



**Hendricks County Parks & Recreation
Comprehensive Master Plan
2026-2030**



Hendricks County Parks & Recreation
Comprehensive Master Plan
2026-2030
April 14, 2026

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation

4481 Gibbs Road
Danville, IN 46122
(317) 718-6188
hcparks@hcparks.net
HendricksCountyParks.org

Ryan Lemley, Superintendent

Hendricks County Park Board

Brad Eisenhart, President
Mike Hayden, Vice President
Matt Freije, Secretary
Vicky Byarley
Gary Emsweller
Paul Miner
Jeff Pell

Cover Image

Brad Poreda

Prepared by

Eric Ivie, Assistant Superintendent

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Resolution Adopting the Comprehensive Master Plan

WHEREAS, the Hendricks County Park Board is aware of the parks and recreation needs of the residents of Hendricks County, Indiana; and,

WHEREAS, the Hendricks County Park Board wishes to provide aesthetic and functional facilities and programs to the residents of Hendricks County, Indiana, to meet their needs; and,

WHEREAS, the Hendricks County Park Board realizes the importance of a sound planning document in order to meet the needs of its citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the Hendricks County Park Board is continually aware of the value and importance of outdoor and leisure opportunities, programs, and facilities to the future of the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Department, its programs, and the residents of Hendricks County, Indiana,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Hendricks County Park Board, by unanimous declaration, does adopt the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation 2026-2030 Comprehensive Master Plan as its official plan for the growth and development of parks and recreation opportunities in Hendricks County, Indiana, for the next five (5) years. The Hendricks County Park Board is committed to an annual review and update of the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Master Plan.

Approved and signed this 6th day of May, 2026.

HENDRICKS COUNTY PARK BOARD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Eisenhart".

Brad Eisenhart, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Freije".

Matt Freije, Secretary



Assurance of Accessibility Compliance with:
Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (as amended);
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as
amended);
and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of
1990 (as amended)

The Hendricks County Park Board has read the guidelines for compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (as amended), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (as amended) and will comply with the applicable requirements of these Acts.

Approved and signed this 6th day of May, 2026.

HENDRICKS COUNTY PARK BOARD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Eisenhart", written over a horizontal line.

Brad Eisenhart, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Freije", written over a horizontal line.

Matt Freije, Secretary

Greg Beilfuss - Chief Planner
IDNR – State Parks: Community Grants and Trails
402 W. Washington St., W298
Indianapolis, IN 42204-2782
(317) 232-4071

May 1st, 2026

Brad Eisenhart
Hendricks County Park Board
44841 Gibbs Road
Danville, IN 46122

Dear Brad,

The DNR Division of State Parks planning staff has reviewed the final draft of the 2026-2031 Hendricks County Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The plan meets the Department of Natural Resources' minimum requirements for local parks and recreation master plans. This letter certifies that your community **is eligible to apply for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants through this office in the 2026 grant year**. A new plan will be due on November 15th, 2031 at which time your current LWCF grant application eligibility will expire.

If you haven't already, we strongly recommend that you contact our grant section chief as soon as possible about future grant applications. The grants staff can assist in your grant application process. They can be reached by phone at: (317) 232-1295 or by e-mail at: LWCF@dnr.IN.gov.

We support your planning efforts and encourage your participation in the grant programs administered by the Division of State Parks. If you require further information regarding planning, do not hesitate to call me at: (317) 232-4071 or by e-mail at: gbeilfuss@dnr.IN.gov.

Sincerely,

Greg Beilfuss
Chief Planner - IDNR Division of State Parks, Community Grants and Trails

ECC – Eric Ivey, Asst. Supt., Hendricks County Parks



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Introduction

Contact Information

This Comprehensive Master Plan, encompassing the years of 2026 through 2030, is for Hendricks County Parks & Recreation (HCP&R).

This plan was written by Assistant Superintendent Eric Ivie throughout 2025 and the first three months of 2026 with oversight from Superintendent Ryan Lemley and the Hendricks County Park Board.

HWC Engineering in Indianapolis coordinated and executed the public input section of the plan.

HCP&R's main office is located at:

4481 Gibbs Road
Danville, IN 46122
(317) 718-6188
hcparks@hcparks.net
HendricksCountyParks.org

Definition of the Planning Area

The planning area for this document is all of Hendricks County, Indiana.

However, while HCP&R primarily serves the citizens of Hendricks County, its service area does not stop at county borders.

The location of McCloud Nature Park attracts park guests from Putnam and Boone Counties, and the section of the Vandalia Trail operated by HCP&R takes trail users to the Hendricks-Putnam County Line, where it connects with People Pathways and runs all the way to Greencastle, Indiana.

W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park attracts visitors from all over the state, especially Morgan and Marion Counties.

In addition to the parks drawing visitors into Hendricks County, HCP&R works closely with Visit Hendricks County to help promote tourism in the county. The more people who eat, drink, and spend the night in Hendricks County, the better it is for HCP&R, as the department is reliant on the Food & Beverage Tax and the Innkeepers Tax for funding. More than half of HCP&R's annual budget comes from those two taxes.



Hendricks County Park Board

The Hendricks County Park Board was established in 2000 under Indiana Code 36-10-3.

Seven (7) members of the community serve on the Hendricks County Park Board as unpaid volunteers. Two (2) positions are appointed by the Hendricks County Council, two (2) positions are appointed by the presiding judge of the Hendricks Circuit Court, one (1) position is appointed by the Hendricks County Commissioners, one (1) position is appointed by the Hendricks County Soil & Water Conservation District, and one (1) position is appointed by the Purdue University Extension Office in Hendricks County.

The two (2) appointments by the Hendricks County Council may not be from the same political party.

The two (2) appointments by the Hendricks Circuit Court Judge may not be from the same political party.

Park Board members serve staggered four-year terms beginning on the first Tuesday of January (unless filling the remainder of an unexpired term) and ending on the first Monday of January at the end of the designated term.

The appointments by the Hendricks County Soil & Water Conservation District and Purdue Extension are *ex officio* (by virtue of holding positions within their appointing bodies).

Hendricks County Park Board - 2026			
Board Member	Office	Appointed By	Term Ends
Brad Eisenhart (R)	President	County Council	2030
Mike Hayden (R)	Vice President	County Commissioners	2030
Matt Freije (D)	Secretary	Circuit Court	2027
Vicky Byerley (D)		County Council	2028
Gary Emsweller (R)		Circuit Court	2029
Paul Miner (R)		Soil & Water Conservation	<i>Ex officio</i>
Jeff Pell (N)		Purdue Extension	<i>Ex officio</i>

(R) = Republican

(D) = Democrat

(N) = No political affiliation

The Hendricks County Park Board generally meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. in the main office building located at 4481 Gibbs Road in Danville, Indiana. Dates and meeting locations are subject to change. Members of the public are always welcome to attend the meetings.

All Park Board members may be reached by mail at: 4481 Gibbs Road, Danville, IN 46122.



Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Department

Staff

The department's superintendent is Ryan Lemley, who joined the staff on February 11, 2019, becoming HCP&R's fourth superintendent in its history.

Prior to Lemley's tenure with the department, Eric Ivie served as interim superintendent from July of 2018 through February 10, 2019.

Jeremy Weber served as superintendent from June of 2016 until July of 2018.

William Roche served as the department's first superintendent from July of 2006 until January of 2016. There was no superintendent in place between January and June of 2016.

HCP&R employs seven (7) full-time staff members and nine (9) part-time staff members.

The full-time positions are: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Park Manager, Maintenance Supervisor, Senior Park Naturalist, and Park Naturalist.

The part-time positions are: six (6) maintenance technicians, two (2) assistant naturalists, and one (1) administrative assistant at the main office.



HCP&R Superintendent Ryan Lemley

Volunteers

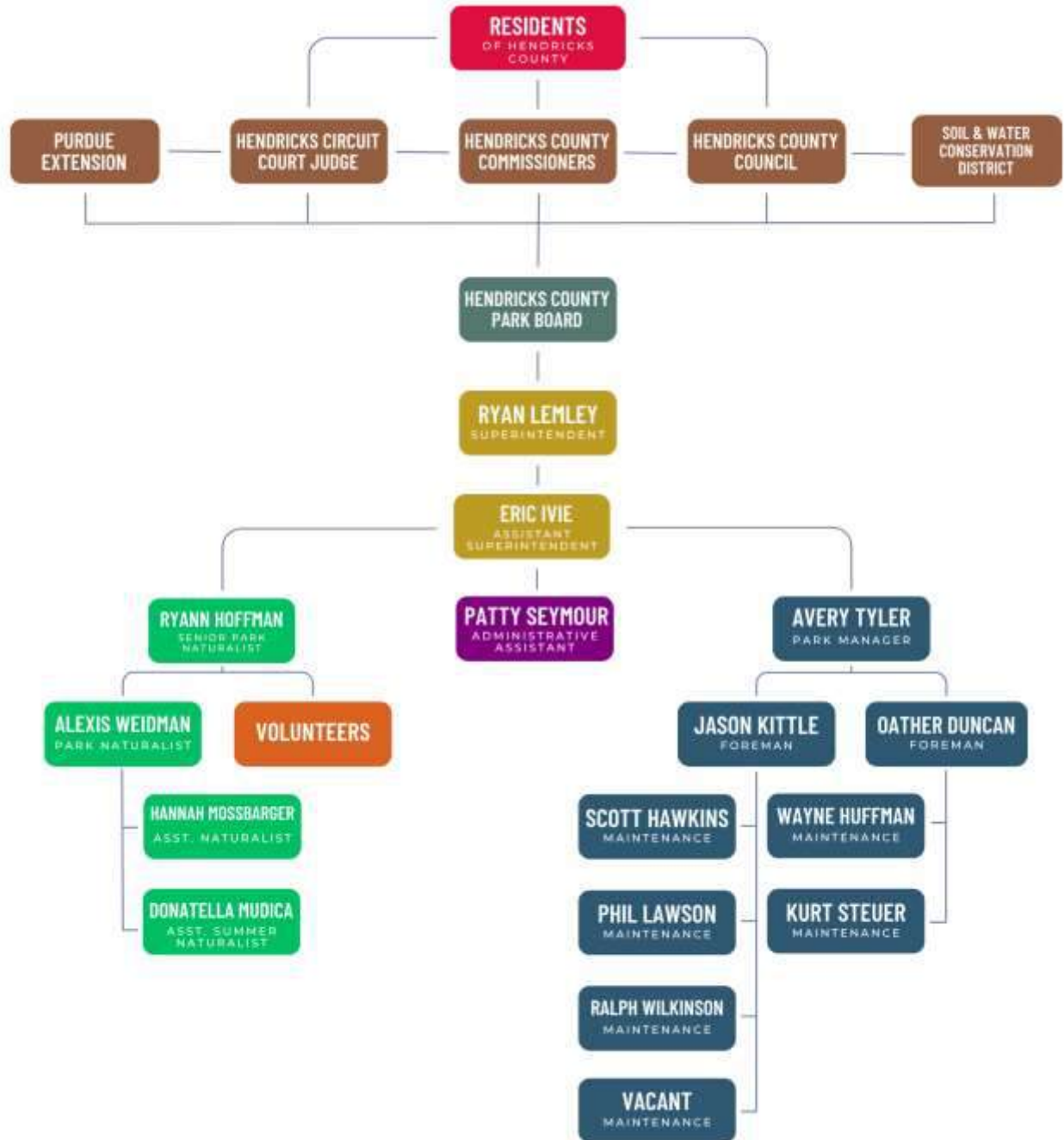
HCP&R relies on a large group of volunteers who assist staff with programs, operations, special events, clerical tasks, landscaping, and more. Without this crucial component of our department, HCP&R would not be able to provide the high-quality programming and special events at our properties that park patrons have come to enjoy.

A group of about 50 volunteers is managed by HCP&R's Senior Park Naturalist, Ryann Hoffman. For more information about how to volunteer with Hendricks County Parks & Recreation, please contact Ryann Hoffman at mccloudnp@hcparks.net or at (765) 676-5437.



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Organizational Chart





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Locations

In addition to its main office, HCP&R operates McCloud Nature Park, located outside of North Salem, Indiana. Its contact information is:

8518 Hughes Road
North Salem, IN 46165
(765) 676-5437
mccloudnp@hcparks.net

HCP&R also operates the western portion of the Vandalia Trail, which runs from Amo, Indiana, west through Coatesville to the Hendricks-Putnam County Line, where it connects to People Pathways and continues to Greencastle, Indiana.

There are two trailheads located on the portion of the Vandalia Trail that is operated by HCP&R:

Amo Trailhead
5042 South Street
Amo, IN 46103

Coatesville Trailhead
7963 Main Street
Coatesville, IN 46121

A third trailhead along the Vandalia Trail is operated by the Town of Clayton. It is located at:

Lambert Park
315 Michigan Street
Clayton, IN 46118

HCP&R's third property is W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park in Avon, Indiana, which opened to the public in 2021. Its official address is:

4521 Gibbs Road
Danville, IN 46122



Aerial View of McCloud Nature Park. Source: Dave Novak.



Goals and Objectives

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Mission Statement

To lead in the protection of outstanding natural, historic, and recreation areas and linkages. To practice and promote the highest conservation ethics and provide environmental education and recreation opportunities to the community. To lead in enhancing quality of life and individual health while driving economic development to ensure a sustainable future for our community.

Goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan

Through this Comprehensive Master Plan, the Hendricks County Park Board and Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Department staff will continually strive to:

- Be a leading entity in nature-based parks and recreation management in Hendricks County.
- Promote sustainable conservation and environmental standards in parks and trails and to the community.
- Protect and preserve important natural and cultural resources as park offerings.
- Maintain, improve, and expand park property.
- Be transparent and uphold the highest ethical standards in all board and department operations.
- Provide nature-based recreation and education opportunities for everyone.
- Enhance Hendricks County's economic development, tourism, and quality of life.
- Implement practices to avoid and mitigate invasive species and to promote native trees and other vegetation, including native pollinator plants, in parks and trails.
- Build a strong network of parks and trails throughout Hendricks County for current and future generations.
- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders.
- Be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by residents of Hendricks County and from all other entities.



Revenue and Budget

HCP&R is annually funded primarily through the **Hendricks County General Fund, Food & Beverage Tax, and Innkeepers Tax.**

Hendricks County General Fund

Each year, the Hendricks County Council appropriates some of the Hendricks County General Fund to be used by HCP&R for operations. This money primarily comes from Hendricks County property taxes and income taxes.

Normally, about 46% of HCP&R's total budget is appropriated from the General Fund, and this funding covers most of the department's salaries, as well as a wide array of operations, maintenance, and programming expenses. In 2026, that percentage is only about 10.2% because a large capital project is being funded from Food & Beverage Tax.

HCP&R Appropriations from the General Fund						
Year	Salaries	Operations	Programming	Maintenance	Capital Projects	Total
2021	\$349,719	\$118,300	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$498,019
2022	\$429,786	\$124,800	\$5,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$579,586
2023	\$475,159	\$135,800	\$5,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$635,959
2024	\$501,856	\$150,800	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$682,656
2025	\$563,520	\$92,800	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$686,320
2026	\$585,760	\$92,800	\$7,500	\$35,000	\$0	\$721,060

HCP&R has seen a 44.8% increase in funding from the General Fund from 2021 to 2026.

The amount of money that is allocated for HCP&R salaries has increased by approximately 67.5% from 2021 to 2026. Hendricks County Government restructured its pay system for its employees in 2022, which resulted in an increase of \$80,067 in HCP&R salaries from 2021 to 2022. Salaries have continued to climb since 2022 through the County's pay-for-performance opportunities in the new salary structure.

Prior to 2025, the Assistant Superintendent and the Assistant Park Naturalist salaries were a combination of General Fund and Innkeepers Tax monies - the result of an agreement that former superintendent Jeremy Weber negotiated with the Hendricks County Council in 2017.

From 2018 through 2024, about 31% of the Assistant Superintendent's salary was paid through the General Fund, while the remaining 69% was paid through the Innkeepers Tax. About 49% of the Park Naturalist's salary was paid through the General Fund, while the remaining 51% was paid through the Innkeepers Tax.

In 2024, at the request of HCP&R, the Hendricks County Council agreed to fund the Assistant Superintendent's salary fully through the General Fund, while the Park Naturalist's salary would become fully funded through the Innkeepers Tax, beginning in 2025. Some budget lines for operations were moved from the General Fund to the Innkeepers Tax to make the switch more equitable.



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

This change resulted in an increase of \$61,664 in salaries and a decrease of \$58,000 in operations coming out of the General Fund beginning in 2025. A similar change in Innkeepers Tax - in reverse - is a result of the same switch.

