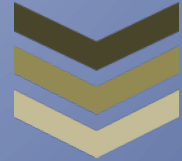


# GOSHEN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION PARKS MASTER PLAN January 2025



City of Goshen  
124 CHURCH STREET  
GOSHEN, ARKANSAS  
72735



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# GOSHEN PARKS COMMISSION 10-YEAR MASTER PLAN

## Years 2021-2031

### Executive Summary and Introduction

The City of Goshen Arkansas has a Parks Master Plan (GPMP) to guide the city in strategically planning for the future of its' parks and recreation development and maintenance. This has been undertaken to better prepare for Goshen's future, allowing us to organize and prioritize the city's resources to improve the quality of life of our citizens while also maintaining or improving surrounding property values. As part of Goshen's desire to promote parks and recreation within our city the citizens voted to approve a one percent sales and use tax in 2020, which has given the city additional financial ability to fund the acquisition and improvements of our city's parks. Prior to this, Goshen did not have any established city parks.

The Goshen Parks Commission's first task was to conduct a 2020 survey of the community. Over 100 responses were received. Survey results indicate a strong desire for walking trails, picnic areas, and dog parks as indicated by the blue bar (highly desired now) and the red bar (desired now) in addition to a desire for other recreation facilities including tennis and basketball courts. A basketball court, pickle ball court, and picnic play areas at the Community Center also were highly desired. The community downplayed the need for soccer and baseball fields for the near term as there are soccer and baseball leagues in larger neighboring towns. This initial survey was

the basis for the (GPMP); an initial plan was implemented, and resources were allocated to seek opportunities to accomplish these goals. This allowed the city to utilize the GPMP to support our applications for grant opportunities being requested. A subsequent survey was conducted in 2024 with over 120 responses, which indicated the greatest interest was for a trailhead pavilion followed by a multipurpose court.

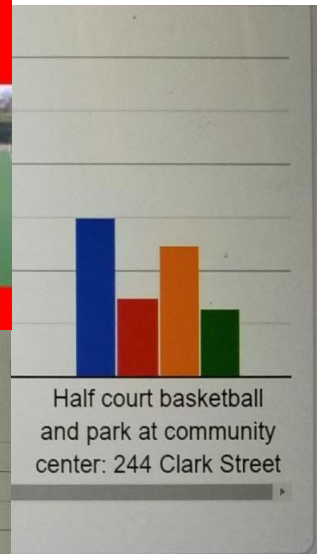
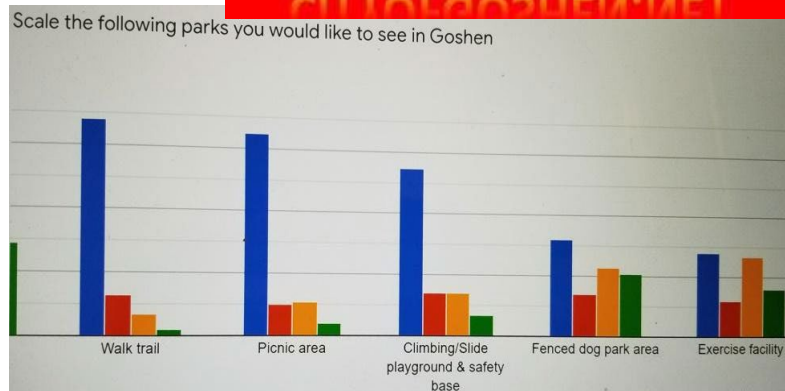
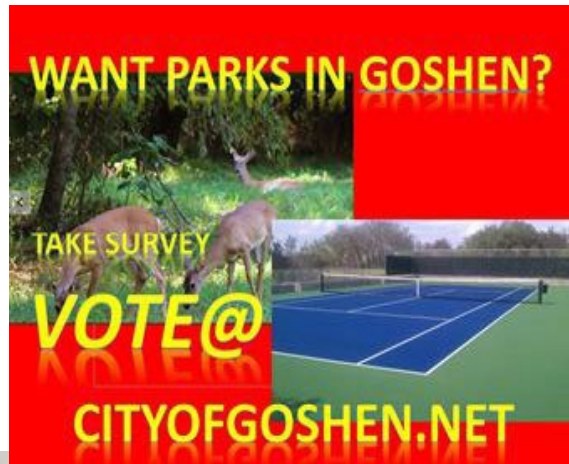


Figure 1 The formal survey and several informal surveys have been conducted.

Goshen’s Park plans follow recommendations in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) that was based on the Land and Water Conservation law of the 60s. It is prepared every five years by the staff of the Outdoor Recreation Grants Program. The purpose of SCORP is to assess the state’s outdoor recreation facilities and resources and to make recommendations and prioritize areas that need attention in the future. For a project to be funded, it must fit within one or more of the SCORP priorities. The AR SCORP was developed through research and a large-scale survey of Arkansas citizens and its’ “recreation providers” (e.g., local park directors) in the state. SCORP priorities are reflected in the survey and provide a guide of what kinds of recreational facilities the people of Arkansas, and by extension Goshen, would like to see in their communities. City leaders recognize that Goshen’s grant success and future funding are directly proportional to the city’s park master plan and its consistency with SCORP and its five recreational priorities.

Connective trails are one of the most common examples of connectivity in public outdoor recreation activities. Walking cuts across all demographic categories to a greater degree than any other. While people still enjoy going to the parks, walking around a track, through the woods, or on a winding trail, more and more Arkansans are saying they enjoy trails that take them from point A to point B, and beyond. Goshen will be looking to bring its communities together by attempting to find walking and bike riding trails between and within our city through the Walk / Bike Plan.

**Priority 1: Connectivity**

Goshen’s Community Center is near the center of the town. The Community Center is a prime site for family gatherings, picnics, or watching kids playing on an outdoor playground. A farmer’s market was started in 2020, offering a site for local artisans and farm producers to sell their goods. The Goshen Farmer’s Market is open every Thursday from May through October



**Figure 2** The wildly popular farmer’s market has been developed and is on Park Property, which connects all citizens

and has been wildly popular, offering live music and frequent food vendors. (see Figure 2).

In developing the Goshen Community Center, the city was awarded a \$75,000 grant from the Arkansas State Parks and Recreation in 2022. Through this “Fun Park” grant the city was able to build its first playground. This outdoor playground is ADA accessible, and two ADA parking spaces were also

constructed as a part of this project. In 2023 the city was able to acquire a strategic piece of property allowing access from Fire Tower Rd. to the south side of Mill Branch Park, at which time the city petitioned to receive a “grant match waiver” on the land purchase from the Arkansas State Parks Recreation and Tourism. In 2024 this property was developed, adding a road across the acquired property and into the south side of Mill Branch Park. In doing so this will allow the city to work on developing a linear walk/bike path connecting the Goshen Community Center to Mill Branch Park.

The Community Center also is well suited as a trailhead for local bicycling trips in and around the city. Goshen was able to partner with All-Sports to host the Highland Gravel Classic qualifying race in early 2024 and in the summer of 2024 the Goshen Community Center became the Washington County Hub for gravel cycling. Goshen continues to place emphasis on further development of walking and biking opportunities within our city. Our survey data has shown that the people of Goshen desire a central place for recreational facilities. Recreational facilities at the Community Center are a high priority for our park development in the GPMP. The Community Center organizes a variety of events throughout the year, including back-to-school activities, chili cook-offs, Christmas tree lighting ceremonies, trunk-or-treat events, and more. Looking ahead, there are plans to host larger events at Mill Branch Park as additional recreational facilities and activities are developed.

The city was able to improve the Goshen Community Building by adding outdoor bathrooms, disabled ramps to the main entrances of the building, a bike wash station with bike repair stand, a water filling station, four picnic tables, two park benches, and expanded Wi-Fi for outdoor use accessible across the entire two acres behind the Community Building.

### **Priority 2: Community**

The Community Center serves as a meeting place for not only Goshen residents but also many residents living outside our city limits. Many of the people living outside our city limits fall into a different demographic than most Goshen residents having a more moderate- and low-income socioeconomic status. The Goshen Community Center is across the street from one of Goshen’s smaller housing developments yet still only a five-minute drive from Goshen’s farthest housing edition.

Goshen is strongly supported by our residents with significant involvement in volunteerism through the Parks Commission, Arbor Board, the Goshen Extension Homemakers Club, the Goshen Senior Center, local churches, schools, Eagle Scouts, the Goshen Riding Club, and others who just want to be involved. Goshen was able to pass a sales and use tax in 2020 with the intent to use this to help support the growth and development of Goshen’s Parks. The citizens LOVE this town with its unique history and culture. The Parks Commission routinely holds public meetings to keep the citizens apprised of the plans and progress and get their input.

