicap-accessible equipment at each facility, and adequate lighting/camera systems. Many people are not aware of the many gems we have. Is that remote control track open to anyone or even part of the Park District (by Walton Park)? Does the Park District operate the archery range, and can anyone access it? What about the bike trails by the lake? Are there races held there? How about a small stage for some local musical talent out by the lake? Continue the Summer Concert Series!!! Could there be some winter activities, perhaps at the Community Center or planned activities on the bike or nature paths? Could signage be added around the nature areas as to the wildlife common in that area or the native plants?”
 - “We need a vocational center very badly.”
 - “Wish the loud trucks and cars would be ticketed and told not to modify the vehicles since it’s a law not to. [You cannot] even enjoy hiking by the lake or anywhere because they know they can get away with it. Not only do they scare people but the wildlife as well.”
 - “You people disregard comments if they do not match your ‘WANTS!’”
 - “An indoor pool would be great for kids/families in the wintertime. I have heard many people express this thought to me. Fusion is too far to travel to swim indoors. People in Litchfield want something closer. I have two small kids and would love to take them swimming indoors in the winter!”
 - “I think this is a great survey and hope you all keep pushing Litchfield to the next level!”

-
- “I would love to see adult sports leagues in Litchfield [such as] volleyball [and] softball.”
 - “Please add restrooms to outdoor locations, even outhouses . . . it’s difficult when you must pull a child away from playing when mom must use the restroom.”
 - “The city needs to stop spending money on projects that never get done or finished or used. Use what we have and make improvements there. This current city administration spends and wastes too much money. Litchfield is NOT an Edwardsville. We moved here for the small-town feel. Please keep it that way.”
 - “Can we establish a gravel path for cycling somewhere . . . oh and build a pump track?”
 - “City is NOT in the business of parks! Park District is! City needs to coordinate with them and NOT do this on their own.”
 - “Thank you for reaching out. The Park District has done a great job improving the parks. Partnering with tourism and the city is a good idea.”
 - “I do not feel that I can give an honest answer on some of the survey questions [because] we do not really use most of the parks! Also, if there are programs available at the Community Center, we are not aware of them!”
 - “More activities for all ages.”
 - “If you do build new, leaving the old to fall apart or look run-down makes the town look trashy.”
 - “Way too long of a survey.”
 - “Thank you for taking the time to ask these important questions. Litchfield has so much potential and should be progressive in [its] thinking so that we can evolve with time and not remain stagnant. Please note that we need an outdoor music park (the type where outdoor instruments are strung up for the public to walk by and play) somewhere too! This should be in a large space which attracts the public but allows the large sound to be enjoyed by all. Maybe north side of Library Park. Once again thank you for asking the public for suggestions, good luck.”
 - “I feel we really need a bike/walking area in town. People must walk in high traffic areas or ride bikes on sidewalks for safety while people are walking. We have a lot more people exercising outdoors now.”
 - “A more spacious area with better access for the Pickers Market. Better concessions and [an] area for [parties] in the park rides. A larger space and better placement for these events is a must. Better parking for these events [is] also a must.”
 - “Survey very redundant. I am sure I am not alone regarding my awareness of every particular about each park. The lake is our greatest external asset and should be utilized to the fullest. Neighborhood parks can improve family life and convenience.”
 - “Appreciate everything the Chamber does . . .”

-
- “It would be great to have a splash pad somewhere in Litchfield.”
 - “We take our grandkids to the playgrounds every week when the weather is nice. Litchfield has some great playgrounds. We also like to have picnics out at Walton Park, which looks great. Would like to have some walking paths developed out at the lake.”
 - “Parks open year-round.”
 - “Would love to see a dog park. Thanks.”
 - “Thanks for doing this project!”
 - “Thank you for asking.”
 - “Quality sidewalks on all sides of the park and through the interior.”

Community Forum

On April 21, 2021, a special meeting was held at the Litchfield City Hall. The City of Litchfield and Litchfield Park District met jointly to review, discuss, and approve the new City of Litchfield and Litchfield Park District Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The public was encouraged and welcomed to participate in the meeting and comment on the plan. Highlights of the meeting include:

- Greg Petry Consulting LLC presented an executive summary of the plan to the Litchfield City Council and Park District Board of Commissioners.

INSERT PUBLIC MEETING RECAP

Demographics

Litchfield is a city in Montgomery County, Illinois, United States. The population was recorded as 6,939 in the 2010 census and is projected to be 6,930 in 2020. It is in South Central Illinois, 45 miles south of Springfield, Illinois, and part of the Metro East of St. Louis.

Located along three major crossroads—Route 66, Route 16, and Interstate 55—Litchfield is best known as the halfway point between Illinois' capital, Springfield, and St. Louis, Missouri. It is a city known for its Route 66 icons and expansive lakes.

Litchfield has a total area of 6.825 square miles, of which 6.45 square miles or 94.51 percent is land and 0.375 square miles or 5.49 percent is water.

Key City of Litchfield demographics:

- Population (2020): 6,930
- Population density is 255 percent higher than Illinois average
- Median age of 43 is 16 percent higher than Illinois average
- 98.18 percent of the population is White
- 0.89 percent of the population is Black
- 0.43 percent of the population is Asian
- Median household income is \$44,284 vs. Illinois average of \$62,992
- Households: 2,882
- Families: 1,794
- Average household size : 2.32
- Families with children under 18: 41%
- Owner-occupied housing units: 2,092
- Renter-occupied housing units: 790
- Persons in poverty: 18%

Market Characteristics

To get more insights into Litchfield's population, we obtained Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) marketing data. ESRI is an information system that integrates, stores, edits, analyzes, shares, and displays geographic information to inform decision-making. The information helped us better understand Litchfield's population as customers: their lifestyle choices, what they buy, and how they spend their free time.

Average household budget index for entertainment and recreation spending is presented for each life mode. The index compares the average amount spent in this market's household budgets for housing, food, apparel, and so on to the average amount spent by all US households. Market Potential data measure the likely demand for a product or service in an area. An index of 100 is average. An index above 100 shows that average spending by consumers in this market is above the national average. Conversely, an index below 100 is below the national average. Consumer expenditures are estimated by ESRI.

Using the tapestry segmentation, four distinct LifeMode groups were identified.

1. Cozy Country Living Heartland Communities
2. Hometown Traditional Living
3. GenXurban Comfortable Empty Nesters
4. Cozy Country Living Salt

LifeMode Group: Cozy Country Living Heartland Communities account for 57 percent of the population of Litchfield.

Entertainment and recreation spending index for this group is below average at 73.

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

Well-settled and close-knit, Heartland Communities are semirural. These older, semiretired residents are primarily homeowners, and many have paid off their mortgages. Their children have moved away, but they have no plans to leave their homes. Their hearts are with the country; they embrace the slower pace of life but actively participate in outdoor activities and community events. Traditional and patriotic, these residents support their local businesses, always buy American, and favor domestic driving vacations over foreign plane trips. Retirees in this market depress the average labor force participation rate to less than 60 percent (Index 94), but the unemployment rate is comparable to the US.

- **More workers are white collar than blue collar, and more are skilled than unskilled.**
- **The rural economy of this market provides employment in the manufacturing, construction, utilities, healthcare, and agriculture industries.**
- **These are budget-savvy consumers; they stick to brands they grew up with and know the price of goods they purchase. Buying American is important to them.**
- **Daily life is busy but routine. Working on the weekends is not uncommon.**
- **Residents trust TV and newspapers more than any other media.**
- **Skeptical about their financial future, they stick to community banks and low-risk investments.**

MARKET PROFILE

Traditional in their ways, residents of Heartland Communities choose to bank and pay their bills in person and purchase insurance from an agent.

- **Most have high-speed internet access at home or on their cell phone but are not ready to go paperless.**
- **Many residents have paid off their home mortgages but still hold auto loans and student loans. Interest checking accounts are common.**
- **To support their local community, residents participate in public activities.**
- **Home remodeling is not a priority, but homeowners do tackle necessary maintenance work on their cherished homes. They have invested in riding lawn mowers to maintain their larger yards.**
- **They enjoy country music and watch CMT.**
- **Motorcycling, hunting, and fishing are popular; walking is the main form of exercise.**
- **To get around these semirural communities, residents prefer to drive domestic trucks or SUVs.**

LifeMode Group: Hometown Traditional Living account for 32 percent of the population of Litchfield.

Entertainment and recreation spending index for Hometown Traditional Living is below average at 62.

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

Residents in this segment live primarily in low-density, settled neighborhoods in the Midwest. The households are a mix of married-couple families and singles. Many families encompass two generations who have lived and worked in the community; their children are likely to follow suit. The manufacturing, retail, and health-care sectors are the primary sources of employment for these residents. This is a younger market; many are first-time homeowners who are juggling the responsibilities of living independently or married life, while retaining their youthful interests in style and fun. Over 70 percent have completed high school or some college.