Appropriations from the General Fund for operations increased by about 27.5% from 2021 to 2024, while those for maintenance and programming remained the same during the same time period. Those trends would have continued in 2025 if not for the switch in funding to make for simpler bookkeeping.

Food & Beverage Tax

Each year, the Hendricks County Council also appropriates some of the County’s Food & Beverage Tax collections to HCP&R. This money comes from the 1% tax that Hendricks County began assessing on all food and beverage sales on August 1, 2005, pursuant to Indiana Code 6-9-35-14.

Normally, about 21.5% of HCP&R’s total budget is appropriated from Food & Beverage Tax. This appropriation is divided into three budget lines: Land Acquisition, Other Park Improvements, and Machinery & Equipment. In 2026, that percentage is about 82.8% because a large capital project is being funded from this fund.

HCP&R Appropriations from Food & Beverage Tax					
Year	Capital Projects	Land Acquisition	Other Park Improvements	Machinery & Equipment	Total
2021	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$35,000	\$335,000
2022	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$0	\$300,000
2023	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$40,000	\$340,000
2024	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$20,000	\$320,000
2025	\$0	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$20,000	\$320,000
2026	\$5,500,000	\$100,000	\$225,000	\$0	\$5,825,000

Total annual appropriations from Food & Beverage Tax for Capital Projects, Land Acquisition and Other Park Improvements remained the same each year from 2021 through 2025.

Funding for Machinery & Equipment fluctuated over the years as equipment needed to be added or replaced. As HCP&R’s maintenance crew began working the land that would become W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, the need arose for an additional tractor that would stay on the property, rather than transporting one tractor back and forth from McCloud Nature Park to the Gibbs property. So in 2021, HCP&R purchased a Kubota tractor to have one tractor at each park.

HCP&R did not have a need to purchase equipment in 2022 or in 2026, so no additional funding was requested or appropriated in either budget year.



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park opened in July of 2021, and during the summer of 2022, it became evident that an additional riding mower was needed to keep up with both parks. Funding was requested and appropriated for the 2023 budget year and used to purchase a John Deere riding mower.

In 2024, HCP&R purchased a Kubota RTV for W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park and traded in an older Kubota riding mower for a new Kubota riding mower.

Again in 2025, the department traded in an older Kubota mower for a new one.

In 2026, the County Council appropriated \$5,500,000 for the construction of a Welcome Center and administrative offices at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. This is a one-time budget appropriation for 2026 only.

Innkeepers Tax

Each year, the Hendricks County Council appropriates some of the County's Innkeepers Tax collections to HCP&R. This money comes from the 8% tax that Hendricks County began assessing on hotel room rentals on October 1, 2005, pursuant to Indiana Code 6-9-37-3.

Normally, about 32.5% of HCP&R's total budget is appropriated from Innkeepers Tax, and it is divided up into salaries, promotion of Hendricks County, Development of County Parks, and - new in 2025 - three budget lines relating to departmental operations. In 2026, that percentage is only about 7% because a large capital project is being funded from Food & Beverage Tax.

HCP&R Appropriations from Innkeepers Tax					
<u>Year</u>	<u>Salaries</u>	<u>Promotional County</u>	<u>Development of County Parks</u>	<u>Operations</u>	<u>Total</u>
2021	\$87,337	\$20,000	\$250,000	\$0	\$357,337
2022	\$139,049	\$25,000	\$250,000	\$0	\$414,049
2023	\$154,116	\$25,000	\$250,000	\$0	\$429,116
2024	\$163,125	\$30,000	\$250,000	\$0	\$443,125
2025	\$147,298	\$30,000	\$250,000	\$58,000	\$485,298
2026	\$152,673	\$30,000	\$250,000	\$58,000	\$490,673

Total annual appropriations from Innkeepers Tax for the Promotional County budget line - used primarily for the publication of *The Explorer* magazine - has increased by \$10,000 (50%) from 2021 to 2026 due to skyrocketing printing costs.

Annual appropriations to Development of County Parks remained the same from 2021 to 2026.

Prior to 2025, the Assistant Superintendent and the Assistant Park Naturalist salaries were a combination of General Fund and Innkeepers Tax monies - the result of an agreement that former superintendent Jeremy Weber negotiated with the Hendricks County Council in 2017.



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From 2018 through 2024, about 31% of the Assistant Superintendent's salary was paid through the General Fund, while the remaining 69% was paid through the Innkeepers Tax. About 49% of the Park Naturalist's salary was paid through the General Fund, while the remaining 51% was paid through the Innkeepers Tax.

In 2024, at the request of HCP&R, the Hendricks County Council agreed to fully fund the Assistant Superintendent's salary through the General Fund, while the Park Naturalist's salary would become fully funded through the Innkeepers Tax, beginning in 2025. Some budget lines for operations were moved from the General Fund to the Innkeepers Tax to make the switch more equitable.

This change resulted in a decrease of \$15,827 in salaries and an increase of \$58,000 in operations coming out of the Innkeepers Tax beginning in 2025.

As with the General Fund, employee wage taxes and benefits are not included in HCP&R's appropriate budget. Instead, the County's Payroll staff take the costs of those taxes and benefits out of whichever fund is used for a particular employee's salary. While the tradeoff looks lopsided on the Innkeepers Tax end of the switch, there was a large increase in taxes and benefits caused by the switch that now must come out of the Innkeepers Tax instead of the General Fund. When those increased costs are included, the switch is equitable between the two funding sources.

HCP&R expected a significant drop in county-wide Food & Beverage and Innkeepers Tax collections in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which would have severely impacted available funding in 2021 and 2022. Amazingly, though, 2020 collections of both taxes were quite close to those of previous years, and the resulting impact was negligible.

With HCP&R relying on these two taxes for more than half of its budget, the department works closely with Visit Hendricks County to help promote tourism in the county. The more people who eat, drink, and spend the night in Hendricks County, the better it is for HCP&R and other agencies reliant on those taxes for funding.

While these taxes provide a healthy source of funding for HCP&R right now, there is always a risk that a serious disruption of the taxes' collection could devastate the department. Disruptions may arise from public health issues similar to the COVID-19 pandemic, political changes in policy, sunseting the taxes, or some unforeseen cause.

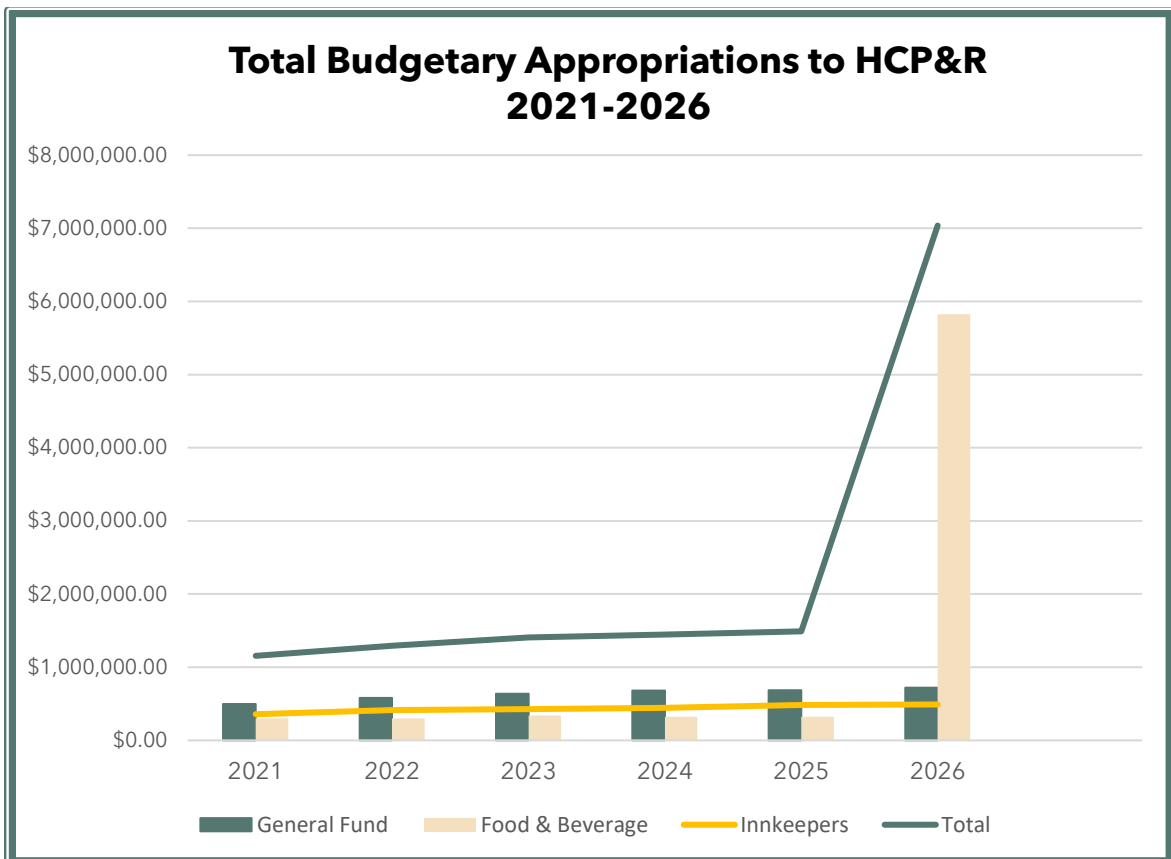
In the absence of Food & Beverage and Innkeepers taxes, HCP&R would have to rely on the County General Fund for its entire \$1.3 to \$1.4 million current annual budget or prepare to lose three (3) full-time employees and \$650,000 annually for park improvements and land acquisition.



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Total Annual Budget Appropriations

Total Budgetary Appropriations to HCP&R, 2021-2026				
<u>Year</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Food & Beverage</u>	<u>Innkeepers</u>	<u>Total</u>
2021	\$498,019	\$335,000	\$357,337	\$1,190,356
2022	\$579,586	\$300,000	\$414,049	\$1,293,635
2023	\$635,939	\$340,000	\$429,116	\$1,405,075
2024	\$682,656	\$320,000	\$443,125	\$1,445,781
2025	\$686,320	\$320,000	\$485,298	\$1,491,618
2026	\$721,060	\$5,825,000	\$490,673	\$7,036,733





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Community Foundation

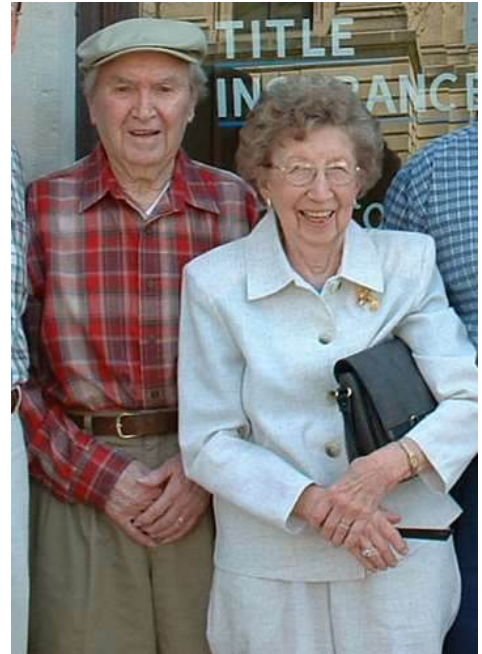
Supplementing the department's annual budget are three endowment funds held by the Hendricks County Community Foundation, all of which are comprised of private donations.

One of these endowments is the **Harlos Fund**, which totals \$448,802.22 as of January of 2026. The spendable amount of this endowment for 2026 is \$107,683.00. The Harlos Fund is specified for use on projects on the north side of McCloud Nature Park - property that HCP&R purchased from Glen and Mildred Harlos.

The second endowment is the **Gibbs Fund**, which totals \$140,911.71 as of January of 2026. The spendable amount of this endowment for 2026 is \$5,219.00. The Gibbs Fund is specified for use on projects at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

The final endowment is the **Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Fund**, which totals \$14,020.57 as of January of 2026. The spendable amount of this endowment for 2026 is \$519.00. This fund has no restrictions on its use.

Each year, the Hendricks County Park Board and the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County Board of Directors, with input from the HCP&R superintendent, determine whether to spend or reinvest the annual spendable amount in each endowment.



Glen and Mildred Harlos in 2014

Parks Foundation of Hendricks County

Established in 2009 as a 501(C)(3) organization, the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County (PFOHC) was created to provide financial assistance to HCP&R through private and corporate donations and sponsorships.

Since its inception, the PFOHC has regularly funded projects in part or in their entireties at McCloud Nature Park, the Vandalia Trail, and W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. Some of these projects have included:

- A Bicentennial Tree Trail in celebration of Hendricks County's bicentennial and planted with more than 200 native trees
- Updates to the McCloud Nature Center
- Two (2) GRIT Freedom Chairs for guests to borrow at the parks
- Swing sets at both McCloud Nature Park and at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park
- A large turtle enclosure / exhibit for the McCloud Nature Center
- A wooden staircase up the side of the 30-foot-tall hill at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park
- A sound garden feature at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

In 2019, the PFOHC expanded its mission to serve all parks departments within Hendricks County.



Features of Hendricks County

Location

Hendricks County is located on the western border of Indianapolis. The county covers an area of approximately 408 square miles and is distinctly suburban in the eastern half of the county and rural in the western half of the county.

As the third-fastest growing county in Indiana, Hendricks County has experienced substantial growth over the past 35 years. During that time, the population has increased from 75,717 in 1990 to a 2024 population of 190,629 - a 152% increase.

Between 2023 and 2024, Hendricks County increased its population by 1.9%, tying Hamilton County and trailing only Boone County (3.4%) and Hancock County (3.1%), according to the Indiana University Business Research Center.

STATS Indiana and the Hoosiers by the Numbers website project Hendricks County's 2030 population to be 206,661, up to 230,568 by 2040.



Source: Visit Hendricks County

Townships

Hendricks County is divided into 12 townships:

- Brown
- Center
- Clay
- Eel River
- Franklin
- Guilford
- Liberty
- Lincoln
- Marion
- Middle
- Union
- Washington

Of the major population centers in Hendricks County, Brownsburg is primarily located within Lincoln Township, Avon is primarily located within Washington Township, Plainfield is primarily located within Guilford Township, and Danville is primarily located within Center Township. Of HCP&R's properties, McCloud Nature Park is



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

located within Eel River Township, W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park is in Washington Township, and the Vandalia Trail is in Clay Township.

Hendricks County Townships, 2020



Source: STATS Indiana, using U.S. Census Bureau township boundaries, May 2021
Base map source: Esri and its partners
STATS Indiana (www.stats.indiana.edu) is a public service of the Indiana Business Research Center at the Indiana University Kelley School of Business.





Incorporated Towns and Populations

Eleven incorporated towns exist within Hendricks County, and five of them provide recreational services to their local population with varying levels of service.

The towns of Avon, Brownsburg, Danville, Pittsboro, and Plainfield each have their own parks and recreation departments. Additionally, Washington Township (Avon) and Guilford Township (Plainfield) have parks and recreation departments.

Incorporated Towns and Populations					
<u>Town</u>	<u>Population in 2000</u>	<u>Population in 2010</u>	<u>Population in 2020</u>	<u>Population in 2023</u>	<u>% change from 2000 to 2023</u>
Amo	428	405	432	416	-2.8%
Avon	7,213	13,626	19,361	24,231	+235.9%
Brownsburg	14,924	22,034	27,597	32,250	+116.1%
Clayton	762	927	1,032	927	+27.7%
Coatesville	525	523	562	568	+8.2%
Danville	6,676	9,088	10,241	11,525	+72.6%
Lizton	448	490	490	513	+14.5%
North Salem	593	506	539	472	-20.4%
Pittsboro	1,629	2,937	3,812	4,235	+160.0%
Plainfield	20,365	27,792	36,275	37,047	+81.9%
Stilesville	262	316	340	274	+4.6%
Hendricks County	105,378	145,954	179,355	186,387	+76.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Indiana SCORP 2021-25 and Hendricks County

The 2021-25 version of the Indiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) outlines how the State of Indiana established Level of Service, described as follows on pages 35-36:

Level of Service (LOS) is a process of strategic planning that takes into account the unique aspects of individual communities. LOS also measures demand for recreation opportunities, current parks and recreation resources, and the needs and preferences of community residents...

... The State of Indiana...created LOS guidelines for publicly owned parks, recreation and open space for all Hoosiers. Indiana's guidelines for outdoor recreation in terms of acres per 1,000 people are:

- *Local LOS: 20 acres per 1,000 people (.02 acres per person).*
- *State/Federal LOS: 35 acres per 1,000 people (.035 acres per person).*
- *Total (Statewide) LOS: 55 acres per 1,000 people (.055 acres per person)*

Using these state guidelines for Local LOS, then, Hendricks County's current population of 190,629 means that there should be 3,812.58 acres of publicly owned parks, recreation, and open space for the county's residents.

