

Vision Commission Report on Topic 12: Park, Recreation, Greenways and Trails

March 2015

The Vision Commission began in January 2009 with the charge to track, measure and report on progress of vision implementation to the community. Beginning November of 2013, the Commission will deliver reports on one of the thirteen Vision Topics using at least three ways to track and measure progress on the Vision:

1. Report the scope of **Implementation Efforts** taken to address strategies and objectives in the Vision document.
2. Recognize **Significant Events** that could have an impact on one or more of the 13 Visions.
3. Develop a set of **Progress Indicators** that will help the community see whether the 13 Visions and their related goals are being fulfilled.

Vision: A network of attractive and safe parks and recreational amenities are connected by trails and greenways that provide area residents with access to nature, recreation, and facilities for active play, both indoors and out.

12.1 Parks - A variety of attractive, well maintained parks throughout Columbia, including neighborhood parks, regional parks, nature parks and urban parks will ensure all residents have access to a full range of outdoor and indoor recreational opportunities.

12.2 Recreation - Columbia's recreation needs and desires will be met through effective public and private partnerships that provide outstanding, exciting and diverse recreational facilities such as, but not limited to, an ice skating rink, golf courses, tennis courts, soccer fields, ball fields, ball parks and swimming pools. These will be placed appropriately throughout the city to allow easy access for everyone.

12.3 Greenways - An extensive network of greenways will play a significant role in providing transportation options, protecting wildlife corridors, watersheds and floodplains and increasing public access to natural and open spaces.

12.4 Trails - An extensive, safe network of trails will accommodate a variety of users ranging from recreational to non-motorized travelers. This network may include roadway and public transportation infrastructure to connect parks, neighborhoods, schools and businesses.

This report has been reviewed and commented on by:

Tammy Miller, City of Columbia Parks and Recreation Department
 Carolyn Amparan, Chair, Osage Group Sierra Club

Implementation Efforts

Goal	Strategies and Objectives from the Vision	Explanation or Comments
12.1 Parks	12.1.1 There is plan that identifies gaps in different kinds of parks in existing network	Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2013 developed with substantial public input. Strategic priorities include developing new programs to meet changing interests, and programs and services to address important community and societal issues (including needs of low income households) https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/index.php
	12.1.2 There is a public-private group to find funding for parks	Columbia's New Century Fund accepts donations, including for parks, facilities and programs. Columbia Parks and Rec open to working with private group on ice rink, etc.
	12.1.3 There is a committee to recommend ordinances to encourage cost-effective creation of parks, greenbelts, trails.	Parks and Recreation Commission makes recommendations.
	12.1.4 Expansion of Volunteer Program	Robust volunteer system – more than any other department. Includes Special Olympics, senior programs, beautification workdays. Volunteer coaches of sports teams not in the count.
	12.1.5 City and County coordination in Parks and Rec planning	See 12.4.2; Jay Dix neighborhood park – county gave long-term lease and city manages Atkins property near Fairgrounds – city/county management agreement "County needs budget for parks" <i>Related – City partners with Columbia Public schools to jointly fund recreation needs.</i>
	12.1.6 Columbia (and County) Parks and Rec Commissions	Each item that comes before council from the Columbia Parks and Recreation Department includes a "Vision Note" which comments on