- Unemployment is higher at 7.3 percent (Index 134); labor force participation is also a bit higher at 63.4 percent.
- Almost 75 percent of households derive income from wages and salaries, augmented by Supplemental Security Income (Index 139) and public assistance (Index 152).
- They are cost-conscious consumers who are comfortable with brand loyalty unless the price is too high.
- Connected and comfortable with the internet, they are more likely to participate in online gaming or post on social media.
- TV is seen as the most trusted media.

MARKET PROFILE

They shop at discount and supercenter stores for groceries, apparel, and sundry household and personal care products.

- They commonly frequent convenience stores for purchasing fuel or incidentals like lottery tickets.
- They tend to carry credit card balances, have personal loans, and pay bills in person.
- Half of households have abandoned landlines for cell phones only.
- Their favorite channels include ABC Family, CMT, and the Game Show Network.
- They are fast-food devotees.
- They enjoy outdoor activities such as fishing and taking trips to the zoo.

LifeMode Group: GenXurban Comfortable Empty Nesters account for 11 percent of Litchfield's population.

Entertainment and recreation spending index is above average at 113.

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

Residents in this large, growing segment are older, with nearly half of all householders aged 55 or older. Many still live in the suburbs where they grew up. Most are professionals working in government, health care, or manufacturing. These baby boomers are earning a comfortable living and benefitting from years of prudent investing and saving. Their net worth is well above average (Index 314). Many are enjoying the transition from child-rearing to retirement. They value their health and financial well-being.

- Education: 36 percent are college graduates; nearly 68 percent have some college education.
- Unemployment is low at 4 percent; average labor force participation is at 61 percent.
- Most households derive income from wages or salaries, but a third also draw income from investments (Index 150) and retirement (Index 159).
- Comfortable Empty Nesters are physically and financially active.
- They prefer eating at home instead of dining out.
- Home maintenance is a priority among these homeowners.

MARKET PROFILE

Residents enjoy listening to sports radio or watching sports on television.

- Physically active, they play golf, ski, ride bicycles, and work out regularly.
- Spending a lot of time online isn't a priority, so most own older home computers.
- Their financial portfolios include stocks, certificates of deposit, mutual funds, and real estate.

LifeMode Group: Cozy Country Living Salt of the Earth account for 1 percent of Litchfield's population.

Entertainment and recreation spending index is below average at 90.

SOCIOECONOMIC TRAITS

Salt of the Earth residents are entrenched in their traditional, rural lifestyles. Citizens here are older, and many have grown children that have moved away. They still cherish family time, tending to their vegetable gardens, and preparing homemade meals. Residents embrace the outdoors; they spend most of their free time preparing for their next fishing, boating, or camping trip. The majority has at least a high school diploma or some college education; many have expanded their skill set during their years of employment in manufacturing and related industries. They may be experts with DIY projects, but the latest technology is not their forte. They use it when absolutely necessary but seek face-to-face contact in their routine activities.

- They were/are steadily employed in construction, manufacturing, and related service industries.**
- Education: 40 percent have only a high school diploma.**
- Household income is just over the national median, while net worth is nearly double the national median.**
- Spending time with family is their top priority.**
- Cost-conscious consumers, they are loyal to brands they like and focus on buying American.**
- They are the last to buy the latest and greatest products.**
- They try to eat healthily, tracking the nutrition and ingredients in the food they purchase.**

MARKET PROFILE

Outdoor sports and activities, such as fishing, boating, hunting, and overnight camping trips are popular.

- To support their pastimes, truck ownership is high; many also own an ATV.**
- They own the equipment to maintain their lawns and tend to their vegetable gardens.**
- Residents often tackle home remodeling and improvement jobs themselves.**
- Due to their locale, they own satellite dishes and have access to high-speed internet connections like DSL.**
- These conservative consumers prefer to conduct their business in person rather than online. They use an agent to purchase insurance.**

Trends, Issues and Needs Affecting the Community

Globally

Every four years since 1997, the National Intelligence Council has published an unclassified strategic assessment of how key trends and uncertainties might shape the world over the next 20 years to help senior US leaders think and plan for the longer term. The report is especially relevant and is useful in sparking discussions about strategic assumptions, priorities, and choices.

Climate change, environment, and health issues will demand attention. A range of global hazards pose imminent and longer-term threats that will require collective action to address even as cooperation becomes harder. More extreme weather, water and soil stress, and food insecurity will disrupt societies. Sea level rise, ocean acidification, glacial melt, and pollution will change living patterns. Tensions over climate change will grow. Increased travel and poor health infrastructure will make infectious diseases harder to manage.

Major global trends and key implications in the way people will live:

- *Changes in Earth Systems:* Climate change, sea level rise, and ocean acidification are likely to amplify stresses already felt from population growth, urbanization, inadequate environmental protection, and the use of energy and past natural resources. Although new climate policies could reduce the rate of greenhouse gas emissions over time, past emissions already have locked in a significant rise in global mean temperature, which will in turn drive more frequent and intense extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, droughts, and floods. The steady run of record-setting weather and growing frequency of extreme events suggest to many scientists that climate change is hitting harder and sooner than the gradual change many projected. The intensity of the disruptions could vary widely, spawning unpleasant surprises, particularly given that an increasingly significant fraction of the planet's species is already at an increased risk for extinction.

-
- *Human and Animal Health Under Pressure:* Changing environmental conditions and increasing global connectivity will affect precipitation patterns, biodiversity, and the geographic distribution of pathogens and their hosts, which will in turn affect the viability and vitality of crops and agricultural systems; the emergence, transmission, and spread of human and animal infectious diseases; and potential medical and pharmacological discoveries. The direct impact by environmental stressors to human health from increased heat stress, floods, drought, and increased frequency of intense storms will force difficult decisions on how and where to live. Indirect environmental threats to population health will emerge in the form of food insecurity, undernutrition, and declining air and water quality due to pollution. Troubling trends in communicable disease, emerging zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistant pathogens, and noncommunicable diseases including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and mental illness may be the result of these effects.
 - *Critical Human Systems at Risk.* The increasing incidence of extreme weather events puts all people at risk, although those concentrated in dense areas will be especially vulnerable. International organizations will be increasingly stretched to respond to the food, water, transportation, shelter, and health needs of those affected unless states and localities have made provisions to mitigate the risks, such as infrastructure improvements and early warning systems. Soil and land degradation during the next 20 years will diminish land available for food production, contributing to shortages and raising prices. Even more affluent nations are at risk, to the extent that they rely on the highly efficient global agricultural trade that has developed under stable environmental conditions during peacetime.

Water shortages and pollution will likely undermine the economic performance and health conditions of populations worldwide. Economic output will suffer if countries do not have enough clean water to generate electrical power or to support manufacturing and resource extraction. Water problems compounded with poverty, social tension, environmental degradation, ineffectual leadership, gender inequality, and weak political institutions will contribute to social disruptions that can prompt state failures.

Nationally

In January 2021, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) identified top trends in parks and recreation. Some of the most impactful insights related to community parks and recreation services are as follows:

- Owing to COVID-19, contactless and virtual practices are likely to stay for quite some time post pandemic.
- The use of parks, trails, and walkable environments will remain strong.
- Open space in dense urban environments is necessary for health and well-being.
- Budgets and revenues will continue to be under strain.
- Health and well-being will intertwine with parks and recreation with a greater focus on meeting the social needs of communities. Social isolation and loneliness will call for a more holistic focus on well-being and increased access to parks and green space. This will lead to greater cross-sector partnerships with public health departments, school systems, and social service agencies.
- Technology affects how parks and recreation agencies do business, interface with the public, maintain parks, and manage data.
- Accelerating climate change has contributed to the degradation of our natural resources, loss of wildlife, and damages to fragile ecosystems. Parks will be increasingly seen as multi-benefit landscapes that protect against flooding, clean and filter stormwater, produce shade and prevent heat island effects, and promote environmental and social resiliency.
- E-sports and virtual programs will continue to grow as social distancing practices remain in place.

The 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review highlights 24 of the most critical park and recreation metrics collected from the NRPA Park Metrics database.

- There is typically one park for every 2,281 residents.
- The typical park and recreation agency has 9.9 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents in the jurisdiction.
- An overwhelming majority of park and recreation agencies have playgrounds (93.9 percent) and basketball courts (86.5 percent) in their portfolio of outdoor assets.
- The typical park and recreation agency manages or maintains 11 miles of trails for walking, hiking, running, and/or biking.
- Most agencies offer community centers and recreation centers; two in five agencies offer senior centers.
- Key programming activities include themed special events, team sports, social recreation events, fitness enhancement classes, and health and wellness education.
- Eighty-three percent of agencies offer summer camps for their communities' younger residents.
- Top roles include operating and maintaining parks and indoor facilities, providing recreation programming and services, and conducting jurisdiction-wide special events.
- Operating, maintaining, or contracting golf courses or tourism attractions and managing large performance outdoor amphitheaters lead the list of other agency responsibilities.

