

LA VISTA PARK AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

2. PROJECT SCOPE/INTRODUCTION

As the City of La Vista continues to grow and develop, it needs to encourage and enhance the growth and development of the City as a whole and in particular the park and recreation system. Great communities build and sustain public parks, protect open space, and offer recreation opportunities to their citizens. Successful communities are able to:

- Contribute to fulfilling the leisure-time needs of their citizens.
- Preserve and protect areas of unique natural and scenic importance for their original and intrinsic value.
- Incorporate environmental stewardship of natural resources into facilities acquisition and development.

The *La Vista Park and Recreation Master Plan* serves as a planning and administrative guide for the community, Park and recreation Advisory Board, Planning and Zoning Commission/Board, City Council, and all City staff. Once implemented, this plan should strive to meet the recreation, park, and open space needs of La Vista residents as facilities and services are enhanced and expanded to support existing and future development.

Over the years the City of La Vista has assembled a composition of park and recreation facilities and developed methods to provide these to its citizens. This combination of facilities offers residents and visitors numerous opportunities for personal enjoyment, active pursuits, and quiet solitude. Simultaneously, the system contributes a fundamental element to the overall livability and quality of life sought by many in La Vista. In a large part, the park and recreation system knits together the community, supporting a diverse population and fostering growth. Numerous influences have impacted the mission of the system, the operations and maintenance, the provision and diversity of programs, and the methods of providing land and money to support demands of a growing community.

Continued new development is adding new people and new service demands. New groups and individuals with different needs, increasing demands from existing facilities and organizations, requests for new and better services, and increasing uncertainty about funding methods are creating a need for a more focused direction, organizational and political support, and a plan that is defensible. The *Park and Recreation Master Plan* must be an amalgam of two important organizational elements: a long-term facility plan that can deal with the reality of land and services required by the community and a strategic plan that responds to a more uncertain social and political environment by setting in place a program to effectively function within a dynamic community structure. Both organizational elements and all actions directed by the plan must be completed in a manner that insures legal defensibility, utilizing the appropriate technical support, and collaborative and participative process.

The *La Vista Park and Recreation Master Plan* does the following:

- Acknowledges and embraces the efforts of the past.

- Creates an understanding, awareness, and appreciation of its value among the citizens.
- Identifies, organizes, and integrates numerous elements into a comprehensive system with multiple objectives.
- Offers flexibility for an expanding population of users.
- Provides guidance to direct the City toward a clear and attainable vision into the future.

The mission statement for the La Vista park and recreation system, as determined by the Steering Committee, is:

The La Vista park and recreation system shall provide life long opportunities for recreational programs and park facilities that enhance the quality of life for La Vista residents.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the *La Vista Park and Recreation Master Plan* is to assist the City of La Vista in its efforts to ensure that current and future residents will have the opportunity to participate in a range of park and recreational activities in a safe, convenient, functional, and aesthetically pleasing environment.

The City of La Vista is a fast growing community and is sought after for its living qualities. A challenge La Vista faces with this growth is to maintain services, including park and recreation facilities, in already developed areas of the City while extending them to areas of recent or expected future development.

An expanded, well-maintained park system can do more than meet the functional need for parks and open space required by a growing population. It can also beautify the community and tie older and newer areas together.

The *La Vista Park and Recreation Master Plan* proposes an approach that will 1) maintain and improve existing park and recreation facilities and programs, 2) create new public park and recreation facilities and programs in already developed areas and throughout recently developed and future development areas, 3) join all park and recreation facilities together with a network of greenways, trails, and green streets wherever possible, and 4) offer financing techniques for the proposed system.

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process was conducted in four phases with each phase addressing a basic question about the La Vista park and recreation system.

- **Phase One - What do we know?**

An inventory of background information was conducted including community demographics and existing park and recreation facilities. Section 3 of this report presents demographic information along with population projections and an inventory and analysis of the existing system, including park facilities and recreation facilities and programs.

- **Phase Two - What do we want?**

A needs assessment phase was performed giving an up-to-date picture of community attitudes and desires for park and recreation facilities and programs. Public input workshops and surveys were conducted to gather this information. A steering committee assisted with providing valuable knowledge regarding the *Master Plan*. This question is addressed in Section 4 of the *La Vista Park and Recreation Master Plan*. (The results presented in this report are qualitative, not quantitative. The information provides input from community members who were interested enough in the park and recreation system to attend a meeting or forum and complete a survey.)

- **Phase Three - What do we do?**

A policy development process was conducted with the Steering Committee to establish a clear direction for the City's future park and recreation system. Specific policies were determined, with detailed information regarding park development, park facility needs and locations, service area and level of service, and financing strategies. Section 5 of the *La Vista Park and Recreation Master Plan* addresses this question.

- **Phase Four - How do we get there?**

The plan describes the types, locations, and number of proposed parks, greenways, trails, and green streets and methods for improving the park and recreation system. Section 6 of the report addresses these issues. Section 7 of the report presents an action plan that organizes and sets priorities for recommended improvements and expansions.

The appendices contain information to support the *La Vista Park and Recreation Master Plan*, including Condition and Capacity Reports; Park, Community, and School-District Inventory Sheets; meeting participants and agendas; and the Steering Committee Policy Matrix. (For a complete list of the appendices, see the Table of Contents.)