

Clever Park *strategic plan*



prepared by the

Table of Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Table of Contents..... | 2 |
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Plan Timeline..... | 5 |
| Community Background..... | 6 |
| Current Park Conditions | 7 |
| Community Input..... | 9 |
| Community Vision | 11 |
| Case Studies..... | 11 |
| Items for Consideration..... | 15 |
| Prioritization..... | 16 |
| Desired Park Components | 17 |
| Funding Sources | 20 |
| References..... | 21 |

Introduction

The City of Clever partnered with the Southwest Missouri Council of Governments (SMCOG) from January through April of 2019 to conduct this park strategic plan. Clever has one city park located on Kennedy Avenue behind the Clever City Hall. Figure 1 displays the Clever Park location within the City. The City owns additional green space that may eventually be developed into a second city park, located off of Hwy 14 west of town.

The purpose of this plan is to establish a clear community vision for the future of the Clever City Park. The process and methodology used in preparing the plan included meeting with city staff, gathering public input, and researching similar community parks to determine potential components. The data was compiled and analyzed by SMCOG staff in order to identify future park amenities and the prioritization of updates.

In order to gather community input on the park amenities that citizens most desired, community input sessions were conducted. SMCOG staff created park amenity idea boards which were displayed at the Clever High School on February 15th during Senior Night and Little Cheer. The boards were also on display at Clever City Hall from March 1st through the 18th.

The desire for updates to the park was noted in the City's 2017 Comprehensive Plan as a result of input collected through a community survey. In the survey, residents were asked what type of new development they would like to see in Clever, 78% responded with parks and recreation. When asked if the current community parks and recreation facilities are adequate for the community, 54% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 26% agreed or strongly agreed. Other comments in the comprehensive plan survey noted that the park was in need of restrooms, activities for infants, better equipment, and was poorly lit.

Included in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan was a report and survey prepared by a student class at Missouri State University. The class conducted a community survey to determine how parks could better serve the community and to determine what park amenities the current city park was lacking. This survey noted a community desire for better playground equipment, the addition of bathrooms/water fountains, and an updated pavilion.

In order to address the issues noted in the comprehensive plan, Clever partnered with SMCOG to analyze community desire and make recommendations. This plan will outline the recommended updates to the Clever City Park as based on public input and priority. Case studies of community parks are included in the document and are to be used as a guide during park updates.