-
- The typical park and recreation agency has a payroll of 41.9 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs).
 - The typical park and recreation agency has 8.1 FTEs on staff for each 10,000 residents in the jurisdiction the agency serves.
 - Operations and maintenance, programming, and administration are the main responsibilities of parks and recreation workers.
 - The typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenditures of \$4,342,495.
 - The typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$81.19 per capita.
 - The median level of operating expenditures is \$7,160 per acre of park and non-park sites the agency manages.
 - The typical park and recreation agency spends \$97,093 in annual operating expenditures for each employee.
 - At the typical park and recreation agency, staffing costs account for 54 percent of the operating budget.
 - The typical park and recreation agency dedicates 44 percent of its operating budget to park management and maintenance and 43 percent to recreation.
 - Park and recreation agencies derive 60 percent of their operating expenditures from general fund tax support.
 - The typical park and recreation agency generates \$20.93 in revenue annually for each resident in the jurisdiction.
 - The typical agency recovers 25.9 percent of its operating expenditures from nontax revenues.
 - Parks and recreation agencies will spend a median of \$5,000,000 in capital expenditures budgeted over the next five years.
 - On average, just over 50 percent of the capital budget is designated for renovation, while 32 percent is geared toward new development.
 - Three-quarters of park and recreation agencies ban the use of tobacco products at most/all of their parks and facilities.

GameTime, a PLAYCORE company, analyzed data and feedback from leading parks professionals, landscape architects, and educators to determine trends in park and playground products for 2021. The top five trends for 2021 were:

- Inclusion and Social Equity
- Embracing the Natural Landscape
- Community Health and Wellness
- Using Outdoor Spaces for Learning
- Environmentally Responsible Play and Activities

Locally Litchfield

Litchfield is located within Montgomery County. Montgomery County Health Department's health plan was reviewed to identify community problems. Montgomery County Health Department's vision is that of most health departments: Healthy People in Healthy Communities. Its mission is to promote physical and mental health and prevent disease. community health plan is a tool that is used to encourage the development of community partnerships. These partnerships allow for an increase in quality and years of healthy life and the elimination of health disparities. The plan allows for collaboration of different entities for a common goal.

Highlights of the plan include:

- National Air Quality Standards for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, and lead are met by the County.
- Relative Health Status (2008) shows that Montgomery County had several unfavorable health issues, compared to the US rates. These include:
 - Very low birth rate (< 1500 g)
 - Premature births (< 37 weeks)
 - Births to women under 18 years of age
 - Colon cancer
 - Lung cancer
 - Motor vehicle injuries
 - Stroke
 - Suicide
- Leading causes of death by age include:
 - Under age 1: Complications of pregnancy/birth and birth defects
 - Ages 1–14: Injuries, followed by cancer
 - Ages 15–24: Injuries (55%), suicide (14%), cancer (14%)
 - Ages 25–44: Suicide (18%), heart disease (18%), injuries (17%), cancer (15%)
 - Ages 45–64: Cancer (33%), heart disease (29%)
 - Ages 65+ : Heart disease (28%), cancer (24%)

The Illinois County Health ranking, developed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, reflects the overall health of the counties. Montgomery County is ranked 82nd out of the 101 counties for health outcomes and 78th for health factors. Health outcomes represent how healthy a county is while health factors are what influences the health of the county.

In Illinois, Montgomery County is ranked 87th for mortality (representing length of life, based on potential years of life lost prior to age 76) and ranked 65th for morbidity (health-related quality of life and birth outcomes, including fair or poor health, poor physical days, poor mental days). Other health rankings for Montgomery County include: 35th for health behaviors (measures of smoking, diet and exercise, alcohol use, and risky sexual behavior); 63rd for clinical care (access to care and quality of care); 90th for social and economic factors (education, employment, income, family and social

support, and community safety); and 52nd for physical environment (environmental quality and the built environment).

The Community Health Needs Assessment highlighted programs that were lacking in the county. Those that are relevant to this plan include more wellness fairs, education on disease prevention, and mental health education.

Several barriers to programs were mentioned:

- The main barrier is a lack of awareness of the importance of preventive screenings.
- Many people think that everything is fine with their health if they feel fine.
- Once the screening is done, they often do not follow up with their physician.
- Screening cost is a barrier for many individuals because a large population does not have insurance owing to low income or lack of income.
- A barrier is the stigma of being labeled “mentally ill.” Many people are reluctant to seek help for problems with treatable conditions to avoid this label.
- Another barrier for those attempting to receive help is the lack of transportation.

Responsibility for the Provision of Open Space and Parkland

The City of Litchfield and the Litchfield Park District recognize the importance of parks and open space. The spaces, amenities, and programs provide healthy opportunities and outlets. Both agencies recognize parks and recreation as a community asset and have a shared responsibility to provide spaces and services.

Illinois State Statutes govern the ability of agencies to provide parks and recreation. The Park District Code 70 ILCS 1205/ describes the powers, duties, and purposes for which the Park District shall operate.

With respect to the City, the Municipal Code 65 ILCS 5/ provides corporate authorization of a recreation system of a municipality so that it may dedicate, set apart, acquire, or lease land or buildings for park and recreation purposes.

Municipalities and park districts may control the property of the corporation and may provide for joint ownership with any one or more park districts of real and personal property used for park purposes by such park district or districts. In case of joint ownership, the terms of the agreement shall be fair, just, and equitable to all parties and shall be set forth in a written agreement entered by the corporate authorities of each participating district and municipality as described in 65 ILCS 5/Art. 11 Div. 96 of the municipal code.

The Litchfield Park District was established in 1941 with the first board of commissioners established in 1944.

The shared cooperative effort in Litchfield to provide parks and recreation is unique. Both agencies believe that parks and recreation is of value and beneficial to the population.

Striving together...

To create a positive community image.

To encourage active, healthy lifestyles.

To provide and protect natural and open spaces.

To be efficient, economical, and impactful by sharing resources.

Open Space/Park Land Purpose, Classification, and Standards

The purpose of having open space and parks in the broadest sense is to conserve, protect, preserve, and shape land and outdoor spaces in the community. Open space and parks can:

Provide recreation space for active or passive activities.

Conserve/preserve the natural environment and its resources of green infrastructure, land, water, trees, open spaces, and wildlife.

Shape the development of Litchfield into attractive corridors and neighborhoods by preserving elements of the natural environment.

Open Space Classifications

Open space is a distinct land use and serves a variety of vital functions. It is typically included as a separate category in land use mapping and planning. It is also subdivided into detailed classifications. Just as residential use can be subdivided into more detailed categories (single family, multiple family, etc.) based on their use, so can all lands have multiple open space uses.

The basis for establishing these classifications is from the NRPA' s "Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines."

The purpose of these classifications is to present parks and recreation standards that are applicable nationwide for the planning, acquisition, and development of parks, recreation, and open space lands, primarily at a community level.

These classifications have been developed to identify, particularize, and assign the open space uses, functions of the land, and responsibility. The classifications are intended to serve as a guide for both the City and Park District government agencies involved in open space delegation. These classifications are intended to serve as a guide to planning, not as an absolute mandate.

For this plan, three park classifications have been established:

Neighborhood Parks

Located within neighborhoods that serve a concentrated or specific population, neighborhood parks are an area for intense recreational activities that draw from the neighborhood population. They are easily accessible to the neighborhood population and geographically centered with safe pedestrian and bike access. They may be developed adjacent to a school. The service area is within a half-mile radius or ten-minute walk.

Community Parks

Community parks serve several neighborhoods that form a community within the city. In serving an area that has a diverse environmental quality, community parks may include more highly developed recreational facilities suited for more intense and active activities. They draw people not only from the surrounding neighborhoods but from the entire city as well.

Regional/Metropolitan Parks

These are natural outdoor areas and spaces that offer outdoor recreation opportunities. The parks may serve not only the community but also several communities within the region. The areas may be developed for varying modes of travel such as hiking, biking, snowmobiling, horseback riding, boating, and pleasure driving. Specialized recreational facilities may be developed on the land. Protection and management of the natural and cultural environment may be desired.

Standards

The **core** park system consists of the local close-to-home areas that are geographically centered within the population.

The **core** neighborhood and community park system should strive to have at a minimum 6.25 to 10 acres of developed open space per 1,000 persons as per the NRPA guidelines.

The 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory noted the wide assortment of facilities and parklands provided at the community and county level. Local agencies collectively oversee the management of more than 350,000 acres and 7,500 park sites (see page 14).

- For populations 5,001–10,000
 - The average total acreage of parkland was 214.30 acres.
 - The average number of parks was 6.67.

The 2008 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory considers outdoor recreation supply on a per capita basis and measures how well existing and proposed facilities meet the needs of the populations they serve.

