

PARK AND FACILITY INVENTORY

Overview

The Columbia Parks and Recreation Department oversees over 2,000 acres of park land with 52 park and recreation facilities.

The largest of the parks is the 533-acre Cosmopolitan Recreation Area (CCRA). Along with traditional park features, CCRA is home to the 6-field Antimi Sports Complex, 6-field Rainbow Softball Center, Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail, the hard-surface Cosmo Fitness Trail, Skate Park, L. A. Nickell Golf Course, and the only lighted and/or irrigated soccer and football fields in the park system.



One of the goals of the Columbia Parks and Recreation Department is to create a trail loop that encircles the city and allows residents the opportunity to experience natural beauty and wildlife in their community while providing active recreation. Three major trails have been constructed as part of this loop. The 4.3-mile Bear Creek Trail, connecting Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area with Oakland Park in the northern part of Columbia, was completed in 2001. The Hinkson Trail together with the University of Missouri's Recreation Trail connects Grindstone Park with the MKT Trail in the southern part of Columbia. This trail was also completed in 2001. The 8.9-mile MKT Nature/Fitness Trail, built on an abandoned railroad right-of way, connects downtown



Columbia with the Katy Trail State Park.

Historical features of the City's parks include the Walters-Boone County Historical Museum and Maplewood Home at Nifong Park, historical plaques at Flat Branch Park and Old 63 Roadside Park, and the Pop Collins Cabin currently located in the Stephens Lake Park. The Maplewood Home and the "Gordon Tract Archaeological Site" at Grindstone Nature Area are included in the National Register of Historic Places.



The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Garden provides a unique feature to the park system with its public art sculpture displaying writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., a small

amphitheater, and beautiful surrounding landscape. Nature lovers enjoy the 199-acre Grindstone Nature Area, 100-acre Forum Nature Area, and scenic views from the cliffs at Capen Park. The Skate Park in CCRA, completed in 1999, is extremely popular with the local skateboarders and attracts users from across the nation. Skateboarders from New York, California, and even Canada have visited Columbia's Skate Park.



three outdoor swimming pools, two outdoor water play areas, two swimming lakes, and cooperative-use of one indoor pool. Other features include an archery range, outdoor roller hockey rink, and three 18-hole disc golf courses (one of which is currently under construction).

The City's park system includes two 18-hole golf courses, six fishing lakes,



The Armory Sports Center, renovated in 2000/2001, is home to the only indoor gymnasium in the park system.



The demand for indoor facilities precipitated the construction of the Columbia Recreation Center (to be formally named in the future), which is scheduled to be completed by fall of 2002. It will feature an indoor leisure pool with lap swimming lanes, two gymnasiums, reservable meeting rooms, a recreation classroom, an indoor walking/jogging track, strength and conditioning areas, a teen room, and a drop-in child care facility.

The citizens of Columbia not only benefit from the parks and recreation facilities provided by the City of Columbia, but also facilities provided by other local agencies. Columbia is home to the University of Missouri, Stephens College, and Columbia College. Residents have access to state, federal, and county facilities. The private sector also provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities.

In determining the recreational facility needs in a community, all facilities available to the public are taken into consideration. For example, if there were privately-owned ice rinks in Columbia, it would certainly affect whether or not the City of Columbia would choose to build one. Hence, along with the inventory of the City of Columbia's parks, facilities, and amenities, this chapter includes an inventory of the facilities of other local agencies.

(Detailed information on individual City-owned parks and facilities can be found in Appendix A.)