### **Priority 3: Innovation**

The city is building its park on innovations. The 1950s Community center building has been revitalized and after adding two acres it is becoming the first public outdoor recreation opportunity in Goshen. The Community Center play equipment was completed in the fall of 2022. Beautification projects have been undertaken by the dedicated team of volunteers working with the city administration to bring innovative improvements to completion. The forethought was to transform the older infrastructure of the Community Center into a newly renovated facility that encompasses accessibility and a sense of community space for gathering. The children’s outdoor

playground has been the first step of the anticipated play facilities that the city desires to see installed in our future. Working with city administration the Community Center can be reserved using an updated reservation system that has enabled local citizens to have easier access for use of the facilities. A linear trail is envisioned which will connect the Community Center with the Mill Branch Park South entrance.

In 2024, Goshen partnered with All Sports Productions to host the annual Highlands Gravel Classic for the first time. The Community Center Fun Park annex and the additional city owned 10 acres next to it was the start and finish line to the over 60-mile multi-course race. In years to come, Goshen plans to continue hosting the annual race. Parking for the event will be moved to the south entrance of the park so the city can utilize the acreage next to the Community Center for more festivities. This will enable the city to include not only racers, but Goshen citizens with more family entertainment and community vendor opportunities.

**Priority 4: Accommodation**

Park facilities shall be accessible to all Goshen residents! The city has continued to place emphasis on ADA accessibility for all new infrastructure. A beautiful water feature along Mill Branch Creek was completed improving access to trails inside the park. Goshen envisions improved access through the future development of walk / bike paths providing improved

The city has been working diligently on citizen requests at the Community Center. In March of 2024, a cycling station was added to the park for bicycle cleaning and repair. The city also has bathroom access to an ADA bathroom that will be available during the park hours for the public. This project is completed and connects to the already existing bathrooms at the Community Center. ADA compliant ramps have been completed on both main entrances of the Community Center.

Goshen was awarded an additional grant from the Arkansas State Parks Recreation and Tourism that will facilitate the funding of a Pavilion/Trailhead/Bathroom project to be constructed at the South portion of Mill Branch Park. This project should be underway during 2025 and will encompass our emphasis on ADA accessibility.

**Priority 5: Stewardship**

The city is committed to maintaining and continuously working to improve all our park facilities. An in-depth maintenance plan has been developed for the park. The city maintains the park through city staff and is fortunate to have much assistance from numerous volunteers, previously mentioned. The park is designed to attract visitors from across our region here in Northwest Arkansas. It is one of the only city parks of its' size. Park visitors will be encouraged to clean up the park after they have finished using the facilities. Taking away what you bring in is a park rule. Placing trash cans throughout the park will help maintain this. The city has received two urban forestry grants that have been vital in assisting to fund the Goshen Arbor Board with tree planting and maintenance. As part of one of these grants, the city collaborated with a local business to plant and landscape the southern entrance into Mill Branch Park. This project will be working with community volunteers to plant and care for over 75 Arkansas native trees.

## **Trails and Greenway program**

Northwest Arkansas is rapidly developing a world-class walking and biking transportation system. With the Razorback Regional Greenway running North and South from Fayetteville to Bentonville, smaller communities East and West of the Greenway are developing plans and building interconnecting walking and biking paths. The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC) in partnership with area communities has developed 25 individual action plans for communities with populations over 1,000 (Walk Bike Northwest Arkansas, 2014). The City of Goshen is one of the communities with an action plan. The city's regional needs are to connect trails to Fayetteville, Springdale, Elkins, Lake Sequoyah, Beaver Lake and the White River. Local needs are to link residential areas to Goshen's town center and White River access. Key recommendations for Goshen are:

1. To encourage sidewalks connecting future commercial and residential growth to the town center.
2. To construct crossing facilities at the Arkansas Highway 45 and Blue Springs Road intersection.
3. To develop shared roadways for Blue Springs Road, Oxford Ben Road, Tuttle Road, and Wyman Road.
4. To develop a side path along Arkansas Highway 45 toward Fayetteville and East to the city boundary linking residential areas to the center of Goshen and the Richland Creek access.
5. To develop a network of trails through Goshen utilizing Richland Creek and Mill Branch Creek in connecting to Beaver Lake, Lake Sequoyah, and rural Washington County.
6. To develop a trailhead with parking, bicycle racks, and kiosk in the town center for area walking and biking.

## **Develop and maintain quality parks and recreation facilities**

The comprehensive SCORP based parks master plan initiated in 2020 by the City of Goshen established that the primary goal of a recreation policy "is the provision of a recreational program to serve all residents of the area, while preserving scenic areas and open space for public enjoyment." Such a goal can be achieved by properly distributing recreational facilities within the city's parks. As well as locating such infrastructure, whenever possible, near or adjacent to other public facilities. Such recreational opportunities are to be diverse in type, size, and extent of development. It should be added that these facilities must be available for all ages, from children to senior residents. Walking trails, bicycle pathways, outdoor play gyms, basketball courts, picnic areas, pavilions, fishing ponds, outdoor water attractions (i.e. splash pad) and other facilities are appropriate and desired by Goshen's citizens.

Through initial surveys conducted in 2019 and 2020 it was identified that many Goshen residents desired a park that offered walking paths. Fortunately, in early 2020 the city identified a parcel of land consisting of 105 acres that was available to be leased to establish a city park. This land near the town center is very rugged and unsuitable for housing development- but perfect for a walk

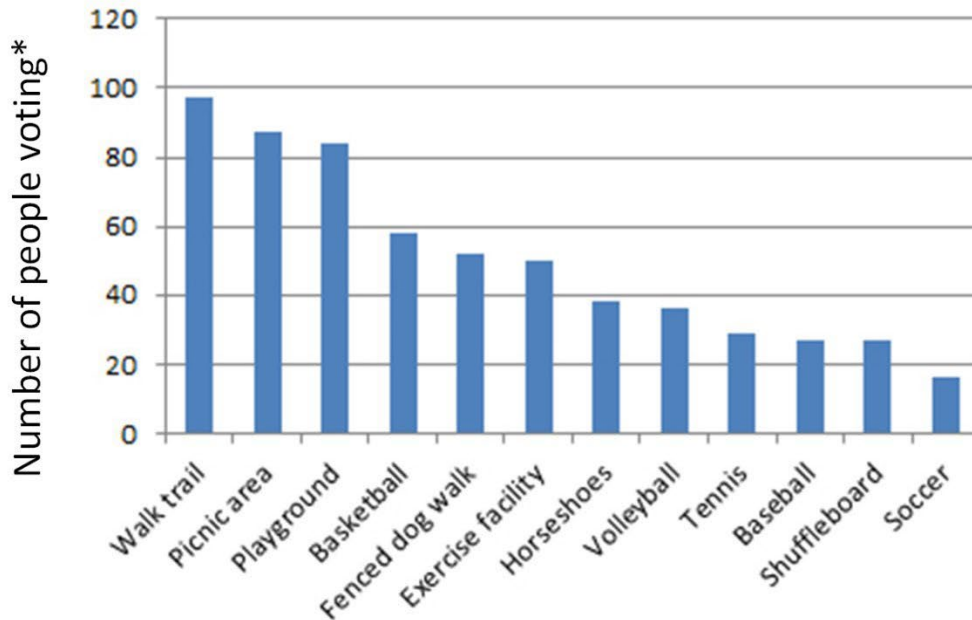
park. Through City and grant funding, the entire property purchase has been completed. Some of the land is not suitable currently for ADA use. Continued work will be completed to provide for as much ADA access as possible given the topography within the park. The city is currently working on a Phase I Arkansas Transportation Alternatives Program grant, managed by ARDOT, constructing the initial ADA compliant linear trail from the north parking lot, across Mill Branch creek, and ending just below the Spring House.

There are plans to further develop this linear trail connecting the north side of the park to the South side, at the site of a proposed Trailhead/Pavillion with bathrooms. The overall intent will be to create this trail as an ADA compliant trail if the topography will allow. The Mill Branch Park became operational and open to the public on September 2, 2022, and the playground at the Goshen Community Center was completed in fall of 2022. Through the land acquisition of the Southern parcel of land off Fire Tower Road, this has allowed for connectivity of both Mill Branch Park and the Community Center to become one entity. The road and parking lot on the south entrance was completed allowing access to Mill Branch Park's south side in the fall of 2024. Continued improvements are planned for this entrance as well as improved connectivity to the Community Center through the development of an additional linear trail along Fire Tower Road.

Figure 3 2021 Internet survey

# ACTIVITIES DESIRED NOW

## 2021 Internet Survey



\*Goshen census at the time- 1071



Shown below is the architect's concept development plan for Mill Branch Park north which will be updated as more activities are commissioned. The park has two small ponds, one of which we would like to develop into a fishing pond to allow for an annual fishing derby. There are three springs, a creek water feature, a bike trail, a dark sky star viewing area, a planned pavilion with ADA capable bathrooms, game playing area and two natural amphitheaters. It will connect the two adjacent housing areas and the Community Center using linear trails.