The same document (pg. 37) reveals that Hendricks County contains 1,554.72 acres of publicly owned parks, recreation, and open space.

By state standards, Hendricks County is **2,257.86 acres short**. It would need to more than double its current park acreage to meet the minimum guidelines for Local LOS.

This is the third-largest deficit in the state, behind only Marion County (7,287.07 acres short) and Hamilton County (2,422.93 acres short).

CRITICAL COUNTIES BASED ON TOTAL ACRES



Source: Indiana SCORP 2021-25



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Hendricks County does not contain any state or federally owned park lands, making it one of 30 Indiana counties that is deficient in all three levels of service (pg. 48).

Finally, because Hendricks County does not meet the total LOS of 55 acres per 1,000 people and it has a population growth rate higher than the 2014 to 2018 estimated Indiana statewide population growth rate of 1.44%, the State of Indiana has deemed Hendricks County to be one of 14 **"critical counties"** in the state (pg. 55).

Effects on HCP&R

Hendricks County has a two-pronged issue here.

First, it is already a critical county, as defined by the SCORP, at its current population and amount of park acreage. Second, that LOS deficit is going to increase exponentially if the county's population grows at its expected rate.

With STATS Indiana and Hoosiers by the Numbers projecting Hendricks County's population to reach 230,568 people by 2040, the county will need 4,611.36 total acres of publicly owned parks - a 197% increase from the current 1,554.72 acres - to meet the Local LOS standards.

It is unrealistic for HCP&R to approach the Hendricks County Council and request the funds required to purchase more than 3,000 acres of land over the next 10 years. It would also be very difficult to find and purchase 3,000+ acres in Hendricks County. The entire county encompasses 408 square miles or 261,120 acres, so about 4,600 acres of publicly owned park land would account for nearly 2% of the whole county - and that would only get Hendricks County up to the SCORP's *minimum* Local LOS standards in 10 years. Meanwhile, the population will likely continue to grow, requiring even more park land.

It is also not the sole responsibility of HCP&R to acquire park land to meet SCORP standards. There are several other parks departments in Hendricks County who can help - and are helping - with this task.

The effect on HCP&R of Hendricks County being a critical county is that the department should perpetually be on the lookout for suitable property for expansion. The department recognizes this and has incorporated that strategy into its Action Plan for the next five years. The county likely will not be able to meet or exceed Local LOS standards in the near future, within the next five or ten years, or quite possibly, ever. But continually working toward that goal remains of the utmost importance to HCP&R.



The People of Hendricks County

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Hendricks County's 2024 population of 190,629 makes it the 7th most populous county in Indiana, accounting for 2.75% of the state's population of 6,924,275.

The Census Bureau predicts a 2040 population of 230,568, which would make Hendricks County the 6th most populated county in the state.

The median age of the Hendricks County population is 38.9 years, which is right on par with the median ages of Indiana (38.2) and the United States (38.7).

Population Estimates by Age, 2023		
<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage of Hendricks County Population</u>
Preschool (0 to 4)	10,180	5.5%
School Age (5 to 17)	35,324	19.0%
College Age (18 to 24)	14,773	7.9%
Young Adult (25 to 44)	50,486	27.1%
Older Adult (45 to 64)	46,782	25.1%
Seniors (65 and older)	28,842	15.5%

Source: STATS Indiana

According to STATS Indiana, the population of Hendricks County is predominantly White, with the Black, American Indian or Native Alaskan, Asian, and Pacific Islander populations making up 16.5% of the entire population. The county's population is 94.5% non-Hispanic, with 5.5% of people being Hispanic.

Population Estimates by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2023			
<u>Race</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage of Hendricks County Population</u>	<u>Percentage of Indiana Population</u>
American Indian or Alaska Native alone	696	0.4%	0.5%
Asian alone	6,933	3.7%	2.9%
Black alone	22,924	12.3%	9.4%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander alone	135	0.1%	0.1%
White	151,150	81.1%	83.7%
Two or more race groups	4,549	2.4%	2.5%
Hispanic or Latino Origin (can be of any race)			
Non-Hispanic	176,220	94.5%	91.2%
Hispanic	10,167	5.5%	8.8%

Source: STATS Indiana



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Hendricks County's population is more diverse than Indiana's population in nearly all racial groups.

The Black population has increased from 1,143 people in 2000 to 6,988 people in 2010 to 13,326 people in 2019 to 22,924 in 2023, indicating a trend toward even more racial diversity within the county as time goes on. The Black population has increased by 228% from 2010 to 2023 and by 1,906% from 2000 to 2023. In just four years between 2019 and 2023, it has increased by 72%.

Of the 65,839 households in Hendricks County, 26.9% are married with children while 33.1% are married without children. People living alone account for 20.3% of households, and single parents make up 8.2% of households.

Hendricks County is a well-educated county compared to Indiana as a whole, with 93.5% of adults holding a high school diploma or higher (compared to 90.2% in Indiana) and 39.6% holding a Bachelor of Arts degree or higher (compared to 28.8% statewide).

HCP&R does not have an efficient, reliable method of tracking the ages, races, or socioeconomic information of its park guests, so there is not a good way to compare the diversity of park patrons to that of the entire county. However, observations from park staff indicate that people of a variety of ages and races visit McCloud Nature Park, the Vandalia Trail, and W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

Concerted efforts are made during the publication of *The Explorer* magazine to use photos that feature people of color and of all ages and both genders, and a quarter-page statement appears in every magazine describing the department's desire for diversity and tolerance.

Economy

Since the county was originally settled in 1820, agriculture has played an important role in its economic development. Now, with farming accounting for only 1,245 jobs in Hendricks County, other types of businesses and industry play an increasingly important role in the economic health of the community.

According to STATS Indiana, the leading employment sectors in Hendricks County in 2023 were:

- Transportation and Warehousing - 21,176 jobs
- Retail Trade - 17,786 jobs
- Government - 10,418 jobs
- Accommodation and Food Service - 8,165 jobs
- Healthcare and Social Assistance - 7,706 jobs

Major employers in Hendricks County include:

- Amazon Fulfillment Center, Plainfield
- Duke Energy, Plainfield
- Hendricks Regional Health, Danville
- Q-Edge Corporation, Plainfield
- HomeGoods Distribution Center, Brownsburg
- O'Reilly Auto Parts Distribution, Brownsburg



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- Ingram Micro Mobility, Plainfield
- Plainfield Correctional Facility, Plainfield
- Walmart Supercenter, Plainfield
- Nice-Pak, Plainfield

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that approximately 69% of residents aged 16 years and older were employed in 2023. Of the 96,080 residents in the labor force, approximately 2,552 were unemployed. The 2.7% unemployment rate in Hendricks County was lower than that of the entire state (3.4%).

STATS Indiana reports that the median household income in Hendricks County was \$95,323 in 2023, which ranked third in the state, well above the Indiana median household income of \$69,458. Just under 6% of the Hendricks County population lived in poverty, which ranked 90th out of 92 counties in Indiana. The poverty rate for the entire state was 12.2% in 2023.

The United Way tracks data at the community, county, and state levels on ALICE. According to unitedforalice.org:

*ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mloyed – households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county. While conditions have improved for some households, many continue to struggle, especially as wages fail to keep pace with the rising cost of household essentials (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan). Households below the ALICE Threshold – ALICE households plus those in poverty – can't afford the essentials.*

According to their most recent data in 2023, 21% of the 69,367 households in Hendricks County are below the ALICE Threshold. The state average is 27%.

When analyzing the data by race and ethnicity, United Way found that some households in Hendricks County are more likely than others to be below the ALICE Threshold based on race and ethnicity. For example, of the 157 households that are American Indian or Alaska Native, 82 of them (52.2%) are below the ALICE Threshold. None are below the poverty threshold.

About 36% of Hispanic households are below the ALICE Threshold and about 19% of them are below the poverty threshold. For Black households, those numbers are about 36% and 7.2%, respectively.

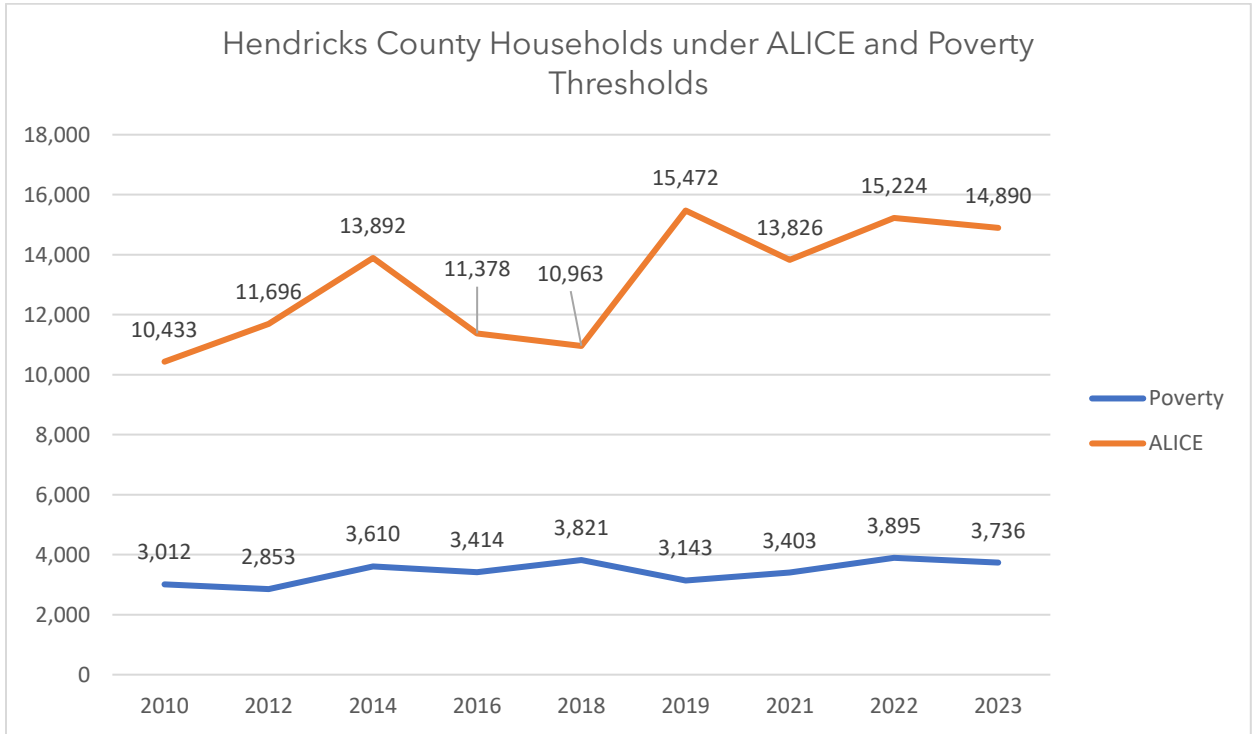
For White households, 24.2% are below the ALICE Threshold and only about 3.6% are below the poverty line.

Household type and age of the householder also differ in financial hardship. For single women with children, a staggering 69% are under the ALICE Threshold in Hendricks County. For single men with children, that ratio is 34%.

For householders under the age of 25, 52% are in financial hardship. Householders 65 years and older don't fare much better at 43% being under the ALICE Threshold.



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The data collected by United Way illustrates the importance of parks in Hendricks County. People who are in financial hardship can visit Hendricks County parks, including those operated by HCP&R, for free. HCP&R also offers a wide variety of free programming for families, children, young adults, and seniors, and programs with fees are often very low-priced at around \$3 or \$5 per person.

This opens the door for outdoors recreation and education to be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of their financial status.

Location of households in Hendricks County also plays a role in financial hardship. In North Salem, 43% of households are under the ALICE Threshold, second only to Stilesville (50%). McCloud Nature Park’s location right outside of North Salem, then, makes it easy for families in that area of the county to enjoy what parks and recreation have to offer.

Pleas for a park in Stilesville were heard through public input in 2020 and again in 2025 for this document. HCP&R continually looks for available land in town to try to meet that need.

In Coatesville, 37% of households are in financial hardship, and Amo isn’t much better at 36%. The Vandalia Trail runs through both towns, providing modern restrooms and drinking fountains, along with space to walk, run, ride bicycles, etc. HCP&R is expanding the Vandalia Trail westward from Clayton (31%) toward Amo, and Belleville (37%) isn’t far from Clayton.

W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park is located at the intersection of Danville (30%), Plainfield (32%), and Avon (25%).



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Most Hendricks County communities are in the 30-40% range of households below the ALICE Threshold, so not only are HCP&R's properties located near where financial hardship affects more than a third of communities' populations, parks and trails operated by towns and townships are also playing a vital role in that regard.

Hendricks County certainly has its economic issues to deal with, but with the county's unemployment at a lower rate than that of Indiana, the percentages of households under the ALICE and poverty thresholds being lower than those of Indiana, and median household incomes exceeding the state average, Hendricks County is fortunate to enjoy strong collection of property and income taxes for the County General Fund. Additionally, residents (and visitors) are financially able and willing to eat and drink in Hendricks County establishments and stay in Hendricks County hotels, thus providing a steady stream of supplemental income for HCP&R through Food & Beverage and Innkeepers taxes.

Roadways

Hendricks County's transportation network includes several significant road corridors.

Three interstates run through Hendricks County:

- **I-70** runs across the southern and southeastern portion of the county, past Plainfield on its way to Indianapolis.
- **I-74** runs across the northern and northeastern portion of the county, past Brownsburg on its way to Indianapolis.
- A very short portion of **I-65** clips the far northeastern corner of Hendricks County.



Three U.S. highways come through Hendricks County:

- **U.S. Highway 40** (also known as the Historic National Road) runs parallel to I-70 across the southern portion of the county in a northeast-southwest direction. It connects Stilesville, the unincorporated town of Belleville, and Plainfield on its way to Indianapolis.
- **U.S. Highway 36** travels east-west through the center of the county, bisecting it into its northern and southern halves. U.S. 36 connects Danville to Avon on its way to Indianapolis.
- **U.S. Highway 136** runs northwest-southeast through the northern portion of Hendricks County, parallel to I-74. It connects the towns of Lizton, Pittsboro, and Brownsburg on its way to Indianapolis.

Four state highways traverse the county:

- **State Road 39** runs north-south and bisects the county into its western and eastern halves. This road connects the unincorporated town of Belleville, Clayton, Danville, and Lizton.
- **State Road 267** runs north-south in the eastern portion of the county, connecting Plainfield, Avon, and Brownsburg.



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- **State Road 75** runs north-south in the western portion of the county, connecting Coatesville and North Salem. The Vandalia Trail crosses SR 75 in Coatesville, and McCloud Nature Park is near SR 75, to the southwest of North Salem.
- **State Road 236** travels northwest-southeast and connects Danville to North Salem.

Additionally, the Hendricks County Highway Department maintains 772 miles of county roads, and each town maintains the streets within its borders.

Much of the county's growth has occurred along these transportation corridors, particularly in the eastern portion of the county.

HCP&R worked with the Indiana Department of Transportation to add wayfinding signs for McCloud Nature Park and W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park along major roadways throughout Hendricks County.

An updated interchange at I-70 and SR 39 brought some recent economic development to that area of the county in the form of a business park along SR 39, just north of I-70.

In 2019, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) awarded a \$16.2 million contract to Milestone Contractors LP to redesign the I-70/SR 39 interchange into a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI). A DDI is a type of interchange in which the two directions of traffic on a non-highway road cross to the opposite side on both sides of a bridge. It is unusual in that it requires traffic on the highway overpass to briefly drive on the opposite side of the road from what is customary. This new interchange was completed in 2021 and has brought economic development to the area.

It was noted by community stakeholders that amenities, including recreation amenities, would help attract development once the DDI was completed.



Conceptual drawing of DDI at I-70 and SR 39. Source: Indiana Dept. of Transportation.



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Hendricks County's proximity to Indianapolis / Marion County offers residents a significant number of nearby recreation opportunities. Eagle Creek Park, in particular, abuts the northeast edge of the county, and is frequently mentioned as a recreation destination by county residents.

Other popular Marion County attractions mentioned by Hendricks County residents include the Indianapolis Canal, the Monon Trail, and the Cultural Trail. Trail connections to Marion County would provide alternative transportation links to Marion County, its extended trail system, and its recreation amenities.

Railways

Three railroads run through Hendricks County, all of which are owned and operated by **CSX**.

One railroad enters Hendricks County just west of Clermont, Indiana, in Marion County and travels through the northeast corner of the county on its way to Lebanon, Indiana, in Boone County.

A second line enters Hendricks County just west of Clermont and passes through Brownsburg, Pittsboro, and Lizton before entering Boone County in Jamestown.