City of Clever & City Park

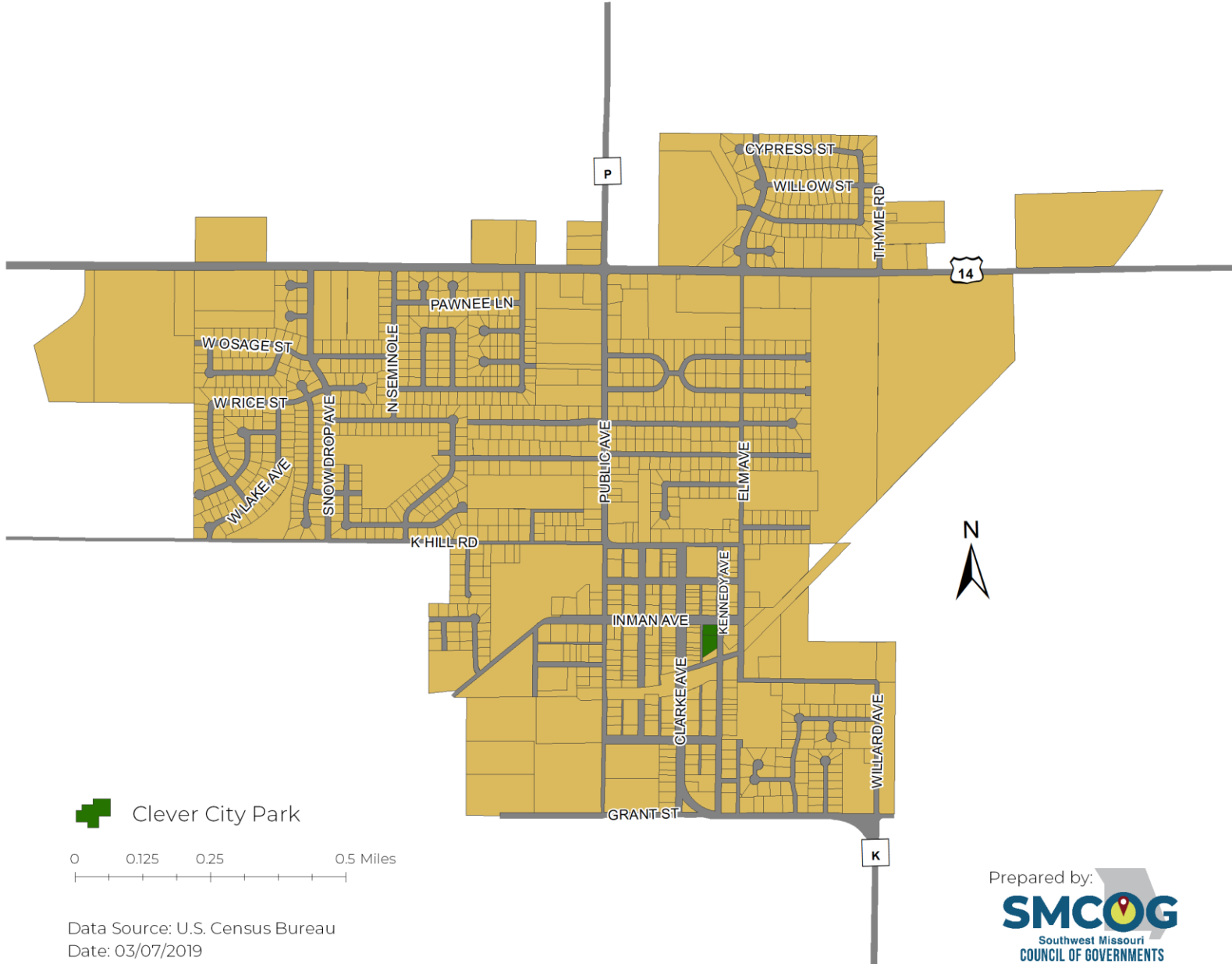


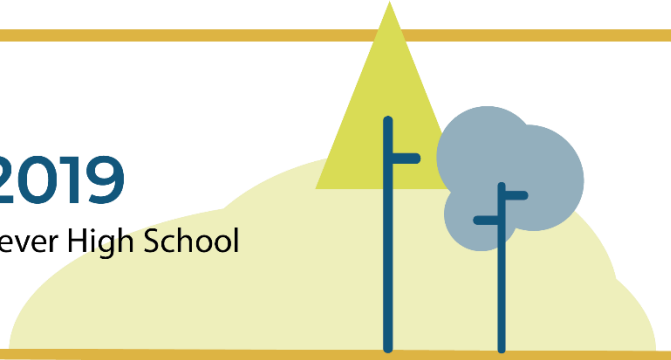
Figure 1, Clever City Park Location Map

Plan Timeline

Clever Park *strategic plan* / timeline

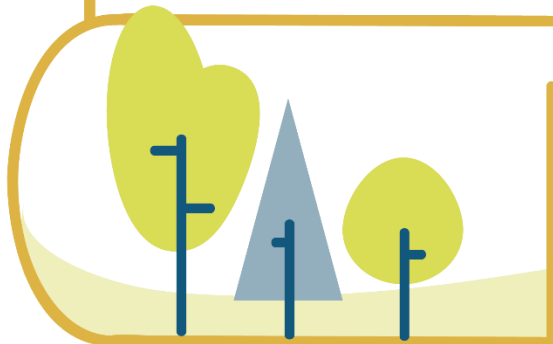
February 15, 2019

Community Input Session at Clever High School



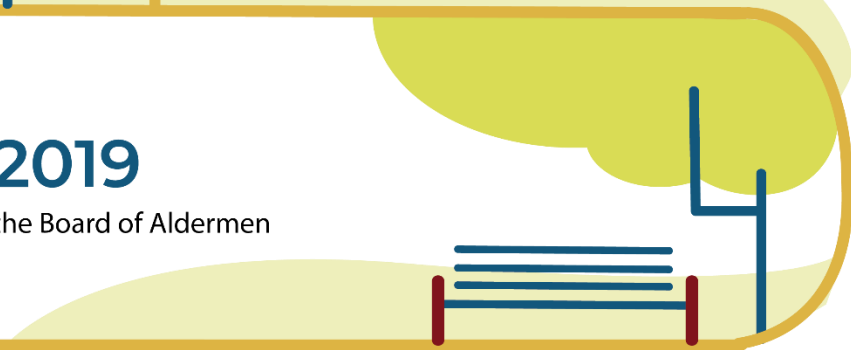
March 1-18, 2019

Community Input Open House at Clever City Hall



April 16, 2019

Presentation of Plan to the Board of Aldermen



Community Background

Clever is a city in Southwest Missouri, located within Christian County. Clever, like much of Christian County, saw a significant increase in population between 2000 and 2010. The 2017 population for Clever is 2,534, as based on 2017 American Community Survey estimates. Table 1 displays Clever’s population in 2000, 2010, and 2017.