Figure 4 Mill Branch Park North Concept Development Plan with south entrance



Figure 5 The Fun Park grand opening December 2022

Mill Branch Park south at the Community Center has an ADA compliant children's playground area (depicted here). The specification contained 35 elements and will accommodate 50 children.

I know there's got to be a lot of people who were involved in this project. Whoever helped in this, THANK YOU!

I got to take my boys by here after work today. As a dad, there's nothing better for me than getting to spend time with my sons. I love that this is an option.

Thank you to whomever helped with this wonderful addition to our community!

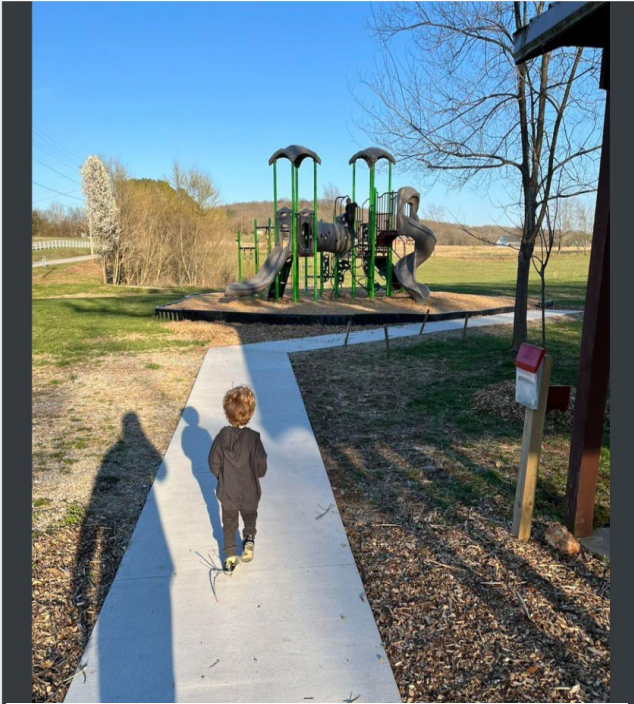


Figure 6 The playground park is appreciated as demonstrated by the March 5, 2022 post.

Since it went into service, the gym has enjoyed extensive activity and is appreciated by the community parents, grandparents, and kids as the Facebook caption indicates. The Fun Park was a State Parks grant that had the grand opening in December 2022.

The Fun Park is located very near the lowest income level housing in the city and has been much appreciated. The Fun Park's appreciation was shown by this Facebook post right. This picture was taken right after the playground was opened.

The father appreciated the work the City Council and the Parks Commission had undertaken to make the Fun Park grant happen.

Just south (right) of the kid's gym there are swings planned and other playground options.

Just to the left of the gym is planned a linear trail leading to Mill Branch Park South Entrance.

## Developing Recreation Restaurants



Goshen is well suited for the development of additional restaurants to complement recreational activity. Nearly 90% of the citizens completing the survey wanted more restaurants in Goshen immediately or in the near term as seen below. About 2500 people live within 5 minutes of the city center where the three current restaurants are located. The Fast Track and Scott's restaurants are popular during the day as is Poncho's Mexican restaurant. Poncho's is filled to capacity on weekends and many weeknights. The survey results are shown on the next page.

Goshen has also attracted the attention of local food trucks, and a local resident has been working to develop property at Goshen's town center to accommodate this venue. The proposed venue will be called "The Goshen Picnic" and is currently underway and will bring a new variety of food options to local residents.

Goshen's residential areas provide good potential for new restaurants. The city's population has doubled over the last ten years. People are looking for restaurants with delicious food and great service. They want to dine out relatively close to where they live, not travel 30 minutes or more to find a restaurant. But most of all, they want variety.



Figure 7 Scott's is a popular lunchtime restaurant

## Preserving Natural and Cultural Heritage

From its incorporation as a city, Goshen has worked to preserve its rural character and heritage. Several city ordinances have codified the city's desire to preserve open space and heritage. Goshen has a minimum lot size of two acres; conservation subdivisions with minimum 40-acre open spaces; an Arbor Board; a Parks Commission and other longstanding community organizations that have been present in Goshen for generations. Goshen has a community leader who organizes a monthly Goshen Historical Society meeting held at Goshen's oldest church, The Goshen Methodist Church. The Parks Commission and city administration continue to work to preserve the history of the property purchased to create Mill Branch Park. Working with the Goshen Historical Society and local residents to honor the Dutton family who homesteaded this land in the late 1800's. The original "Grist Mill Stone" from the grain mill established in Goshen back in the late 1800's was discovered along the banks of Richland creek. It has been donated to the city for preservation and to provide the history of the grain mill along Mill Branch Creek.

## Park Master Plan Accomplishment, Goals, and Future Action Items

Goshen is dedicated to attracting quality investment and to preserving its natural and cultural heritage. The city understands that improving the quality of life is a key to growing the city. An attractive city park is one important element for growing the city and protecting its heritage. The following park objectives have been established:

- Develop processes that will keep the citizens involved in planning new park facilities and programs.
- Ensure financial sustainability for park facility development and maintenance.
- Provide a variety of park facilities and outdoor activities for walking, biking, ball playing, fishing, picnicking, and playgrounds/play areas.
- Provide for open spaces within a park and within the community.
- Develop a park system that will enhance the city's existing character.
- Develop a reservation system for family reunions and other group gatherings.
- Maintain the park and its facilities in a high state of repair.

- Continually update the Park’s Master Plan to adjust to changing community desires and completed projects.

## Public Involvement

A substantial effort has been made to gather community input through various channels, including surveys, public outreach initiatives, and engagement opportunities at Parks Commission meetings. In 2020, over 100 citizens participated by responding to the survey or providing written and verbal feedback. Respondents not only expressed their desired activities but also shared their preferences for funding these initiatives. Seventy percent of participants indicated a willingness to borrow funds to accelerate the growth of the developing park system. Additionally, 70% expressed interest in having the ability to reserve a park for specific times. In 2024, a follow-up survey was conducted, with more than 72% of the 137 respondents highlighting the trailhead pavilion as their top priority for the park.

Figure 8 More than 89% of the 2020 survey respondents wanted parks

Borrow development capital during these low interest times to accelerate recreational facilities expansion

87 responses

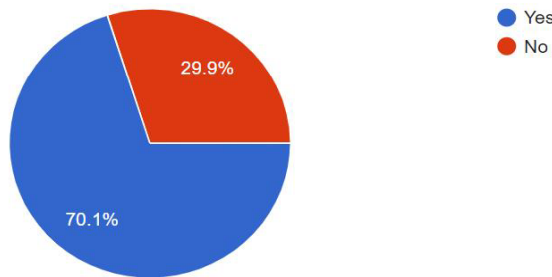
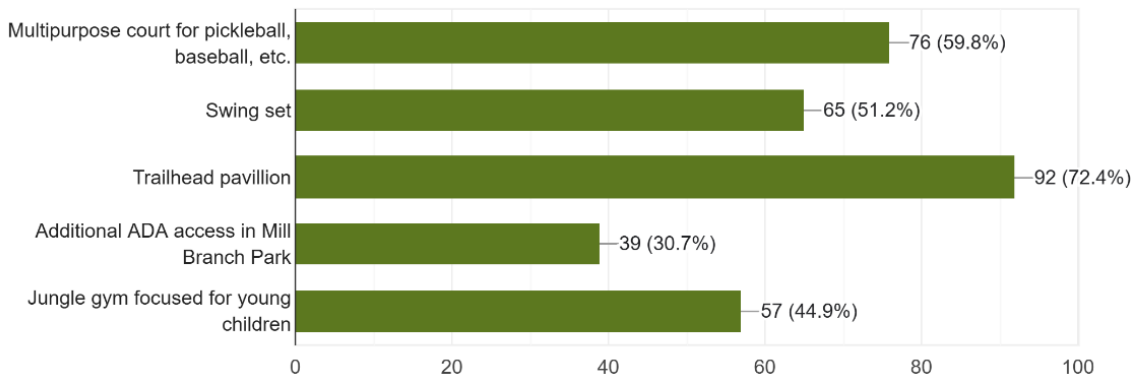


Figure 2 More than 72% of the 2024 survey respondents wanted a Trailhead Pavilion

The following has been denoted by the City/Parks and Recreation Commission as items of key interest to pursue over the coming years, please select the ones you are the most interested in.

127 responses



## **Funding of Parks**

Mill Branch Park is funded through a mix of tax revenue, grants, federal allocations and private donations.