The third line enters Hendricks County in Avon, runs parallel to U.S. Highway 36 into Danville, and then veers southwest, running north of Coatesville before entering Putnam County and traveling to Greencastle, Indiana.

Additionally, the CSX Avon Railyard, the CSX Avon Service Center, and the CSX Intermodal Indianapolis are all located in Avon.

These three railways are all solely used for transporting freight.

Airways

The **Indianapolis International Airport (IND)** is located just across the Hendricks-Marion County Line to the east of Plainfield. A portion of the Indianapolis Airport Authority's property extends into Hendricks County. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) classifies the airport as a medium hub, and it is home to the second-largest FedEx Express hub in the world.

In 2024, a total of 10,520,326 passengers traveled through Indianapolis International Airport, including 59,182 international travelers, according to the Indianapolis Airport Authority. A total of 907,868 tons of freight made its way through the airport in 2024.

Hendricks County capitalizes on this air traffic by positioning a number of hotels and restaurants directly to the west of the airport in Plainfield. These hotels and restaurants play an important role in the collection of Food & Beverage and Innkeepers taxes, which are a vital component of funding for HCP&R.

The Indianapolis Airport Authority also owns and operates the **Hendricks County Airport - Gordon Graham Field (2R2)** in Danville. It is a small airport with two runways that are primarily used by single-engine planes.



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In 2019, Gordon Graham Field averaged about 37 aircraft operations per day, the vast majority of which were for local or transient general aviation.

Trails

A number of municipalities and townships in Hendricks County maintain trails, including Plainfield, Avon, Brownsburg, Danville, Washington Township and Guilford Township. In addition, Hendricks County is home to two rail-trails.

The paved **B&O Trail** in Hendricks County runs along the former route of the B&O Railroad from the Hendricks-Marion County line just south of Clermont 6.1 miles generally west traversing the south side of Brownsburg and currently ending at County Road 500 East. Most of the B&O Trail is owned and maintained by the B&O Trail Association Inc. (BOTA), an Indiana not-for-profit company, but the Town of Brownsburg owns and maintains a 2.8-mile segment from Ronald Reagan Parkway west to Green Street. BOTA owns most of the railway corridor in Hendricks County west of County Road 500 East and is actively continuing to develop and extend this popular recreational resource.

The Speedway Trail Association (STA) along with the Town of Speedway have completed another 1.6 miles of the B&O Trail in Speedway and STA has received a Next Level Trails grant that will enable it to complete the paving and trail amenities from Michigan Street in the near west side of Indianapolis to Girl School Road west of Speedway. The mutual goal of BOTA and STA is to connect the Hendricks County and Marion County segments of the B&O Trail as soon as available funding makes this possible.

Eventually, the goal is to extend the B&O Trail all the way from Indianapolis through North Salem, out to the Putnam County/Hendricks County line and beyond, perhaps as far as Montezuma, Ind.

The paved **Vandalia Trail** runs along the former route of the Vandalia Railroad in the southern portion of Hendricks County. The section of the trail that is operated by HCP&R is 4.1 miles long and spans from the Hendricks-Putnam County line through Coatesville to Amo.

The paved portion of the Vandalia Trail within Plainfield town limits is operated by Plainfield Parks & Recreation and is about 4 miles in length. The two sections do not currently connect, and Plainfield's portion of the Vandalia Trail does not currently connect to Marion County.

The overarching goal is to have the Vandalia Trail span the entire width of Hendricks County. It would serve as part of the National Road Heritage Trail that is envisioned to cross the entire state from Terre Haute to Richmond. The National Road Heritage Trail and the B&O Trail have both been identified by the State of Indiana as Visionary Trails.



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Education System

Hendricks County is served by six public school corporations, plus some private schools.

Avon Community School Corporation

- Avon High School
- Avon Academy
- Avon Middle School North
- Avon Middle School South
- Avon Middle School West
- Cedar Elementary School
- Evergreen Elementary School
- Hickory Elementary School
- Maple Elementary School
- Pine Tree Elementary School
- River Birch Elementary School
- Sycamore Elementary School
- Willow Elementary School
- White Oak Early Learning Center



Brownsburg Community School Corporation

- Brownsburg High School
- Brownsburg East Middle School
- Brownsburg West Middle School
- Brown Elementary School
- Cardinal Elementary School
- Crossroads Elementary School
- Delaware Trail Elementary School
- Eagle Elementary School
- Lincoln Elementary School
- Reagan Elementary School
- White Lick Elementary School
- Brownsburg Early Childhood Center



Danville Community School Corporation

- Danville Community High School
- Danville Community Middle School
- Danville North Elementary School
- Danville South Elementary School
- Little Warrior Learning Center





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Mill Creek Community School Corporation

- Cascade High School
- Cascade Middle School
- Mill Creek East Elementary School
- Mill Creek West Elementary School
- Little Cadet Preschool



North West Hendricks School Corporation

- Tri-West High School
- Tri-West Middle School
- North Salem Elementary School
- Pittsboro Elementary School
- Pittsboro Primary School
- 1883 One Room Schoolhouse
- Cubs Preschool



Plainfield Community School Corporation

- Plainfield High School
- Pride Academy
- Plainfield Community Middle School
- Brentwood Elementary School
- Central Elementary School
- Clarks Creek Elementary School
- Guilford Elementary School
- Van Buren Elementary School
- Little Quakers Academy
- The Imagination Lab



Private Schools

- Kingsway Christian School (Avon)
- Our Shepherd Lutheran School (Avon)
- Bethesda Christian Schools (Brownsburg)
- St. Malachy Catholic School (Brownsburg)
- St. Susanna Catholic School (Plainfield)

Each school has a comprehensive list of enrichment and extracurricular opportunities which vary by school, but include athletics, clubs, arts and performance, and recreation facilities. Partnerships between the schools and the county's various parks and recreation programs provide opportunities for shared resources. For example, Plainfield Parks & Recreation has a shared facility use agreement with the Plainfield Community School Corporation for swim education and team practices.



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Public Libraries

Hendricks County is home to six public libraries:

- Avon-Washington Township Public Library
- Brownsburg Public Library
- Clayton-Liberty Township Public Library
- Coatesville-Clay Township Public Library
- Danville-Center Township Public Library
- Plainfield-Guilford Township Public Library

Historic and Cultural Features

There are several historical places of interest within Hendricks County, including 19 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places and an additional seven sites recognized by the Indiana Historical Bureau.

National Register of Historic Places

- Ora Adams House (Danville)
- Amo TH&E Interurban Depot (Amo)
- Leander Campbell House (Danville)
- Danville Courthouse Square Historic District
- Danville Main Street Historic District
- Dr. Jeremiah & Anne Jane DePew House (Danville)
- Hendricks County Bridge Number 316, AKA Friendship Gardens Bridge (Plainfield)
- Hendricks County Jail and Sheriff's Residence, AKA Hendricks County Museum (Danville)
- Joel Jessup Farm (Friendswood)
- Noah Kellum & Hannah Hadley House (Camby)
- Kellum-Jessup-Chandler Farm (Plainfield)
- John W. McClain House (Avon)
- McCormack-Bowman House (Clayton)
- Plainfield Historic District
- Smith Farm (Plainfield)
- Sugar Grove Meetinghouse and Cemetery (Plainfield)
- TH&E Interurban Depot Substation (Plainfield)
- Twin Bridges (Danville)
- Wilson-Courtney House (Danville)



Danville-Center Township Public Library



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Indiana Historical Bureau Markers

- Western Yearly Meeting House (Plainfield)
- Danville Main Street Historic District
- Danville Carnegie Library
- Central Normal College (Danville)
- Samuel Luther Thompson (Danville)
- Arthur L. Trester (Amo, at the Amo trailhead of the Vandalia Trail)
- Adrian A. Parsons (Avon)

Other Historical Sites and Points of Interest

- 1883 One Room Schoolhouse (Pittsboro)
- Historic National Road - U.S. Highway 40 (Plainfield, Stilesville)
- Site of the Van Buren Elm (Plainfield)



1883 One Room Schoolhouse. Source: Visit Hendricks County.

The Amo THI&E Interurban Depot is located across the street from the Amo trailhead of the Vandalia Trail, allowing people from Putnam County and Coatesville access to this historical site. As future expansion of the trail is completed, people from the east of Amo will also be able to access it. While HCP&R doesn't currently have a partnership with the Interurban Depot, a partnership certainly makes sense, given that the trail is built over or near the former rail line.

The Arthur L. Trester historical marker is located at the Amo trailhead of the Vandalia Trail and provides trail users with interesting information.

No other historical features are near HCP&R properties.

Clubs, Groups and Organizations

HCP&R welcomes groups and clubs that would like to utilize the parks. The department partners with, presents to, and cooperates with many local clubs, groups, and organizations.

The Indiana Astronomical Society holds monthly astronomy programs at McCloud Nature Park during the summer. Scout organizations often utilize McCloud Nature Park, a local bluebird society has done work at McCloud, and McCloud is often used by photographers - including the Hendricks County Photography Club - as a backdrop for family photography or the subject of nature photography.

Field trips at McCloud Nature Park are very popular among schools, daycares, church groups, homeschoolers and other groups. HCP&R naturalists also offer monthly programs called Rooted in Nature and works with local teens to provide nature-related programming and activities.



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The Hendricks County Disc Golf Club was instrumental in the design of the disc golf course at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park and uses the park as their headquarters. Avon High School sends students to the park every year for the Avon Junior Day of Caring, and Eagle Scouts have completed service projects at the park.

The B&O Trail Association uses McCloud Nature Park as a Support and Gear (SAG) Station during their annual B&O Bicycle Tour. The HCP&R maintenance crew has also assisted with construction and maintenance of the B&O Trail on a few occasions.

HCP&R maintains a close working relationship with the Friends of the Vandalia Trail after taking over operations of the trail in 2016, and that group frequently completes volunteer work clearing leaves from the trail, removing invasive species, picking up trash, and other valuable beautification assistance.

Additionally, HCP&R staff routinely attend local Chamber of Commerce meetings, service club (Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, etc.) meetings, Boy Scout and Girl Scout council meetings, the Hendricks County 4-H Fair, Fair on the Square, Old Fashion Days, and other group meetings and community events to discuss the parks, programs, and other topics relating to parks and recreation.



Avon Junior Day of Caring at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.



Arts & Entertainment

Hendricks Live! is a performing arts center in Plainfield that features a state-of-the-art theatre, event space, and public gallery. It hosts live music, theater, art galleries, and more. **Hendricks Civic Theatre**, which provides community theater performances, is based there.

The **Hendricks County Historical Museum** is located in Danville, and it collects, preserves, and interprets items relating to the people, places, and events of Hendricks County. The building, which once served as the residence of the Hendricks County Sheriff and as the Hendricks County Jail, is located one block south of the Hendricks County Courthouse Square.

The **Royal Theater**, located on the east side of the Hendricks County Courthouse Square in Danville, has provided Hendricks County residents and visitors with first-run movies, classic movies, live music, and other entertainment since 1927.

The **Gallery on the Square** is also located on the east side of the Courthouse Square, and it displays local artwork and offers pieces of art for purchase. It is home to the **Hendricks County Arts Council**.

Avon is home to the **Hendricks Symphony Orchestra and Chorus**, which performs at a variety of locations and events in and around Hendricks County throughout the year.

Sporting Events

Lucas Oil Raceway is located in Brownsburg, and it contains a 0.686-mile paved oval track and a 4,400-foot-long drag strip. Many motorsports events are held at the raceway, highlighted by NHRA U.S. Nationals every year. ARCA stock car racing, USAC sprint car racing, the U.S. F2000 National Championship, motorcycle racing, and many other events also take place at Lucas Oil Raceway. Additionally, the facility opens on a regular basis for racing among members of the public.

The **Indiana Lyons**, a team with the American Basketball Association (ABA), play their home games at Bosstick Gym in Danville. Founded in 2018, this professional minor league basketball team qualified for the ABA playoffs in each of its first seven seasons of existence. The 2022-23 team won the ABA Midwest Region and the ABA Championship out of more than 150 teams in the league.



The Indiana Lyons provide high-octane semi-pro basketball action in Hendricks County. *Source: Antonio Toppin.*



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Community Events

Hendricks County is home to a wide variety of community events of various sizes and areas of focus throughout the year. Visit Hendricks County keeps an online calendar of events up-to-date on their website.

Some of the most popular community events within the county are:

- Amo Fish Fry
- Christmas Under the Stars Parade (Brownsburg)
- Fair on the Square (Danville)
- Fall Colors Festival (North Salem; an HCP&R event)
- Heartland Apple Festival (Danville)
- Hendricks County 4-H Fair (Danville)
- Hendricks County Rib-Fest and Balloon Glow (Danville)
- Mayberry in the Midwest (Danville)
- North Salem Old Fashion Days
- Quaker Days (Plainfield)
- Winterland Holiday Light Show (Danville)

There are also several Independence Day and Christmas celebrations throughout the county every year, which are heavily attended.

Historically, HCP&R has had booths at Fair on the Square, the Hendricks County 4-H Fair, and North Salem Old Fashion Days to meet people, spread awareness of the department and its offerings, and share in the community event. HCP&R staff has also volunteered at the Winterland Holiday Light Show in support of Danville Parks & Recreation, which operates the lights and the park where they are located.



Amo Fish Fry. Source: Amo Fire Dept on Facebook



Natural Features of Hendricks County

Hendricks County is located within the Indiana physiographic region known as the Tipton Till Plain. This flat topographic area was created from debris deposited by retreating glaciers of the Wisconsin Age, which covered the region about 15,000 years ago.

There are no bodies of water in Hendricks County of appreciable size. The largest is approximately 24 acres. There are several small streams within the county, and two significant stream corridors: Big Walnut Creek, which runs through McCloud Nature Park; and White Lick Creek and its associated forks, located in the eastern portion of the county and running through Brownsburg, Avon, and Plainfield. The creeks provide limited water-based recreation opportunities due to fluctuating water levels throughout the year. The streams are often too shallow for boating or canoeing, although “creek stomping” at McCloud Nature Park is a popular activity.

The Central Indiana Land Trust (CILTI) has identified a number of areas within Hendricks County as valuable to preserve to maintain habitat for sensitive wildlife. These include the riparian corridors of White Lick Creek and Big Walnut Creek. According to CILTI, “most of the remaining forest in Hendricks County is found along a stem of White Lick Creek. ... A White Lick Creek greenway system could protect important wildlife habitat while offering outdoor recreation as well as help maintain or improve a high quality stream.”

Soils

The soils in Hendricks County fall into seven major associations, the majority of which are poorly drained. The Crosby-Brookston soils comprise the majority of soils in the county, with the Miami-Crosby soils being the next most common.

These soil types create some limitations for construction due to their wetness and potential for erosion.

The poorly drained soils also create moderate to significant limitations for recreational uses, including campgrounds, picnic areas, play areas, paths, and trails. These limitations are based on the soils’ restrictive qualities such as flooding, wetness, and slope. Appropriate site design, intensive maintenance, limited use of the site, or a combination of these measures can overcome the soils’ limitations.