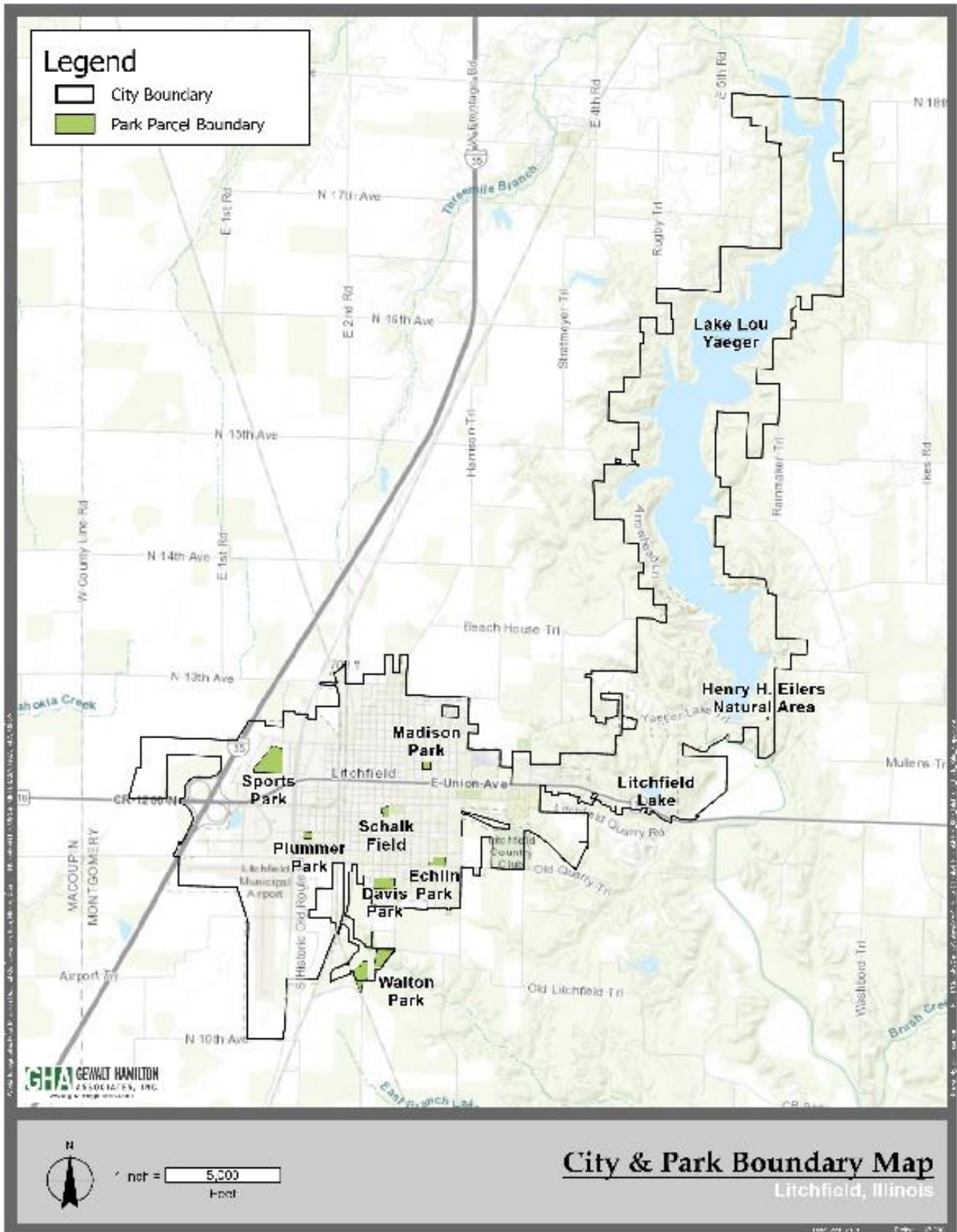
- The average statewide supply of community outdoor recreation lands in Illinois is 11.35 acres per 1,000 persons. This includes park district and municipal lands, which primarily serve community-based recreation needs.
- The average Illinois statewide supply of regional resource-based outdoor recreation lands is 52.69 acres per 1,000 persons. This includes county and state lands, which primarily conserve natural resources and provide resource-based recreation.

The core Litchfield park system consists of seven neighborhood and community parks. The upper end of the NRPA standard is ten acres per 1,000 persons. The current statewide average for the supply of local open space and parkland acreage according to the Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory is approximately 11.35 acres per 1,000 people for overall community parkland acreage.

Regional Impact

The average statewide supply of regional resource-based outdoor recreation lands is 52.69 acres per 1,000 persons. This includes county and state lands, which primarily conserve natural resources and provide resource-based recreation. Litchfield has 4,880 acres compared to the statewide average of 3,651. Regional parks and spaces serve several communities within an hour's drive. Most transactions and users of Lake Lou Yaeger are from up to one- and one-half hour drive which encompasses over a million people. The population within Montgomery County is 19,213, which would reasonably suggest 10,132 acres be available for regional resource-based outdoor recreation lands.

Boundaries and Study Area



Inventory of Parks, Open Space and Recreational Facilities

Davis Park
222 E. Seneca Street
Litchfield IL 62056
18 acres

Property Identification Number
15-04-334-021

Overview: Owned and maintained by the Litchfield Park District. The swimming pool was originally owned and operated by the Litchfield Swimming Pool Association. It conveyed the pool, buildings, and grounds to the Park District in 1972.

Recreational Facilities: Brubaker Playground, 2 large soccer fields, 2 small soccer fields, 2 tennis courts lighted, picnic shelter, ½ basketball court, outdoor swimming pool, baby pool, bathhouse and concession stand, and Community Center 9000 sf is a meeting place for various civic clubs and organizations, used for recreational programs and is available for rental. The 9,000 square foot building is great for receptions, banquets, and workshops. The Golden Circle Nutrition Program operates from the Center.

Amenities

Benches	YES
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	YES
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	YES
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	NO
Other:	

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	NO
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	NO
Wetlands	NO
Woodlots Forests	NO
Other:	

Echlin Park
901 E. Water Street
Litchfield IL 62056
5 acres

Property Identification Number
15-04-280-021

Overview: Owned and maintained by the Litchfield Park District. The property was acquired by the park district in October of 1974 from the Litchfield Bank and Trust Company.

Recreational Facilities: 3 youth baseball fields, 2 picnic shelters, playground, basketball court.

Amenities

Benches	YES
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	YES
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	YES
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	NO
Other:	

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	NO
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	NO
Wetlands	NO
Woodlots Forests	NO
Other:	

Lake Lou Yaeger
4313 Beach House Trail
Litchfield IL 62056
4641 acres

Property Identification Number
Multiple parcels 10-26-226-002

Overview: Owned and maintained by the City of Litchfield. This 1,357-acre, 5.5-mile-long lake is the centerpiece of Litchfield’s bustling outdoors culture with the surrounding 4,641 acres providing outdoor recreation opportunities.

Recreational Facilities: Horse trails, pollinator area, hiking trails, natural areas, boating, 10 shelters, 2 boat launch, 2 marinas, handicapped accessible fishing pier, fishing with tournament drop box, picnic areas, mountain bike trails, conservation area, hunting, playground, camping cabins, primitive camping, shower house, horseback riding, recreational vehicle camping, beach.

Amenities

Benches	YES
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	YES
Grills	YES
Picnic Tables	YES
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	YES
Other:	

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	YES
Lakes or Ponds	YES
Prairie Remnants	YES
Rivers or Streams	YES
Wetlands	YES
Woodlots I Forests	YES
Other:	

**Henry Eilers Shoal Creek Nature
Preserve
Yaeger Lake Trail
Litchfield IL 62056
266 acres**

Property Identification Number
15-04-334-021

Overview: Shoal Creek Conservation Area is owned by the City of Litchfield. Established in 1990, Shoal Creek Conservation Area consists of 266-acres of high-diversity Southern Illinois till-plain Oak and Hickory woodland. It is one of the best remaining examples of these native environments in Illinois and a must see for environmental enthusiasts. Based on studies, there are 700 plant species, 70 butterfly species and more than 70 separate bird species in the Conservation Area. Shoal Creek Conservation Area is located on the southeast side of Lake Lou Yaeger. Shoal Creek Conservation Area is one of the best examples of native Central Illinois flora and fauna.

Recreational Facilities: Roadway, parking, trails, controlled hunting, interpretive signage, blue bird habitat, horse trail.

Amenities

Benches	YES
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	YES
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	YES
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	NO
Other:	

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	NO
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	NO
Wetlands	NO
Woodlots Forests	NO
Other:	

Litchfield Lake
Illinois Rt. 16
Litchfield IL 62056
240 acres

Property Identification Number
10-35-400-001 and 10-35-326-03,10-35-301-001 cover primarily
the lake area, multiple others

Overview: Owned by the City of Litchfield and is undeveloped with 50 acres of water surface.