| Clever Population | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Year | Population |
| 2000 | 1,010 |
| 2010 | 2,139 |
| 2017 | 2,534 |

Table 1, Clever Population.

Figure 2 displays the population pyramid for Clever, as based on 2017 estimates from American Fact Finder. The figure shows that the largest age groups in the City are under 5 years old, 5 to 9 year olds, as well as 25 to 29 year olds and 30 to 34 year olds. The community’s top age groups are either children who use the Clever City Park, or adults who are of child rearing years. Table 1 and Figure 2 show that Clever is a growing community with an increasing number of children. Therefore, Clever can expect to see an increase in park usage and an increase in the demand for park amenities.

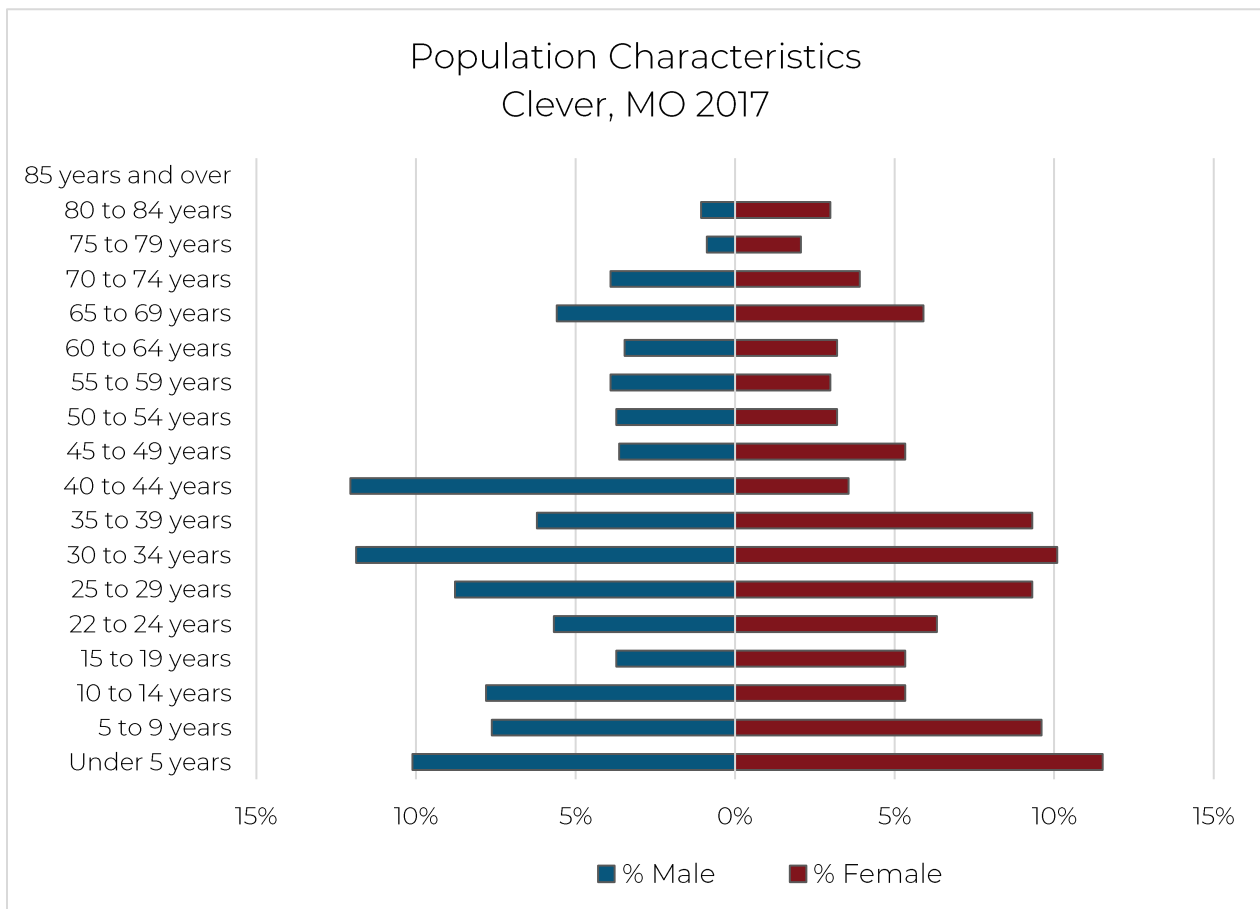


Figure 2, Clever Population Pyramid.

Current Park Conditions

The Clever City Park currently has an array of amenities that have gradually been added and updated over the years. The park currently encompasses 1.1 acres and contains a pavilion, swing sets, grill, trash cans, benches, teeter-totter, slides, and a small playground.

The Clever City Park acts as community hub for families, children, and teenagers to play and meet. Residents voiced that they would like to see updates and additions to the park's amenities in order to better align with citizens wants. Below are images of some of the parks current amenities.



Playground Source: SMCOG, 2019



Basketball Court, Source: SMCOG, 2019