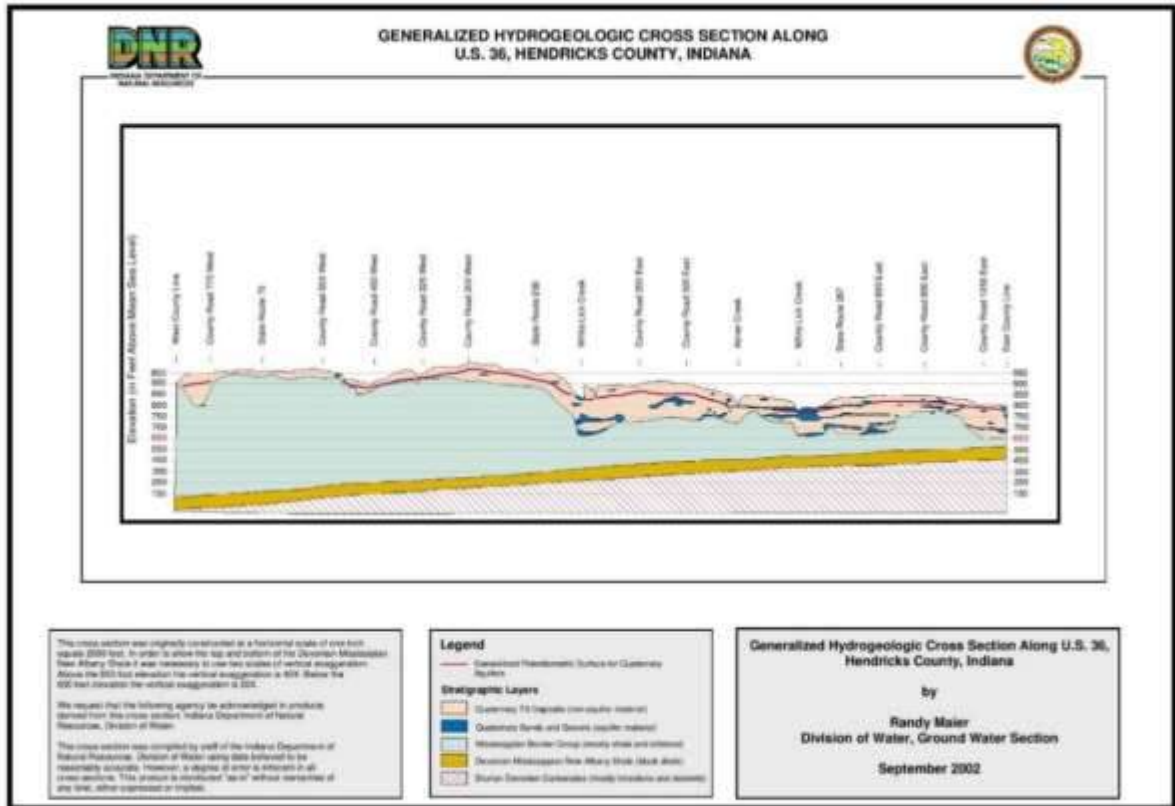
Climate

Hendricks County has a continental climate characterized by winter temperatures cold enough to support snow cover and warm temperatures typical of tropical climates in the summer. The county is subject to the various conditions of all four seasons - spring, summer, autumn, and winter - and enjoys a mild climate overall. Winter is the most unpredictable season, as precipitation takes on all forms: rain, sleet, freezing rain, snow, and hail.

Overall, the climatic patterns support a wide range of recreation activities, although winter snowfalls are light and creation of outdoor ice without the use of refrigeration is difficult. Outdoor activities that rely on snow cover, such as sledding or cross-country skiing, are generally available only on a limited basis.



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Hendricks County Climate at a Glance				
Month	Average High Temperatures (°F)	Average Low Temperatures (°F)	Average Precipitation (inches)	Average Snowfall (inches)
January	35.6	20.5	2.66	8.6
February	40.2	23.9	2.32	6.5
March	51.7	32.8	3.56	2.6
April	63.4	42.7	3.81	0.2
May	72.8	52.6	5.05	Trace
June	81.9	62.1	4.25	0.0
July	85.0	65.8	4.55	0.0
August	84.0	64.4	3.13	0.0
September	77.6	56.2	3.12	0.0
October	65.3	44.7	3.12	0.4
November	52.2	35.1	3.70	0.7
December	38.9	24.4	3.17	6.9
Annual	62.5	43.9	42.44	25.9

Source: <https://www.weather.gov/ind/localcli#norm>



Watersheds

Most of Indiana is located within the **Ohio Region**, identified by the two-digit Hydrological Unit Code (HUC) of 05.

Throughout the United States, each region is divided into subregions and assigned a four-digit HUC. The majority of Indiana, including Hendricks County, is within the **Wabash Subregion** (0512).

The Wabash Subregion is divided into two accounting units, or basins, each of which is designated by a six-digit HUC: **Wabash** (051201) and **Patoka-White** (051202). Almost all of Hendricks County lies within the Patoka-White Basin.

Patoka-White Basin, which covers the Patoka and White River basins, is broken down into nine cataloging units, or subbasins that are each given an eight-digit HUC.

Wabash Basin, which covers the Wabash River basin excluding the Patoka and White River basins, is broken down into 15 cataloging units.

Hendricks County is primarily covered by the **Upper White River** (05120201) and the **Eel-West Fork White River (WFWR)** (05120203) Subbasins of the Patoka-White Basin. A small finger of the **Middle Wabash-Little Vermillion** (05120108) Subbasin of the Wabash Basin covers the northwesternmost corner of the county.

Subbasins are then divided into watersheds, each of which receive a 10-digit HUC. A total of seven watersheds exist in Hendricks County.

Watersheds are subsequently divided into subwatersheds, each receiving a 12-digit HUC. There are 15 subwatersheds within Hendricks County.

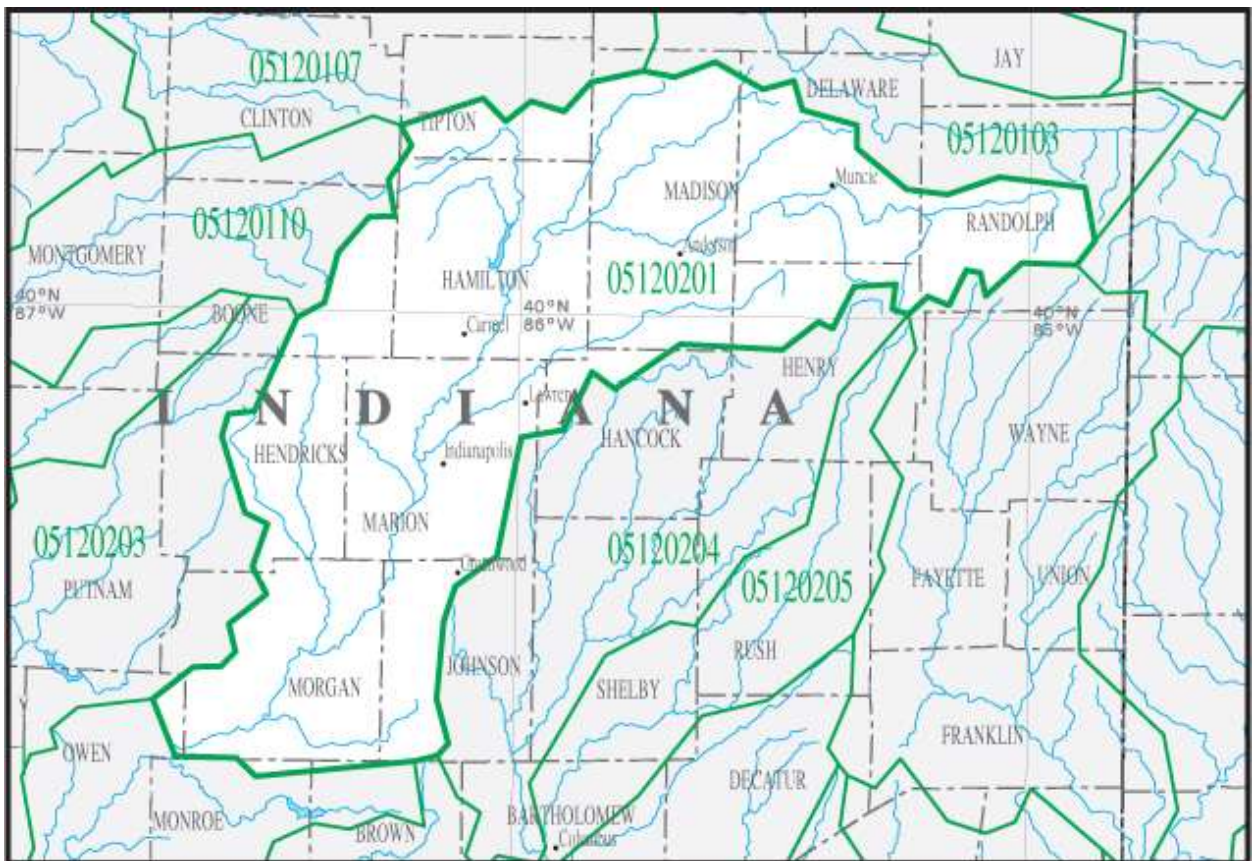
8-Digit Hydrologic Unit Code Areas within the Subregions





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Upper White River Subbasin



Upper White River Subbasin (HUC 05120201). Source: USGS

The northeast corner of Hendricks County is within the **Eagle Creek** (0512020112) Watershed. None of HCP&R's properties are within this watershed.

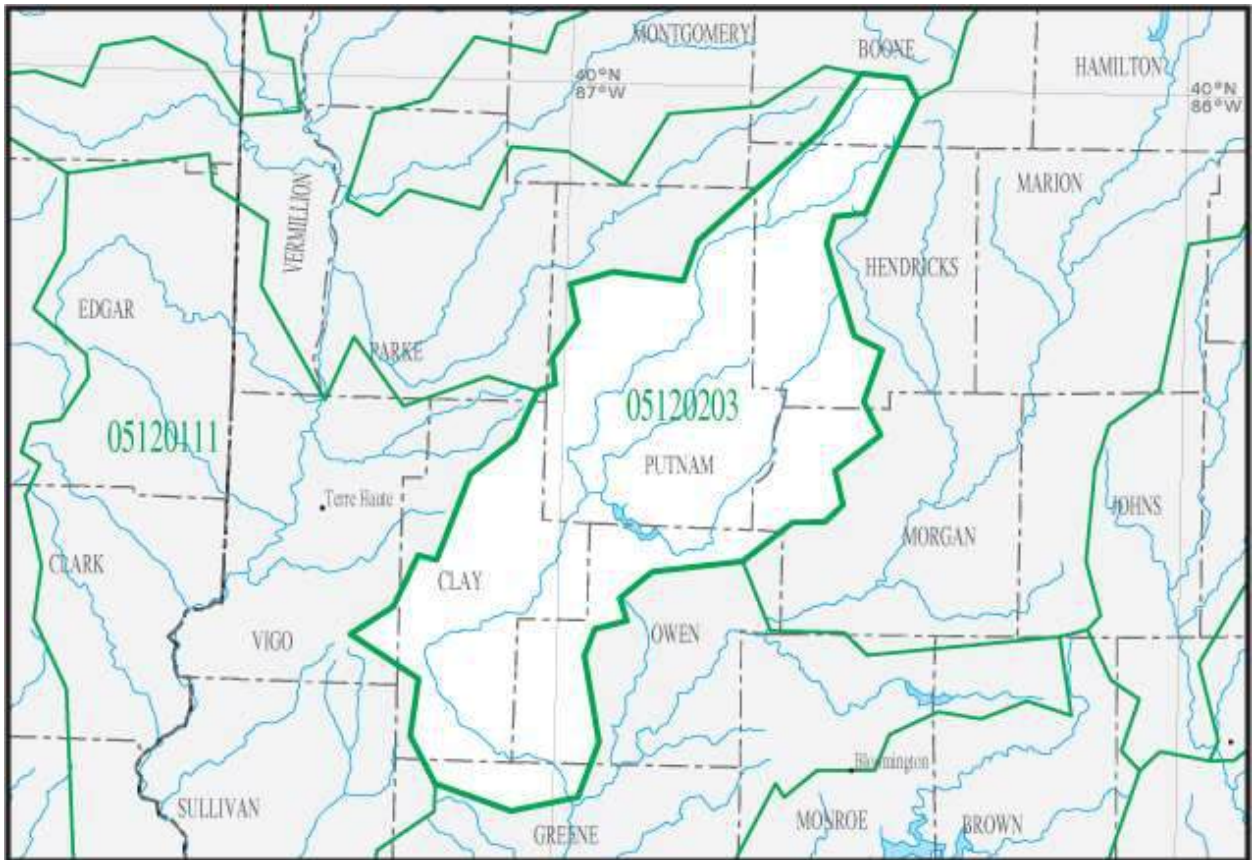
Most of the eastern portion of Hendricks County, which includes W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, is part of the **White Lick Creek** Watershed (0512020113).

A total of nine subwatersheds within the Eagle Creek and White Lick Creek Watersheds of the Upper White River Subbasin are located in part or entirely within Hendricks County.

The eastern portion of W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park lies within the **Clarks Creek-White Lick Creek** (HUC 051202011306) Subwatershed while the western portion of the property is part of the **West Fork White Lick Creek** (051202011305) Subwatershed.



Eel - West Fork White River (WFWR) Subbasin



Eel - West Fork White River (WFWR) Subbasin (HUC 05120203). Source: USGS

Most of the southwestern portion of the county is in the **Mill Creek** (0512020305) Watershed. The majority of HCP&R's portion of the Vandalia Trail, including both trailheads, lies within this watershed.

A total of four subwatersheds within the Eel WFWR Subbasin are located in part or entirely within Hendricks County.

The Coatesville trailhead of the Vandalia Trail is located within the **Sallust Branch-Mill Creek** (051202030503) Subwatershed of the Mill Creek Watershed, while the Amo trailhead is located within the **Headwaters Mill Creek** (0512030502) Subwatershed of the Mill Creek Watershed.

A small portion of the **Deer Creek** (0512020303) Watershed juts into Hendricks County just west of Coatesville. A short section of the Vandalia Trail between Coatesville and the Hendricks-Putnam County Line runs through this watershed.

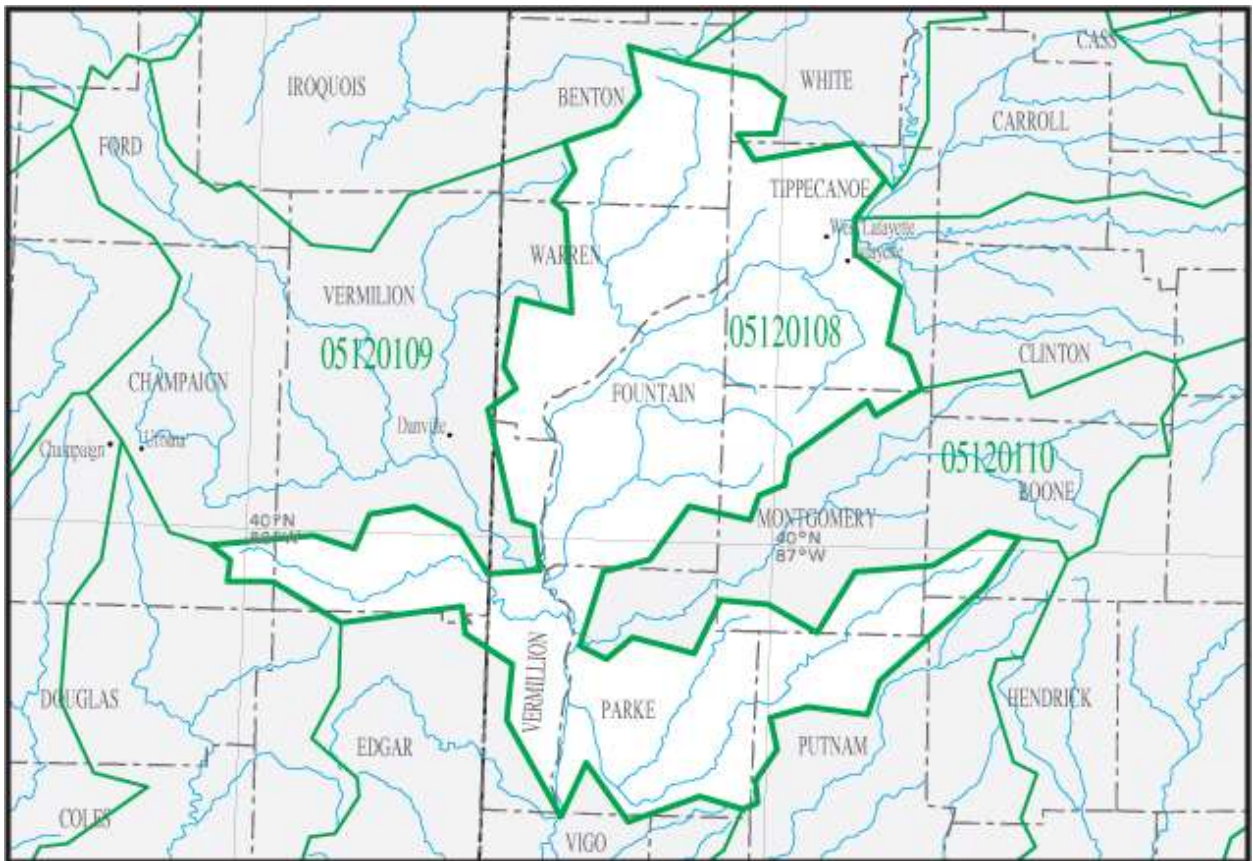
Much of the northwestern portion of Hendricks County is within the **East Fork Big Walnut Creek** (0512020301) Watershed. HCP&R does not operate any properties within this watershed.



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The **Big Walnut Creek** (0512020304) Watershed runs along the western edge of Hendricks County and encompasses McCloud Nature Park. McCloud Nature Park lies within the **Town of Banard-Big Walnut Creek** (051202030401) Subwatershed of the Big Walnut Creek Watershed.

Middle Wabash-Little Vermillion Subbasin



Middle Wabash-Little Vermillion Subbasin (HUC 05120108). Source: USGS

A small section of the **Cecil M. Hardin Lake-Raccoon Creek** (0512010804) Watershed runs through the northwesternmost corner of Hendricks County. None of HCP&R’s properties are located within this watershed.