Recreational Facilities: Generally undeveloped with some marked hiking/horse trails

<u>Amenities</u>	
Benches	NO
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	NO
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	NO
Restrooms	NO
Shelters	NO
Water Fountains	NO
Other:	

<u>Special Features</u>	
Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	YES
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	YES
Wetlands	YES
Woodlots Forests	YES
Other:	

Madison Park
700 E Park Place
Litchfield IL 62056
2.1 acres

Property Identification Number
10-33-411-001

Overview: Owned and maintained by the City of Litchfield. It is adjacent to Madison Elementary School.

Recreational Facilities: Recreational Facilities Backstop, picnic shelter, 3 basketball ½ courts, 1 basketball full court, 3 playgrounds, parking.

<u>Amenities</u>	
Benches	YES
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	NO
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	YES
Restrooms	NO
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	NO
Other:	

<u>Special Features</u>	
Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	NO
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	NO
Wetlands	NO
Woodlots I Forests	NO
Other:	

Plummer Park
850 W Columbia Street
Litchfield IL 62056
3.7 acres

Property Identification Number
15-05-276-007, 15-05-276-036

Overview: Owned and maintained by Litchfield Park District.
Recreational Facilities.

Recreational Facilities: Baseball field, 3 shelters, 2 playgrounds, basketball court, batting cage, parking on street.

Amenities

Benches	NO
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	NO
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	NO
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	YES
Other: Bleachers	YES

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	NO
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	NO
Wetlands	NO
Woodlots Forests	NO
Other:	

Schalk Park
201 South Jackson Street
Litchfield IL 62056
3.1 acres

Property Identification Number
15-04-131-005, 15-04-131-003, 10-33-392-010

Overview: Owned and maintained by the Litchfield Park District. The original Schalk Field was leased from the Penn Central Railroad and developed into a ballfield. With the aid of a group of citizens leased Hauser field from the Montgomery County Housing Authority and made it into a ball field. Schalk Field, in downtown Litchfield, is named after Ray Schalk, who played with the Chicago White Sox for 17 seasons; was named by Babe Ruth as the greatest catcher baseball has ever known; caught five no-hitters; and coached at Purdue University.

Recreational Facilities: Skate park, batting cage, 2 youth baseball fields with lights, parking lot, concession stand is operated by the Litchfield Baseball Association.

Amenities

Benches	YES
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	NO
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	NO
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	NO
Water Fountains	YES
Other:	

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	NO
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	NO
Wetlands	NO
Woodlots Forests	NO
Other:	

**Sports Complex
Corvette Drive
Litchfield IL 62056
19.4 acres**

**Property Identification Number
10-32-302-001**

Overview: Owned by the City of Litchfield. Purchased in 2021 from the United Community Bank. Acquired with LAWCON grant and developed with OSLAD grant for IDNR.

Recreational Facilities: 4 Soccer fields, walking trail, 2 playgrounds (2-5yr and 6-12yr).

Amenities

Benches	NO
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	YES
Grills	NO
Picnic Tables	NO
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	NO
Other: Concession	YES

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	NO
Lakes or Ponds	NO
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	NO
Wetlands	NO
Woodlots I Forests	NO
Other:	

Walton Park
10207 Niemanville Trail
Litchfield IL 62056
35.7 acres

Property Identification Number
15-09-153-005, 15-09-300-012,15-09-153-004,
15-09-176-009

Overview: Owned by City of Litchfield. Maintained by the Litchfield Park District. Historic Walton Park recently celebrated its 75th Anniversary. Walton Park was the home of the first 1905 Chautauqua with plenty of activities, including speeches by William Jennings Bryan and Carrie Nation. The site and lake were originally used for the city’s water supply. The Litchfield Chapter of the Isaac Walton League requested to take over the old reservoir for the purpose of making it into a municipal park and fishing reserve. An ordinance was passed in 1926, giving the Walton’s supervision and control of the lake and adjacent grounds for a period of five years. The Walton’s raised funds and developed the park a swimming area which in 1927. The area was then named Walton Park.

Recreational Facilities: On-site parking, 2 fishing piers, pathways, lake, 4 picnic shelters 1 having a restroom, 2 playgrounds, 1 baseball field lighted, frisbee golf course, horseshoe pit, outdoor stage with concrete dance floor, 2 maintenance buildings, archery range, basketball court full court, radio-controlled track.

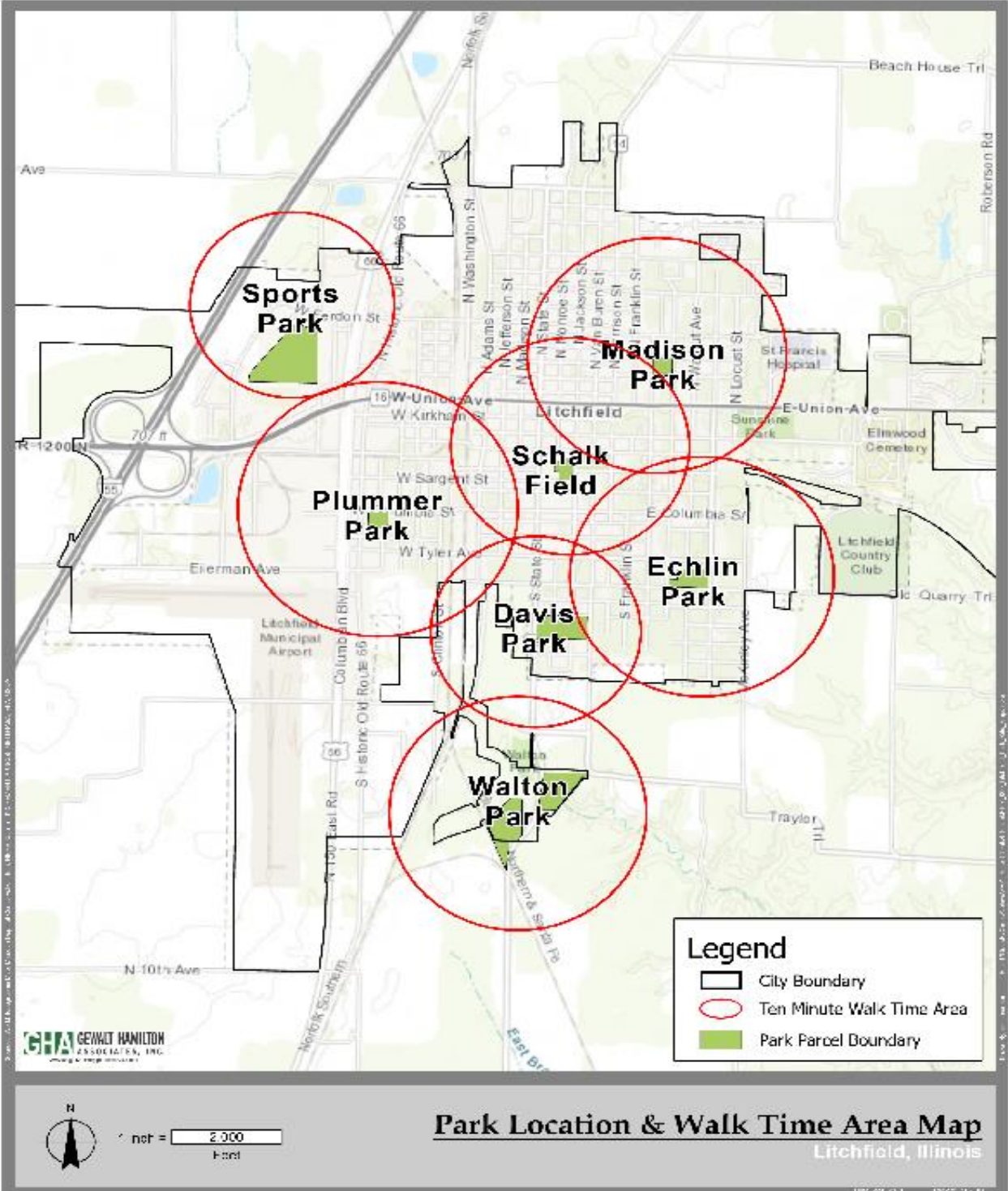
Amenities

Benches	YES
Community Ctr./ Indoor Fac.	NO
Grills	YES
Picnic Tables	YES
Restrooms	YES
Shelters	YES
Water Fountains	YES
Other:	

Special Features

Archaeological Sites	NO
Historical Sites & Structures	YES
Lakes or Ponds	YES
Prairie Remnants	NO
Rivers or Streams	YES
Wetlands	YES
Woodlots I Forests	YES
Other:	

10 Minute Walk Assessment



Inventory

The core Litchfield park system consists of seven neighborhood and community parks. The upper end of the NRPA standard is ten acres per thousand population. The current statewide average for the supply of local open space and parkland acreage according to the Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory (IRFI) is approximately 11.35 ac/1000 population for overall community park land acreage. The following chart represents the current inventory of park land. With a population of 6,930 Litchfield meets the NRPA standard and is deficient compared to the IRFI standard acres in the core City of Litchfield/Litchfield Park District area.

