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Executive Summary

The first Spring Valley Parks and Recreation Plan is the result of an intensive six-month planning process undertaken by the Spring Valley Parks Board and the assistance of the North Central Illinois Council of Governments. It is based on a review of the entire community, an analysis of the parks system, and the needs and concerns of the residents. The first meeting was held in August 2002. A public meeting was held in October at the City Hall. Residents and invited guests were asked to offer their opinions on numerous subjects dealing with the city parks. Many good ideas resulted from the meeting and helped serve as a guide for the important principles of the plan. Once adopted by the Parks Board, it went to the City Council for final adoption in March 2003.

Spring Valley residents have a strong parks system available for their use. This plan aims to strengthen the existing parks and develop a proactive thought process for future facilities. One of the overarching goals of the plan is to use it to obtain state and federal parks and recreation grants. A parks plan serves as a necessary component in order to qualify for the competitive grants. It functions as a guide to enhance the parks system over the next 20 years.

The city is located on a particularly opportunistic land area. The Illinois River is a vital asset and must be taken care of properly. It is a great source for aquatic recreation and wildlife. The surrounding floodplain zones should be further utilized for outdoor enthusiasts. Development should be restricted whenever possible in flood prone areas. Spring Valley enjoys many elevation changes that few towns have in the primarily flat region. The land rises more than 100' overlooking the river, offering spectacular views. Two abandoned mines can also be found in the city. The Mine #1 has been proclaimed as a vital site for a number of trails. Its hill is often used for sledding when snowfall is prominent. Mine #3 is currently vacant, though its prospects for walking trails would greatly enhance the connectivity of Spring Valley and make the city more pedestrian-friendly.

Little population change has occurred since 1960, though the city did grow by 2.9% over the last decade. There is little need for new parks at the current growth rate, as the existing parks are generally maintained well and are sufficient for the relative size of the city. Statistics indicate a slightly decreasing population for Bureau County through 2020. As the population continues to increase in age and it loses a portion of its inhabitants younger than 25, Spring Valley must analyze the programs and facilities to serve the changing demands of its residents. There has been little change regarding the ethnic makeup of the residents. The education and income levels continue to increase concurrent with national trends.

Seven parks make up the Spring Valley parks system, not including parks found at Kennedy and Lincoln Schools. Each is a neighborhood level park with the exception of Kirby Park, which serves as a community park. Baltikauski Park was the latest park added to the system in the early 1990's. Most of the park components are in good to excellent shape. However,

each park has some minor safety concerns that must be fixed to bring them to the desired level. As stated above, the existing parks should serve as the primary priority while keeping an eye on changes with the demographics and development trends.

The five long-range goal categories, along with the corresponding objectives and policies, are the backbone of the plan that acts as the main guide. The categories include: general parks development; park programs; funding; spatial distribution and park development; and maintenance and safety. While each policy is important, a handful can be identified as particularly imperative for future implementation:

- Review and formulate updates to the plan as needed, at least every five years.
- Provide at least 10.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as a guide for future planning.
- Encourage cooperation and consensus among residents and the Parks Board by actively promoting residential and citizen group input through parks planning sessions and user surveys.
- Coordinate sports programs by season to encourage a wider user group and ensure that residents have the opportunity to participate in any activity.
- The Parks Board shall institute a yearly evaluation process of existing programs to ensure that they are properly managed and meet the needs and expectations of those involved.
- Develop partnerships with private and non-profit firms to take advantage of possible underutilized programs that organizations have that aim to help with community functions.
- Utilize state and federal grant programs for the acquisition and development of parks and trails. Particular attention should be given to the building of baseball/softball and soccer fields.
- As new development extends the Spring Valley corporate limits, require neighborhood parks be within 0.25 miles of each household.
- Mandate that a percentage of land or money from any new development be devoted to either new parkland within the development or for improvements to existing nearby parks.
- Develop the Mine #1 property as a source for passive recreation enjoyment.
- An annual maintenance program should be instituted to bring improvements to the highest priority items based on age and wear.
- Install a uniform signage system at each park to clearly identify the name and any rules and regulations for usage.

The priority items are broken into time ranges of 0-5 and 6-10 years. Certain items can be instituted with little financing and political acceptability while others will take additional planning and funding. The implementation section is the most important component of the plan. It identifies a schedule during which these can take place. Many greenways grants are

also revealed. These sources can make achieving the policies much easier and quicker. Spring Valley can then be more creative in its management of the parks system.

This plan takes a concerted effort on behalf of the Parks Board, City Council, and residents to put it into action throughout its lifespan. This vision must receive the backing of each elected and appointed city official. Solutions for problems do not result in the short term but rather over a long period of forethought. This is only a plan; the real work begins following its adoption. It is a working document. That is, the plan and its components should be followed as much as possible and updated when required, but it should not act as a limitation if alternatives evolve over time. The implementation of the plan ultimately decides the degree of success of the plan. The plan is not intended to sit on a shelf but to be used by public officials and private residents to retain a high standard of quality of life. The Spring Valley Parks and Recreation Plan serves as a benchmark for future parks efforts.

Dear Spring Valley City Council Members,

The 2003 Spring Valley Parks and Recreation Plan is the result of an intensive six-month planning process undertaken by the Spring Valley Parks Board and the assistance of the North Central Illinois Council of Governments. It is based on a review of the entire community, an analysis of the parks system, and the needs and concerns of the residents. The first meeting was held in August 2002. A public meeting was held in October at the City Hall. Residents and invited guests were asked to offer their opinions on numerous subjects dealing with the city parks. Many good ideas resulted from the meeting and helped serve as a guide for the important principles of the plan.

It is important that the City Council and Parks Board have the same goals for the improvement of the parks. In order for the plan to be put into action, the Parks Board must be able to receive the proper support from the City Council.

- 1) The top priority for the City is the continued plan to apply for an Illinois Department of Natural Resources Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant for the Coal Mine Park #1 site. This will require the City to devote a portion of its budget to the matching portion of the grant for the development of the many trails and other amenities that will be part of the site plan. The land donation and development of this property will complete a process started many years ago. In addition, the land donation can provide additional funding for other projects within the city. Completing the Mine #1 property will in turn generate momentum for other parks improvements. The proposed site plan is included within this memo.
- 2) The next priority should be to obtain and/or develop land for additional team sports fields, such as for baseball and soccer. A site plan for possible enhancements is also found proceeding this memo.

Besides the physical parks improvements, many organizational items must be serious priorities. The Parks Board needs an annual budget that it can depend on to do the most minimal maintenance projects. This includes ensuring that the parks are safe and that each resident has the ability to access a recreation site. There must be a high level of cooperation between the City Council and Parks Board. The Parks Board is there to help the City Council maintain and develop the City's parks. A list of prospective parks improvements and preliminary costs are attached.