	incorporate Vision recommendation into their planning	the impact of the department's recommendation on the Vision.
12.2 Recreation	12.2.1 There are diverse recreation facilities accessible to everyone	Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2013 developed with substantial public input. Strategic priorities include developing new programs to meet changing interests, and programs and services to address important community and societal issues (including needs of low income households) https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/index.php
	12.2.2 There is an ice rink	There is an ice rink in the proposed SE Regional plan but no funding as yet
	12.2.3 There is a public private group to find funding for park facilities, possibly hire a special interest coordinator	Suggested this should also include public-public cooperation (ie parks and schools). The Parks Department is open to working with private groups. A special interest coordinator probably would not be high priority if there was money for new staff .
12.3 Greenways	12.3.1 The Parks and Recreation master plan includes multi-purpose greenways	2013 Master Plan strategic priorities include providing adequate and appropriate public lands, trails and facilities that are equitably distributed across the City to meet the needs of residents. https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/index.php
	12.3.2 City and County coordination to maintain natural buffers (part of fairgrounds remains natural)	2013 Master Plan strategic priorities include stewardship of parks and open spaces for long-term sustainability and increasing restoration of natural communities. Initiatives include working with the county https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/index.php
	12.3.3 There is an acquisitions agent to facilitate acquisitions of green space and parks	Parks already work with Right Of Way agents in Public Works who help with easements after investigation by Parks staff.
12.4 Trails	12.4.1 There is a plan for multi-use trails with projects prioritized (especially to achieve connectivity with new and existing developments)	2013 Master Plan 2013 strategic priorities include a trail and greenbelt system that will provide opportunity for recreation as well as alternative transportation. https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/index.php
	12.4.2 There is a committee to recommend ordinances on proactive, cost-effective acquisition of properties	Parks and Recreation Commission
	12.4.3 Coordination between City and County boards to achieve trail connectivity with new and existing developments	Reports for P&Z about proposed developments include information from trails plan. Negotiation with developers is possible -esp in planned developments. Example: Conley Road rezoning. City Master Trail Plan goes to P&Z for endorsement. County is working with the City Master Trail Plan to try and get developers to continue trail easements. Also interested where future parks are planned. County is working on subdivision regulations. Need more communication with city on Parks and Trails.

Significant Events in the past year

2013 August

Parks – Grindstone Trail project gets green light - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/grindstone-trail-project-gets-green-light/article_a72bb326-09bf-11e3-ae5d-0019bb30f31a.html

Boone Dawdle - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/boone-dawdle/article_953631b4-07b7-11e3-93dd-001a4bcf6878.html

Residents ponder future park in southeast Columbia - <http://www.columbiamissourian.com/a/164744/residents-ponder-future-park-in-southeast-columbia/>

September

Council adds restrictions as it Oks plan for subdivision next to state park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/council-adds-restrictions-as-it-oks-plan-for-subdivision-next/article_0462198c-156d-11e3-9392-0019bb30f31a.html

October

Parks - County suggests transferring MKT Trail portion to city control - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/county-suggests-transferring-mkt-trail-portion-to-city-control/article_df73e88e-40c4-11e3-a433-10604b9f6eda.html

Parks – Proposed playground would be designed for the disabled - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/proposed-playground-would-be-designed-for-the-disabled/article_e012e7b8-40c4-11e3-a43b-10604b9f6eda.html

City releases final tab for Roots N Blues - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/city-releases-final-tab-for-roots-n-blues/article_bacba7fa-3a7b-11e3-a558-10604b9f6eda.html

Ceremony set to dedicate park improvements done to honor Welliver - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/ceremony-set-to-dedicate-park-improvements-done-to-honor-welliver/article_410be96c-3755-11e3-9b4c-10604b9f6eda.html

Volunteers 'sweep' creeks for garbage (10th annual effort) - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/volunteers-sweep-creeks-for-garbage/article_8f7b4de4-33be-11e3-b550-10604b9f6eda.html

City to rename park on Old 63 for Sterling Wyatt - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/city-to-rename-park-on-old-for-sterling-wyatt/article_7552c410-3107-11e3-9023-10604b9f6eda.html

'Roots N Blues' new location had smaller attendance - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/roots-n-blues-new-location-had-smaller-attendance/article_fd691730-2d80-11e3-a162-10604b9f6eda.html

Boone County wants Columbia to take over all of MKT Trail - <http://www.columbiamissourian.com/a/167356/boone-county-wants-columbia-to-take-over-all-of-mkt-trail/>

Parks – Columbia works to improve residents' park and trail access - <http://www.columbiamissourian.com/a/166971/columbia-works-to-improve-residents-park-and-trail-access/>