Two subwatersheds - **Little Raccoon Creek-Big Raccoon Creek** (051201081207) and **Haw Creek** (051201081206) - of the Middle Wabash-Little Vermillion Subbasin reach into a very small portion of northwest Hendricks County.



Impact of Natural Features on HCP&R

Terrain

There is not a lot of diversity in the terrain of Hendricks County, with most of the landscape being flat. HCP&R is fortunate to operate McCloud Nature Park in a rare area of the county that features some varying terrain, glacial ravines, woods, prairie, and a creek. This makes for a unique attraction for nature enthusiasts to visit.

On the flip side of that coin, the flat terrain that used to be farmland made for a challenge in the construction of W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – that is, giving the park some personality and something unique for park guests to enjoy. Ultimately, HCP&R decided to construct two ponds totaling 5½ acres in size to give the park a water feature. The soil that was excavated from the pond was then used to build a 30-foot-tall hill that will serve as an outlook during the warmer months and as a sledding hill after snowfalls.

Invasive Plants

Invasive plant species create a continual issue in all three of HCP&R's properties. Invasives such as garlic mustard, autumn olive, multiflora rose, and honeysuckle require a great deal of manpower, equipment, and chemicals to remove.

HCP&R naturalists have held Garlic Mustard Pulls as programs for the public at McCloud Nature Park, scout groups have come out to McCloud to remove invasive plants, and students from the Tri-West High School Service Club and Avon High School have been out to McCloud to remove invasives.

HCP&R has partnered with Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM) to host Weed Wrangle® programs at McCloud Nature Park and along the Vandalia Trail.

The HCP&R maintenance crew has spent months clearing out invasive plants and trees from the W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park before, during, and after construction. Some areas of the land had not been managed for about 60 years, so HCP&R has had to use a rented forestry mulcher to clear out invasives in large sections of the property.

The 52-acre prairie at McCloud Nature Park is managed using prescribed prairie burns on a regular basis. Normally, the prairie is burned every 2 to 3 years to increase biodiversity and to help control invasive plant species. Once the prairie burn is completed, the invasive woody plants remain, allowing for easy identification and removal by the HCP&R maintenance crew.

The most recent prescribed prairie burns at McCloud Nature Park were conducted by Turner Forestry on April 1, 2025 and on March 28, 2022. It is scheduled for its next burn in 2026 to maintain the prairie's progress.



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Prescribed prairie burn at McCloud Nature Park on April 1, 2025. Source: Deb Stukenborg

Invasive Insects

Without question, the most destructive invasive insect that HCP&R has had to deal with is the Emerald Ash Borer. The infestation throughout the Midwest of the beetle that is native to northeast Asia has had catastrophic effects on ash trees, including those at all three of HCP&R's properties.

Thousands of ash trees were killed by the Emerald Ash Borer at McCloud Nature Park, W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, and along the Vandalia Trail, resulting in HCP&R spending thousands of dollars on having dead ash trees removed as well as the HCP&R maintenance crew spending an untold amount of manpower removing the dead trees themselves.

Reforestation is a top priority for HCP&R at all three properties. McCloud Nature Park and W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park have both been sites for reforestation efforts as Eagle Scout projects. Several trees have been purchased and planted at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park by HCP&R, and the park is the site of the Bicentennial Tree Trail, which holds nearly 100 species of native trees as part of Hendricks County's bicentennial celebration in 2024. Those



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trees were purchased by corporate and private donors, the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County, and the Hendricks County Bicentennial Committee.

In 2024, the Central Indiana Land Trust purchased and planted 26,000 tree seedlings along a 2.5-mile-long stretch of land that will become an extension of the Vandalia Trail in the next few years.

Water

Since the soil across Hendricks County does not drain well, HCP&R constantly deals with standing water, flooding, and erosion issues.

Big Walnut Creek frequently floods during and after heavy sustained rainfall, which caused significant erosion of the creek bank and often flooded a lower portion of McCloud Nature Park. To combat these issues, jetties were installed along the creek bank in 2016 by Environmental Remediation Contractor out of Columbus, Ohio, to protect from erosion.

Additionally, a wetland habitat was constructed in the area of the park that frequently floods, and a large boardwalk and observation deck was constructed by the HCP&R maintenance crew to allow park guests, school children, and other groups of people to observe the habitat, even when it's flooded.



Aerial view of wetland habitat, boardwalk, and observation deck at McCloud Nature Park. Source: Dave Novak.



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Drainage became an issue in 2018 along the Vandalia Trail after it was paved. A contracted engineering firm miscalculated the size of the watershed that feeds into Crittenden Creek, so improper drainage was designed and installed during the paving project. That error, combined with several historical rain events in 2018, resulted in frequent heavy flooding along the trail and surrounding area.

A new drainage system was designed to handle 100-year floods and was installed in 2019, which ended the heavy flooding problems. The system was specifically designed to slow down the water flow before it reached Crittenden Creek in an effort to minimize erosion of the creek bank.

Drainage is a constant challenge at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. The land was poorly drained to begin with and was farmland with no vegetation. Since construction began, roads and parking lots were paved, and ponds and a hill were created, attention has perpetually been focused on drainage and erosion.



Forebay weir and erosion control / natural water filtration system at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

An ephemeral creek bed on the property was cleared out by the HCP&R maintenance crew, which improved drainage after rainfall, and a system of culverts and erosion control were designed and constructed throughout the park, especially around the forebay and ponds.

Several boardwalks throughout the park allow guests to continue hiking trails, even through some low spots on the property that still collect standing water from time to time.

A rain garden at the front of the property next to the entrance was planted to help deal with an area that continues to collect standing water, even after multiple attempts at a drainage system in that area.

Grasses on the hill at the park combat erosion. Native prairie grass is on the two steep end slopes, while turf grass is on the top of the hill and down its wider sides with gentler slopes. HCP&R monitors erosion on the hill, but it has not yet become an issue.



Hendricks County Parks and Trails

HCP&R operates McCloud Nature Park, W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, and a section of the Vandalia Trail that runs from Amo through Coatesville to the Hendricks-Putnam County line.

Additionally, the Park Board owns a section of land along County Road 500 S. adjoining the western border of the Town of Clayton and has purchased right-of-way access to another piece of property along CR 500 S. with the intention of expanding the Vandalia Trail eastward from Amo to Clayton. One component of that construction was completed in 2025, building a small section of trail in Clayton town limits that connects to Lambert Park.

McCloud Nature Park

**8518 Hughes Road
North Salem, IN 46165**

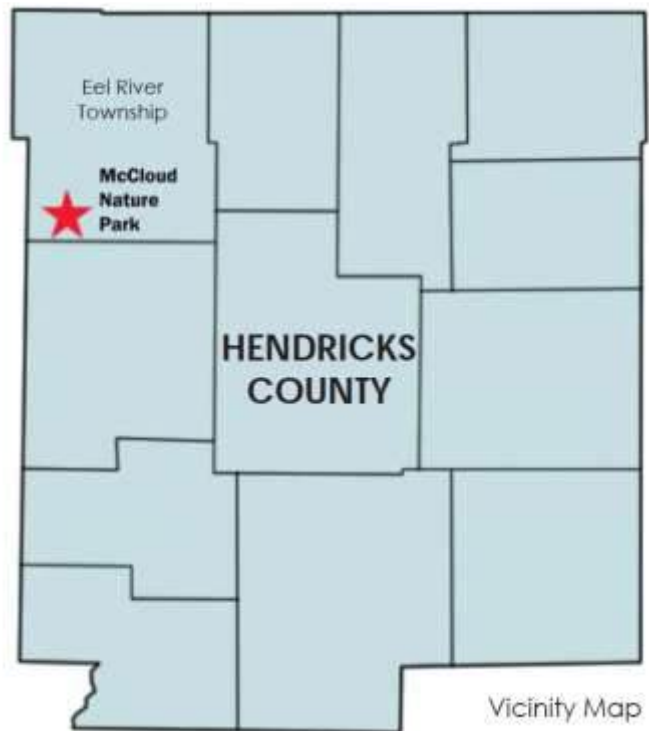
Located in Eel River Township in the northwest corner of Hendricks County, McCloud Nature Park is HCP&R's first park, opened in 2003. At 232 acres, it is also the department's largest park.

McCloud's varied terrain includes wetlands, open grassland, the Big Walnut Creek, seeps, and forested hills. A master plan completed in 2008 proposed expanding and protecting the natural qualities of the park for education and passive recreation purposes, a goal that was supported by public and stakeholder comments at the time. The variety of natural communities present in the park offer opportunities to explore and compare different ecosystems.

Amenities

Amenities at McCloud Nature Park include:

- Big Walnut Creek access
- Restored 100+ year-old truss bridge
- 7+ miles of well-marked trails in varying levels of difficulty and terrain
- 15' x 30' pavilion with grills and picnic tables
- Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center
 - Interactive exhibits
 - Bird-viewing room
 - Resource library
 - Modern restrooms
 - Large wooden deck with bench seating





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- Family programming, summer day camps, and festivals
- 800-square-foot wetland habitat boardwalk and observation deck
- 3-acre arboretum with interpretive signage
- Live observable honeybee habitat with interpretive signage
- Astronomy pads and viewing programs
- 52-acre prairie
- Woodland communities
- Swing set
- Nature play area

Visitation

McCloud Nature Park sees about 40,000 visitors per year – a total that held steady for the past four years after an anomalous 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Visitation in 2024 was 42,342 people, while 2023 had 45,870 visitors and 2022 brought 39,625 people to the park. In 2025, 40,078 people visited McCloud.

The park is also home to two popular annual festivals. **Maple Syrup Days** are held in March and the **Fall Colors Festival** is held in October. With a typical annual attendance of about 2,500 people, the Fall Colors Festival is most often HCP&R's largest one-day festival.

Challenges

One of the biggest challenges faced by HCP&R at McCloud Nature Park is its **very limited ADA accessibility**. All trails at McCloud are crushed stone or natural surfaces, and the topography provides park guests with elevation changes that are not ADA accessible. The Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center also has some ADA-accessibility deficiencies.

HCP&R has tried to mitigate this issue by offering free use of a GRIT Freedom Chair, constructing a large ADA-accessible deck on the back of the Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center, and the addition of a swing set with an ADA-accessible swing seat. The department is also currently looking into ways to fund motorized wheelchairs for park guests.

The **small size and poor flow** of the Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center, along with the ADA accessibility issues in that building, has led the Park Board to set a goal over the next five years of developing a plan for possible remodeling.

As **Mill Cottage ages**, it requires more and more maintenance. A recent inspection by an engineering firm found that the building is still structurally sound, but it also uncovered a **substantial mold infestation**. It is currently used only for storage, but one Park Board member has ideas of it becoming a laboratory in which college students can study the local watershed. A plan must be developed for how much money HCP&R should put into Mill Cottage and if it will be used for anything other than storage.

The **Bee House needs a lot of TLC**. The perpetually failing window shades to help protect the bees from the heat of direct sunlight are currently being replaced by the maintenance crew with an entirely different system. The naturalists have a plan to give it fresh paint by way of a mural, and HCP&R has hired a professional beekeeper



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to care for the bees. After being without bees inside for the past few years, HCP&R hopes to reopen this popular educational feature this summer.

HCP&R is constantly battling **invasive plant growth** at McCloud.

Vandalism at McCloud has been sparse over the years, but it occasionally happens. People also **dump large trash items** - mattresses, appliances, etc. - along the edge of the park from Putnam County Line Road. More recently, a bigger issue has been people coming to the park after dark, consuming alcohol and having a campfire by Big Walnut Creek, and **leaving the creek bank full of trash** after they leave. HCP&R is currently working to eliminate that behavior.

McCloud has a small pond that is in a high traffic area of the park. It houses a lot of turtles and frogs, but it's also **overgrown with aquatic plant growth**, making both an eyesore for park guests and unhealthy for the wildlife living in it. The naturalists are currently working with the maintenance crew to find a chemical-free solution to this issue.



Maple Syrup Days at McCloud Nature Park



Fall Colors Festival at McCloud Nature Park



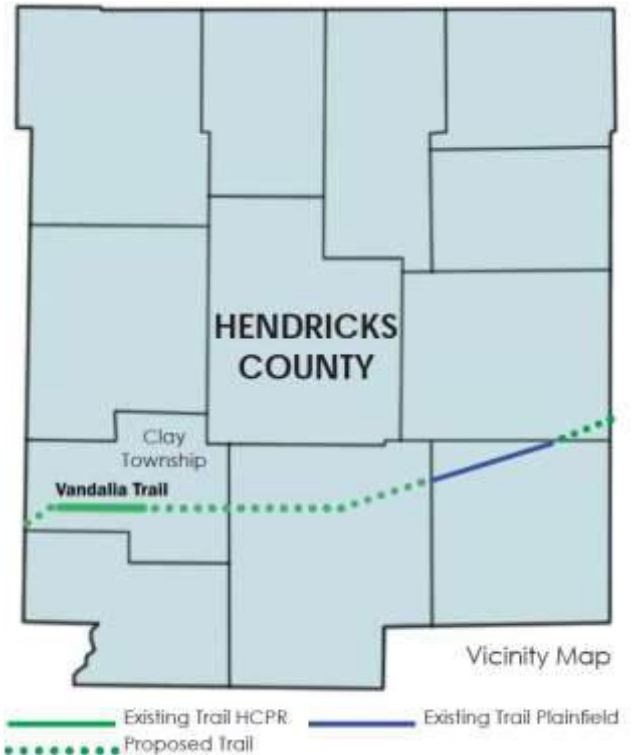
Vandalia Trail

Amo Trailhead
5042 South Street
Amo, IN 46103

Clayton Trailhead (Lambert Park)
315 Michigan Street
Clayton, IN 46118

Coatesville Trailhead
7963 Main Street
Coatesville, IN 46121

The Vandalia Trail is a paved 4.1-mile trail for hiking, jogging, and bicycling that runs on or near the former Vandalia rail corridor. An equestrian trail runs parallel to the pedestrian trail. The trail connects the towns of Amo and Coatesville in southwest Hendricks County and connects with the People Pathways at the Hendricks-Putnam County line. People Pathways continues west to Greencastle, Ind.



In 2025, HCP&R completed construction on a small but important extension of the Vandalia Trail that includes about a quarter mile of paved trail along the north side of County Road 500 South from Michigan Street to Lambert Park in Clayton, Ind. The trail created access to the south side of the park via pavement and a small concrete bridge across a culvert, and it continues to run along the eastern portion of the park to Michigan Street in the northeast section of Lambert Park. The park, owned and operated by the Town of Clayton, now serves as the Clayton trailhead.

In 2019, the Park Board purchased a 67-acre piece of land from Glen "Buck" Arnold that adjoins the western border of the Town of Clayton and stretches two (2) linear miles west from the town limit toward Amo along the north side of County Road 500 S. This land was purchased with the intention of extending the Vandalia Trail from Amo to Clayton, which are located five (5) miles apart from each other.

These efforts continue the long-range goal of eventually connecting HCP&R's portion of the trail with the Town of Plainfield's section. This HCP&R land is currently leased to a local farmer for corn and soybean crops, providing some annual income to HCP&R until the trail is developed there.

The Park Board has purchased right-of-way access to key pieces of land on the north side of County Road 500 South between Clayton and County Road 250 West, and HCP&R has applied for a federal Land & Water Conservation Fund grant administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. That grant request is awaiting federal approval.



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Assuming the grant is approved, plans are to begin construction in 2027 on a 2.5-mile stretch of paved trail from Michigan Street in Clayton, along the north side of County Road 500 South, to County Road 250 West.

HCP&R continues, through the efforts of a contracted engineering firm, to work with landowners along the north side of CR 500 S. to purchase property or right-of-way access for the entire five-mile stretch between Amo and Clayton.

In addition to the Coatesville-Amo and Clayton segments of the trail, a 5-mile stretch of the Vandalia Trail is located in Plainfield as part of the town's trail network. That section of the trail is operated by Plainfield Parks & Recreation.

The Vandalia Trail, which is part of the National Road Heritage Trail, is planned to extend across the state of Indiana from Terre Haute to Richmond. The National Road Heritage Trail has been designated by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources as a Visionary Trail.

The trail opened in 2005 through the efforts of volunteers, the Indiana Trails Fund, and private donations. Although HCP&R didn't initially own the trail, the department established a partnership with the Indiana Trails Fund in 2007 and maintained the natural-surface portion of the trail connecting Amo and Coatesville.