This plan takes a concerted effort on behalf of the Parks Board, City Council, and residents to put it into action throughout its lifespan. This vision must receive the backing of each elected and appointed city official. Solutions require input from everyone. This is only a plan; the real work begins following its adoption. It is a working document and should be followed as much as possible and updated when required. The Spring Valley Parks and Recreation Plan serves as a benchmark for future parks efforts.

Sincerely,
Spring Valley Parks Board

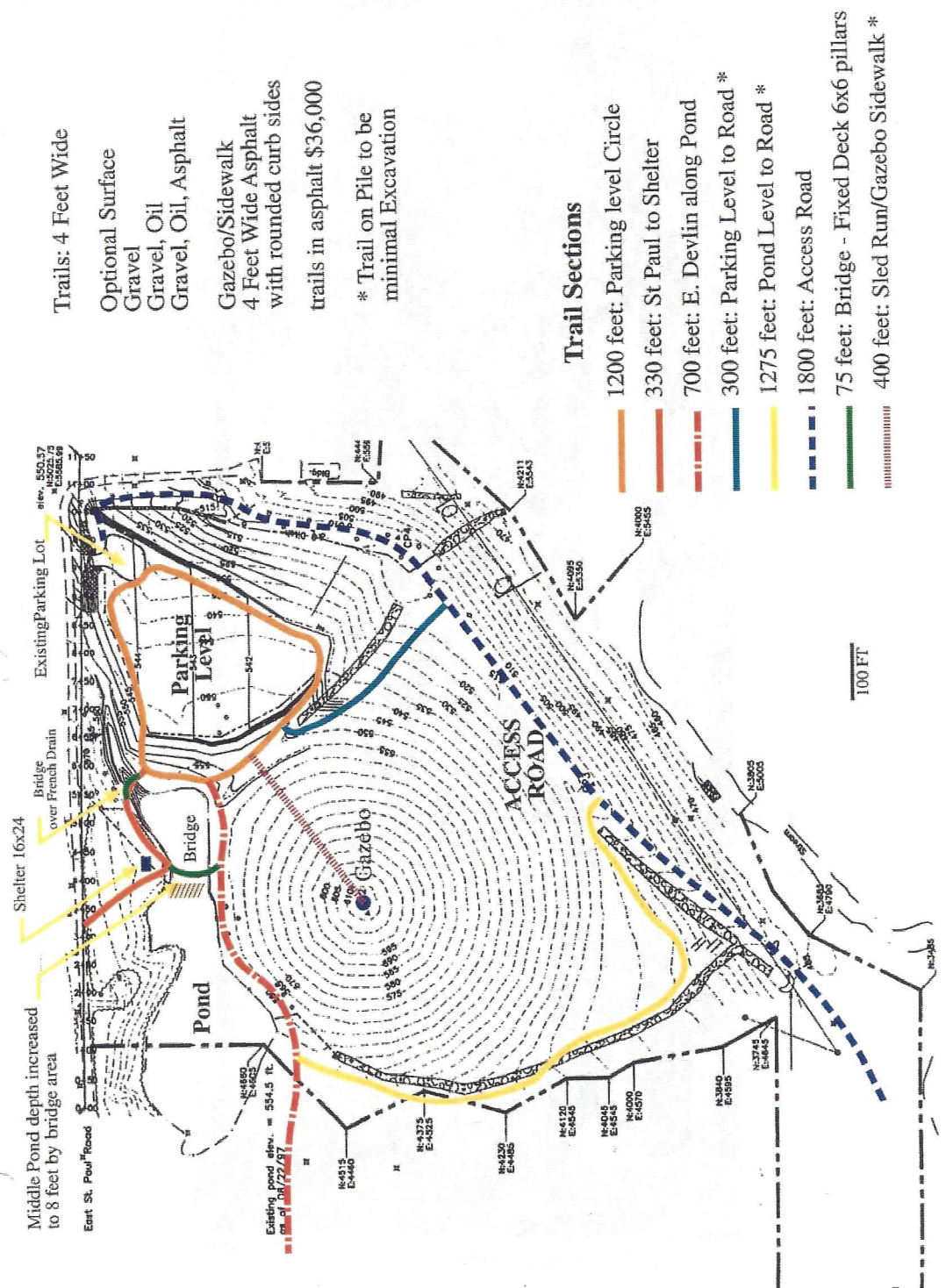
2003 Parks Projects

The following is an itemized list of projects that should be undertaken by the City of Spring Valley for 2003.

