



Various recreational facilities in Crystal Lake Park, Urbana.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Urbana Park District offers residents a recreational system that includes 24 parks distributed over 580 acres, 6 facilities, and hundreds of sports, fitness, aquatics, community, and environmental programs. However, there is not a system of trails that connects every park to make them accessible to all residents of the community. With the number of existing parks and flat topography in Urbana, it is important to enable walking and bicycling access for residents of the community to these open spaces. Walking and bicycling contribute to the improved public health and well-being of Urbana’s citizens, good air quality, and reduces congestion.

The Urbana Park District’s mission is to “improve the quality of life of Urbana’s citizens through a responsive, efficient and creative park and recreation system.” The mission has several associated strategic objectives, one of them being to “meet the community’s priorities for value and environmental ethic by acquiring, providing, maintaining and improving safe, high-quality, accessible parks,

recreation facilities and programs.” The same document also focuses on six “big moves” that would help meet the needs of the community and maintain the existing assets of the District, one of them being to “continue with the collaborative development of a trail system including strong connections between present and future Urbana Park District parks, loop trails within parks and linkages with the regional trail system.”

The three elements (mission, strategic objectives, and moves) mentioned above define the framework for the development of a Trails Master Plan for the Urbana Park District. This framework will help guide the creation of linkages for existing, proposed, and future trail facilities for walking and bicycling within the community. It will also establish connectivity for walking and biking between Urbana Park District facilities and adjacent attractions and destinations.

The Urbana Park District Trails Master Plan will guide park district decisions on trails within its jurisdiction and will strive to coordinate their efforts with the City of Urbana, those of adjacent open space districts, and adjacent municipalities to create a more integrated, better connected trail system on a regional scale. This plan establishes goals and objectives as well as performance measures that will guide the implementation of proposed recommendations that will further enhance the connectivity of area trails for the enjoyment of area residents and visitors.