HCP&R took possession of the Vandalia Trail in March of 2016 and, utilizing a \$1,928,000 award from the Indiana Department of Transportation, paved the entire 4.1-mile section of the trail and installed 1-acre trailheads in both Amo and Coatesville. The bridge over Crittenden Creek was also replaced. Construction was completed in 2019 and rendered the entire HCP&R-owned section of the Vandalia Trail ADA-accessible.



The Vandalia Trail in Coatesville



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HCP&R regularly hosts programs periodically along the Vandalia Trail, including a popular annual Egg Hunt at the Coatesville trailhead around Easter and the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County's annual Summer Fun Run Series at the Amo trailhead in the summer.

Amenities

The Amo and Coatesville trailheads include:

- Two modern ADA-accessible restrooms
- Two drinking fountains, one of which is ADA-accessible
- Trash and recycling receptacles
- Bicycle repair station and tire pump
- Interpretive signage
- Pet waste stations
- Equestrian loading and unloading zones

The Clayton trailhead at Lambert Park includes:

- 6 acres
- Playground
- Gazebo
- 2 shelters
- Modern restrooms

Visitation

The Vandalia Trail sees about 20,000 visitors per year.

Visitation in 2024 was 18,959, while 2023 brought 24,333 people to the trail, 2022 saw 20,379 visitors, and 21,622 people used the trail in 2021.



Bicyclists along the Vandalia Trail. Source: Greg Midgley

Challenges

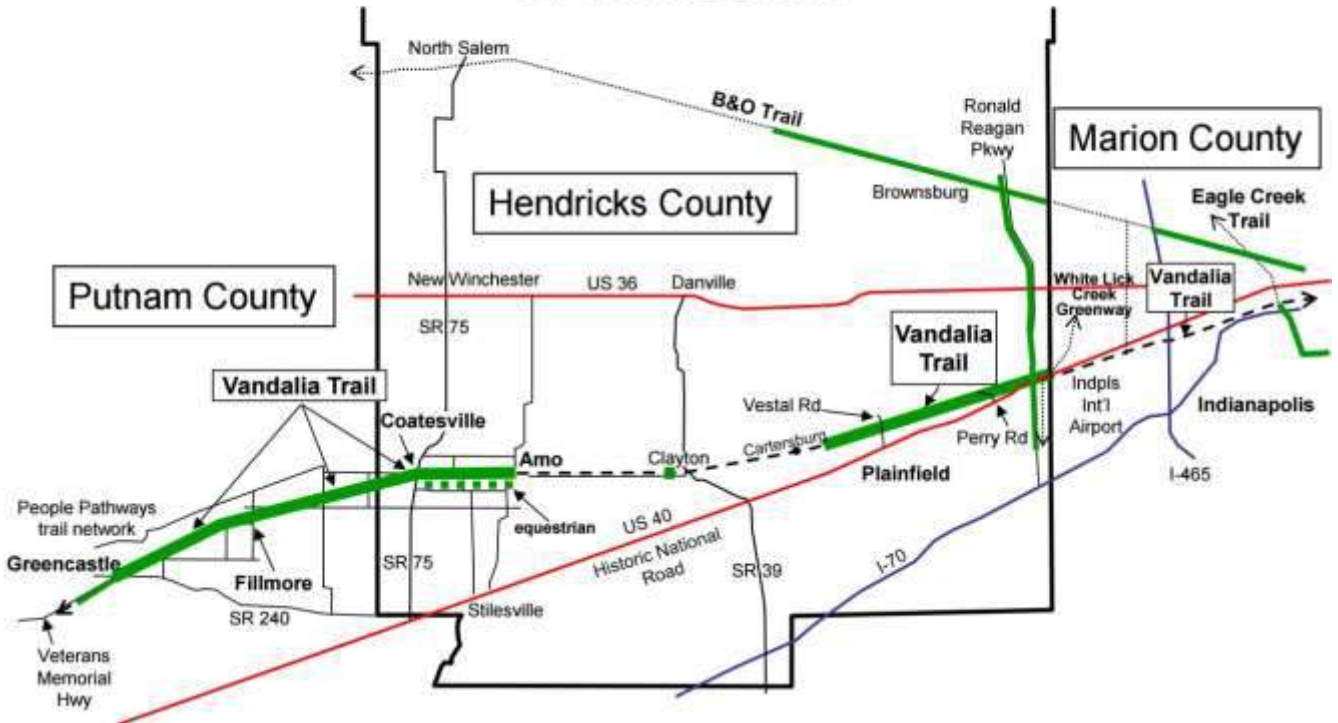
Vandalism is far and away the biggest challenge along HCP&R's stretch of the Vandalia Trail. While there has been a little bit of vandalism at the Amo trailhead over the years, the Coatesville trailhead has been heavily vandalized on a regular basis for the past several years. HCP&R has tried working with law enforcement in Coatesville to remedy this issue, but the vandalism continues. In 2026, the restrooms at the trailheads were opened on April 1, and the Coatesville restrooms were vandalized on April 2. HCP&R has started thinking about closing the restrooms down in Coatesville either temporarily or permanently as a result.

Invasive plants line both sides of the trail and are a constant project to remove.



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Vandalia Trail Locations & connectors



Source: NRHT



W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

**4521 Gibbs Road
Danville, IN 46122**

W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park is a 160-acre facility in Washington Township that opened to the public on July 21, 2021. While it has a Danville address, the park is located within Avon town limits.

Phase I Development

The initial portion of the park encompassed about 70 acres of a 140-acre parcel owned by the Park Board. When it opened, it included:

- About a mile of paved road throughout
- Parking lots totaling 136 spaces
- A 3.8-acre and a 1.1-acre pond that are connected under water by a 24-inch bypass pipe
- An ADA-accessible dock on the larger pond
- A 30-foot-tall hill
- Two pavilions
- A nature-themed playground
- An 18-hole disc golf course
- Eight bicycle racks
- Just under two miles of crushed stone trails



An ephemeral creek runs through the property, which served as the western boundary of the first phase of development, and all Phase I development was completed to the east of the creek.

The ponds were stocked with thousands of fingerlings by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Fish & Wildlife in the fall of 2021. The stocked species are bass, redear sunfish, bluegill, and channel catfish. Licensed anglers can now fish the ponds for free and keep their catch - a unique offering in Hendricks County.

The maintenance crew constructed a wooden stairway up the side of the 30-foot-tall hill to provide safer ascent and descent of the hill, and swing sets were added to the playground in 2022.

In 2022, HCP&R received a federal Land & Water Conservation Fund grant administered by the Indiana DNR to increase security and accessibility throughout 70 acres in Phase I, as well as to add modern restrooms.

From 2022 through 2025, HCP&R used the grant money and funds from their annual appropriated budgets to add seven solar-powered security lights, an ADA-accessible dock on the smaller pond, a concrete ADA-



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accessible switchback trail to the top of the 30-foot-tall hill, about a half-mile of paved trail around the two ponds, and two precast concrete vault restrooms including the required well and septic system.

The restrooms were manufactured by CXT. One unit is the CXT Arapahoe, which is a 20' x 26' structure with four family-assist restrooms, four ADA-accessible toilets, and four sinks. It is located next to the central parking lot in the park.

The other unit, located next to the playground, is a CXT Denali. This 10'3" x 17" building houses two single-person restrooms, two ADA-accessible toilets, and two sinks.

Both units have drinking fountains on the front of the structures. Installation of the restrooms was completed in 2025, which closed out the Land & Water Conservation Fund grant.



Installation of the CXT Denali restroom at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.



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Phase II Development

In 2023, development of the park began on the west side of the ephemeral creek. HCP&R worked with West Central Indiana Quail Forever and the Hendricks County Soil & Water Conservation District to plant an 8-acre pollinator garden in the southwest corner of the park property.

A special mixture of native plant and grass seed was created for this project, and West Central Indiana Quail Forever and the Hendricks County Soil & Water Conservation District purchased the 44 pounds of seed required to plant the garden. West Central Indiana Quail Forever loaned HCP&R a specialized seed drill and taught members of the HCP&R maintenance crew how to use it. The planting was completed on May 18, 2023.

A crushed stone and natural surface trail was built around the garden, and an interpretive sign was installed along the trail to educate park guests about the project, the collaboration, and the species of plants in the garden.

Also in 2023, the shell of a 60' x 120' maintenance hub was constructed by Patterson Horth after being designed by Align Civil Engineering Consultants. Over the fall and winter of 2023 into the spring of 2024, the HCP&R maintenance crew constructed the interior of the building, which includes a climate-controlled area that houses three offices and a conference room/kitchenette, as well as a pull-through bay, a mechanical repair bay, a woodworking shop, a large mezzanine, a supply room, and a storage room for the HCP&R naturalists.



Exterior of the Gibbs maintenance hub after construction

A large fenced-in maintenance yard surfaced with crushed stone connects to the building, providing secure space for County-owned vehicles and machinery, staff vehicles, and bins for landscaping materials. A long crushed stone drive with an asphalt apron provides access from Gibbs Road to the maintenance hub.

In 2024, six members of HCP&R's nine-member maintenance crew began reporting directly to the Gibbs maintenance hub, while the remaining three crew members continue reporting directly to the McCloud maintenance hub.

In 2025, after months of planning by the Hendricks County Bicentennial Committee, HCP&R, and the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County, a six-acre Bicentennial Tree Trail was constructed immediately south of the maintenance hub. Funded by the Bicentennial Committee, largely through private and corporate sponsors, a crushed stone trail was designed and built by the HCP&R maintenance crew in the shape of a "200" to commemorate Hendricks County's 200th anniversary in 2024.



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About 225 trees representing over 60 native species were planted throughout the six-acre plot, and species identification signs were designed, constructed, and installed by the HCP&R maintenance crew.

In 2024, the Hendricks County Park Board purchased a 20-acre parcel of land from the estate of Chub and Lydia Gibbs. The parcel is directly north of the park entrance, thus expanding the acreage of W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park to about 160 acres. Included in the purchase was the former residence of Chub and Lydia Gibbs, two barns, and a historic silo, all of which sit on the 20-acre parcel.

HCP&R entered contracts with Studio View Architects and Patterson Horth to design and construct a welcome center at the park, which will also serve as office space for HCP&R administrative and naturalist staff. The building will be situated on a portion of the newly acquired 20-acre parcel of land. Construction is expected to take place in 2026.

During the summer of 2025, HCP&R administrative staff were required by Hendricks County authorities to move into the former Gibbs residence until the new welcome center and office building is constructed. That move took place in late July.



**W.S. GIBBS MEMORIAL PARK
WELCOME CENTER AND
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**



Amenities

Current park amenities include:

- Approximately one mile of paved drive throughout the park
- Parking lots totaling 136 spaces
- Eight bicycle racks
- 3.8-acre and 1.1-acre ponds connected by a 24-inch bypass pipe
- ADA-accessible dock on each pond
- About three miles of trail (paved, crushed stone, and natural surfaces)
- 30-foot-tall observation/sledding hill
- Concrete ADA-accessible switchback trail to the top of the hill
- Wooden staircase to the top of the hill
- Two ADA-accessible pavilions with picnic tables and grills, available for rental
- 18-hole disc golf course
- Nature-themed playground with swings
- Nature play area
- Two modern restrooms that combine to include six ADA-accessible toilets



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- Picnic areas
- Solar-powered security lights throughout the park
- 8-acre pollinator garden
- 6-acre Bicentennial Tree Trail
- Three bridges
- Green space (turf grass)
- Native prairie grasses

Visitation

After opening to the public on July 21, 2021, W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park had 60,614 visitors throughout the remainder of that year.

In 2022, park visitation jumped to 80,999, and in 2023, a total of 97,360 people visited the park.

Visitation in 2024 was 104,061.

Annual visitation is expected to continue increasing as more people learn about the park and as HCP&R continues development of the location.





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Challenges

At Gibbs, dealing with **water flow issues** is common. Water collects in various spots around the park after rainfall because of poor drainage. The ephemeral creek that runs through the park has caused bank erosion when heavy water flows through it, resulting in HCP&R spending a great deal of time and resources to slow the water down and to repair and reinforce the creek banks. The property used to be poorly drained agricultural fields, and while drainage was improved greatly through construction of the park, it remains an issue in some areas.

The new **modern restrooms** at Gibbs have been problematic since installation in late summer of 2025. **Septic issues, water leaks, and a burst water main** have been a frequent headache for the maintenance crew and the department's budget. It was also a long and grueling task to **figure out how to program the door lock timers**.

HCP&R has dealt with a little bit of **vandalism** at Gibbs, but not as much as at the Coatesville trailhead of the Vandalia Trail. Before modern restrooms, the porta-potties around the park were often vandalized, but with the new restrooms locking at dark, that vandalism has not carried over. **People taking vehicles off-road** and causing damage to the grass and prairie, as well as being a major safety risk for park users, happens from time to time. A bunch of male phallic symbols were **spray-painted** on the asphalt in a parking lot once, a school track team spray-painted distance markers on a freshly paved trail once, and there has been **minor graffiti** left behind at park shelters.

Maintenance of equipment at the Gibbs maintenance hub has left a lot to be desired in recent years, but a new Park Manager was hired in March of 2026, and already, the equipment maintenance has improved tremendously. An 18-year-old skid steer with now-obsolete parts is rapidly reaching the end of its lifespan and has required numerous expensive repairs. HCP&R will be requesting funding for a new skid steer in 2027. Fortunately, the County Council has historically been supportive of funding replacement equipment when the time comes, so HCP&R does not anticipate any major objection to receiving this funding next year.

As with HCP&R's other properties, removing **invasive plants** is a constant battle.



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W. S. Gibbs Memorial Park

Trails		Park Amenities					
	Bluestem Bend .25 miles		Firefly Shelter		Playground		Observation / Seating Hill
	Oxeye Stroll .15 miles		Bluegill Shelter		Disc Golf		Dock
	Monarch Way .60 miles		Nature Play Area		ADA Accessible Concrete Switchback		Maintenance Hub
	Heron Hideaway .14 miles		Woodland Passage .69 miles				
	Forebay Crossing 194 ft		Park Property Line				
	Turtle Crawl .27 miles						
Landscapes							
	Wooded Areas		Reforestation		Prairie		Future Park Area
	Ponds		Pollinator Plot		Nature Play Area		





Other Hendricks County Parks and Trails

A wide variety of programs and amenities are offered to Hendricks County residents and visitors. Many are free and open to the public. Others have associated fees.

The following list catalogues recreation amenities within Hendricks County that are offered by entities other than HCP&R.