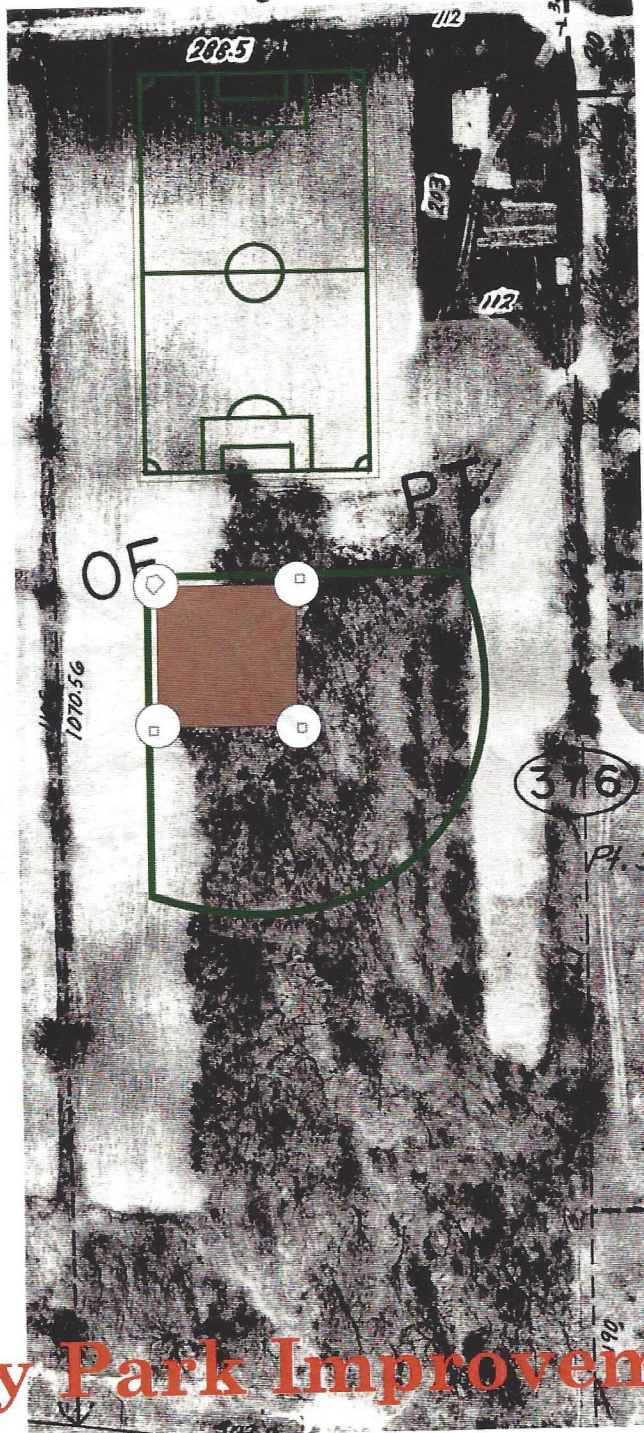
- 1) **The most important project for the Spring Valley parks is to begin work on the Coal Mine #1 site.** Once the Parks Plan is complete, preliminary work can commence on the OSLAD grant application. The city engineer should determine cost estimates on each of the site improvements so the City can set aside its portion of the funding.
- 2) **Improvements to Kirby Park.** This includes leveling the soccer field. It could possibly be used as a flag football field. Lights could be installed for night games. Grants should be explored for the lights. A softball field is needed on this site as well. The city engineer should determine cost estimates for each of these projects. Five adult swings would cost \$125, two infant swings would cost \$120, two animal swings (lion and dolphin) would cost \$200, and new chains for the swings would cost \$1,000. Safety fill for the jungle gym at the east end of the park would cost \$500. Foley Field bleachers are \$3,000 and the fill around the bleachers and a path to the dugouts is an additional \$750. A new batting cage net would cost \$500.
- 3) **Refurbish the Savage Park baseball field.** Most importantly, the grass must be maintained to ensure a safe playing surface. Dirt on the baselines and mound should be loosened. The work on the field would be about \$1,000. Community volunteers would be a great resource to keep the fields playable and be more cost effective.
- 4) **Resurface the tennis courts at Kirby Park.** Currently, many cracks on the courts create an uneven playing surface. The surfacing would likely cost at least \$10,000 for a quality product that would survive many years. Sport Court Industries guarantees their courts for 20 years. Their cost for both courts would be \$40,000-\$50,000. In addition, the basketball court should be resurfaced. This cost would likely be between \$8,500 and \$10,000.
- 5) **Construct a butterfly garden at City Hall.** This would develop the underutilized land into a passive recreation site. A landscape plan would identify the different site amenities to be included. An Illinois Conservation Foundation grant should be explored to help fund the project. Also, the old playground equipment that had been used at City Hall should be moved to other city parks.
- 6) **Start plans for a skateboard park.** The City should determine where the park would be most feasible and what components would be most desirable. Once this is accomplished, a cost analysis must be completed. Due to the recent popularity of skateboard parks, many construction grants are available.
- 7) **Coordinate recreational programs.** Each year, the directors of the respective programs should meet to coordinate the schedules to best incorporate as many users as possible and most efficiently utilize the recreational facilities. A centralized location must be available to publicize the activities. The public must be able to easily obtain forms and brochures.
- 8) **Hold a carnival to raise money for the parks.** This would create excitement amongst the residents and provide an additional funding source for the City.
- 9) **Set up annuity accounts, bonds, or CD's in place for replacement equipment.** The City should plan ahead for equipment upgrades and can have funding in place by properly managing the budgeted money.

- 10) **Find other sources of income.** The community businesses should be urged to contribute to the Spring Valley parks. This can be done through financial, land, or labor donations. Each would lessen the restraints on the City's behalf. The residents can also be encouraged to donate their money or time. Specific projects should be outlined to detail what the money would be used for.
- 11) **Upgrade Dakota Street Park.** Trees should be trimmed, fences should be fixed, and fresh paint is needed on the playground equipment.
- 12) **Improve the swimming pool.** The steps and the area under the diving area need welding. This would be estimated to cost about \$1,500. The pool motor and impeller should be reworked. The city engineer should be consulted to determine a price. About \$1,000 is needed for new chemical injectors.

Coal Mine Park #1 Improvements



Hall High School Ball Fields



Resess
Ball Field

North,
East & West
Hillside
"Bleacher"

K
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Y

P
A
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K

Kirby Park Improvements

What is a Park?

Parks can be the backbone of any town. They are the places of central interest for many people. They come in different sizes and shapes. Parks serve many functions in the course of a day. A great park is much more than a predetermined square footage of grass where people congregate. However, there is no set definition on how to build a park that will be successful. Neighborhood parks are as necessary as large community parks. They each serve different audiences and functions. Some of the world's greatest parks have had little money invested in them, while some famous park failures have had large capital expenditures. Streets and parks can dictate the health of a city. If there is a wealth of vitality, there will typically be an abundance of exciting possibilities for residents and visitors. Each park does have one common denominator: they have the ability to attract people for a variety of reasons. From the person looking to read a book underneath a shade tree to a jogger hoping to train for a marathon, parks offer the necessary relaxation and recreation opportunities in today's fast-paced society.

Though there is no set definition or design that will automatically be a town's centerpiece, many basic parts must be considered for every park. These are ideas that are not necessarily inherently known to the park's visitors but serve as the vital ingredients in most swaths of open space. These parts include the location relative to the natural environment, the location relative to the built environment, the identity, shape, audience, mixture of nearby land uses, the ability to aid diverse functions and activities, and the environmental enhancements.

Many parks take advantage of the sun's angle to provide natural lighting. Trees of all sizes make this more distinctive. They create what could be referred to as "lines of demarcation." This contrast attracts distinct options for use and the type of person likely to be attracted. Weather is a very real concern of park users. The need for sun may be more advantageous during cool fall days when the rays provide needed heat. It may also be sought after by those hoping for increased warmth beside the town swimming pool. The shade provided by trees or shelters is often a prime site for picnics and can be more desirable to the elderly. It is a needed relief on hot summer days.

Besides providing places for changes in body temperature, the need for a mix of sun and shade breaks up the continuity of a park. A section of land that is consistently in sun or conversely is always shaded holds little visual forthcomings. If the park can be viewed in one glance and holds little stimulation, a person is likely to not return as often. The use of sun and shade provides a distinctive feeling for the visitor. A park in full sun looks dull and uninteresting. It is only a park from the perspective that there is no profitable development located on the land. Shade presents the illusion of constant dreariness. Parks that are dark do not offer the sense of security needed that appeal to children. In addition, shade provided from trees or buildings can establish a permanent sense of enclosure and separation from the outside surroundings. While this enclosure is often a vital component to successful parks,

people should not feel removed from the neighboring properties. This is further discussed later.

