

**STATEMENT OF POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR MASTER PLAN ACTIVITIES  
WITHIN THE MADISON PARK SYSTEM**

**AUTHORIZATION**

The Madison Board of Park Commissioners is the approving authority for policies governing the Madison Park system. This policy is intended to provide guidelines and procedures that will ensure individual park master plans are consistent with the most recently adopted City of Madison Park and Open Space Plan and Comprehensive Plan. This policy is also intended to sustainably guide the location and management of the infrastructure, recreational amenities, and habitats/land management areas in the Madison Park system. Each Park Master Plan will require Park Commission approval. Requests for changes or revisions to a proposed Park Master Plan will be evaluated and revisions will follow a similar process, including Park Commission approval to amend the park master plan.

Park Master Plans are intended to provide the following:

- Provide a long-term plan for recreational amenities in a park that is consistent with the Park and Open Space Plan (15-20 year horizon).
- Achieve an equitable distribution of recreational amenities and facility standards in parks across the city.
- Encourage participation by the public in the identification and assessment of amenities and infrastructure to maintain transparency in the park master plan process such that citizens, staff and elected officials are informed throughout the process.
- Aid budgetary decision-making by identifying deficiencies and maintenance needs across the system.
- Provide a framework for staff implementation of desired changes to the system as recommended in the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan and Park and Open Space Plan.

NOTE: This policy applies to all City of Madison parks in the system. Greenways or street ROWs (e.g., street ends or boulevards) are under the purview of City Engineering and/or Transportation. The Parks Division and/or the Board of Park Commissioners may make recommendations on activities or projects on adjacent city properties to promote consistency and compatibility with park plans. Recommendations will be advanced to the appropriate boards or managers regarding the activities on these properties. The final decision on non-park properties lies with the respective agency boards, commissions or staff.

**GUIDELINES FOR PARK MASTER PLANS AND REPORTS**

1. The master plan and report define the facilities, recreational amenities, and general landscape elements/land management areas to be developed in each park. For example, the park master plan will define the recreational amenities within a park (athletic fields, playgrounds, sport courts, forested buffer areas, etc.) but will not define specific locations of benches nor individual trees. The report format and process followed to develop a new park master plan or to amend an existing park master plan is based on the classification of the park, as described below. A park master plan amendment is required when a significant change in recreational amenities is proposed (e.g, when a splash park is proposed in a park where the park master plan did not include a splash park). If a new recreational amenity will displace an existing recreational amenity, a park master plan amendment is required.

Approved by Parks Commission  
On February 10, 2016

2. The **Parks Master Plan Process** describes the procedure for public input including notification, survey, meetings, report drafts, review process and approvals for the master plan for a park; the process may be abbreviated for amendments to existing master plans. This process may be updated on a periodic basis by staff after review by the Parks Long Range Planning Subcommittee.
3. The format of the master plan report is determined by the classification of the park property. For example, a master plan for a community park, which is larger in size and contains a diversity of amenities and uses, will follow the **Park Master Plan Report Format**. The master plan for smaller parks classified as neighborhood parks will typically have less detail and be shorter in length (3 pages or less) and may not include all of the elements in the **Park Master Plan Report Format**. A master plan for a park classified as a mini park will consist of a single page map of amenities and their location in the park. The report format may be updated on a periodic basis by staff after review by the Parks Long Range Planning Subcommittee.

### **PROCEDURE**

A park master plan will be developed and approved by the Park Commission for new parkland. Development of a park master plan will follow the **Parks Master Plan Process** and the **Parks Master Plan Report Format** based on the classification of the park. Requests to amend an existing master plan for a park will be reviewed by staff and addressed as staff resources are available. While Madison Parks is willing to provide supporting services and/or resources needed to accomplish master planning projects, staffing may be limited based on the priorities and constraints of the Madison Park system and budget.