

TRENDS

Analysis

Section I: Facility Trends

Following are trends that have been identified as facilities that may eventually have some impact on the Parks and Recreation Department. After a brief description, the probability of their impact is based on the following:

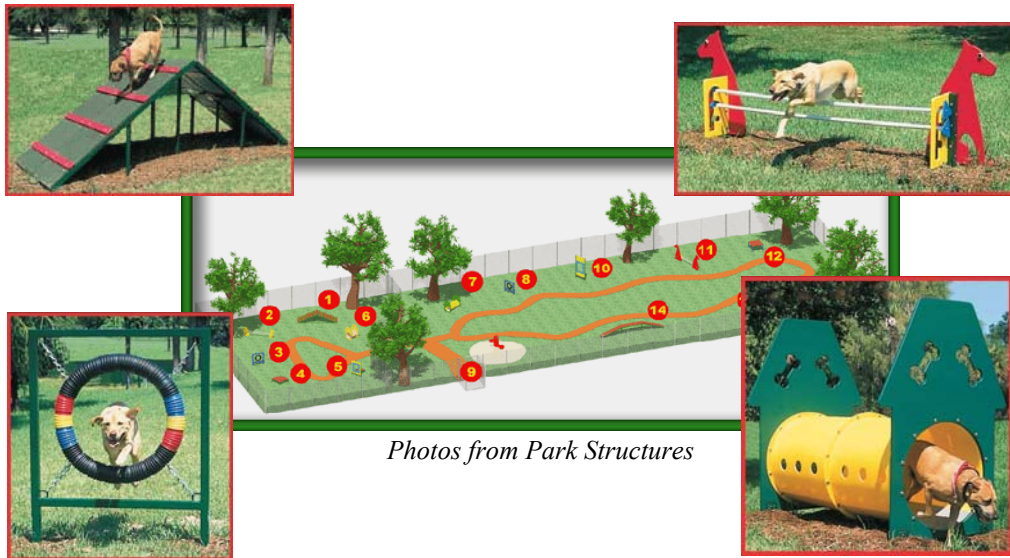
High Probability: Trends that exist in or near Missouri and may exhibit some amount of participation in the Columbia area.

Medium Probability: Trends that exist in the mid-America region and may exhibit some amount of participation in Missouri.

Low Probability: Trends that exist in some areas of the country and may exhibit some participation in the mid-America region or trends that due to financial reasons may not be viable for 5-10 years.

- 1. Dog Parks.** Dog parks are similar to leash free areas, except that they are fenced and may have play equipment for the dogs. The ever-increasing growth of urban areas has made open space for dogs increasingly scarce. Dog parks range in size from three to five acres and consist of benches, shade areas, drinking water, and if use dictates, may be irrigated to maintain turf quality. Dog parks offer pet owners the opportunity to exercise and socialize with their dogs in a secure environment. The number of dog owners is growing and currently represents 28% of the population.

High Probability



- Spraygrounds.** Similar to traditional park playgrounds, spraygrounds are water play areas that are designed to operate on their own with minimal or no need for lifeguards. Sprayground areas are true “zero-depth” with no standing water. Surface area is concrete and may have a rubber coating. Water flows only when users are present to activate controls. Water source may either be direct from potable supply or as part of a chlorinated recirculating system. Volume of water may range from a mist spray to in-ground water jets designed to soak participants. **High Probability**



Photo from WaterPlay

- Paint-Ball.** Paint-ball is a sport in which the player is tagged with a paint-ball that is launched from an opponent’s paint-ball marker. A tag occurs when the ball hits its target and the colored mineral oil breaks on contact. This sport uses safety gear and a restricted-use area. The site needs to have either natural or man-made cover for participants. **High Probability**
- BMX (Bicycle Motocross) Courses.** BMX is bicycle racing around a dirt track with riders of the same age and skill level competing against each other. A race begins at the starting gate where all riders leave at the same time and race around the track over dirt jumps, around banked corners, and to the finish line. Tracks consist of contours that allow for left and right turns and jumps. Track lengths vary from 1000 to 1500 feet. The starting gate consists of a hill that is approximately 25 feet high. **High Probability**
- X-Sports.** Extreme sports (or X-sports) consist of non-traditional athletic activities, such as, skateboarding, in-line skating, scooters, snowboarding, trick-bike riding, and so on. These sports are growing in popularity due to national media coverage, such as ESPN. The Columbia Skate Park certainly has demonstrated the popularity of skateboarding, and it is only a matter of time before the need will arise for another one or more of these X-sports. The question will be one of finances and participant organization. A street course for trick bikes may be the first of these to become a factor in the Department’s Capital Improvement Program. **Medium-High Probability**