The location relative to the built environment is integral. A park located within an industrial park is not likely to be successful when analyzed by itself. But it may be a necessary greenway within an abundance of heavy machinery and industries and may be home to many workers. Having parks where people have to go out of their way to pass them is similar to a store locating in a poor market. People are generally more likely to use a park if they are able to view it more often and do not have to go out of their way to pass it. Most parks are typically located near residential developments. This is often because there is a greater collection of people at more hours of the day. Many types of people utilize parks. Families use them after work hours, children use them during the summer, office workers use them during lunch hours, and peddlers use them to sell crafts. Therefore, there is no area where a park cannot properly function if it is located within the right marketplace.

Parks near areas of residences are solid sites because of the inherent need for recreational opportunities. These types of parks often contain playgrounds and ballfields that appeal to all ages. Areas near commercial or office uses typically draw a limited in type, but substantial in number of people. The use of these parks usually peaks between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. when people are on lunch breaks and get an opportunity for fresh air. These are often not parks in the perceived sense; many times, there is little chance for recreation. Areas surrounding fountains with benches, landscaping, sculpture gardens, or public art are popular congregation points. In fact, there does not need to be grass for there to be a park. Most urban parks have more hard surface area than other parks. Some cities have commercial districts with picnic tables or seating areas on closed streets to promote workers and visitors to stop and mingle.

The most successful parks support a mixture of land uses. As with the most exuberant shopping or historic districts, the longer an area is open to as many people as possible, the more healthy it will be. It should have a diversity of economic and social uses. Any successful place must offer a clear remembrance for four periods of time. The first is the initial time that one views a locale. This is the most important and is the lasting perception that someone has of the place. This perception will determine whether a person will return to the site. Second, the area must be open for as many of a day's 24 hours as possible. An area that is only open from 9 to 5 is virtually two distinct districts. Third, it should be open as long as possible for each of a week's seven days. If the location is closed on weekends, it will lose some of its appeal. Finally, it should be open year-round. The seasons must not dictate when or how the area is used. This is particularly true of parks, which can be utilized differently depending on the month of the year. The combination of uses generally includes residential uses. This use maintains a set number of people are in the district at the hours when people are not working or shopping.

Not every area is conducive to supporting greenspaces. The days of the Urban Renewal movement proved this point. Large tracts of buildings cannot be torn down to provide lower-density developments and open space and expect the “park” to be successful. Many parks found among high-rise apartment buildings in urban areas are locations for crime infestation. These parks have no identity. They are merely unbuilt stretches of land that may contain grass, trees, or benches. The parks should not serve as barriers to the operation of the city. It should bring diverse functions by creating a joint facility. Most solid parks are identified by the people who use them and the activities that take place. There is a general feeling of home because the park clientele is similar with each visit. The visitors can relate to the comparable backgrounds of the users, whether they are kids or adults.

Parks do not have a definitive shape. However, they do have a definitive space. Parks can be square, rectangular, circular, or any other odd shape. The space gives a park its characterization. As with prime real estate, it must be used efficiently. It must have a general layout that does not have conflicting uses. For example, joggers cannot deviate into the space of the playground users. The space is also given definition from the surrounding land uses. A mix of nearby land uses gives meaning to the space. A park enclosed on four sides by buildings stands out. People understand that the space is separate from the nearby edifices but do not feel removed from the immediate backdrop. There is a small difference between parks between space being enclosed and too confined. The buildings or trees nearby ideally should not create the feeling of isolation. The purpose of a park is not to portray or imply that a person is in a jail.

Having parks near places of higher density serves an important purpose: the users feel a heightened sense of security. The more eyes placed on the park, the greater degree of safety one will feel. However, it must be noted that merely having houses, shops, or civic uses in abundance nearby does not automatically create security. The properties should be facing the park. Not only does this mean that more people can observe the park happenings, but the park has a more open feeling. This causes the park to be more inviting.

A solid park is preferably suited to the audience that it is attempting to entice. For example, a recreational area comprising mainly playground equipment would not be well-situated near a retirement community. The size of the park usually resembles the type of user that is attracted. A small neighborhood level park is unlikely to serve many different functions. It may be aimed at one portion of the neighboring population but cannot please every recreation habit. A community level park should serve many different functions, including those that appeal to a wide range of age groups. It fails if it cuts itself off from the general makeup of the residents.

Nearly anything can be classified as a park. The only thing it must do is act as a diversion for residents and visitors. Parks are necessary to improve a town’s quality of life. Besides beautifying the visual landscape, they are needed to enhance the overall health of the community. The sections following in this plan will review local and national standards for

parks and recreation programs, evaluate the town's current resources, and develop policies for future parks enhancements and development.

Review of Existing Plans

Some of the material is derived from the *Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan 1970*. The Parks and Recreational Facilities section of the plan contains information that is still relevant today. The population of the town has remained at nearly the same level. At that time, there were 42.2 acres of parks and recreation facilities. This number has changed little over the last few decades. Most of the land was devoted to active recreational pursuits. While some of the problems noted in the plan have been addressed, many of the solutions then could be implemented today for each individual park. These will be expanded upon through the course of this plan.

The 1970 comprehensive plan expected a population of 8,680 by 1990. Since the population has not reached this level, there has not been as great a need for additional programs and space. The existing infrastructure has usually proved to be sufficient. A number of goals were created for the town parks. Following are a few of the recommendations and their applications in the decades since the plan's release:

1. **Improve Kirby Park by expanding it to the south, increasing the size of the parking lot, restricting parking along the south side of Devlin Street.** The community pool is now located south of Kirby Park. The parking lot has not been expanded. While the number of parking spaces is sufficient the majority of the time, it cannot support larger events such as community festivals or sports games. Parking is still allowed on the south side of Devlin Street. This street is rather narrow and can create safety problems if cars are parked on both sides of the street.
2. **Develop three large city parks in each major residential area: an 8-acre park directly west of Webster Street in the Webster Park area; a 10-acre park directly west of Terry Street and Trinity Place extended; and a 12-acre park between Public Road and Ramblewood Lane.** There has only been one park constructed since 1970. These sites were all denoted because of anticipated residential growth. Though some small-scale residential construction has taken place, it is not to the extent to support larger parks.
3. **Propose that with any major residential subdivision, good usable land be reserved for a neighborhood park.** This is a sound policy and one that will be alluded to later in this plan. However, without it being included in the city's subdivision ordinances and with strong city backing, developers can easily overlook it. Few, if any, major residential subdivisions have been built since the 1970 plan was written.

4. **Investigate what federal programs, such as open space grants, are available to help finance recommended improvements.** Spring Valley has explored these opportunities for years, particularly with the funding of a park on the former Mine #1 property. This plan will be used as a guide to identify what grants may be available, how they can be used, and where they should be utilized.