Classification	Current Acres	NRPA 10 Acre /1000	IRFI	Surplus/Deficient
Neighborhood	18.7			
Community	54.1			
Total	72.8	69.3	78.65	3.35- 5.85

The DNR uses criteria that approximately 20% of local parkland/open space acreage should be allocated to neighborhood or mini-park facilities serving an area up to ½ mile radius and approximately 80% allocated to community parks serving a community-wide area or up to 2-mile radius in high density urban areas.

In Litchfield 26% of parks are composed of neighborhood parks, while 74% are community spaces.

Regional

The average statewide supply of regional resource-based outdoor recreation lands is 52.69 acres per 1,000 population. This includes county and state lands, which primarily conserve natural resources and provide resource-based recreation. Regional parks and spaces typically serve several communities up to an hour drive time.

Lake Lou Yaeger and Lake Litchfield combined are 4,881 acres.

The statewide average comparison with Litchfield’s population computes to a need of 3,651 acres.

Transactions and users of Lake Lou Yaeger are from up to one- and one-half hour away. That driving distance encompasses a population of well over one million people.

A more practical and realistic comparison suggests using the population of Montgomery County which is 19,213 and projects that 10,132 acres be available for regional resource-based outdoor recreation lands. This suggests that Litchfield should continue to acquire more regionally based outdoor recreation lands.

Existing Recreational Amenities Matrix

COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY									
	City of Litchfield					Litchfield Park District			
	Lake Lou Yaeger	Lake Litchfield	Sports Park	Madison Park	Walton Park	Davis Park	Echlin Park	Plummer Park	Schalk Field
Size (acres)	4641	240	19.4	2.1	35.7	18	5	3.7	3.1
Classification	Regional	Regional	Community	Neighborhood	Comm./Neigh.	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood
Inventory									
CAMPING & PICNIC FACILITIES									
Picnic Shelters	10		1		4	1	2	3	
Tent Camp Sites (primitive)	482								
Trailer/Camper Sites	82								
SPORTS FIELDS & PLAY AREAS									
Baseball Fields					1		3	1	2
Softball Fields									
Soccer Fields			4			2			
Football Fields									
Lacrosse									
Cricket Fields									
Tennis Courts						2			
Pickleball Courts									
Basketball Courts				2.5	1	0.5	1		
Volleyball Courts									
Running Tracks								1	
Playgrounds	2		2	3	2	1	1	2	
In-line Skating Rinks/Courts									
Skate Parks									1
GOLF COURSES									
Golf 18 Hole									
Golf 9 Hole									
Frisbee Golf # Holes					9				
TRAILS (# of miles)									
Hiking/Walking/Multi-Use	27		0.6		0.25				
Nature/Interpretive/Scenic	2.6								
WATER FACILITIES									
Spray Grounds									
Swimming Pool						1			
Swimming Beach (linear ft)	400								
Boat Launch Ramps/Marina	2								
Fishing Piers	1				2				
WINTER REC. FACILITIES									
Ice Rink									
Cross Country Ski Trail									
Permanent Outdoor Ice Rink									
Snow Mobile Trail									
OTHER									
Dog Parks									
Fitness Stations (#)	9								
Amphitheater/Bandshell					1				
Mountain Bike Trails	7.5								
Bocce Ball Courts									
Horseshoe Courts					1				
Baggo Area									
Archery Range					1				
Hunting Area	3								
Outdoor Shooting Range									
Equestrian	15								
INTERPRETIVE CENTERS									

Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory Comparison

Community Outdoor Recreation Facilities in Illinois – 2008 Park Districts & Municipal Departments				
Community Recreation Facilities	Illinois Per 1,000 Capita	Core 7 Parks City/Park District Supply	Supply per 1,000 Population	Difference +/- Total
I. Water-Based Facilities				
Fish Piers/Docks	0.0408	2	0.29	1.7
Aquatic/Centers/ Pools	0.0282	1	0.1443	0.8
Spray Grounds	0.0292	0	0.0000	0.2
II. Trails				
Trails (Miles)	0.1630	0.25	0.0361	0.9
Bike Trails (Miles)	0.1058	0	0.7332	0.7
Nature Trails (Miles)	0.0547	0	0.0000	0.4
III. Sports Facilities				
Basketball Courts	0.2500	5	0.7215	3.3
Baseball Fields	0.2552	7	1.0101	5.2
Softball Fields	0.1425	0	0.0000	1.0
Skate Parks	0.0163	1	0.1443	0.9
Soccer Fields	0.1779	6	0.8658	4.8
Football Fields	0.0546	0	0.0000	0.4
18-Hole Golf Courses	0.0081	0	0.0000	0.1
9-Hole Golf Courses	0.0051	0	0.0000	0.0
Frisbee Golf Courses	0.0080	1	0.1443	0.9
IV. Day-Use Facilities				
Picnic Shelters	0.2060	11	1.5873	9.6
Playgrounds	0.4035	11	1.5873	8.2
Dog Parks	0.0074	0	0.0000	0.1

*All data is from the Community Recreation Facility and Park District Inventory March-July 2008, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and University of Illinois, Office of Recreation & Park Resources.

*U.S. Census Bureau 2008 population estimate for Illinois is 12,901,563.

*Population of Litchfield estimated at 6,930

*Park District and Municipal Department numbers have been estimated for a statewide total, based on the inventory's collected data for 74% of the state's population.

Potential Participation in Outdoor Recreation Activities

Litchfield Potential for Outdoor Recreation Activities & Participation		
Activity	State Averages	Potential Litchfield Participants
Pleasure Walking	80.7	5593
Picnicking	47.1	3264
Observing Wildlife/Bird Watching	42.9	2973
Use a Playground	40.2	2786
Bicycling–Roads	37.8	2620
Swimming–Outdoor Pool	36.3	2516
Visit Amphitheatre/Band Shell	33.2	2301
Hiking	31.3	2169
Fishing	31.0	2148
Bicycling–Trails	30.0	2079
Running/Jogging	23.0	1594
Golfing	22.1	1532
Swimming–Lake/River	22.1	1532
Motor Boating	17.6	1220
Softball/Baseball	17.1	1185
Baggo/Bag toss	15.4	1067
Tent camping	13.6	942
Hunting	13.6	942
Canoeing/Kayaking	13.2	915
Horseshoes	12.0	832
Outdoor Basketball	11.4	790
Camping (RV)	10.6	735
Soccer	9.7	672
Off-Road Vehicle Use	9.5	658
Equestrian (Horseback riding)	9.4	651
Tennis	9.3	644
Ice Skating	8.4	582
Bocce Ball	7.7	534
Water Skiing	6.5	450
Mountain Biking	6.1	423
Cross-country skiing	5.7	395
Sailing	4.9	340
In-line skating	4.6	319
Trapping	4.5	312
Snowmobiling	3.7	256
Pickleball	1.8	125
Lacrosse	1.5	104

Attractions, Cultural, Scenic, Historic and Natural Sites

Tourism results in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for communities. Litchfield is a premier travel destination. The legendary Route 66 begins in Illinois and travels through Litchfield. In Litchfield there are several unique attractions:

- Drive in Theater
- Ariston Restaurant
- Jubelts Restaurant
- Route 66 Museum
- Carnegie Building
- Route 66 Bike Trail
- Lake Lou Yeager
- Shoal Creek Conservation Area

The Illinois Office of Tourism reports that in Illinois every \$1 invested in tourism marketing generates \$9.

The Year-End 2018 Visitor Profile An Inside Look at the Leisure Travel Market in Illinois, Chicago, and Downstate by D. K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd. reports several interesting tourism findings that are relevant to tourism initiative in Litchfield.

- Timing: Illinois solidified its position as a Summer and Fall destination.
- Largest share of visitors originates from Chicago, IL, followed by St. Louis, MO and Champaign-Springfield-Decatur, IL.
- Travelers arrive almost exclusively by auto – traveling 187 miles on average.
- Solo Travelers make up 38% of Illinois Leisure Stays and spend an average of \$221 per stay.
- Two-Adult Parties are 42% of Illinois Leisure. These are predominantly One Man + One Woman parties.
- Three+ Adult Groups account for 6% of Illinois Leisure Stays.
- 14% of Illinois' Travel Parties include children. These parties spend an average of \$457 per stay.
- The average length of stay is 1.78 days.
- Illinois Leisure travelers spend \$122 on average per person per day in 2018 with travelers to Illinois downstate travelers spending \$83.