On March 3, 2020 Goshen voters approved a sales and use tax increase for improving and maintaining city services and facilities with a portion of the proceeds allocated to parks and recreation programs. In addition to public funds, the Parks and Recreation Commission also will seek opportunities for private donations and grants. More than \$8,000 was donated for the water feature / creek crossing, which allows people to get from the north parking to the remaining three miles of trails.

Since the park's opening the city has secured over \$1.7 million in state and federal grant funding. This includes state funding from multiple managing departments, such as the Arkansas Department of Transportation, the Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division, and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism. Additionally, the city has secured federal grant funding through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support park improvements and property acquisitions.

In 2022, the city secured a total of \$339,000 in grants. This included \$252,000 from the Arkansas Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), with a 20% matching requirement, to fund the completion of alternative transportation trails. The city also received \$12,000 from the 2022 Urban and Community Forestry Grant, which required no match, to support forestry-related park enhancements. Additionally, \$75,000 was awarded through the 2022 Outdoor Parks and Recreation Fun Park Grant, also requiring no match, to aid in the development of the park. The city partnered with ARDOT to oversee the TAP project, while the other grants contributed to ongoing improvements throughout the park.

In 2023, the city received funding through the FY2023 Outdoor Parks and Recreation Grant to purchase a 22.1-acre parcel of land for \$267,110.25, with an out-of-pocket cost of \$146,310.25. Additionally, the city acquired a 5-acre parcel for \$246,406.70, which provided a second entrance to the south side of the park. The city also secured a waiver from the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism, allowing this purchase to be included as a matching contribution in a future Outdoor Parks and Recreation Grant. Furthermore, the city received a federal grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) totaling \$880,000 to improve the parking lot at the north entrance of Mill Branch Park. This grant also funded the purchase of the final 53.25 acres of land in 2024, completing the park's land acquisition.

In 2024, the city secured an additional \$10,000 through the Urban and Community Forestry Grant matching program to plant and landscape the south entrance of Mill Branch Park, with additional city funds allocated to complete the project. The city was also awarded the FY2025 Outdoor Parks and Recreation Grant for \$207,000, which will fund a South entrance trailhead pavilion and ADA-

compliant bathrooms. To help cover the matching portion of this grant, the city will use the \$75,000 land acquisition waiver awarded in 2023. These funds are crucial to the ongoing development and enhancement of the park. As of January 2025, the city has invested \$211,889.25 in matching funds for various grant projects.

## **Public Involvement**

Significant effort has been taken to gather the desires of the Goshen citizens through a community survey, written comments, and citizen comments during the public Parks Commission meetings. The Parks Commission consistently seeks opportunities to do public outreach and provides volunteer opportunities. Park Commissioners along with city staff have actively engaged with the Goshen Farmer's Market, the Goshen EHC, the Goshen Senior's Center, local car club, and local POA's. By doing this, the mayor and city council are better able to match community desires and city resources. The city has created and conducted two surveys, one in 2022 and another one in 2024 with the aforementioned results. In total both surveys had over 250 responses.

## **Land Acquisition**

Although Goshen is a rural and quaint community, a city park was envisioned to provide residents with a space to enjoy with their families. In 2021, the city purchased 28.86 acres of land to begin the development of the park. Two years later, in 2023, an additional 22.18 acres were acquired for what would be known as Mill Branch Park. In 2024, a further 53.25 acres were added, bringing the total size of Mill Branch Park to 112 acres. The mayor announced the completion of these property purchases on September 10, 2024. Currently, efforts are underway to establish future connections from the 2.8-acre Community Center Fun Park Annex to the southern entrance of Mill Branch Park.

## **Park Categories**

### **Neighborhood parks vs. one large park**

The City of Goshen would like to have a park that is available within a short distance of all residents. Goshen's initial park activity was a kid's playground centrally located near the Community Center. That initial plan quickly morphed into one single large park. A linear trail is envisioned connecting Mill Branch Park South to the City Hall, then on to Mill Branch North.

Infrastructure will include outdoor game courts, a playground gym, as well as picnic areas and walking/biking trails. The Parks Commission will explore indoor recreational opportunities in a future City Hall building if that becomes a reality. The Parks Commission desires to create a web-based activities reservation center for residents to reserve park facilities for group gatherings. This service could be provided by a third-party contractor such as Tec Desk. Citizens will be able to easily locate a park and determine availability for reservation.

As previously stated, the community survey has shown to date limited interest in larger ball fields for baseball, softball, and soccer. As Goshen develops, though, it should reevaluate whether such facilities are needed for the community. In the meantime, exercise facilities, ball fields, and programs exist nearby Fayetteville, Springdale, and Elkins

### Walking and Biking Trails

Goshen residents strongly supported walking trails in the community survey. More than two-thirds of the respondents in the 2020 survey said trails were highly desired. Currently, the City of Goshen has plans to improve linear trails throughout the city to give citizens walking and biking paths. These trails will connect landmarks in the city as well as Mill Branch Park. Trail development will be a key element in all requests for property and infrastructure. Walking trails will be designed to follow the community's numerous creeks, rivers, and hills. Bike trails will extend from outdoor facilities to link the community. Bicycle racks, road signs, and kiosks with maps are all important components of a safe, enjoyable trail system. Bike and walk trail development in Goshen will follow the 2014 Walk Bike Plan for Northwest Arkansas (see earlier discussion). Park facilities and bike trails should be integrated in their design.



Figure 9 Walk, and bike trails was by far the most desired recreational activity

The Regional Walk / Bike Plan was recently revised to include linear trails which connect the park from both access points (Hwy 45 and Fire Tower road).

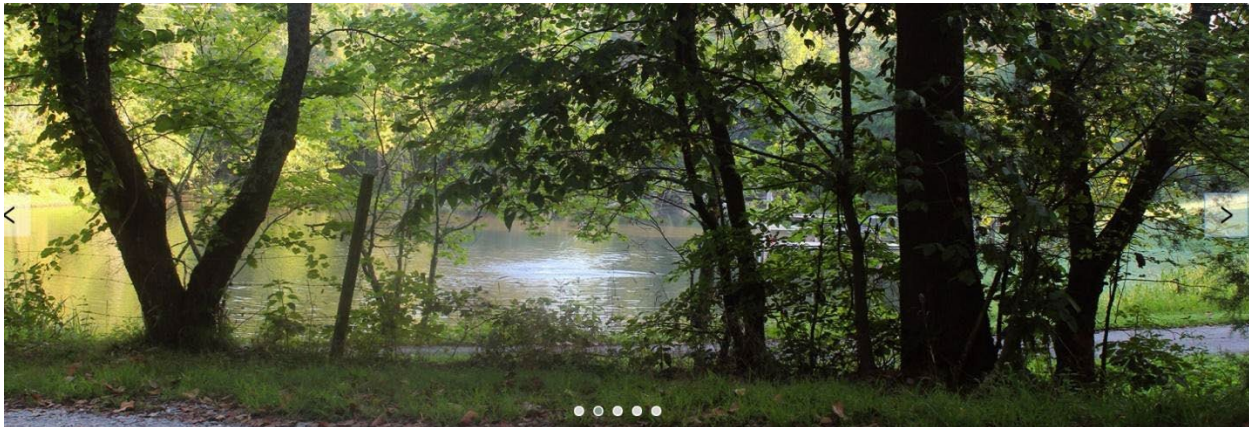


Figure 10 The trails contain many picturesque sites. The city maximizes the use of its resources

The linear trails also connect to the City Hall. The plan provides bike paths on various other roads around Goshen. The bike paths increase connectivity within the community and neighboring communities.

### River Recreation

River recreation is an opportunity for development at Twin Bridges. Goshen already has an Army Corp of Engineers boat ramp under the White River Bridge on Arkansas Highway 45. Richland Creek flows under the second nearby highway Twin bridges. In the early Spring months of February and March, anglers are lined up and down both streams fishing for white bass and walleye. Boats and trucks are stacked end to end in the parking lot under the White

River bridge. For the rest of the year, area residents launch their boats, kayaks, and canoes for fishing and recreational boating. Goshen should consider a partnership with the Corps to enhance recreational use at Twin Bridges.

### **Open Space**

Goshen residents love the openness of their community. Coming down Slaughter Mountain on Highway 45 reveals a wide-open landscape of fields and homes. From the East, visitors and residents motor into Goshen through hills and a highway lined by trees. Future Park development and trail development should complement the openness and natural beauty of the community. The Parks Commission should incorporate open space with rural and cultural preservation in its mission.

### **Park Maintenance**


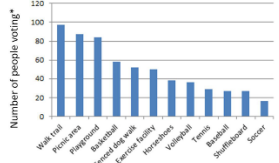
The Parks and Recreation Commission has written a comprehensive maintenance plan to comply with city resolutions and to ensure the maintenance of the park. It's of the utmost importance to ensure that all citizens and visitors can enjoy the beauty the park brings to not only Goshen, but to all of Northwest Arkansas.