Definitions

Prior to going into more depth on the current and future role of the Spring Valley parks system, it is important to define a number of the terms that will be used throughout the plan.

Parks – Though parks can be described and illustrated in a variety of ways, the term will be used in a rather simplistic manner. A park is any part of land that is utilized for the purpose of relaxation or recreation. There is no limitation on the size or shape of the parcel. Parks include open space, greenways, trails, natural resource areas, or indoor athletic facilities. This plan will primarily analyze publicly available lands that are not located on school properties.

Active Recreation - Active recreation involves spaces that are suitable for and often used for intensive recreation. Active recreation spaces are usually large and relatively treeless, allowing for sports fields or used as festival settings. Specific uses include tennis courts, soccer fields, playgrounds, skateboard parks, and aquatic facilities. Active recreation areas are necessary to provide for physical fitness opportunities.

Passive Recreation – Passive recreation activities require a small amount of physical effort or low intensity recreation. The term passive implies inactivity, which is not entirely accurate when applied to passive recreation. The purpose of passive areas is to give users a unique place that allows for informal recreation, encourages socializing, and to enjoy the park's beauty. Passive recreation areas can range from open meadows to spaces providing benches, trees, and pathways. Passive uses include walking, reading, pet exercise areas, or bicycling on trails.

Sub-Neighborhood Park – Sub-neighborhood parks or mini-parks are usually found within densely populated neighborhoods to meet unique recreation needs. They are often no more than an acre in size and contain amenities such as a playground or picnic tables. The park is aimed towards the nearby residents who live within a convenient walking distance of 0.25 miles.

Neighborhood Park – Neighborhood parks pertain to a more broad usage. A strong neighborhood park serves about 2,500 people within a service radius of 0.5 miles. The minimum size is about three acres. Facilities can include playground equipment, tennis

courts, ball fields, or a picnic shelter. The area can contain active or passive recreation features. The park generally complements the neighborhood by blending in using landscaping or similar raw materials. The location should not be on a major thoroughfare, increasing the safety of the pedestrians.

School Park – School parks complement the nearby school site. Most school parks are located near elementary schools, whose parks usually contain playground equipment and are heavily used only during normal school hours. The participation is directed toward young children. High school parks, which can contain many different athletic fields, are generally not available to the public due to the extensive use by physical education classes and sports teams. The school park size is similar to the sub-neighborhood park. It serves a smaller residential population within walking distance of the school.

Community Park – Community parks are places where larger events are held. They contain a mix of active and passive recreation uses. The community park is usually the largest park found in a town. The town's recreation needs should be met through this park. The minimum size is 10 acres. It serves a population over greater than 5,000. It services a radius of at least one mile. At least 2.5 acres of space should be set aside per 1,000 people. It usually serves as the focal point for meeting the recreation needs of all age groups at one facility.

District Park – District parks are the largest classification of parks within a city and emphasize passive recreation needs. They may contain amenities that are not found in any other parks in the town. Such aspects can include a baseball/softball field complex, a community pool, nature areas, or boating facilities. District parks are either found in larger cities that can support such facilities or are shared on a regional basis.

Greenways – Greenways are also known as parkways, stream and waterway corridors, park connectors, and trails. They do not always connect parks as formal trails. However, they do provide a sense of connectivity between streets, schools, or neighborhoods. They often benefit the ecosystem and wildlife when the natural state of the land is maintained. The most common greenways are linear pathways that transport pedestrians by means of walking, bicycling, or some small motorized terrain vehicles. The number and length of a town's greenways varies due to the built and natural environments. Many greenways require the coordination and cooperation from multiple jurisdictions, municipalities, or counties in order to be successful.

Demographic Profile

Population Characteristics

Table 1 – City of Spring Valley - Population

| | Spring Valley | ± % change | Bureau County | ± % change | Illinois | ± % change |
|------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| 1940 | 5,010 | -- | 37,600 | -- | 7,897,241 | -- |
| 1950 | 4,916 | -1.9% | 37,711 | 0.3% | 8,712,176 | 10.3% |
| 1960 | 5,371 | 9.3% | 37,594 | -0.3% | 10,081,158 | 15.7% |
| 1970 | 5,605 | 4.4% | 38,541 | 2.5% | 11,110,285 | 10.2% |
| 1980 | 5,822 | 3.9% | 39,114 | 1.5% | 11,427,409 | 2.9% |
| 1990 | 5,246 | -11.0% | 35,688 | -9.6% | 11,430,602 | 0.0% |
| 2000 | 5,398 | 2.9% | 35,503 | -0.5% | 12,419,293 | 8.6% |

Source: 1940 - 2000 U.S. Census

Spring Valley is the second largest municipality in Bureau County. The city has lost more than 200 residents since 1970. The population of Bureau County has fluctuated greatly over time (from an all-time high of 44,000 in 1910 to its current low of 35,500). The population of Spring Valley declined during the 80's, following the trend of Bureau County. The decline was followed by a 2.9% increase to the current population of 5,398. However, the population has risen little since 1888, when 3,000 people called Spring Valley home. A solid park system, which includes recreational opportunities for people of all ages, is an important quality of life pull. It can become a determining factor for families who are looking to move into the area.

The state's median age for 1990 was 32.8 years of age, which was 3.1 years younger than the residents of Spring Valley. The median age of Spring Valley was virtually identical to that of Bureau County. The median age of Bureau County increased more than three years between 1990 and 2000 to 39.3 years of age. This has followed a trend that is based on a number of factors. First, family sizes have become smaller due to lower fertility rates. Second, more couples have waited before having children. Third, the Baby Boomers are moving closer to retirement ages. Finally, the number of teenagers and young adults has decreased because of the perceived and real lack of opportunities in the region. The increase in the median age has a great effect on the types of services the City must offer.

There are a few ways towns can keep a steady or increasing population base. Services and activities should be offered that are directed toward youths. Families with children need reasons to live in Spring Valley. Good schools and a strong parks and recreation program are essential. The older population will demand more senior-oriented activities. Senior housing will be

increasingly desired as the median age of the town rises. A solid healthcare system should be a goal for the entire population but particularly people nearing retirement age.