Existing Recreational Offerings

The City of Litchfield does not offer formal recreational programs. However, the City oversees Lake Lou Yeager which has several recreational facilities. The Litchfield Park District offers programs and services. In addition, the Park District cooperates with various organizations to provide programs and services. Historical program statistics are not available. The information available is presented as follows:

Park District Program Participation

Five Year Average

Program	Participants	Provider
Trunk or Treat	600	Park District
Youth Baseball	400	Litchfield Baseball Assoc.
Summer Concerts (4)	400	Park District
Easter Egg Hunt	350	Park District
Soccer	220	Litchfield Soccer Association
Meals on Wheels	170 daily	CEFS
Adult Men's Softball	125	Litchfield Moose
Visit with Santa	125	Park District
Pool Swim Lessons	108	Park District
Adult Ladies' Softball	80	Litchfield Moose
Competitive Swim	55	Montgomery County Swim Team
Line Dance	30	Park District
Painting Class	6	Independent Contractor

Needs and Priorities

The following considerations and recommendations highlight actions to meet community needs that will benefit the individuals, families, economy, and environment of Litchfield. To meet the needs and priorities of the community, the City of Litchfield and the Litchfield Park District should consider implementing the following:

POLICY

- Adopt this plan and authorize its use as the principal tool in planning for parks and recreation.
- Use the planning and financial recommendations contained in this plan as a guide for determining the allocation of funds for land acquisition, park development, capital improvement projects, and recreation programs.
- Implement this plan in cooperation with citizens, other governmental agencies, and private organizations to ensure responsiveness to community needs and changing local issues and priorities.
- Review this plan annually to implement and update the plan as needed.
- Create a land/cash developer donation ordinance.
- Create a three-year capital improvement plan for replacement and update of amenities.
- Create a long-range capital development plan for future recreational facilities.
- Continue to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the recreational needs of the community and develop the appropriate support facilities.
- Create a foundation to solicit private fundraising.
- Create endowment/memorial funds to solicit private fundraising.
- Follow recommendations and guidelines suggested by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, NRPA, Illinois Park & Recreation Association, Illinois Association of Park Districts, Illinois and United States Environmental Protection Agencies, and the Montgomery Health Department.
- Promote fairness and equality across the community through inclusion, equity, and accessibility.
- Open the parks from dawn till dusk.

LAND ACQUISITION

(Confidential Listing—may not appear in text of plan)

- Acquire at least 7.8 acres within the core park system to eliminate the deficiency.
- Acquire property in the northwest section of the city to support a park within a ten-minute walk for residents.
- With the core park system, develop trails for walking, hiking, running and/or biking.
- Acquire additional parkland. Potential sites are found in a separate listing, which is confidential.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The following specific park recommendations are a result of staff interviews, site visits, and data from the community survey.

- Davis Park
 - Many people commented they did not know of the park.
 - The public's perception is that there is not much at the park, maintenance and upkeep needs improvement, and the park needs to be updated.
 - The most needed improvements are adding trees, restrooms, walking paths, benches, a picnic shelter, picnic tables, and a splash pad.
 - Complete construction of a dog park in conjunction with volunteers.
 - The Memorial Pool is outdated and needs to be renovated because it is unattractive and lacking in amenities and programs.
 - Consider adding more programs, expanding hours, and building a splash pad, shade structures, a kiddy pool, slides, and a lazy river.
 - The Community Center is basic and perceived as lacking in programs. Recent improvements are appreciated; however, there was a call for a rehab or rebuild. The building was built in 1979.
- Echlin Park
 - The public's perception is that the park is unattractive and needs improvements. Beautification and upkeep were common themes in survey responses.
 - The park needs an upgrade of the baseball field; improved parking, restrooms, trees, and landscaping; and a general redesign to meet the needs of the area.

-
- Lake Lou Yaeger Park
 - The public's perception of the area is particularly good.
 - Maintenance of the property is done with in-house labor and aging volunteers, and they cannot keep up with the demands. Consider adding staff, recruiting new volunteers, and supplementing with contractors.
 - There is a desire to keep it up and improve it. The public noted the need for more restrooms, a restaurant, more trails, more campsites, improved marina and boat launch, and benches along trails.
 - Improve Milnot Beach House.
 - Beach and shoreline areas need improvement.
 - Demand for additional campsites with recreational facilities and amenities is warranted.
 - Enhance accessibility to amenities throughout the park.
 - Improve boat launching area. Create boat and kayak launch area. Add docks.
 - Develop more recreational activities such as eagle watching.
 - Create a plan for future lake sustainability.
 - Consider a traffic count to gather visitation data.
 - Henry Eilers Shoal Creek Nature Preserve
 - Considered an asset and treasure.
 - Most needed improvements include trail maintenance and additional interpretive and trail signage.
 - Litchfield Lake
 - Currently undeveloped. Future improvements include adding trails, access to the lake for fishing and boating, campsites, and picnic shelters.
 - This area should be considered for preservation and have limited access because it is a secondary water source for the area.
 - Madison Park
 - Generally, the public is pleased with the physical features and amenities in the park.
 - There is a perception that the park may not be clean and safe at times.
 - The park needs better maintenance, more trash cans, and visible patrols.
 - Plummer Park
 - The park needs better maintenance and upkeep owing to overuse, better restrooms, and more playground equipment.
 - Schalk Field
 - There is a perception that that park is old and worn down, generally unattractive, and needs improvement.
 - The park needs updated restrooms, repairs to the deteriorated parking lot, better playground equipment and turf maintenance, and a centralized playground area and dog park area.

-
- Sports Park
 - Under development
 - Walton Park
 - Considered the best park in town.
 - Overwhelmingly people want it to open all year round.
 - The public noted a need for improved restroom cleanliness, restroom upgrades, additional and improved walking paths, pavilion upkeep, and an improved boat launch area.
 - The future of the radio-controlled track needs evaluation.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- The City and Park District should both continue to collaborate and partner to enhance the community's park and recreation system.
- Continue to collaborate in providing parks and recreation opportunities for the community.
- Seek partnerships to provide parks and recreation opportunities for the community.
- Formally meet to ensure adequate input, participation, and coordination in the development of parks, programs, and facilities.
- Create a volunteer program as an initiative to secure corporate and community support for the ongoing maintenance and improvements to the park system.
- Cooperatively develop neighborhood and community recreation facilities in conjunction with the Litchfield School District.
- Establish working relationships with local affiliated groups/associations to develop and use indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.
- Cooperatively develop recreation with other governmental agencies, nonprofits, and private industry (e.g., Townships, YMCA)

OPERATIONAL

- Enhance maintenance of park sites for greater satisfaction and appeal.
- Increase staff levels. Nationally, a typical park and recreation agency has 8.1 FTEs on staff for each 10,000 residents in the jurisdiction served by the agency. By this metric, Litchfield should have 5.6. Currently there are 1.5 full-time and 29 seasonal employees.
- Adopt a smoke-free park policy. Nationally, three-quarters of park and recreation agencies ban the use of tobacco products at most/all their parks and facilities.
- Work with individuals, focus groups, neighborhood and community groups, and advisory committees to gain input into the planning, development, and improvement of park areas and facilities.
- Regularly survey park users and program participants to assess and evaluate the quality of parks, programs, services, and facilities.
- Promote park safety and security to dispel misconceptions.
- Enhance marketing and community efforts to generate public interest and participation in programs, facilities, and park areas.
- Educate the public on the benefits of parks and recreation.
- Publicize success stories with personal testimonies.
- Critique, evaluate, and accommodate as necessary new directions, opportunities, and initiatives beyond what was established with this plan.
- Use social media, websites, and print media to educate the public about offerings, services, and facilities.
- Establish maintenance management standards so that park features are current, preserved, and maintained to ensure quality, safety, and cost effectiveness.
- Consider using in-house labor along with contractual and volunteer labor sources.
- Strive toward conforming with standards/guidelines set forth by the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the American Standard for Testing and Materials for playground, pool operations, and pool safety, and the Americans with Disabilities Act for handicapped accessibility.
- Perform a playground safety audit and develop a renovation/replacement plan.
- Integrate learning and interpretation into the design of spaces and programs.
- Seek outside funding sources for grants e.g., Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Grants, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and US Environmental Protection Agency.
- Seek earmarks or legislative initiative funding from state legislators.
- Use recycling, environmentally safe products, and energy-saving and efficiency measures.

BUILDING AND FACILITIES

- Continue to assess buildings and outdoor facilities and make capital improvements to enhance energy conservation, quality, aesthetics, sustainability, function, accessibility, and safety.
- Assess the condition, usefulness, and function of the Memorial Pool and consider redevelopment owing to its age and the outdated recreational amenities. Be “shovel ready” for grant opportunities.
- Assess the need for new, expanded, and repurposed buildings and outdoor facilities, particularly regarding the Community Center in Davis Park and the Beach House at Lake Lou Yaeger. Be “shovel ready” for grant opportunities.
- Make preventive maintenance a priority to increase the valued life cycle of buildings and outdoor facilities.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

- Embrace the natural landscape and spaces in the community by expanding outdoor education, outdoor recreation, and interpretive services.
- Expand capturing revenue from boats, trailers, campers, and RVs (MPI 104).
- Expand activities with greatest potential for participation: freshwater fishing (MPI 131), hunting with shotgun (MPI 116), softball (MPI 114), volleyball (MPI 109), baseball in last 12 (MPI 108), bowling (MPI 103), archery (M102), horseback riding (MPI 102), motorcycling in last (MPI 100), walking for exercise (MPI 100).
- Promote attendance at high school sporting events (MPI 119).
- Promote activities around watching auto racing (NASCAR) (MPI 144) and wrestling (WWE) (MPI138).
- Promote activities with veterans’ clubs (MPI 165).
- Promote e-sports and computer games (MPI 122).
- Focus on meeting the needs of the community with special events, team sports, social recreation events, fitness enhancement classes, and health and wellness.
- Cooperate with new YMCA to develop and offer new programs.