November

Parks and Recreation Department institutes fee for race entrants - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/parks-and-recreation-department-institutes-fee-for-race-entrants/article_cf4351ca-4e8e-11e3-97ea-10604b9f6eda.html

Columbia City Council approves Douglass Park improvement plan - <http://www.columbiamissourian.com/stories/news/citycounty-government/?p=10>

December

Council approves 17th joint Parks and Recreation and Columbia Public Schools playground project. https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Parks_and_Facilities/annual_city_school.php#thirteen

Council Oks upgrades for Douglass Park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/council-oks-upgrades-for-douglass-park/article_7d8e29cc-5c4e-11e3-b07b-10604b9f6eda.html

Council approves 17th joint Parks and Recreation and Columbia Public Schools playground project. https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Parks_and_Facilities/annual_city_school.php#thirteen

2014 January

Parks and Rec plans 7k fitness trail run, a new event - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/parks-and-rec-plans-k-fitness-trail-run/article_967f8484-838c-11e3-9fc3-10604b9f6eda.html

Parks and Recreation programs make move to Waters-Moss property - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/parks-and-recreation-programs-make-move-to-waters-moss-property/article_16972862-8206-11e3-bd6b-10604b9f6eda.html

Columbia residents split on Forum Boulevard trail plans - <http://www.columbiamissourian.com/a/170339/columbia-residents-split-on-forum-boulevard-trail-plans/>

February

New Norma Sutherland Smith Park will have extreme fitness trail - <http://www.columbiamissourian.com/a/170982/new-norma-sutherland-smith-park-will-have-extreme-fitness-trail/>

March

Bicycle commuting workshop offered - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/bicycle-commuting-workshop-offered/article_119171e8-abf4-11e3-8118-10604b9f6eda.html

Miles to go - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/miles-to-go/article_317514f0-b055-11e3-bbd0-001a4bcf6878.html - About 150 people walked 1.3 miles with the Nixons and athletes from Special Olympics Missouri to begin the governor's 100 Missouri Miles Challenge 2014 in Rock Bridge Memorial State Park

April

Downtown parklet makes spring return - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/downtown-parklet-makes-spring-return/article_9fc14616-cb05-11e3-be3a-0017a43b2370.html

Veterans and novices turn out for kite flying day - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/veterans-and-novices-turn-out-for-kite-flying-day/article_c13fc7fe-bd4a-11e3-9034-0017a43b2370.html

Tons of Trucks tons of fun - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/tons-of-trucks-tons-of-fun/article_632b7500-bb56-11e3-be05-001a4bcf6878.html

Volunteers, city workers plant about 1,200 trees to help Hinkson watershed - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/volunteers-city-workers-plant-about-trees-to-help-hinkson-watershed/article_7f96d5fe-bd4f-11e3-88cc-0017a43b2370.html

University of Missouri event challenges participants to experience life in wheelchair - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/university-of-missouri-event-challenges-participants-to-experience-life-in/article_2093e260-bd4d-11e3-80ad-0017a43b2370.html

May

Family Fun Fest brings fitness and fun together - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/family-fun-fest-brings-fitness-and-fun-together/article_4210b626-e1d7-11e3-b536-0017a43b2370.html

Columbia club continues to improve city's park system - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/columbia-club-continues-to-improve-city-s-park-system/article_5cb9b142-e756-11e3-8173-10604b9f7e7c.html

Children's Grove dedicated at Stephens Lake Park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/children-s-grove-dedicated-at-stephens-lake-park/article_c7b1db34-d30e-11e3-8db3-001a4bcf6878.html

City to dedicate new wetlands area - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/city-to-dedicate-new-wetlands-area/article_510d6ce2-dac9-11e3-b016-10604b9ffe60.html

Garage to be used for skateboarding event - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/garage-to-be-used-for-skateboarding-event/article_0fbf00c0-d47f-11e3-84d8-10604b9f6eda.html

June

Lunch in the Park returns to feed children during summertime - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/education/lunch-in-the-park-returns-to-feed-children-during-summertime/article_83c5033c-f0c9-11e3-94f5-10604b9ffe60.html