Table 2 – Spring Valley Population by Age Group

| Age Range | 1990 | | 2000 | |
|------------------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | Total Persons | Percent | Total Persons | Percent |
| Under 5 | 347 | 6.6% | 313 | 5.8% |
| 5 – 9 | 410 | 7.8% | 350 | 6.5% |
| 10 – 14 | 362 | 6.9% | 358 | 6.6% |
| 15 – 19 | 372 | 7.1% | 414 | 7.7% |
| 20 – 24 | 306 | 5.8% | 278 | 5.2% |
| 25 – 34 | 751 | 14.3% | 667 | 12.4% |
| 35 – 44 | 713 | 13.6% | 788 | 14.6% |
| 45 – 54 | 504 | 9.6% | 717 | 13.3% |
| 55 – 64 | 456 | 8.7% | 488 | 9.0% |
| 65 – 74 | 548 | 10.4% | 431 | 8.0% |
| 75 – 84 | 369 | 7.0% | 387 | 7.2% |
| Above 84 | 108 | 2.1% | 207 | 3.8% |
| Total Population | 5,246 | | 5,398 | |
| Median Age | 35.9 | | 39.3 | |

Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

Two age groups had the largest decreases in population. One was the 25-34 age group, which fell from 751 to 667 people. This was a change from 14.3% to 12.4% of the population. The decrease in this age group may be contributed to by a couple of factors. The first may be an increasing number of young people going on to college and the second being the lack of jobs for these people to come back to after obtaining their college degree. The 65-74 age group had the largest decrease. It decreased from 548 to 431 people. Two groups had the largest increases. The first was for those between 45 and 54 years of age. This group climbed from 9.6% to 13.3% of Spring Valley’s population. The second was for the 85 and above age group. This group nearly doubled in population and increased from 2.1% to 3.8% of the town’s population. Each age group (with the exception of the 15-19 category) for people 34 or younger had a decrease. Each age group (with the exception of the 65-74 category) for people 35 and older had an increase.

Different age groups require different recreational requirements. The 15-19 group typically are more involved in team sports; 20-34 year-olds require adult-sized sports fields but have equal uses between team and individual activities; people 35-54 partake in more passive interests and require space for their young children. The ratio of males to females can help determine what types of programs are offered. There are only slightly more females than males in Spring Valley, not a true indicator that more activities aimed toward females should be recommended.

Table 3 – Bureau County Population by Age Group

| Age Range | 1990 | | 2000 | |
|------------------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | Total Persons | Percent | Total Persons | Percent |
| Under 5 | 2,330 | 6.5% | 2,094 | 5.9% |
| 5 – 9 | 2,768 | 7.8% | 2,407 | 6.8% |
| 10 – 14 | 2,691 | 7.5% | 2,567 | 7.2% |
| 15 – 19 | 2,561 | 7.2% | 2,683 | 7.6% |
| 20 – 24 | 1,903 | 5.3% | 1,675 | 4.7% |
| 25 – 34 | 4,917 | 13.8% | 4,015 | 11.3% |
| 35 – 44 | 4,971 | 13.9% | 5,298 | 14.9% |
| 45 – 54 | 3,708 | 10.4% | 4,926 | 13.9% |
| 55 – 64 | 3,345 | 9.4% | 3,539 | 10.0% |
| 65 – 74 | 3,454 | 9.7% | 2,918 | 8.2% |
| 75 – 84 | 2,256 | 6.3% | 2,452 | 6.9% |
| Above 84 | 784 | 2.2% | 929 | 2.6% |
| Total Population | 35,688 | | 35,503 | |
| Median Age | 36.3 | | 39.6 | |

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Table 4 – Spring Valley Male/Female Ratios

| Sex | 1990 | | 2000 | |
|--------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | Total Persons | Percent | Total Persons | Percent |
| Male | 2,468 | 47.0% | 2,578 | 47.8% |
| Female | 2,778 | 53.0% | 2,820 | 52.2% |

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Population Projections

The State of Illinois predicts a virtually steadily decreasing population for Bureau County through 2020. A 2020 population of 34,384 would be nearly 5,000 less than the 1980 population of 39,114. The percentage of people 0-17 years of age is expected to decrease from 24.5 percent in 2000 to 23.1 percent by 2020. The percentage of people 65 years of age and older is expected to increase from 17.9 percent to 19.8 percent by 2020. According to the State, the median age would increase slightly from 38.3 to 40.1 years of age. This may be slightly inaccurate as the actual median age for Bureau County in 2000 was 39.6. The actual 2000 population of Bureau County was moderately lower than was projected.

Table 5 – Population Projections

| | Bureau County | % Change | Illinois | % Change |
|------|---------------|----------|------------|----------|
| 1990 | 35,688 | -- | 11,430,602 | -- |
| 2000 | 35,802 | 0.3% | 12,134,344 | 6.16% |
| 2005 | 35,458 | -1.0% | 12,382,598 | 2.05% |
| 2010 | 35,003 | -1.3% | 12,689,360 | 2.48% |
| 2015 | 34,673 | -1.0% | 13,011,266 | 2.54% |
| 2020 | 34,384 | -0.8% | 13,295,597 | 2.19% |

Source: 1990 Census and Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs projections

Households Characteristics

The average number of persons per household for Spring Valley remained virtually identical between 1990 and 2000, 2.44 versus 2.43. At the same time, the number decreased for Bureau County from 2.55 to 2.47. Families with children are typically the most frequent users of parks and recreation facilities. Out of 1,468 families in Spring Valley, 652 families (30.2 percent) had children aged 18 or younger. This number is not indicative of a real need for supplying programs aimed at families with young kids.

Table 6 – Household Characteristics Summary

| | Spring Valley | | Bureau County | |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| | <u>Number</u> | <u>Percent of Total</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>Percent of Total</u> |
| Total Households | 2,158 | - | 14,182 | - |
| Total Housing Units | 2,339 | - | 15,331 | - |
| Owner Occupied | 1,575 | 73.0% | 10,775 | 76.0% |
| Renter Occupied | 583 | 27.0% | 3,407 | 24.0% |
| Persons Per Household | 2.43 | - | 2.47 | - |
| Families | 1,468 | - | 9,890 | - |

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Ethnic Composition

Spring Valley is predominately made up of White residents with Hispanics being the next largest population group. The percentage of Hispanics is considerably higher than the rate for Bureau County. Changes in racial composition in Bureau County have also been relatively minor. The percentage of Caucasians has decreased very slightly over the past decade, from 98.2 to 95.7%.