Slide, Source: SMCOG, 2019



Swing set with ADA swing, Source: SMCOG, 2019



Pavilion, Source: SMCOG, 2019



Monkey bars, Source: SMCOG, 2019



Dome Climber, Source: SMCOG, 2019

Community Input

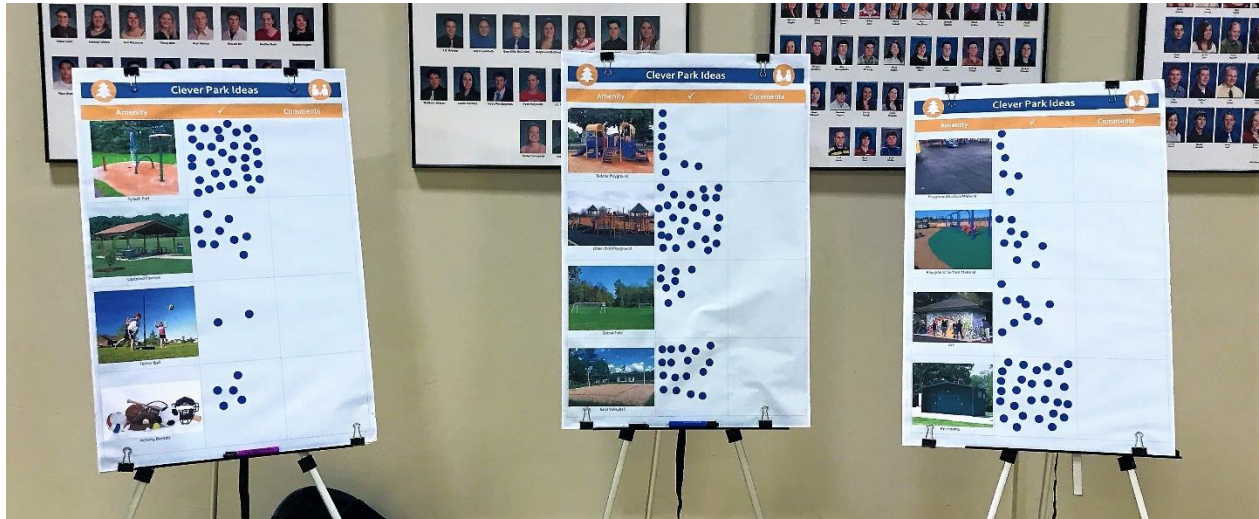


Figure 3, Park Idea Boards during the Community Input Session at Clever High School

Community input sessions were conducted on February 15th during the Clever High School Senior Night and on March 1st – 18th in Clever City Hall. SMCOG staff created park idea boards that displayed a variety of park amenities that were used to gather resident’s votes on the amenities they most desire in the Clever Park. In order to decide on the park amenities to be voted on, SMCOG staff worked with city staff and conducted research to create a list of possible park amenities. During the community input sessions, residents were asked to vote on park amenities by placing a dot next to the amenities that they most desired to see added or updated in the park. Residents could place a single dot on an amenity, or more than one if the amenity was a high priority for them. Residents were also asked to provide comments when necessary. Figure 4 displays the three idea boards and the votes each item received after both community input sessions. Table 2 lists comments that were noted during the community input sessions that were not identified on the boards. The input provided during the input sessions allowed SMCOG to gather a community vision for the park.