Crowds brave rain for first day of Art in the Park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/crowds-brave-rain-for-first-day-of-art-in-the/article_0ca07808-eea9-11e3-bbfc-001a4bcf6878.html

Volunteers work to improve lake at Nifong Park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/volunteers-work-to-improve-lake-at-nifong-park/article_88624b28-c57b-51e9-8a56-3f4856b3e0fc.html

It's a dog's life at leash-free parks, areas - http://www.columbiatribune.com/our_town/it-s-a-dog-s-life-at-leash-free-parks/article_e68edb14-ed81-11e3-835d-10604b9f6eda.html

Councilwoman Ginny Chadwick seeks alcohol ban at Douglass Park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/councilwoman-ginny-chadwick-seeks-alcohol-ban-at-douglass-park/article_795a4c5a-f384-11e3-b05e-10604b9f1ff4.html

Environmental group sues Columbia over development near state park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/environmental-group-sues-columbia-over-development-near-state-park/article_997d3ac0-ed3-11e3-b3c7-001a4bcf6878.html

New water trail dedicated at Finger Lakes State Park - http://www.columbiatribune.com/arts_life/pulse/new-water-trail-to-be-dedicated-at-finger-lakes-state/article_b6a3652c-e864-11e3-bfbe-10604b9f6eda.html

Disc golf tournament events start tonight - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/disc-golf-tournament-events-start-tonight/article_17c7840c-0eb0-5b7c-ae6a-3558c4993d73.html

Council approves construction of city's second bike boulevard - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/council-approves-construction-of-city-s-second-bike-boulevard/article_12f45eea-eb48-11e3-a4f8-10604b9f6eda.html

City offers sports options for adults - http://www.columbiatribune.com/our_town/city-offers-sports-options-for-adults/article_e680ca38-ed81-11e3-8351-10604b9f6eda.html

July

Boone Co Parks commission declines to support proposed county parks sales tax - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/politics/parks-commission-declines-to-support-proposed-sales-tax/article_10988ff3-d5a8-5f8c-9e2e-3df98fc25f28.html

Inaugural youth mud run is a hit - http://www.columbiatribune.com/sports/splat-lets-kids-get-down-and-dirty/article_d35de24e-42a2-52db-a301-0426ace8673e.html#image_1 – 350 kids turn out

Park dedicated to late soldier, Columbia native - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/park-dedicated-to-late-soldier-columbia-native/article_2557a27f-1f2c-552b-a6c3-f67522f91a25.html – Old 63 park dedicated to Sterling Wyatt

Speakers debate county parks tax proposal - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/speakers-debate-county-parks-tax-proposal/article_5a2fb204-3318-5fbd-8d6b-5a8b18220747.html

Douglass Park baseball coordinator supports alcohol ban - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/douglass-park-baseball-coordinator-supports-alcohol-ban/article_7e36726a-f06f-5683-a71a-63640ad447cc.html – Park users, neighborhood leader oppose proposal

Columbia youth kick off National Park and Recreation Month - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/columbia-youth-kick-off-national-park-and-recreation-month/article_4a56b5e3-dbb9-5eac-a548-be0517961ca0.html

August

Two-thirds of voters reject tax for Boone County fairground, parks - <http://www.columbiatribune.com/a/177477/two-thirds-of-voters-reject-tax-for-boone-county-fairground-parks/>

Dedication of Parks and Rec buildings set for tomorrow - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/dedication-of-parks-and-rec-buildings-set-for-tomorrow/article_7ecef45-6cf6-5dd2-a4f0-425e3b1a17d4.html

September

Impact of Central Missouri Events Center closing causing concern - <http://www.komu.com/news/impact-of-central-missouri-events-center-closing-causing-concern/>

Cosmo-Bethel improvements are topic of meeting - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/cosmo-bethel-improvements-are-topic-of-meeting/article_e274ac2f-b511-5893-8b51-fe68f6cca780.html

