

Needs Assessment

A Needs Assessment plays an important role in discovering a community's recreational needs and opportunities. The needs gathering process also provides insight on how the existing recreation services are being utilized and/or which facilities or programs are being used.

A needs assessment can be prepared using two basic methods: public input and recreation standards. This plan has been developed using a wide array of public input, including user group input, web site on-line surveys, and public meetings. Parks, Recreation & Forestry Committee and staff input also provided hands-on information regarding several existing and proposed recreational needs.

Allouez Park, Recreation & Forestry Committee

The Allouez Park, Recreation & Forestry Committee, composed of six (6) community members, one (1) Village Trustee, and a staff liaison/park director, advises the Village Administrator, Village Board, Plan Commission and other Village officials on all matters relating to parks, recreation, and open spaces in the Village of Allouez. During the course of updating the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Committee played a crucial role in seeking public comment, reviewing all information presented, and making final recommendations.

Stakeholder/User Group Surveys

Fifteen stakeholder surveys were sent out and six groups responded, providing input on facilities used, number of events and attendees per season, facility shortages and desired improvements, willingness to contribute financially, and other comments. The following is a short summary of the information received. Please see the Appendix Section for a complete list of responses.

Riverview Park and Green Isle Park were the most popular parks with user groups; however, Optimist, Webster, and Broadview were also named.

Parking was the most listed shortage, but more fields and various field improvements (lighting, netting, and video surveillance) made up the rest.

The number of participants listed varied from 12 to 400 depending on the event and most user groups list events producing overnight stays in the Village of Allouez.

Overall, the user groups that responded seem pleased with current facilities, have few suggestions improvements, are willing to financially contribute to park additions and maintenance, and place a high priority on their relationship with the Village of Allouez.

For more information and to read the rest of the questions and comments, please see Appendix A.

Public Meetings

The Parks Committee hosted a public meeting on September 22, 2015 to get public comments for the future needs of the park system. A small group attended and there was special interest in the parks adjacent to their residences. Comments tended to concur with the online results.

On-Line Community Survey

The Parks, Recreation & Forestry Committee conducted an on-line community survey between September 1st and 30th. In an effort to promote the on-line survey, emails and phone calls were made, a story was published in the local Allouez newsletter, and links were added to the Parks and Recreation Department website and Facebook page.

A total of 96 responses were received. The survey included 20 questions regarding frequency of use and satisfaction with existing facilities, athletic fields, trails, maintenance items and input on future park needs. The survey results also included 47 extra comments regarding parks and recreation items throughout the community.

The overwhelming majority of respondents reside in Allouez and over half of them are between the ages of 50 and 69. Most of them use the Village website, the “All About Allouez” publication, or simple word of mouth to obtain park and rec information.

During the spring/summer/fall seasons, most participants use the public parks weekly, with over 10% visiting daily. Green Isle was by far the most popular park to visit. Resch Family East River Trail and Fox River State Trail followed closely.

Allouez residents, as represented by the survey responses, love their park and trails system! 99% of those who took the survey rated Allouez parks as average or better- and 70% of those selected the above average option. The trail system was rated even higher.

When asked to choose from a list of possible park improvements, the top three improvements chosen were: additional trails, a canoe/kayak launch, and a dog park. Respondents also indicated that these improvements should be primarily funded by donations/naming rights, state and federal aid or grants, and a general fund tax levy.

Maintaining current facilities was also important with the top five priorities being: trail maintenance, restroom maintenance, playground maintenance, trash & recycling cleanup, and tree/landscape maintenance.

When asked what the Allouez Park, Recreation & Forestry department does well in a free comment format, the residents who answered overwhelmingly praised the great maintenance (clean facilities, safe, enjoyable, and well kept) on both parks and trails. Several mentioned the good use of natural areas, sensitivity to environmental issues, and fiscal responsibility.

When asked what the Allouez Park, Recreation & Forestry department needed to improve on, the results were less definite. The most frequent shared response was simply “no suggestions.” Other common responses were: friendly attitude toward pets, increased security/police presence, cleaner restrooms, more trails, and more parking.

For more information and to read the rest of the questions and comments, please see Appendix B.

The above methods were utilized in assembling the Allouez Parks and Recreation needs assessment. The Parks, Rec & Forestry committee then evaluated and prioritized the information and with the guidance of the Parks director and consultant many of the prioritized needs were included in the proposals and capital improvement schedule for future consideration and or development.

Recreation Standards

Recreation standards are another method to determine a community's recreation needs. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed standards for both public open space and actual facilities.

Suggested Outdoor Recreation Facility Development standards are provided in the appendix section of this manual. These standards were reviewed during the development of the need assessment. The standards are based on a park service area approach. A concern with this method is that it does not take into account user preferences and physical barriers between actual park locations. Therefore, these standards should be used to review specific identified needs along with public input to assist in prioritizing and justifying real needs for the community.