TOURISM

- Pursue the Illinois Department of Commerce grant programs to support local, national, and international marketing and advertising efforts.
- Focus on the development of permanent attractions such as cultural, scenic, historic, and natural sites.
- Create a maintenance and development plan to sustain the viability of tourism sites.
- Modernize downtown Litchfield as a center for arts, music, and greenspace.
- Support adding more Neon to Route 66 by developing an incentive program.
- Create a Tourism Strategic Master Plan to enhance and sustain tourism.
- Consider an activities coordinator for events.
- Develop the Sports Park and host tournaments to attract visitors.
- Consider development of an indoor sports and recreational facility for year-round activities.
- Consider an event venue with space that would host large- and small-scale events/conferences with a larger space than the auditorium at Lincoln Land Community College.

Fiscal and Budget Considerations

The typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$81.19 per capita. Over the past five years, the City and Park District expended \$48.30 per capita on average. That is 60 percent of the national average (or \$32.8 less).

The median level of operating expenditures is \$7,160 per acre of park and non-park sites managed by the agency. The City and Park District expend on average \$2,927 per acre.

The typical park and recreation agency generates \$20.93 in revenue annually for each resident in the jurisdiction. Litchfield can project that to equate to \$145,044.

The Park District is at the maximum tax rates allowed for the Corporate Fund and Recreation Fund and cannot increase that levy rate unless an increase is approved through a referendum.

Litchfield on average spends less than most communities on parks and recreation. For park districts (27 reporting) serving populations 5,000–7,499 consider the following:

- The average number of total employees was 29.48.
- The average number of full-time employees was 2.19.
- The average number of part-time employees was 27.30.
- The average property tax extension was \$389,626.
- The average total expenditures were \$678,543.
- The average total indebtedness was \$569,691.
- The average total payroll was \$224,804.

For us to offer the parks, open spaces, and programs to the public and implement the goals of this plan, we must secure and maintain funding. Typically, the public's needs, wants, and desires are greater than the resources available. A list of resources for consideration are as follows:

Fees and Charges for Services: User fees collected for programs and services. For example, include recreation program income, pool passes and daily admissions, and fees for campsites.

Grants: Grant funding to support capital improvement projects and operations through local, regional, state, and national sources.

Sales: Sales revenue from in-house concessions and merchandise.

Rental Income: Rental fees from facility and park spaces.

Interest Income: Revenue received from investments.

Sponsorships: Sponsorship funds from partners, businesses, and patrons to supplement the cost of capital improvements, operations, and maintenance programs and facilities.

Gifts/Donations: Gifts and donations can consist of cash or in-kind contributions received from individuals, groups, and businesses that support programs, services, park amenities, and development.

Land/Cash Dedication Ordinance: Land, cash, or in-kind donations from developers through the mandatory dedication of parkland or cash in lieu of land.

Advertising: Revenue received from advertising can be obtained from sources such as program guides, web advertising, and the banners program.

Commissions: Commissions from concessions, leases, and management contracts that take place on District property but are performed by a contractor.

Memorials and Endowments: A donation of money or property meant to be used for operations or programs that are consistent with the wishes of the donor(s). Most endowments are designed to keep the principal amount intact while using the investment income for charitable efforts.

Foundation: Foundations assist with raising funds to support the District's mission through grants and donations.

Real Estate Tax: Tax revenue based on the equalized assessed valuation of real estate in the community.

Referendum: Conducting a public vote to support funding for operations and capital improvements.

Bond Issue: Issuing bonds to support capital improvements.

Sales Tax: Revenue from tax on certain transactions.

Privatization: Contracting out services to the private sector to reduce costs.

Management and Review of the Plan

To continue the positive spirit and intent of intergovernmental cooperation between the City of Litchfield and the Litchfield Park District, both organizations desire to meet at least annually at the beginning of the budget process to review and update this plan.

The fiscal year begins May 1 for both organizations. The budget process usually starts in January and continues until a new fiscal year budget is approved in April.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Review the plan with the public, decision makers, and staff so it is discussed and relevant throughout the budgeting process.
- Make amendments and changes to keep it current. New information, trends, and needs will be identified.
- Review initiatives undertaken to identify obstacles, successes, and financial impacts.
- Review and update the proposed implementation timeline.
- Keep the document current by annually updating the plan on a rolling basis.

Implementation

Throughout the planning process both agencies identified projects—some to be implemented separately, others cooperatively. The projects are organized into short-, mid-, and long-term projects. Both agencies also identified common themes that they thought were important to constantly strive for.

Short-term: Projects within the fiscal year that are budgeted and typically executed within that year.

Mid-term: Projects that require some thought and planning and may span several years but typically no more than three years.

Long-term: Projects that require a great deal of planning and funding over a long period of time.

Themes: Specific strategies or areas of concern that both organizations think are important to emphasize and strive for to make the park system more attractive to the public.

City of Litchfield

Short-term

Enhance playground safety inspection process.

Offer interpretive walks with Henry Eilers.

Increase boat slips from 13 to 26.

Offer outdoor education classes at the Beach House.

Revitalize the self-guided nature trail signs.

Emphasize preventative maintenance on existing infrastructure.

Update trail mapping.

Offer more activities and programs at the Beach House.

Mid-term

Add additional cabins and glamping.

Expand Bicentennial campsites.

Improve grassy green space south of the Beach House.

Improve fish habitats to increase bass populations.

Develop the Sports Park.

Develop an improvement plan for picnic area 3.

Enhance landscaping at Madison Park.
Remove unsafe playground equipment from Madison Park.
Create a development and maintenance plan for Five-Mile Lake.
Continue implementing and pursuing 319 Grant for shoreline protection.
Continue silt-reduction efforts.
Install accessible fishing dock and kayak launch.

Long-term

Install Wi-Fi at lake and campgrounds.
Determine use of Beach House top floor for activities, concession, and restaurant.
Improve boat ramp at Litchfield Lake.
Improve spillways at Litchfield Lake.
Improve marina store.

Litchfield Park District

Short-term

Amended Ordinance concerning park hours
Complete Community Center remodel.
Install AcidRite system at Memorial Pool.
Install a security camera system at Memorial Pool.

Mid-term

Develop a dog park at Davis Park with the help of volunteers and patrons.
Install restrooms at Davis Park.
Install restrooms at Plummer Park.
Replace playground equipment at Plummer Park.
Upgrade parking at Echlin Park.
Upgrade parking at Plummer Park.

Construct volleyball courts at Davis Park.

Long-term

Construct a splash pad at Memorial Pool.

Replace the Bath House at Memorial Pool.

Add fencing and lighting at Echlin Park.

Add fencing and lighting at Plummer Park.

Themes

Communicate with police to walk through park areas and visit with users to convey a sense that the parks are safe and secure.

Emphasize maintenance standards and processes that will improve the level of beautification of all park areas.

Plan Participants

The creation of this plan would not have been complete or possible without public input and participation. The residents, taxpayers, constituents, City Council, and Park Board provided valuable information. There were 439 households, representing 905 household members throughout the community who provided input through the community-wide forum or survey. In addition, [REDACTED] of people participated in the public meeting.

City of Litchfield

City Council

Tonya Flannery, Economic Development Director/City Administrator

Shelly Herman, Economic Development Assistant

Eric Lamb, Lake Superintendent

Litchfield Park District

Board of Commissioners

Steven C. Bryant, Executive Director, Litchfield Park District

Consultant

Greg Petry Consulting LLC

Sources

2018 Visitor Profile: An Inside Look at the Leisure Travel Market in Illinois, Chicago, and Downstate by
D. K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd

ESRI Business Analyst

<https://www.dni.gov/index.php/global-trends/trends-transforming-the-global-landscape>

IAPD Economic Impact of Local Park and Recreation Agencies in Illinois: 2005

IAPD Statewide Compilation of Tax Levy and Employment Data for All Illinois Park Districts -
September 2020

Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans: 2009-2014 and 2015-2019

National Parks and Recreation Association

<https://www.areavibes.com/litchfield-il/demographics/>

<https://www.dni.gov/index.php/global-trends/trends-transforming-the-global-landscape>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Litchfield,_Illinois