6. **Bouldering/Climbing Walls.** For the past 5-10 years, traditional climbing walls have been popular in community recreation centers and specialized outdoor retailers. For municipal agencies, the high cost of constructing and operating climbing walls has directed many toward bouldering. Typically located outside, bouldering walls take a vertical climbing wall and turn it on its side. These structures are about 12 feet high or shorter and are open to the public as weather allows. The lower height does not require belaying devices or park staff. Surfacing around the wall consists of a minimum of 12 inches of engineered wood fiber - the same material that is used on playgrounds. **Medium Probability**



Photos from Boulder Co.

7. **Adaptive Recreational Trails/Courts/Fields.** As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals at all levels of ability or disability shall have activities and facilities suitable and accessible. A multiplicity of activities and facilities should be offered so that each individual, of every ability or disability, will find his/her own level or range of play and participation. Some of the facilities include hard-surface trails; basketball courts with the baskets designed at various heights and angles; and synthetic surfacing for baseball, soccer, and other sport fields. **Medium Probability**



Photo from BankShot Co.

8. **Finger Parks.** Finger Parks are large play tables that contain a miniature playscape designed for specific types of toys children bring from home. Using precast concrete and other materials of proven durability, Finger Parks make “loose part” play style available in a public setting. Loose part play is classified in developmental research as play with elements that the children can manipulate and combine. Finger Parks are accessible from a wheelchair at ground level and do not require the typical 6 ft. fall zone. Finger Parks provide children the opportunity to interact with other children. **Medium-Low Probability**



Photos from FingerParks.com

9. **Mobile Technology Centers.** Just as “book-mobiles” were popular and well used in the 1960-80’s, the mobile technology center mirrors the basic principle of providing a service to those without access. The mission of these centers states that in an increasingly technologically-dominated society, people who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged will become further disadvantaged if they lack access to computers and computer-related technologies. Many of these centers are co-sponsored by various agencies to provide technological opportunities for people of all ages and socio-economic levels. **Low Probability**
10. **Animal Farms/Petting Zoos.** In 2001, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new warnings about farm animal exhibits. “Each year many young children across the country come in contact with farm animals at petting zoos, petting farms, and county fairs where they may be putting themselves at risk of getting a life threatening infection like *E. coli* O157:H7,” said CDC Director Dr. Jeffrey Koplan. “Managers of these venues as well as parents of children who visit them should be aware of these risks and should assure that the strategies to minimize them are in place.” Suggested strategies include constructing double-fences around animals to prevent direct contact with visitors; providing hand washing stations; providing information about the risk of transmission of pathogens from farm animals to humans and strategies for prevention of such transmission; staffing facilities to prevent or monitor interaction; and prohibiting hand to mouth activities such as eating and drinking, smoking, and carrying toys and pacifiers in interaction areas. Many parks and recreation departments are either implementing these procedures or closing down their exhibits. As the Columbia Parks and Recreation Department prepares a master plan for Nifong Park, the animal farm exhibit should be reviewed.

Section II: Participation

Searching for national recreational participation trends is difficult, as each individual association proposes that their sport or hobby is the next trend. In researching trends, many organizations investigate either purchasing habits or utilize surveys that are conducted by national organizations. For the purpose of this report, a national survey conducted by the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) in 2000 appeared to be the most current. Additionally, results of this survey mirrored purchasing trends that were conducted by a similar organization, the Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association.

Listed below is a table that highlights the NSGA survey results for the year 2000. It also compares the participation patterns of similar surveys that were conducted in 1996 and in 1990. This comparative data can be used to determine if a particular sport or activity is either increasing or decreasing.