Improvements slated for Douglass Park; alcohol ban proposal on hold - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/improvements-slated-for-douglass-park-alcohol-ban-proposal-on-hold/article_26a598f1-036a-5d75-bff9-9ddf0509ce67.html

City to build pedway along Forum Boulevard - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/city-to-build-pedway-along-forum-boulevard/article_5bb1e9ab-5b18-52e3-be96-23bbd14005b4.html

Barberry park property is topic of meeting - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/barberry-park-property-is-topic-of-meeting/article_ee94bc41-f5a5-57cc-a3a3-30c97a98b01c.html

October

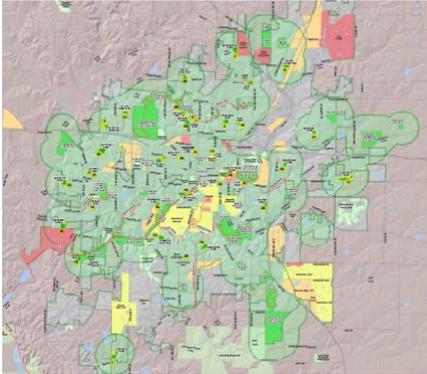
Douglass Park gathering celebrates Crayton's legacy - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/douglass-park-gathering-celebrates-crayton-s-legacy/article_89c7453a-8f56-5b71-9ef2-393f60157f26.html

November

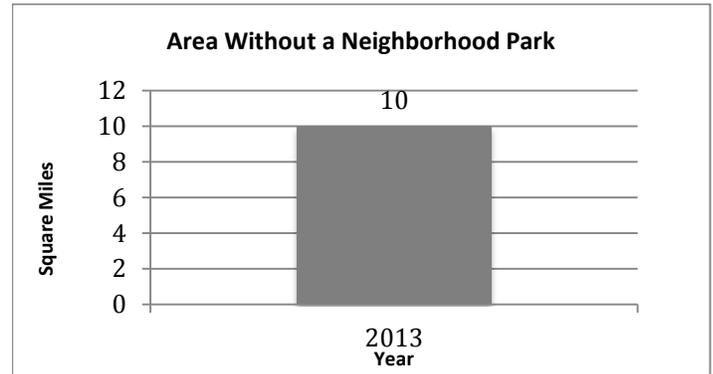
Consultants recommend hotel tax increase for sports facilities - http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/consultants-recommend-hotel-tax-increase-for-sports-facilities/article_28b5de2a-a4d7-5d85-83d1-fcce90d50ff6.html

Progress Indicators

12.1 Parks Accessible Parks



Neighborhood Parks Map. Image: Columbia Parks and Recreation



Rationale – Neighborhood parks are most essential to those with limited time or access to transportation.

Data Explanation – A ¼” grid was drawn on the map and the areas in the city not covered by the service area of a neighborhood park was estimated by counting ¼” squares or sections of squares

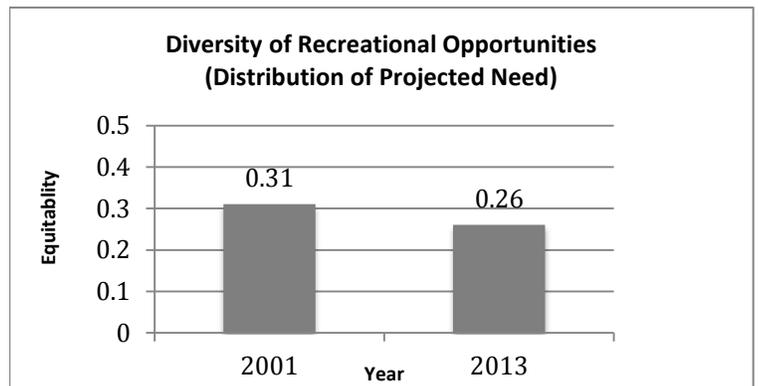
Data Source – 2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan – Existing Neighborhood Parks Map.
https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/#view

Cautions – The needs met by neighborhood parks may be provided by other amenities, including elementary school playgrounds or proximity to a nature trail. Also, some areas of the city included in this estimate may have very low numbers of residences due to their use for industrial or agricultural work, so there is no need for a neighborhood park.