Table 7 – Race and Hispanic Origin

| 1990 | White | % | Black | % | Hispanic* | % | Amer. Indian/ Eskimo/Aleut | % | Asian/ Pacific Islander | % |
|---------------|--------|------|-------|-----|-----------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|
| Spring Valley | 5,151 | 98.2 | 18 | 0.3 | 174 | 3.3 | 6 | 0.1 | 29 | 0.3 |
| Bureau County | 35,157 | 98.5 | 50 | 0.1 | 1,003 | 2.8 | 65 | 0.2 | 195 | 0.5 |
| 2000 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spring Valley | 5,168 | 95.7 | 41 | 0.8 | 359 | 6.7 | 9 | 0.2 | 24 | 0.4 |
| Bureau County | 34,365 | 96.8 | 116 | 0.3 | 1,732 | 4.9 | 61 | 0.2 | 182 | 0.5 |

* Note: Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race

Source: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census

Educational Attainment

The level of educational attainment in a community is often used to measure preparedness of the local labor force. It has a direct correlation between the type of occupations that are most prevalent and the income generated. The level of education has been proven to correspond to the type of recreation and frequency of involvement. People with higher levels of education generally pursue recreation more than those with lower levels of education. Those with higher levels of education also tend to stay active in more diverse recreational interests. Participation in certain sports and activities such as golf, tennis, swimming, and hiking are greater as the level of education increases. Typically, education levels dictate the amount of leisure time needed to participate recreationally.

Table 8 – Spring Valley Educational Attainment

| Education Level | 1990 | | 2000 | |
|---|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Population 25 years and older | 3,426 | 100 | 3,720 | 100 |
| Less than 9 th grade | 498 | 14.5 | 332 | 8.9 |
| 9 th to 12 th grade | 358 | 10.4 | 466 | 12.5 |
| High school diploma | 1,349 | 39.4 | 1,110 | 29.8 |
| Some college, no degree | 632 | 18.4 | 896 | 24.1 |
| Associate's degree | 203 | 5.9 | 268 | 7.2 |
| Bachelor's degree | 275 | 8.0 | 421 | 11.3 |
| Graduate or better degree | 111 | 3.2 | 227 | 6.1 |
| Percent high school grad or better | -- | 75.0 | -- | 78.5 |
| Percent bachelor's grad or better | -- | 11.3 | -- | 17.4 |

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

The table indicates that the level of educational attainment has steadily increased. This has closely resembled state and national trends. A higher percentage of residents are high school graduates or have associate's and bachelor's degrees. This is usually followed by a greater demand for recreational facilities.

Occupation

Studies have shown that the type of occupation has an effect on the demand for parks and recreation programs. As with the level of education and income, a person's occupation status will typically mean a more varied recreational association. The strenuous level of one's work has an inverse relationship to the type of activities are more likely to be chosen. A person who does more manual labor is likely to be in favor of passive recreation. Active recreational pursuits are the more likely choice of those whose work is more sedentary. The type of work could also indicate when parks are more likely to be used. For example, construction workers may have longer summer work hours than those in education. Not only is the construction industry more conducive to passive recreation, but there may be less time in which to utilize parkspace. Office workers would have more defined hours, where a park located near an office complex could serve employees on lunch breaks.

Table 9 – 2000 Spring Valley Employment Breakdowns

| Industry | Number Employed | Percent |
|--|-----------------|---------|
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining | 48 | 1.8 |
| Construction | 165 | 6.2 |
| Manufacturing | 513 | 19.1 |
| Wholesale Trade | 125 | 4.7 |
| Retail Trade | 448 | 16.7 |
| Transportation and warehousing, utilities | 173 | 6.5 |
| Information | 62 | 2.3 |
| FIRE (finance, insurance, real estate) | 156 | 5.8 |
| Professional, scientific, management, administrative | 99 | 3.7 |
| Educational, health and social services | 536 | 20.0 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services | 171 | 6.4 |
| Other services | 104 | 3.9 |
| Public administration | 82 | 3.1 |

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Income Levels

Just as the type of education can explain how much people will partake in recreational activities, there is also a relationship between family income and outdoor recreation activities. As discretionary income increases (income available after necessities are accounted for), so does the participation in certain activities. Certain sports require more financial resources in order to be

involved, such as golf and tennis. Equipment and fees for certain specific sites (i.e. golf courses) are needed.

Spring Valley has a per capita income nearly identical to that of Bureau County. Spring Valley has a slightly higher level of median family income and a lower median household income compared to Bureau County. Spring Valley has a very small percentage of its residents below the poverty level.

Table 10 – Per Capita Income

| | Spring Valley | Bureau County |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Per Capita Income (1999) | \$19,467 | \$19,542 |
| Median Family Income (1999) | \$50,348 | \$48,488 |
| Median Household Income (1999) | \$38,775 | \$40,233 |
| Percent of Population below Poverty Level (1999) | 3.2% | 5.4% |

Sources: 2000 U.S. Census

Nearly 41 percent of all households in Spring Valley have incomes of \$50,000 or greater. However, there are a higher percentage of households earning less than \$25,000 in Spring Valley than in Bureau County. This could be an indication that people may be less willing to pay fees for certain recreational programs. A household is defined as all the people who occupy a housing unit. A comparison of household income distribution in Spring Valley and Bureau County is provided on the next page:

Table 11 – Median Household Income

| Income Range | Spring Valley | | Bureau County | |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Number of Households | Percent Distribution | Number of Households | Percent Distribution |
| Less than \$10,000 | 127 | 5.9 | 978 | 6.9 |
| \$10,000-\$14,999 | 179 | 8.3 | 990 | 7.0 |
| \$15,000-\$24,999 | 376 | 17.4 | 1,988 | 14.0 |
| \$25,000-\$34,999 | 295 | 13.7 | 2,132 | 15.1 |
| \$35,000-\$49,999 | 298 | 13.8 | 2,563 | 18.1 |
| \$50,000-\$74,999 | 485 | 22.4 | 3,160 | 22.3 |
| \$75,000-\$99,999 | 258 | 11.9 | 1,487 | 10.5 |
| \$100,000-\$149,999 | 107 | 5.0 | 591 | 4.2 |
| \$150,000-\$199,999 | 31 | 1.4 | 111 | 0.8 |
| More than \$200,000 | 5 | 0.2 | 164 | 1.2 |

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

A family is defined as a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family. A comparison of family income distribution in Spring Valley and Bureau County is provided below:

Table 12 – Median Family Income

| Income Range | Spring Valley | | Bureau County | |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Number of Households | Percent Distribution | Number of Households | Percent Distribution |
| Less than \$10,000 | 17 | 1.2 | 340 | 3.4 |
| \$10,000-\$14,999 | 67 | 4.6 | 326 | 3.3 |
| \$15,000-\$24,999 | 233 | 15.8 | 1,114 | 11.2 |
| \$25,000-\$34,999 | 197 | 13.4 | 1,342 | 13.5 |
| \$35,000-\$49,999 | 213 | 14.5 | 2,033 | 20.5 |
| \$50,000-\$74,999 | 379 | 25.8 | 2,649 | 26.7 |
| \$75,000-\$99,999 | 226 | 15.4 | 1,332 | 13.4 |
| \$100,000-\$149,999 | 103 | 7.0 | 555 | 5.6 |
| \$150,000-\$199,999 | 31 | 2.1 | 100 | 1.0 |
| More than \$200,000 | 5 | 0.3 | 144 | 1.4 |