| Community Input Comments | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Increase lighting in the Park. | Would like to see the installation of a baseball field. |

Table 2, Community Input Comments

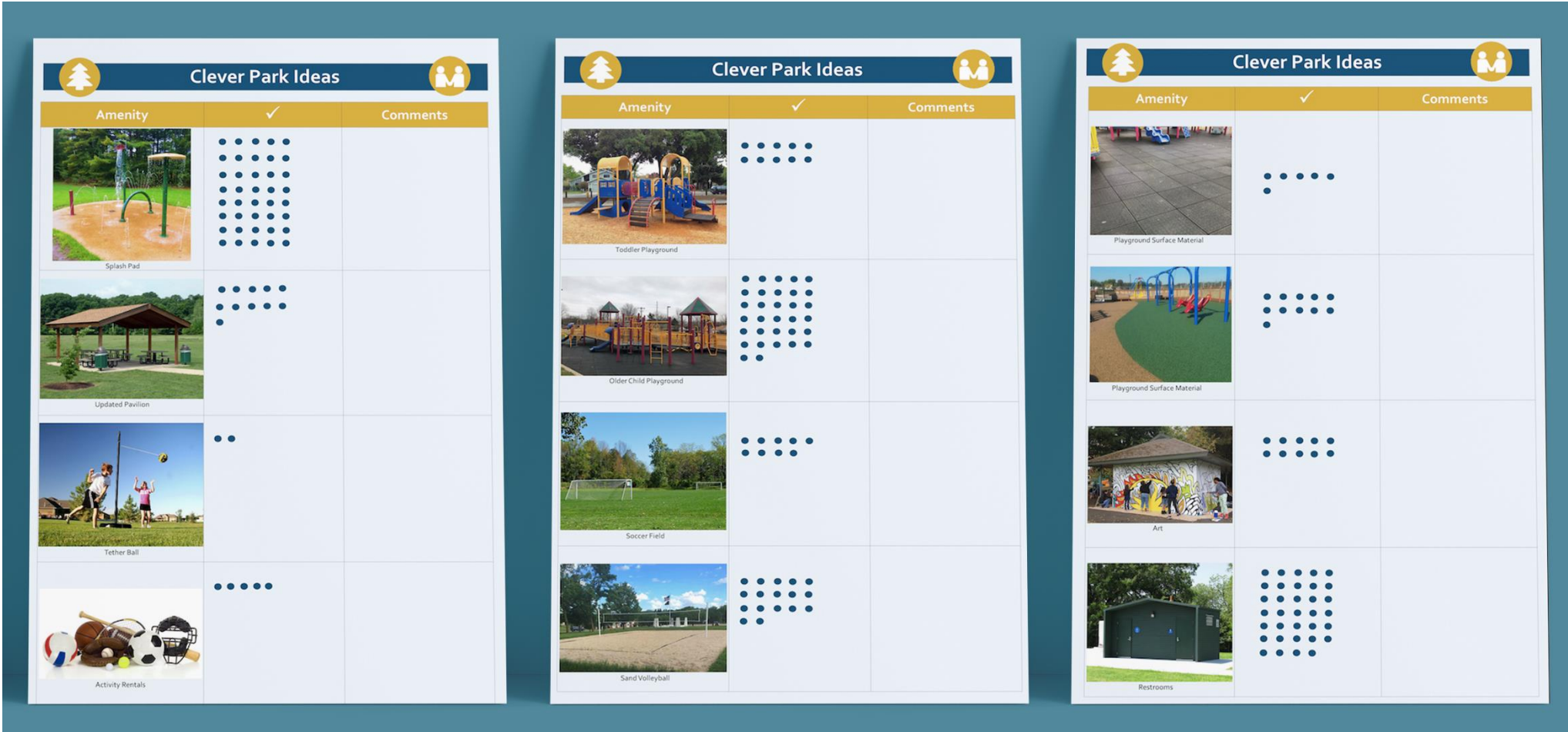


Figure 4, Public Input Boards

Community Vision

Based on the community input, SMCOG was able to gather a community vision of citizen desires for the Clever City Park. Any addition or update to the park requires planning, funding, time, and maintenance. Not only do many of the citizen's park desires require an initial cost, but supplemental cost for upkeep and use as well. All of these items should be taken into consideration when making updates. Case studies and prioritization should be considered when implementing the community vision.