12.2 Recreation Recreation Diversity



Stephens Lake. Photo: Columbia Parks and Recreation



Rationale – The equitability index is a measure of how the projected need in facilities (as compared to a state standard) is distributed among different categories of facilities like trails, picnic tables, campsites, soccer fields, etc. A lower value means the unmet needs are not distributed uniformly.

Data Explanation – The data are the Simpson Equitability Index for the projected needs in 14 (2002) and 15 (2013) categories of recreational facilities. The needs are based on a comparison of the number of existing facilities in each category with the number recommended by the MO Department of Natural Resources. The index formula is $(1/\sum p^2)/n$ where p is proportion or the needed number of facilities in a category divided by the total needed facilities, and n is the total number of categories. The symbol Σ means to sum up the proportions or ps for each of the n categories.

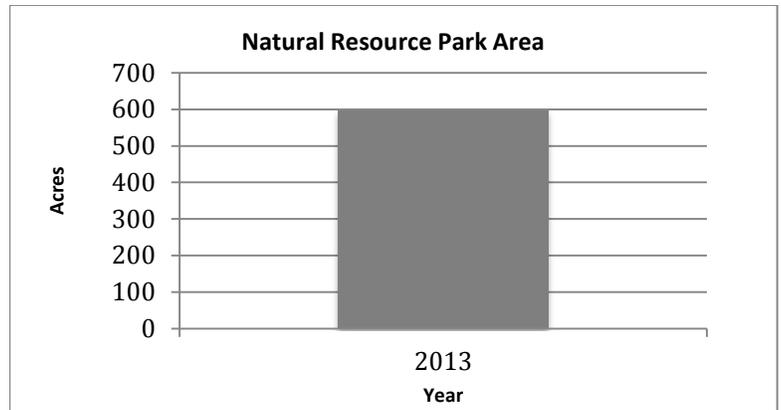
Data Source – 2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan – Facility Standards Section.
https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/#view

Cautions – The facilities listed are so diverse in their cost, time to completion and ongoing expense that giving them all equal weight in the calculation may bias the measure of equitability.

12.3 Greenways Acres of Natural and Wild Areas



Grindstone Nature Area. Photo: Columbia Parks and Recreation



Rationale – This is a measure of the area dedicated to natural open spaces.

Data Explanation – The value is the number of acres categorized as Nature Resource Park in the master plan

Data Source – 2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan – Outdoor Park Facility Inventory.

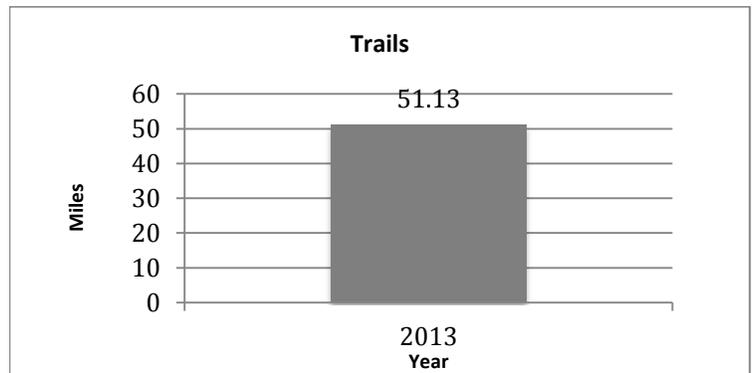
https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/#view

Cautions – Other areas, particularly along trail corridors or in areas of community and regional parks may have significant acreages that are “wild”. Therefore this value may be an underestimate

12.4 Trails Miles of Trail



Scott's Branch Trail. Photo: Columbia Parks and Recreation



Rationale – This is a measure of the trails available for recreation and non-motorized transportation

Data Explanation – The value is total miles of trail listed in the master plan.

Data Source – 2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan – Outdoor Park Facility Inventory.

https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/2013_Master_Plan/#view

Cautions – None