National Sporting Goods Association				
Sport <i>(Ranked in order of highest participation rates)</i>	2000 Total (million)	Percent Change from 1999	1996 Total (million)	1990 Total (million)
Exercise Walking	86.3	0.6%	73.3	71.4
Swimming	60.7	2.3%	60.2	67.5
Camping (vacation/overnight)	49.9	-2.3%	44.7	46.2
Fishing	49.3	4.5%	45.6	46.9
Exercising with Equipment	44.8	-4.4%	47.8	35.3
Bicycle Riding	43.1	0.3%	53.3	55.3
Bowling	43.1	1.6%	42.9	40.1
Billiards/Pool	32.5	0.1%	34.5	28.1
Basketball	27.2	-8.1%	31.8	26.3
Aerobic Exercising	27.2	3.5%	24.1	23.3
Golf	26.4	-2.8%	23.1	23.0
Weight Lifting	24.6	na	na	na
Boating, Motor/Power	24.2	-0.9%	28.8	28.6
Hiking	23.7	-15.6%	26.5	22.0
Running/Jogging	22.5	0.5%	22.2	23.8
Roller Skating (in-line)	21.8	-9.4%	25.5	3.6
Hunting with Firearms	19.1	12.6%	18.3	18.5

National Sporting Goods Association				
Sport <i>(Ranked in order of highest participation rates)</i>	2000 Total (million)	Percent Change from 1999	1996 Total (million)	1990 Total (million)
Dart Throwing	17.4	-13.8%	21.3	16.4
Baseball	15.7	-3.8%	14.8	15.6
Backpack/Wilderness Camp	15.2	-0.5%	11.5	10.8
Target Shooting	14.8	-16.4%	21.2	na
Mountain Bike (on road)	14.3	-5.6%	13.3	na
Softball	13.9	-5.2%	19.9	20.1
Calisthenics	13.5	7.7%	10.1	13.2
Soccer	12.9	-1.8%	13.9	10
Volleyball	12.3	3.9%	18.5	23.2
Scooter Riding	11.6	na	na	na
Football (touch)	9.9	-11.4%	11.6	na
Tennis	9.9	-9.8%	11.5	18.4
Horseback Riding	9.5	na	8.7	na
Skateboarding	9.1	30.2%	4.7	7.5
Table Tennis	7.7	-7.1%	9.5	11.8
Football (tackle)	7.5	-10.3%	9.0	na
Skiing (alpine)	7.4	-0.3%	10.5	11.4
Roller Skating (2x2)	7.2	-12.5%	15.1	18.0
Mountain Biking (off road)	7.1	4.0%	7.3	na
Ice/Figure Skating	6.7	-12.4%	8.4	6.5
Canoeing	6.2	-15.1%	8.4	8.9
Step Aerobics	6.1	-26.2%	11.3	na
Water Skiing	5.9	-9.9%	7.4	10.5
Snorkeling	5.5	-13.9%	7.1	na
Martial Arts	5.4	5.9%	4.7	na
Paint-Ball Games	5.3	4.6%	na	na
Badminton	4.9	-2.0%	6.1	9.3
Hunting w/Bow & Arrow	4.7	-18.4%	5.5	na
Archery (target)	4.5	-7.6%	5.3	na

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Snowboarding	4.3	31.2%	3.1	1.5
Kick Boxing	3.9	3.7%	na	na
Climbing (mountain/rock)	3.4	na	3.4	4.7
Climbing (artificial wall)	3.3	na	2.3	na
Racquetball	3.2	0.6%	5.3	8.1
Kayaking/Rafting	3.1	5.2%	3.6	na
Muzzleloading	2.9	-11.8%	3.2	na
Sailing	2.5	-10.8%	4.0	4.9
Skiing (cross country)	2.3	-14.0%	3.4	5.1
Hockey (roller)	2.2	3.1%	3.4	na
Hockey (ice)	1.9	3.1%	2.1	1.9
Scuba Diving (open water)	1.6	-29.%	2.4	2.6
Field Hockey	1.4	na	na	na
Surfboarding	1.2	na	na	1.5
Snowshoeing	1.0	18.3%	na	na
Wind Surfing	0.2	-50.7%	0.7	0.9