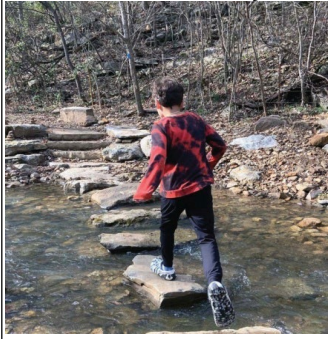

### **Action Plans**

In 2019, Goshen was a small city that was experiencing growth yet lacked the presence of a park. The following actions have been taken since then to develop one. The first step involved determining whether the community desired a park and, if so, what type of park and with what amenities. To achieve this, an internet survey was conducted in 2019/2020, which identified the citizens' priorities as discussed later in this document. The City Council established a Parks Commission, which used the survey as a foundation and explored avenues to finance priority projects. The action plans outlined below detail those that have been completed, as well as those that will be pursued in the future, indicating the associated costs, priorities, and potential funding sources. The park has been developed using SCORP principles as shown on the left column. On the fourth Tuesday of every month, the Commission holds a Parks Commission meeting to determine steps forward and briefs the City Council at their monthly meeting on the status of the plan.



**GOSHEN PARKS COMMISSION ACTION PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE**


SCORP ELEMENT	NEED/APPROACH	STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify parks needs</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Connectivity</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parks Commission/community involvement</li> <li>2. Citywide internet survey</li> </ol> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete</li> <li>2. Complete and prioritized</li> <li>3. Public meetings</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIVITIES DESIRED NOW</b> 2021 Internet Survey</p>  <p style="font-size: small;">*Goshen census at the time- 1071</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify land and acquisition strategy</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish land RFP</li> <li>2. Five-year lease with option to buy for walk park</li> <li>3. Outright purchase for fun park</li> <li>4. Select less rugged and flood land not suitable for housing</li> <li>5. Select land near the city center</li> <li>6. Capitalize on the land's farm history and geography as well as repurpose existing infrastructure (chicken house pad or spring house)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete</li> <li>2. Complete</li> <li>3. Complete</li> <li>4. Complete</li> <li>5. Complete</li> <li>6. Complete</li> </ol>

SCORP ELEMENT	NEED / APPROACH	STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community</li> <li>Innovation</li> <li>Stewardship</li> <li>Accommodation</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turn existing creek liability (the creek separated the parking from trails) into an asset by creating a water feature / low water crossing</li> <li>Revitalize creek health</li> <li>Got Corps approval for crossing, order boulders and build crossing</li> <li>Completed a feasibility / practicality study to increase the probability of success.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete (funded with two cash donations and volunteer labor)                     <div data-bbox="933 304 1258 640" style="text-align: center;">  </div> </li> <li>Concept formulation (assessment completed)</li> <li>Crossing approval and construction by Natural State Streams</li> <li>Complete</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stewardship-Identify order of parcels to be purchased</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercise lease option                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upper road, right of way and Mill Branch Center</li> <li>Parking lot</li> <li>19.3 Acre center parcel</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovation</li> <li>Stewardship</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Accommodation</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trail development / naming</li> <li>Develop trail map</li> <li>Trail signs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed and named six trails</li> <li>Published and distributed over 1,000 maps to date</li> <li>Volunteer developed trail signs</li> </ol> <div data-bbox="1112 1060 1510 1375" style="text-align: right;">  </div>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovation</li> <li>Community involvement</li> <li>Communication</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>Develop educational kiosks throughout park and including ADA at Mill Branch Center</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovation</li> <li>Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>Investigate and identify a low light star gazing area</p>	<p>Commission and landscape architect identified the area and designated it on the park map.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment</li> </ul>	Identify and remove /prevent invasive species.	The city works with the Parks Commission and Arbor Board to identify and remove invasive plants through volunteerism and city staff.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	Flood and erosion control	Stream blockage was removed to allow free water flow and aid in the low water crossing. Drainage has been incorporated in the plan for the high-water stream crossing and road into the North parking area. Community members designed the concept for the low water crossing and provided the rock for Natural State Streams to use in the crossing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	The historic spring house needed cleanup and restoration.	Community volunteers cleaned up the spring house, removed dangerous water piping and channeled the flooding water across a trail, allowing walkers to use the trail.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	Develop innovative resting areas throughout the three miles of trails.	Community volunteers purchased and had placed large boulders for rest stops, children climbing and sightseeing. This includes Mossy Rock Crossing to allow enjoying the gentle ripple of the stream passing over the crossing rocks and downstream relief area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	Concert gathering area required	A large hill just to the East of Mill Branch Center was cleaned of debris and invasive plants to make a natural amphitheater. This will be used in the summer for community concerts and gatherings and in the winter for sledding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	The old farm inner barbed wire areas need to be removed	The Parks Commission voted to allow a community member to remove the wire at no cost in exchange for the posts and wire. This will be expanded as the land is purchased.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	The local eagle scouts need assistance with projects	The city works with the scouts' program to facilitate eagle scout projects and to accommodate use of the park for scouting projects.

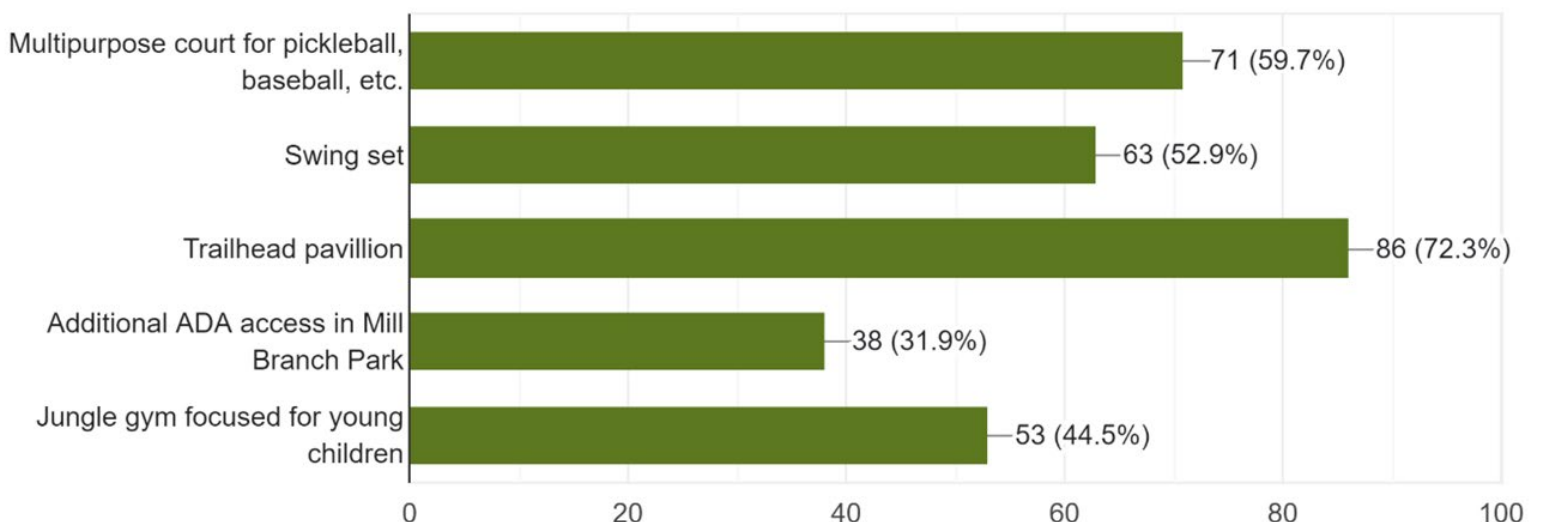
**NEAR TERM ACTION PLAN TO DATE**

<b>SCORP ELEMENT</b>	<b>NEED / APPROACH</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	A linear trail was needed to connect the housing areas with the central downtown area	The Community Scouts develop crude rock stream crossing to get to their area. Goshen developed and approved an input into the NWA Planning Commission's walk/bike plan which connects the center of Goshen with two housing areas immediately. It is envisioned that the linear trail will be expanded to all housing areas in the next revision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	A maintenance budget was required for	A \$73,041 budget for 2024 was developed and approved by the council for maintenance and

	infrastructure acquisition and maintenance	operation of the park. Details of the maintenance budget are in the maintenance plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	A plan was required to guide the development of Mill Branch Park	A comprehensive management plan was developed by the Beaver Watershed Alliance (Alliance) for the City of Goshen and property of Mill Branch Park. This plan intends to serve as a watershed-based, foundational piece to inform the future development of Mill Branch Park. Details of the plan are provided under separate cover.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	The community needed a children’s climbing gym	Complete 