Case Studies

The following pages contain park case studies that provide input on park elements that other communities have used to make parks comfortable, accessible, and attractive. Creative design, attractive playgrounds, and special amenities work together to create unique parks. These elements are to be used as guides when updating or adding elements to the Clever City Park.

John M. Patriarche Park *East Lansing, MI*

This fully accessible park consists of a 1.2 acre playground that was built with the help of community volunteers. The park contains a baseball/softball field, basketball court, benches, grill, play field, pavilion, picnic tables, playground, restrooms, tennis court, and a volleyball field. Through community involvement, the addition of a playground was made possible. By partnering with the local Rotary Club, the City was able to gather community members and build a large playground that contains an array of fun and unique equipment. The variety of park equipment provides options for a range of visitors and accessibility.



Source: www.cityofeastlansing.com



Source: www.cityofeastlansing.com



Source: www.cityofeastlansing.com

Highlights:

- + Unique playground equipment that interacts with scenery
- + Inviting entryway
- + Large size of the playground

Dan Kinney Park Springfield, MO

This park uses updated playground equipment, restrooms, shading, lighting, and open space to make the park a comfortable and attractive place for all. Dan Kinney Park is a universal playground, meaning that the park aims to remove physical barriers for handicapped visitors. Wide ramps, an easy access playground, and an ADA accessible swing make this park available to a wider range of visitors.

The park includes a baseball/softball diamond, pavilion, restrooms, playground, trails, and a family center.



Source: SMCOG 2019



Source: SMCOG 2019



Source: SMCOG 2019

Highlights:

- + 7/10-mile paved recreation trail
- + Assessable playground equipment
- + Cushioned play areas

Jordan Valley Park Springfield, MO

Jordan Valley Park includes jumping fountains, a walking trail, outdoor amphitheater, shaded picnic area, and unique children's play features. Attractive landscaping, open space, and lighting allow this park to be used in all seasons and at all times of the day. The variety of park amenities make this park appealing for visitors of all age groups.



Source: parkboard.org



Source: springfieldmo.org



Source: sculpturewalkspringfield.org



Source: parkboard.org



Items for Consideration

After gathering and analyzing public input and researching other community parks, SMCOG staff has compiled additional items that were not noted on the park amenity boards but the City may consider during park updates and future plans. These recommendations will work to enhance safety and aesthetics in the park. SMCOG staff advises the City to keep the following items in mind when making updates to the park.

Park Lighting

Lighting is an important factor in creating a safe and crime-free environment. Comments were made at the open house that lighting should be increased in the park. Additional or enhanced lighting in and around the park will increase safety while also allowing for the park to be used for longer hours.

Shade

Shade provides comfort and protection from the sun. It allows the park to be used on sunny afternoons comfortably and increases the life of equipment by protecting against fading and cracking. Shade can be increased by adding trees, pavilions, and canopies.

Landscaping

Landscaping can provide a natural buffer between roads and park amenities. Landscaping also enhances the areas aesthetic. Adding native trees, bushes, shrubs, or grasses can enhance the park appearance while also providing shade. Education opportunities exist by using native landscaping and providing identification markers that can educate and inform visitors.

Programmed Events

Programmed events and activities will draw people to the park. To increase the use of the public gathering place, the City should consider establishing a regular series of activities such as:

- Music and theatrical performances
- Outdoor movie nights
- Major cultural and holiday celebrations
- Craft fair
- A farmers market

Park Expansion

The City may want to pursue options to expand the Clever City Park into the City owned lot across Kennedy Avenue. Expanding the park would increase recreational opportunities and allow the space to better serve Clever residents. Many of the neighboring municipalities have parks that are at least three acres in size.

Expanding the Clever Park across the street would double the parks current acre size. Opportunities exist to use the portion of Kennedy Avenue between the two properties as park space as well. Closing the street to traffic and incorporating it into the park allows the road to be used for walking/biking, recreational area, and other opportunities.