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Geography

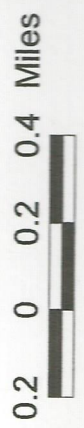
Spring Valley is located in southeastern Bureau County in north central Illinois. Only the City of Princeton has a greater population than Spring Valley within the county. U.S. Highway 6 and Illinois Routes 29 and 89 are the most heavily traveled arterial roads in Spring Valley. Interstate 80 is located just north of the city limits. Access to Interstate 39 is less than 10 miles away. There are currently 3,611 acres of land, or 3.89 square miles, within the Spring Valley corporate limits. This only increased slightly from 1990, when there were 3.8 square miles of annexed land. There were 3.7 square miles of annexed land as far back as 1970. The city has a current population density of 1,389.3 people per square mile. This is a decrease since 1960, when the density was 1,790 people per square mile. The annexation of many acres of land in northern Spring Valley, a decentralization of growth, and the slight population decrease are the reasons for the density decrease.

Spring Valley was originally founded for the purpose of mining coal. The Illinois River forms the southern border and is a source for many recreational opportunities. Therefore, a portion of the city is located within its 100-year floodplain. The city was built into a valley and has some steep changes in terrain north of the river. The land rises over 100' between the river and the area around Kirby Park on the city's southwest side. Few other cities in this generally flat portion of the state contain this opportunity for such sweeping vistas and natural areas ideally suited for parks. Soil maps would indicate which areas are more suitable for any building.

Existing Parks Map

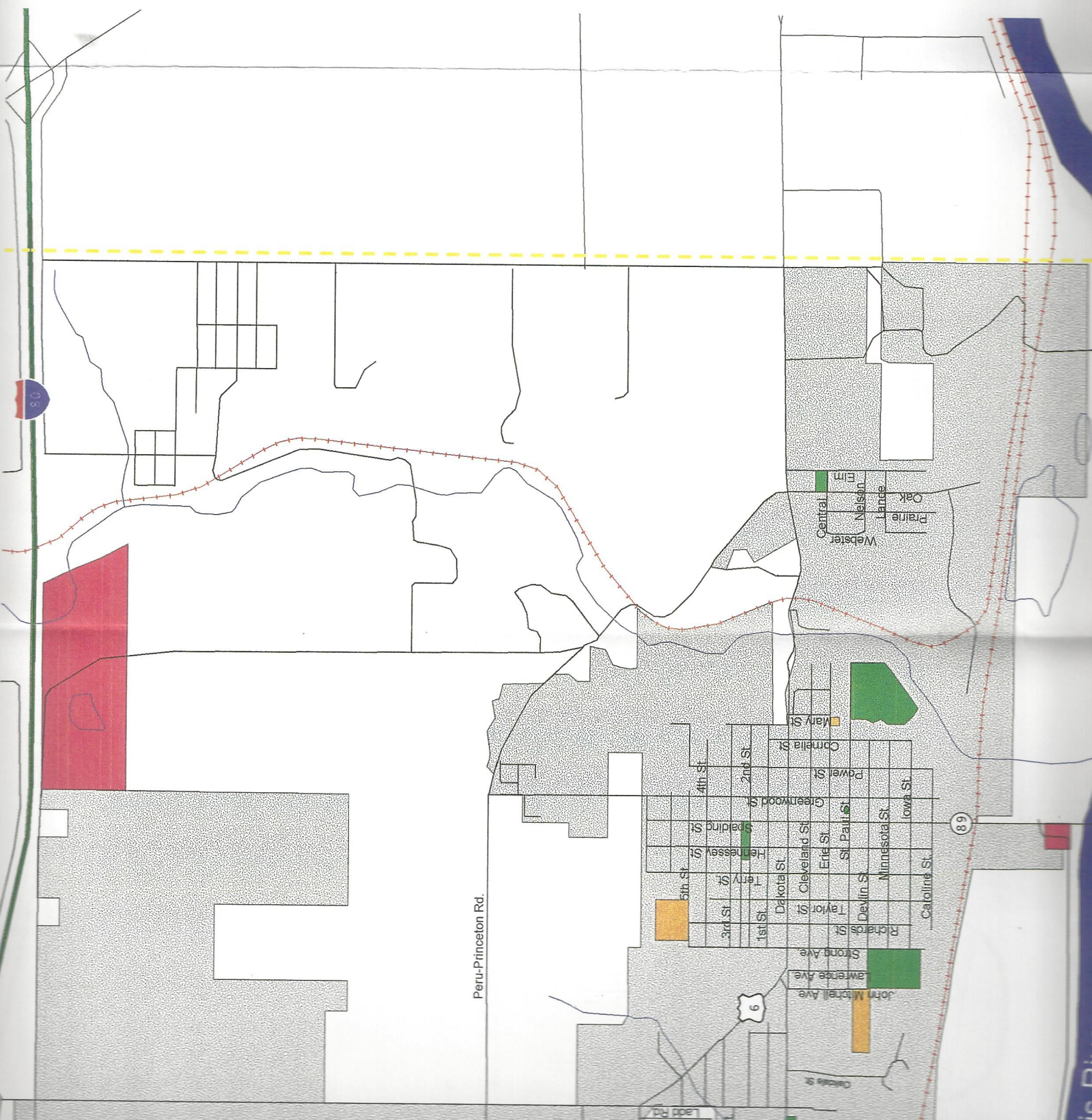
- Roads
- Interstate 80
- Railroads
- Streams
- Bureau County Line
- City Parks
- School Parks
- Other Parks
- SV City Limits

**MAP
#1**



March 2003

Note Map to be Used





Illinois River

Peru-Princeton Rd.

Spring Valley-Marguerite Hwy

6

29

89

Webster
Central
Elm
Nelson
Lance
Prairie
Oak

Mary St

Comelia St

Power St

Greenwood St

Spelling St

Hennessy St

Tenn St

3rd St

1st St

Dekota St

Cleveland St

Erie St

St Paul St

Devlin St

Minnesota St

John Mitchell Ave

Lawrence Ave

Strong Ave

Richard St

Taylor St

Capoline St

Iowa St

John Mitchell Ave

Lawrence Ave

Strong Ave

Richard St

Taylor St

Capoline St

Iowa St










Ladd Rd

Northwestern St

Puaski St

Caokole St

Service Area Map

-  Roads
-  Interstate 80
-  Railroads
-  Streams
-  Bureau County Line
-  0.25 Mile Buffers
-  0.5 Mile Buffer
-  City Parks
-  SV City Limits

MAP
#3



0.2 0 0.2 0.4 Miles



March 2003

Note: Map to be Used
With Parks Plan Text