## GOSHEN PARKS COMMISSION ACTION PLAN GOING FORWARD

Goshen conducted a SCORP assessment in May 2024 (attachment 1) and a second internet survey was completed on June 24 as input to the commission for their 2024 State Parks grant request. Last year’s request was for the pickle ball / basketball court, but given the results of the survey, the commission decided on applying for a grant for the Trailhead pavillion and a linear trail between the Community Center, City Hall and the Park North entrance. The results of the survey are shown below:



**GOSHEN PARKS COMMISION / COUNCIL MEDIUM/LONG TERM APPROVED PROJECTS**

SCORP ELEMENT	NEED / APPROACH COST / PRIORITY	STATUS
<b>Section 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<b>A Mill Branch South parking lot will be required for overflow parking, bus, ADA entrance and emergency vehicles.</b> <b>&lt; \$10K / HIGH</b>	4.9 acres were purchased in 2023 for the Mill Branch Park South entrance. That entrance will be completed by 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter, 2024
<b>Section 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<b>Maintaining/creating new and existing hiking trails in the park</b>  <b>Volunteer/City Staff/MED</b>	This is an ongoing project for volunteers and city staff
<b>Section 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<b>Further cleaning and beautification of the spring house</b> <b>Volunteer/LOW</b>	Communicating with local high schools regarding possibly volunteer opportunities
<b>Section 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<b>Removal of dead trees and invasive species/plants</b>  <b>Volunteer/HIGH</b>	This will give more access to the parks amenities like Mill Branch Creek while also protecting visitors from hazards that could cause harm
<b>Section 5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<b>Possible uses of the chicken house pad or alternate demolition and removal</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Section 6</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<b>Clean up and restocking the park ponds</b>  <b>City Staff/AG&amp;F/HIGH</b>	Contact AG&F to discuss pond dredging and potential fishing derbies so we can have one of the ponds stocked
<b>Section 7</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<b>Plan for disc golf course</b>  <b>Volunteer/HIGH</b>	Partner with National Disc Golf Association to place a better course in the park
<b>Section 8</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<b>Conservation Easement</b>  <b>City Staff/High 5-10 years</b>	The city has partnered with NWA Land Trust and their professional opinion would be to wait until the park is more developed before adding an easement. This is something that the city will explore after park development is over 50%

<p><b>Section 8</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bathrooms at Mill Branch South Park area.</b></p> <p><b>UNK / MEDIUM</b></p>	<p>The modifications have been completed. The bathrooms are available for guests currently. Concept design with estimate</p>
<p><b>Section 9</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p><b>North Trailhead / Bathrooms</b></p> <p><b>\$50-60K / HIGH</b></p>	<p>Submitted as State Parks grant</p>
<p><b>Section 10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	<p><b>Concrete topping of North parking lot.</b></p> <p><b>\$120K / LOW HUD</b></p>	<p>The clay and gravel parking area are beginning to become weather-beaten and will require repair. The city has contracted Crafton Tull to top it with concrete. The project should start in 2024. HUD grant funded.</p>
<p><b>Section 11</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<p><b>North entrance improvements</b></p> <p><b>110K / HIGH</b></p>	<p>Currently the road into the park is a single lane. A two-lane road capable of holding a bus is planned and an estimate has been provided by the engineer. The City will use the HUD grant to fund this project.</p>
<p><b>Section 12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	<p><b>Swings</b></p> <p><b>UNK / MED</b></p>	<p>The Parks Commission has received several requests for swings at Mill Branch Park South area. Estimate given and grant requested / not approved</p>
<p><b>Section 13</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>Basketball court / Pickle ball / volleyball</p> <p><b>~110K / MED</b></p>	<p>The internet survey showed a very high desire for a basketball / multi-purpose court in the Mill Branch Park South area. The city applied for a State Parks grant for this project but that was not successful</p>
<p><b>Section 14</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Commutation</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	<p>Disk golf.</p> <p><b>&lt;5K / HIGH</b></p>	<p>The city has installed a disc golf course.</p>
<p><b>Section 15</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>Creek overlook viewing area.</p> <p><b>PART OF PII ARDOT</b></p>	<p>The Parks Commission plans to place a Mill Branch Creek overlook viewing area just North of Mill Branch Center.</p>
<p><b>Section 16</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>ADA trail from trailhead to Mill Branch Center</p> <p><b>PART OF PII ARDOT</b></p>	<p>Design complete, PII ARDOT grant submitted.</p>

<p><b>Section 17</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>Picnic area (tables)</p> <p><b>&lt;5K / MED</b></p>	<p>The Parks Commission recommended a rock table eating area just south of Mill Branch Center just after exiting the ARDOT bridge. It will be funded with ARDOT II funds and is scheduled to be in place first quarter of 2025.</p>
<p><b>Section 18</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	<p><b>250K / HIGH</b></p> <p>Trailhead with three ADA bathrooms</p>	<p>The city has applied for a State Parks grant in 2024</p>
<p><b>Section 19</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p><b>35K / MED</b></p> <p>South parking lot with ADA / high water / and emergency vehicle park access</p>	<p>The city purchased a 5-acre lot off Fire Tower Road for the south entrance which saved the \$500,000 project from the north parking lot. The project is scheduled to be completed in dirty rock by 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2024 and hopes to asphalt in 2026 with ARDOT</p>
<p><b>Section 20</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p><b>3K / MED</b></p> <p>A bike wash/repair at the Community Center</p>	<p>The city completed the project</p>
<p><b>Section 21</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p><b>UNK / MED</b></p> <p>Poor cell reception in some parts of the park</p>	<p>The city will contact various cell providers to determine what can be done to improve cell coverage at Mill Branch Park.</p>
<p><b>Section 22</b></p>	<p><b>&lt;5K / LOW</b></p> <p>Water fountains <b>BEAVER WATERSHED</b></p>	<p>Scheduled to be completed by 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2025</p>
<p><b>Section 23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<p><b>UNK/ MID - HIGH</b></p> <p>Provide water shelter on trails</p>	<p><b>TBD</b></p>
<p><b>Section 24</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> </ul>	<p><b>LOW / HIGH</b></p> <p>The city public access Haying access and land prairie restoration area and wildflower area</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ADA trail</li> <li>2. Haying contract</li> </ol>	<p>The city plans to put ADA parking in the North and South parking area. The North Parking by 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2025 and the South Parking by 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2025</p>
<p><b>Section 25</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<p><b>UNK / HIGH</b></p> <p>North and South handicap parking</p>	<p>HUD / City funding and installed as above</p>

<p><b>Section 26</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<p>South Entrance</p> <p><b>UNK / HIGH / CITY</b></p>	<p>The city has completed basic roadwork and is ready for dirty base and rolling.</p>
<p><b>Section 27</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>	<p>The city will obtain emergency access to the park with completion of the south entrance</p>	<p>The entrance is scheduled for opening in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2024</p>
<p><b>Section 28</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Innovation</li> </ul>	<p>Community Center Bathroom</p> <p><b>Funding for this is coming from the City's General Fund.</b></p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p><b>Section 29</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Innovation</li> </ul>	<p>Environmental Review</p> <p><b>UNK / HIGH / VOLUNTEER / CITY</b></p>	<p>The city has completed the environmental review and it has been approved by HUD. The city has completed payment for all 112 acres.</p>
<p><b>Section 30</b></p> <p>Emergency Access</p>	<p>Complete land payment South Entrance with dirty base</p> <p><b>ARDOT GRANTS &gt;30K / MED</b></p> <p>North entrance improvements</p>	<p>Engineered project plans are 100% complete. Proposed project start date is August of 2024</p>



## **PHASE II GOSHEN PARKS COMMISSION VISION GOING FORWARD**

### **Vision:**

To expand and maintain our region's premier city park, offering a diverse range of recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities for all. This brainstorming phase marks the beginning of our vision to mature and market the park.

The City of Goshen embarked on the park project in 2019, forming the Parks Commission in 2020. As detailed in the first section of this Master Plan, an online survey was conducted to gauge citizen preferences. The results are depicted in the accompanying graphic. Volunteers played a crucial role in preparing the park for its September 2, 2020, grand opening, an event hosted by Congressman Womack and Road Commissioner Phillip Taldo.

Moving forward, Phase II will require significant effort to mature and market the park's facilities, host events, and establish Mill Branch Park as the regional destination. When we started, the city lacked dedicated park staff or grant writers. Our initial work included manual tasks like clearing brush, mowing trails and writing grants, which should now constitute less than 20% of our workload. The following draft outlines the Phase II plan:

### **1. Identify the Park's Unique Selling Points (USPs)**

- **Natural Features:** Highlight scenic spots, ponds, trails, wildlife, or any distinct natural beauty.
- **Facilities and Amenities:** Promote facilities like the trails playgrounds, picnic areas, restrooms, and planned pavilion.
- **Activities:** Showcase recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, fishing (improving the pond for this), or organized sports like pickle ball at Mill Branch Center. Promote any special attractions, like the Highlands Gravel Classic, garden area, or educational billboards throughout the park.