Prioritization

The park prioritization matrix takes into account community input, cost, and the ongoing maintenance level. Priority was given based on the number of votes each park amenity received during the community input sessions. It is important to keep in mind that many park amenities require a cost beyond the installation and purchase cost which can leave the City with an annual cost burden. This matrix should be utilized when making park updates and additions as well as organizing improvements to align with other city projects. By timing park updates with nearby street and building improvements, the City will increase opportunities and lower the financial burden of additions and updates.

Clever Park Prioritization Matrix

| Priority | Park Amenity | Installation Cost | Maintenance Level |
|----------|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Splash Pad | \$\$\$\$ | High |
| 2 | Restrooms | \$\$\$ | High |
| 3 | Older Children Playground | \$\$\$ | Minimal |
| 4 | Sand Volleyball | \$\$ | Intermediate |
| 5 | Updated Pavilion | \$\$ | Minimal |
| 5 | Pour-In-Place Playground Surface Material | \$\$ | Intermediate |
| 7 | Art | \$ | Minimal |
| 7 | Toddler Playground | \$\$ | Minimal |
| 9 | Soccer Field | \$ | Minimal |
| 10 | Rubber Tile Playground Surface Material | \$\$ | Intermediate |
| 11 | Activity Rentals | \$ | Minimal |
| 12 | Tether Ball | \$ | Minimal |

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| \$ = 0 – 1,000 | \$\$ = 1,001 – 10,000 | \$\$\$ = 10,000 – 50,000 | \$\$\$\$ = 50,001 + |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|

Desired Park Components

The images below display renderings of the top amenities desired by citizens. The renderings are examples of what the park may look like with the appropriate additions and updates. Figures 5, 6, and 7 show what the Clever City Park may look like if the park stayed in its current boundaries. Figure 8 shows what the park may look like if Kennedy Avenue was converted into green space and the park was expanded into the City owned lot across the street. Adding the displayed park amenities takes time and money. The City should create a phasing plan to add the top priorities as funding becomes available.

