

Comprehensive Policy Plan
"Public Spaces"

Policy Letter 602: Park Deficient Areas

BACKGROUND:

Parks are essential for the well being of the City. They provide opportunities for recreation, areas for storm water runoff, and development breaks and scenic views. All residents of Fargo desire a variety of parks for active and passive recreational opportunities, organized sports, picnics, and environmental enjoyment.

The City area plans are a land use planning tool that maps the intended land use throughout each neighborhood of Fargo. Not all area plans have an equal distribution of pocket parks, neighborhood parks, neighborhood play fields, community parks, special purpose parks, and linear parks. The City's older or established neighborhoods have numerous examples of what appear to be park deficient areas. Land around NDSU for children to play appears to be lacking; the North Fargo High School area has limited park land; and bike paths and pedestrian ways have limited continuity along the river in North Fargo. Along with the park deficient areas, there may be deficiencies in the necessary linkage or passage between park areas. The park needs of Fargo are not limited to older neighborhoods and a periodic comprehensive evaluation of park needs could answer the questions on where residents face park land deficiencies.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The City of Fargo should conduct a City-wide park and recreation facilities needs assessment. The findings of the park needs assessment should be related to the service standards and expectations of residents in the community.

CONCLUSION:

The development of new parks within established older neighborhoods presents a formidable challenge because of the difficulty and expense of acquiring suitable land. Residents may resist more taxes or assessments but each resident shares in the responsibility and can contribute equally, based on their ability to pay. All possible financial mechanisms should be explored to fund the required development or redevelopment needed for park deficient areas. Community development grants, special assessments, and general funds from the Park District budget are but a few options in addressing these park needs. No area plan in the City will have neighborhoods with similar park needs, nor will residents of those neighborhoods establish standards with the same criteria. However, the task is to ensure the well being of the Fargo residents citywide.