### **2. Segment Our Audience**

- **Families:** Emphasize the kid-friendly areas, playground, family picnic spots, Frisbee/Disc Golf and fishing pond.
- **Fitness Enthusiasts:** Highlight organized trail walks, fitness stations, or yoga classes.
- **Nature Lovers:** Promote birdwatching, nature walks, or wildlife observation points.
- **Event-Goers:** Market the park as a venue for concerts, festivals, and community events.
- **Tourists:** Market the park on various trail apps. Market seeing the 100 year old spring house and water feature and position it as a must-visit destination.

### **3. Create a Digital Marketing Strategy**

- **Website:** Ensure the park has a user-friendly website that offers essential information, such as park hours, directions, available activities, and event calendars. Use high-quality photos and videos to showcase the park's beauty.
- **Social Media:**
  - Post regularly on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to engage different demographics.
  - Share event updates, behind-the-scenes content, visitor testimonials, and beautiful visuals of the park.
  - Utilize hashtags like #Explore[Mill Branch Park] to increase visibility.

- Engage with users by responding to comments, running contests, or encouraging user-generated content (e.g., photo challenges).
- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Google Ads:** Optimize our website and content for search engines using relevant keywords such as “best parks in [city],” “outdoor activities near me,” or “[city] family-friendly parks.” Use Google Ads to target nearby audiences looking for recreation options.

#### 4. Leverage Local Media

- **Press Releases:** Send press releases to local newspapers, radio stations, and TV channels, especially when launching new features, events (Highland Classic or concerts), or seasonal activities.
- **Interviews and Features:** Offer interviews with park Commissioners or tour segments to local news outlets, focusing on the park’s impact on the community or upcoming events.
- **Event Coverage:** Coordinate with local journalists to cover big events, festivals, or new activities within the park.

#### 5. Community Engagement and Partnerships

- **Collaborate with Schools and Organizations:** Partner with local school district for educational programs, field trips, or eco-projects. Work with local organizations (e.g., fitness clubs, wildlife societies) to host regular activities or workshops.
- **Local Businesses:** Collaborate with nearby restaurants, hotels, or stores to offer joint promotions or prizes for park visitors.
- **Sponsorships:** Attract sponsors for specific events or facilities, allowing their brand to be associated with community well-being and outdoor recreation.

#### 6. Organize and Promote Events

- **Seasonal Events:** Plan events like outdoor concerts, farmers’ markets, yoga sessions, or themed festivals (e.g., Earth Day, holiday celebrations). Regular events encourage repeat visits.
- **Sports Tournaments:** Organize local sports tournaments (Pickle ball, , Frisbee golf, fishing, etc.), fun runs, or charity walks to attract crowds and media attention.
- **Special Attractions:** Set up temporary attractions like food trucks (get electric outlets in soonest), art exhibitions, or eco-friendly markets to create buzz and draw visitors.
- **Event Partnerships:** Partner with event organizers and influencers to co-host or promote events in the park.

#### 7. Create a Visual and Print Campaign

- **Flyers and Posters:** Distribute flyers and posters in high-traffic areas like schools, libraries, cafes, and community centers. Include a map, upcoming events, and park highlights.
- **Park sign:** Get the highway department to put up a sign on Highway 45 outside the north entrance
- **Billboards and Outdoor Ads:** Use large-format advertising in strategic locations around town to draw attention to the park, focusing on eye-catching images of the park’s attractions.
- **Brochures:** Design and distribute brochures at tourism centers, hotels, and local businesses.

#### 8. Engage with the Community Online

- **Email Newsletter:** Build an email list to send regular updates about upcoming events, seasonal activities, and park news.
- **Online Community Groups:** Engage with local online communities on platforms like Facebook Groups or Reddit, sharing park activities, answering questions, and encouraging discussions.

- **Engagement briefings:** plan five engagement briefings before March each year to be used for State Parks grants

**9. Offer Memberships or Loyalty Programs**

- Create a membership program offering perks like early access to event tickets or premiere seating. Promote it through our website and social media.
- **Loyalty Coin:** Offer a park loyalty program where frequent visitors can accumulate points for various level coins.

**10. Measure and Optimize**

- **Visitor Surveys:** Gather feedback through online surveys or suggestion boxes in the park to understand visitor preferences and areas for improvement.
- **Social Media Metrics:** Track engagement, shares, and visitor-generated content to refine our digital strategy.
- **Website Analytics:** Monitor traffic and popular web pages to see what’s drawing the most attention and optimize those features.

By focusing on both digital and traditional marketing, partnering with the community, and hosting engaging events, we will increase visibility, attract diverse audiences, and build a strong reputation for our park.

**MILL BRANCH PARK PHASE II SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN ELEMENTS AND PROGRAMS WITH STATUS**

TASK	STATUS
<p><b>1. Understanding the Audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Demographics:</b> Identify the target audience—families, children, seniors, young adults, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Preferences:</b> Survey or research what activities are most appealing to your audience, such as sports, cultural events, or nature exploration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed two internet studies which identified the target audience</li> <li>• Completed two internet studies and several outreach meetings to establish preferences</li> <li>• Five outreach meetings are scheduled in 2024-2025 to update Goshen citizen preferences</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Assess Park Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Natural Features:</b> Consider the park's landscape (e.g., lakes, trails, open spaces) that can be utilized for activities like stocking the fishing pond).</li> <li>• <b>Facilities:</b> Evaluate available facilities (playgrounds, sports courts, pavilions) and how they can be integrated into events. Set up a web-based reservation system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With help from a landscape architect Goshen developed numerous trails, a water feature, a water crossing, a kid’s play gym, a multipurpose court. the south parking lot, an ADA trail to the south trailhead and three ADA bathrooms.</li> <li>• Future facilities, including indoor recreational facilities, will follow the same strategies.</li> </ul>

<p><b>3. Create a Variety of Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Physical Activities:</b> Organize sports, fitness classes, hiking, and cycling events.</li> <li>• <b>Cultural Events:</b> Plan music concerts, movie nights, art installations, or cultural festivals.</li> <li>• <b>Educational Programs:</b> Offer nature walks, workshops, and environmental education programs.</li> <li>• <b>Family-Friendly Activities:</b> Set up playgrounds, scavenger hunts, or outdoor storytelling sessions.</li> <li>• <b>Seasonal Events:</b> Organize seasonal events like holiday markets, summer camps, or winter ice skating.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Phase I, Goshen identified the physical activities the residents desired as shown below:</li> <li>• All the high priority activities down to the</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><b>ACTIVITIES DESIRED NOW</b> 2021 Internet Survey</p> <table border="1"> <caption>ACTIVITIES DESIRED NOW (2021 Internet Survey)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Activity</th> <th>Number of people voting*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Walk trail</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Picnic area</td><td>90</td></tr> <tr><td>Playground</td><td>85</td></tr> <tr><td>Basketball</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr><td>Fenced dog walk</td><td>55</td></tr> <tr><td>Exercise facility</td><td>50</td></tr> <tr><td>Horseshoes</td><td>45</td></tr> <tr><td>Volleyball</td><td>40</td></tr> <tr><td>Tennis</td><td>35</td></tr> <tr><td>Baseball</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>Shuffleboard</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>Soccer</td><td>20</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Goshen census at the time- 1071</p> </div> <p>planned basketball / pickle ball court are substantially completed. A story tree and library are in place and Easter egg hunts have been performed. The City / Parks Commission hosted the Highlands Gravel Classic bike race in 2024. The multi-purpose court is a planned grant project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Tree identification trail with 30+ trees has been identified and marked</li> <li>• Educational plaques are planned throughout the trails and at Mill Branch Center.</li> <li>• The famous Goshen Farmer’s market is based at Mill Branch Park</li> <li>• Concerts are planned at the two natural amphitheaters.</li> <li>• A star gazing area is planned and will be feasible after the south entrance is opened. Put electricity and water as well as places to set up telescopes there</li> <li>• A winter sledding area concept may be considered at the large amphitheater area</li> <li>• The fishing pond may be improved and stocked.</li> </ul>	Activity	Number of people voting*	Walk trail	100	Picnic area	90	Playground	85	Basketball	60	Fenced dog walk	55	Exercise facility	50	Horseshoes	45	Volleyball	40	Tennis	35	Baseball	30	Shuffleboard	25	Soccer	20
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<p><b>4. Collaborating with Local Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Partner with the Community:</b> Involving local schools, clubs, or businesses to co-sponsor or host activities.</li> <li>• <b>Volunteers:</b> Use our Arbor board and other volunteers to assist with events and help manage the flow of participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently the University has many classes in the park. With the south entrance, school buses will now be able to get to the park enabling the local school district to use the park. Coordination with the school district is planned as soon as the south parking is complete.</li> </ul>																										
<p><b>5. Consider Accessibility</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADA accessibility is a priority. The PhII ARDOT grant will complete an ADA trail</li> </ul>																										