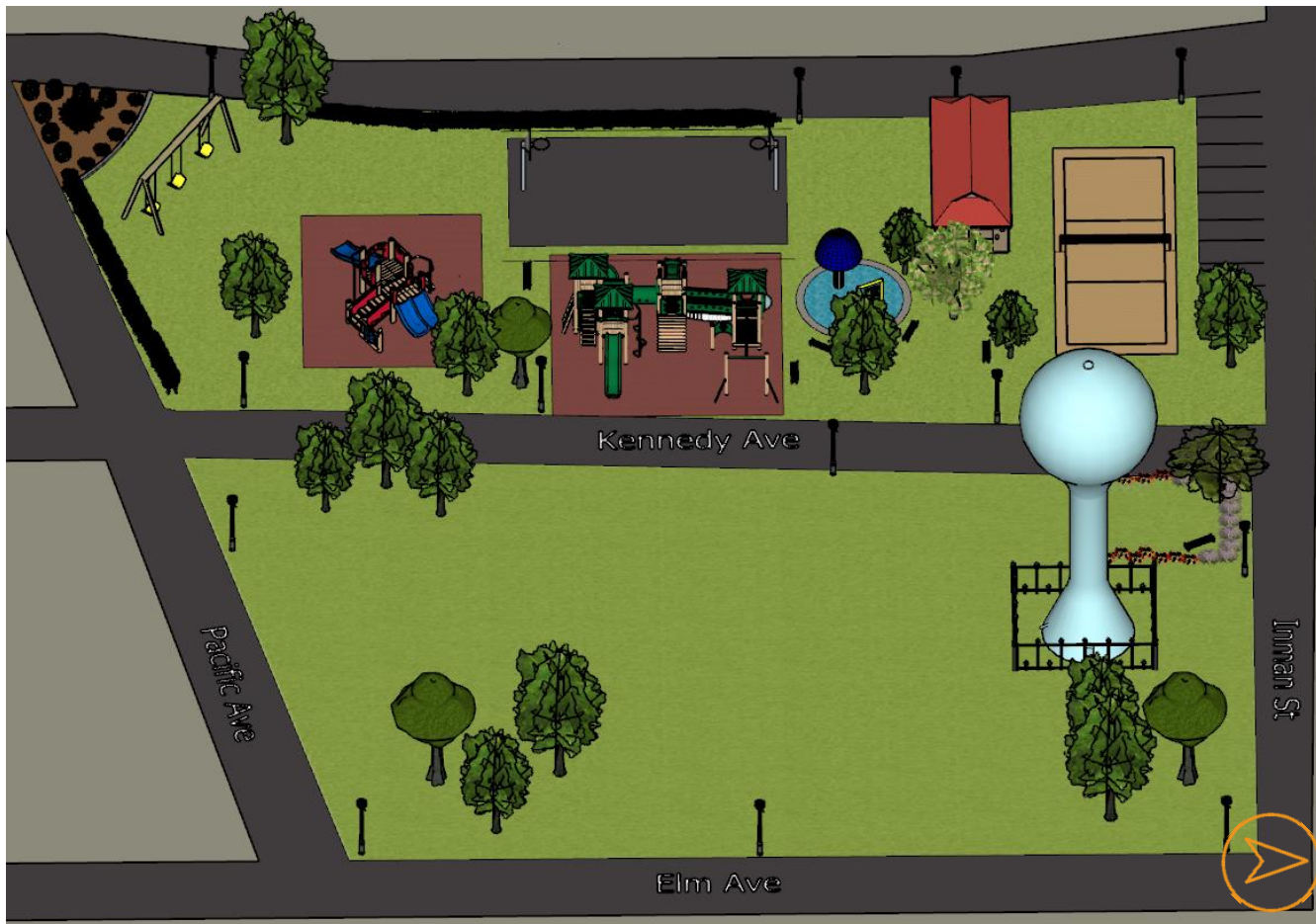


Figure 5, Park Rendering Overview



Figure 6, Park Rendering



Figure 7, Park Rendering View from Pacific St.

Kennedy Street Closure Renderings

Figure 8 displays a rendering of the Clever City Park if Kennedy Avenue between Inman St. and Pacific St. was closed and converted into green space. Since the City owns Kennedy Ave and the lot across the street, this allows for park expansion, which would increase opportunities for amenities and green space.



Figure 8, Park Rendering with Kennedy St. Removal

Funding Sources

The following funding sources provide opportunities and assistance for park upgrades and additions. Studying the feasibility of these opportunities and pursuing options will assist the City in implementing the community's desired park updates.

| Funding Sources | |
|--|---|
| KaBOOM Playground Grants | KaBOOM offers playground grants with assistance to construct or build playground equipment, adventure and sports courts, or creative play grants. |
| Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant | The Land and Water Conservation Fund provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. |
| Lowe's Charitable & Educational Foundation | The Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation supports nonprofit organizations and public institutions that support public education and community improvement and has grant funds available for playground projects (\$5,000-\$25,000). |
| Placemaking Grant | The Placemaking Grant's goal is to transform underused or unused public spaces into vibrant gathering places accessible to everyone. |
| AARP Community Challenge Grant | The AARP Community Challenge grant program is part of the nationwide AARP Livable Communities initiative that helps communities become great places to live. The program is intended to help communities make immediate improvements and jump-start long-term progress. |
| Shade Structure Grant | The American Academy of Dermatology's Shade Structure Grant Program awards grants to public schools and non-profit organizations for installing permanent shade structures for outdoor locations that are not protected from the sun, such as playgrounds. Each grant is valued at up to \$8,000. |
| Parks/Recreation Property Tax Levy | This property tax levy allows up to \$0.20 on every \$100 of assessed value for park and recreation purposes. |
| General Revenue Sales Tax | A general revenue sales tax may be imposed at a rate of .50 of a cent, .875 cent or 1 cent. A portion of this can be used to fund park improvements. |
| Storm Water/Parks Sales Tax | The tax may be used for storm water control, parks, or both. The tax may not exceed .50 of a cent. |
| Collaborative Updates | Park improvements can be made in conjunction with other city projects such as exterior upgrades to neighboring buildings and street improvements. For example, upgrades to City Hall could be paired with park updates to include better access to the park, and increased parking and lighting. Proposed future street improvements along Elm and Kennedy allow for the possibility of increased parking, sidewalks, trails, and storm water management. |

References

TheGrantHelpers.com. (n.d.). Parks & Recreation Grants. Retrieved from

<http://www.thegranthelpers.com/municipal-grants/parks---recreation-grants>

John M. Patriarche Park. Retrieved from

<https://www.cityofeastlansing.com/Facilities/Facility/Details/John-M-Patriarche-Park-18>

United States Census Bureau. (2017). *American Fact Finder*. Retrieved from factfinder.census.gov:

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>