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that activities are inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities, offering options like wheelchair-friendly paths or adaptive sports.</li> </ul>	<p>from the south parking lot to Mill Branch Center where the small amphitheater is located.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mill Branch South has ADA parking and an ADA capable kids’ gym</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Promote Sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage eco-friendly practices by incorporating recycling stations, nature clean-up activities, and sustainability workshops.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive Maintenance Plan has been developed that outlines City and Volunteer maintenance activities and logs those results.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Market the Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Use Social Media:</b> Create a buzz by posting about upcoming events.</li> <li>• <b>Flyers and Posters:</b> Distribute materials in local cafes, schools, or community centers.</li> <li>• <b>Local News:</b> Collaborate with local news outlets for event coverage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To date, communication with the public has been limited to the city web site and Facebook page. A prime PHII challenge is to increase marketing activities. This deserves its own separate plan.</li> <li>• If we host the Highlands Classic next year, perhaps the local news would like to cover it.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Get Feedback</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After each activity, collect feedback from participants to improve future events and tailor them to what the community enjoys.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of each of the outreach meetings, the Commission records the comments and asks for other feedback.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equipment and Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Restrooms:</b> Adequate restrooms should be available or provided with portable solutions.</li> <li>• <b>Lighting:</b> If the activity takes place during evening hours, you may need sufficient lighting for safety.</li> <li>• <b>Sound Systems:</b> For performances or announcements, you may need a sound system and appropriate permissions for noise levels.</li> <li>• <b>Electricity:</b> Check for electrical outlets if the activity requires power (e.g., for food vendors, sound equipment).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The city just completed its first restroom in the park at Mill Branch South.</li> <li>• A second set of three ADA capable bathrooms is planned at Mill Branch North.</li> <li>• The city just completed a bicycle wash rack and repair station at Mill Branch South.</li> <li>• Electricity and sound systems are required at the Mill Branch Center amphitheater, especially at the Farmer’s Market site.</li> <li>• A kiosk with informational signs is needed at the South entrance to the trails.</li> <li>• Electricity and water are required through the park and the trails.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Environmental Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Waste Management:</b> Provide adequate trash bins and recycling options. For</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current waste management plan is “Take out what you bring in”. This has sufficed to date but may need to be revisited.</li> </ul>

<p>larger events, consider bringing in additional waste disposal units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Eco-Friendly Practices:</b> Encourage sustainable practices like using biodegradable materials, reducing plastic, and organizing clean-up drives post-event.</li> <li>• <b>Minimizing Disturbance:</b> For nature-based parks, be mindful of activities that may disturb wildlife or damage the environment (e.g., noise, litter, trampling of plant life).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Parks Commission and City plan to hold more events, like the Highlands Classic and concerts this year. Plans need to be made to accommodate that.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Safety and Health Measures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>First Aid:</b> Have a first aid station or trained personnel on-site, especially for physical activities or large gatherings.</li> <li>• <b>Weather Preparedness:</b> Make contingency plans for bad weather, including covered areas, cancellation policies, or rescheduling options.</li> <li>• <b>COVID-19 Guidelines:</b> Depending on current health regulations, you may need to implement social distancing, provide sanitation stations, or limit the number of participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The city made a major investment in 2023 and 2024 to open up the park so that emergency vehicles will now be able to get to a large portion of the park for fire or health emergencies.</li> <li>• The north entrance has been designed and funded. It will support emergency vehicles coming into the north side of the park</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Financial Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Budget:</b> Understand the costs associated with the event, including permits, equipment, staff, and promotional expenses.</li> <li>• <b>Sponsorships:</b> Seek local sponsors to help cover costs and promote the event.</li> <li>• <b>Fees:</b> If charging for participation, ensure pricing is reasonable and includes all costs (such as equipment rentals, refreshments, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City’s strategy was to lease most of the park property with the option to buy. Over the last three years, the city now owns all 112 acres. These payments have been made without a bond issue nor has it excessively depleted the City coffers. No local sponsorships or fees have been required.</li> </ul>

DRAFT  
 Rev 4.5 January 2025  
 Attachment 1 - SCORP

<b>CONNECTIVITY</b>																			
<b>BARRIERS</b>		<b>OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PLANS</b>																	
Income Inequality		Mill branch park is located adjacent to low to moderate income housing																	
Feeling Unsafe		Mill branch park and the FUN park element is ADA accessible																	
Physical Impairment		There are sidewalks from low to moderate housing areas to the park																	
Nobody to Go With		A linear trail is planned which will connect three housing areas to the park																	
Lack of Free Time		The linear trail will connect the center of town with eating areas to the park																	
		The fun park is ADA accessible and is located adjacent to low to moderate income housing																	
		Mill Branch trails are connected to the community center and to low to moderate housing																	
		The city sponsored the nationals of the Highland Gravel Bike national tournament																	
		The Highland tournament gave away 40 bikes to needy kids enabling them to ride to the park																	
		Mill Branch Park has over three miles of bike riding trails. The nearest other park is 10 miles away																	
		The park has a bike repair station and a bike wash																	
		The park has a full service bathroom																	
<b>COMMUNITY</b>																			
<b>BARRIERS</b>		<b>OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PLANS</b>																	
Income Inequality		The park has programmed events like the Highland Nationals Gravel Classic, the Goshen Farmers Market and planned seasonal concerts in its																	
Feeling Unsafe		natural amphitheater																	
Physical Impairment		A planned DC Fast charge station nearby will allow people to charge their car on a level 2 charger while they walk the 3.5 miles of trails or shop at																	
Nobody to Go With		Goshen Farmer's Market																	
Lack of Free Time		The Farmers Market is a social event where people from all over the region come and make it a social occasion																	
		The Goshen Police make routine stops at Mill Branch Park																	
		The new south entrance is being made for rapid entry of emergency vehicles for both fire and ambulance.																	
		See bike events, farmers market, concerts above																	
		Provide an adequate number of seating areas																	
		The park has picnic tables and will expand throughout the park trails																	
		The park is ADA compliant																	
		The park in the center of the City and has access from three housing areas																	
<b>INNOVATION</b>																			
<b>BARRIERS</b>		<b>OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PLANS</b>																	
Income Inequality		The 111 acre Mill Branch Park is free for Goshen residents and those in the surrounding communities																	
Feeling Unsafe		Mill Branch Park is so rugged, it turned an unbuildable area into a haven for all																	
Physical Impairment		The park has an ADA capable gym and bathrooms																	
Nobody to Go With		The city advertises the park and its capabilities through a City website and two social media sites																	
Lack of Free Time		The city partnered with a local business to provide stone resting seats on the trails and several picnic tables at scenic locations																	
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>																			
<b>BARRIERS</b>		<b>OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PLANS</b>																	
Income Inequality		Mill Branch Park was intentionally developed at the center of town and near low-to middle income housing areas																	
Feeling Unsafe		The park has a free bike maintenance repair area and wash rack																	
Physical Impairment		Mill Branch Park is routinely patrolled by Goshen police and has never had a reportable incident																	
Nobody to Go With		The City has encouraged older retired people to work on the parks commission and volunteer at the park																	
		For best results, include persons who are physically impaired in parks commissions and hold focus group meetings at rehabilitation or special needs centers																	
		The Park and kids gym was designed to be ADA compliant.																	
		Though the park has very rugged terrain, it is designed to maximize the use by seniors and ADA people																	
		The park has hosted several dinner get-togethers, hosted the Highlands Gravel bike Classic and plans concerts this year																	
<b>STEWARDSHIP</b>																			
<b>BARRIERS</b>		<b>OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PLANS</b>																	
Income Inequality		The City has a detailed Maintenance Plan to preserve and maintain existing facilities, especially within communities with frequent usage and lower																	
Feeling Unsafe		income																	
Physical Impairment		The City has created safe routes and plans a linear trail to connect city housing areas and to give opportunities for those without transportation to																	
Nobody to Go With		experience nature																	
		The City plans to improve lighting conditions, using energy efficient or solar powered fixtures																	
		The City has increased visibility of Mill Branch Creek by maintaining foliage and removing the understory of a wooded area as well as plans for a viewing																	
		platform																	
		The City has signage to identify the various tree types and hazardous areas																	
		The City routinely engage community groups to remove invasive species and other cleanup																	
		The City has plans to create a nature trail and viewing area that meet ADA requirements																	
		The City through the Arbor Board routinely has clean up days to improve the park																	