Avon Parks & Recreation

- **Avon Town Hall Park**
 - 83 acres
 - 2 miles of paved walking trails
 - ½-mile Story Walk
 - 9-acre Avon Town Hall Park Lake
 - 3-acre Sycamore Lake
 - Small pond
 - Catch-and-release fishing
 - 2 playgrounds
 - 9-hole disc golf course
 - Outdoor RC race track
 - Shelter
 - Picnic tables
 - Ping pong tables
 - Bocce court
 - Angel of Hope
- **Bicentennial Trail**
 - 1-mile paved trail from CR 200 N. to the B&O Trail
- **Gable Park**
 - 10 acres
 - 3-acre catch-and-release fishing pond
- **White Lick Creek Trail**
 - North-south paved trail that follows White Lick Creek from Plainfield through Avon
 - Some sections still under construction or in planning stages
- **WWII Memorial Park**
 - 1 acre
 - Honors WWII veterans



Bicentennial Trail map. Source: Town of Avon



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Washington Township Parks & Recreation (Avon)



Murphy Aquatic Park. Source: Washington Township Parks & Recreation

- **Murphy Aquatic Park**
 - 43 acres
 - Opened on May 28, 2022
 - Aquatics facility featuring:
 - Wave pools
 - Water slides
 - Recreational swimming
 - Toddler Zone
 - Accessible water playground
 - 48 water spray features
 - Super soaker
 - Cabana rentals
 - Bathhouse
 - Concessions
 - Inclusive playground
 - Recreation pond
 - Recreation hill
 - Pedestrian connection via trails to AJAA outdoor sports complex
 - Native plantings
- **Pecar Park**
 - 46 acres
 - Nature Center
 - Playground
 - 8 primitive tent camping sites, open Memorial Day to Labor Day



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- Raccoon Lagoon catch-and-release fishing pond
- Kayaks available for rent
- Low ropes course
- Bird aviary
- **Pock Park**
 - 26 acres
 - Opened in November of 2021
 - Adjoins Pecar Park
 - Three natural surface trails
 - One campsite
 - Cabin
- **Washington Township Park**
 - 160 acres, divided into an upper and lower park
 - Upper Park
 - 2 covered picnic facilities
 - Gazebo
 - 2 shelters
 - 5 miles of hiking trails (paved and natural surfaces)
 - "Learning Trail"
 - Playgrounds for a variety of age groups
 - Sand volleyball court
 - Basketball court
 - 1½-acre DNR-stocked fishing pond
 - Story Walk
 - Dog park
 - Lower Park
 - Splash pad
 - Playground
 - 2 shelters
 - Pavilion Center with rentable conference rooms



Cabin at Pock Park. Source: Washington Township Parks & Recreation



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Central Indiana Land Trust (Avon)

- **Burnett Woods Nature Preserve**
 - 83 acres
 - 1.5-mile loop trail (natural surfaces)

Brownsburg Parks & Recreation

- **Arbuckle Acres Park**
 - 52 acres
 - Access to White Lick Creek
 - 1.3 miles of paved trails
 - Baseball complex
 - Basketball courts
 - Tennis courts
 - Playground
 - 6 shelters
 - Pavilion
 - Bundy Lodge
- **Cardinal Park**
 - 14 acres
 - Trailhead to B&O Trail, including 50 parking spots
 - One mile of paved trail
 - Dog park
 - Pet pantry
 - Year-round restroom facility
- **Stephens Park**
 - 3.2 acres
 - Exercise equipment
 - Shelter with electricity
 - Inclusive playground
 - 6 pickleball courts
- **Virgil Park**
 - 6.67 acres
 - Half-mile trail network including boardwalks
 - Fitness equipment
 - Picnic shelter
 - Year-round restroom facility
 - Playground
 - Trailhead to B&O Trail
 - Wetlands and prairie



Burnett Woods in Avon. Source: Visit Hendricks County



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- **Williams Park**
 - 77 acres
 - Watermill Splash Pad
 - Blast Off Playground
 - Veterans Memorial
 - 1.6 miles of trails (paved and crushed stone)
 - 7 shelters
 - Additional playground
 - Outdoor classroom
 - 3 pollinator gardens
 - Access to White Lick Creek
 - Basketball courts



Blast Off Playground in Williams Park

- **Future Park**
 - Lincolnwood Park, 46 acres
- **Arbuckle Acres Park Loop**
 - 0.9-mile section of paved trail
 - Story Walk
- **B&O Trail**
 - 8.2-mile section of paved trail
- **Bicentennial Trail**
 - 1-mile paved trail from CR 200 N. in Avon to the B&O Trail
- **Bulldog Way**
 - 1-mile section of paved trail
- **Maple Ridge Trail**
 - 1-mile section of crushed stone trail
- **Recreational Trail Program (RTP) Trail**
 - 0.77-mile section of paved trail
- **White Lick Creek Greenway Trail**
 - 1-mile section of paved trail
- **Williams Park Loop**
 - 0.9-mile section of paved trail

B&O Trail Association (Brownsburg)

- **B&O Trail**
 - 6.1 miles of paved trail (including Brownsburg section)



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Lincoln Township (Brownsburg)

- **Lincoln Township Park**
 - 3.5 acres
 - 0.33 mile of paved trails
 - 2 baseball/softball fields
 - 2 soccer fields

Town of Clayton

- **Lambert Park**
 - 6 acres
 - Playground
 - Gazebo
 - 2 shelters
 - Paved access to the Vandalia Trail

Town of Coatesville

- **Coatesville Park**
 - 1 acre
 - Playground

Danville Parks & Recreation

- **Blanton Woods Nature Park**
 - 53 acres
 - 5+ miles of wooded trails
 - Shelter
 - Picnic tables
 - Blanton House available for rental
- **Bosstick Gym / Danville Athletic Club / Hargrave Gym**
 - 5,000-square-foot fitness center
 - Two gyms
 - Indoor basketball courts
- **Community Gardens**
- **Ellis Park**
 - 49 acres
 - Access to White Lick Creek
 - Playscape Playground
 - Gill Family Aquatic Center



Gazebo at Ellis Park in Danville. Source: Danville Parks & Recreation



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- 0.75 mile of paved trails connecting to Gary Eakin Community Park and Blanton Woods Nature Park
- 6 baseball/softball fields
- Basketball courts
- 2 football fields
- 2 tennis courts
- 4 pickleball courts
- Volleyball pit
- 9-hole disc golf course
- 2 shelters
- Gazebo
- Amphitheater
- Train Station, building available for rental
- **Gary Eakin Community Park**
 - 42 acres
 - Paved trails connecting to Ellis Park
 - Disc golf course
 - Two youth football fields
 - Football tower
- **Jack Willard Community Park**
 - 1 acre
 - Firefighter-themed playground

Town of Jamestown

- **Pleasant Acres Nature Park**
 - 16 acres
 - 24' x 60' shelter
 - Gazebo
 - 2 miles of paved trails

Liberty Township (Cartersburg)

- **Liberty Township Park**
 - 5.4 acres
 - Shelter
 - Playground

Town of Lizton

- **Lions Club Park**
 - 3.6 acres
 - Shelter
 - 2 baseball/softball fields
 - Playground
 - Basketball goal



Lizton Lions Club Park. Source: *Lizton Lions Club Facebook page*



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Marion Township (New Winchester)

- **Marion Township Park**
 - 10 acres
 - Shelter
 - Playground
 - 3 baseball/softball fields

Town of North Salem

- **North Salem Community Park**
 - 3 acres
 - Playground
 - Shelter

Pittsboro Parks & Recreation

- **Dr. Malcom O. Scamahorn Community Park**
 - 18 acres
 - 0.33 mile of walking track
 - Playground
 - Basketball courts
 - Baseball/softball fields
 - Soccer fields
 - 2 shelters
 - Legion Building and Scout Building available to rent
- **Scott Park**
 - 1.7 acres
 - Baseball/softball field
 - Basketball court
 - Playground
 - Shelter
- **Esther Park**
 - 13.1 acres
 - Undeveloped green space



Scamahorn Park in Pittsboro. Source: Town of Pittsboro

Plainfield Parks & Recreation

- **Al & Jan Barker Sports Complex**
 - 58 acres
 - 5 baseball/softball fields
 - 17 soccer fields / 3 football fields



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- Access to White Lick Creek
- **Anderson Park**
 - 7 acres
 - Shelter
 - Anderson Skate Park
- **Bob Ward Park**
 - 1 acre
 - Gazebo
 - Green space
- **Echo Hollow Nature Park**
 - 310 acres currently developed
 - 1,928 acres total
 - 5.1 miles of trails (paved, crushed stone, and natural surfaces)
 - 5.5-acre pond
 - Catch-and-release fishing
 - 24' x 44' shelter
 - ADA-accessible fishing dock
 - ADA-accessible picnic area
 - Wildlife viewing platform
- **Franklin Park**
 - 35 acres
 - One mile of paved trail
 - 3 shelters
 - 3 playgrounds
 - 4 baseball/softball fields
 - 2 tennis courts
 - 8 pickleball courts
 - 6 basketball courts
 - Dog park
- **Friendship Gardens**
 - 13 acres
 - Gazebo
 - Flower garden
 - Waterfall
 - Access to White Lick Creek



Echo Hollow Nature Park. Source: Silvia Schneirov



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- **Richard A. Carlucci Recreation & Aquatic Center**

- 20 acres
- 113,000-square-foot indoor recreation center
 - 20,000-square-foot indoor aquatic center
 - 5,472-square-foot leisure pool
 - Multitude of sports and exercise equipment and areas
- Splash Island outdoor aquatic center



Splash Island in Plainfield. Source: Visit Hendricks County

- **Swarn Park**

- 2.83 acres
- Sculpture art
- Playground
- Pickleball courts
- Dog park
- Multiple gaming zones
- Access to Vandalia Trail

- **Swinford Park**

- 27 acres
- Shelter
- Playground
- 4 baseball/softball fields
- 8 pickleball courts
- Volleyball court
- Horseshoe pits
- Dog park

- **Talon Stream Park**

- 13 acres
- 0.5-mile paved trail
- Two covered seating areas
- Shelter
- Access to White Lick Creek

- **Plainfield Trail System**

- Comprised of a multitude of paved trails of varying lengths, including 3.3 miles of the Vandalia Trail
- Over 20 miles of trails within the Town of Plainfield



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Guilford Township (Plainfield)

- **Hummel Park**
 - 205 acres
 - 3 miles of paved trails
 - 8 shelters
 - 4 playgrounds
 - 4 baseball/softball fields
 - Soccer fields
 - Basketball courts
 - Outdoor performing arts center
 - 4,000-square-foot community center
 - Splash pad



Source: Hummel Park

Town of Stilesville

- **Stilesville Town Park**
 - 1.25 acres
 - Shelter
 - Basketball court
 - Playground

Other Recreation Opportunities in Hendricks County

There are a multitude of additional recreation opportunities within Hendricks County that are owned by individuals, groups, or organizations other than public parks departments. These include, but are not limited to:

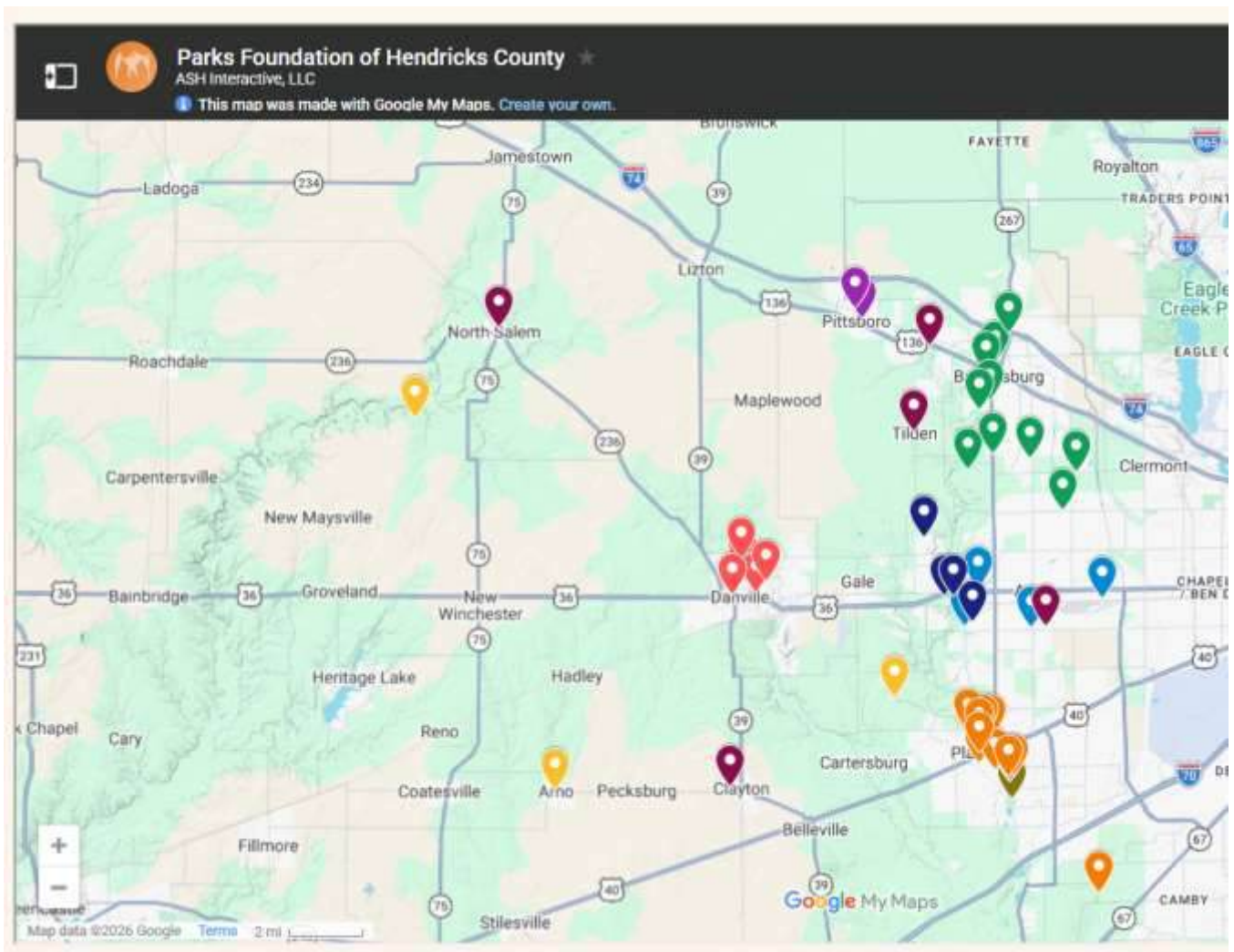
- Hendricks Regional Health YMCA, Avon
- Avon Softball Park
- Brian Burch Memorial Sports Complex, Amo
- Several golf courses around the county
- Several youth sports leagues around the county
- Twin Bridges Archery, Danville



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Hendricks County Parks & Trails Map

The Parks Foundation of Hendricks County maintains an interactive online map of all parks and trails throughout the county. Pins on the map are color coded based on who operates each facility. HCP&R's parks and trails are marked with gold pins.



The above image is a screenshot from the online map. The map is available at pfohc.org.

State Road 39 that runs through Danville divides Hendricks County into east-west halves. The western half of the county is largely agricultural fields and is sparsely populated. That half of the county is underserved with parks and trails, but HCP&R has met a lot of resistance from residents who feel parks and trails are a waste of taxpayer money and are unneeded.



ADA Accessibility Compliance

The mission of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is to make it possible for everyone with a disability to live a life of freedom and equality. Passed by the Congress and signed into law by U.S. President George H.W. Bush on July 26, 1990, the ADA protects the civil rights of people with disabilities in all aspects of employment in accessing public services such as transportation and recreation, as well as guaranteeing access to public accommodations such as restaurants, stores, hotels, and other types of buildings to which the public has access.

The 2018 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 10.8% of the population in Hendricks County has a physical or mental disability.

In order to meet the recreation needs of those county residents and visitors with disabilities, it is the goal of HCP&R to offer barrier-free facilities, programs, and services that are inclusive of all users whenever feasible.

ADA Coordinator

On December 13, 2011, the Hendricks County Commissioners issued Resolution No. 11-09, which appointed the Assistant County Engineer as the ADA Coordinator for all Hendricks County Government offices.

The Assistant County Engineer is currently Mr. Kim Galloway, 355 S. Washington Street, Danville, IN 46122; (317) 745-9236; kgalloway@co.hendricks.in.us.

Hendricks County's ADA Implementation and Transition Plan can be found online at: https://www.co.hendricks.in.us/egov/documents/1495197073_66107.pdf

Public Notice of ADA Requirements

All of Hendricks County's policies are available through the Hendricks County Commissioners' Office located within the Hendricks County Government Center at 355 S. Washington Street, Danville, IN.

Additionally, they can be found online at: <https://www.co.hendricks.in.us/topic/index.php?topicid=174&structureid=15>

ADA Grievance Procedure

The Hendricks County Grievance Procedure, most recently revised on May 18, 2017, is established to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. It may be used by anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by Hendricks County Government.

The complaint should be filed in writing with the ADA Coordinator. It should be submitted by the complainant and/or his or her designee as soon as possible but no later than 60 calendar days after the alleged violation.



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Within 30 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator or his/her designee will contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and the possible solution. Within 15 calendar days of the contact, the ADA Coordinator or his/her designee will respond in writing. The response will explain the County's position and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

If the response by the ADA Coordinator or his/her designee does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his or her designee may appeal the decision of the ADA Coordinator within 30 calendar days after the receipt of the response to the Board of Hendricks County Commissioners or their designee.

Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of the appeal, the complainant may wish to be heard at a designated meeting of the Board of Hendricks County Commissioners, meeting on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, to discuss the complaint and possible resolution. Within 15 calendar days, the Board of Hendricks County Commissioners or their designee will respond in writing with a final resolution of the complaint.

McCloud Nature Park

McCloud Nature Park currently offers limited accessibility to those with disabilities.

Accessible Parking

All roads and parking lots in the park are surfaced with a chip-and-seal surface, which provides the stable, firm, and slip-resistant surface required under the ADA.

Two accessible parking spaces have been designated in the parking lot adjacent to the Nature Center. The designated accessible parking spaces are located along the shortest route to the main entrance of the Nature Center.

Nature Center

A concrete ramp to the front door of the Nature Center provides access for wheelchairs and the mobility-impaired. A large wooden deck on the back of the Nature Center also has a ramp for wheelchair access.

Inside, many amenities are accessible to those with mobility impairments, including displays and the observation window. Restrooms provided inside and outside of the Nature Center are accessible.

Picnic Shelter

The picnic shelter sits on a concrete pad. However, a gravel edge around the shelter and a gravel path to the shelter inhibit access. Accessible picnic benches are located in and around the picnic shelter.

Wetland Observation Deck

In the lower section of the park, adjacent to Big Walnut Creek, is a large wooden observation deck overlooking a wetland habitat. The deck is accessible to wheelchairs, walkers, and other park guests with mobility



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impairments. However, the nearby parking lot is loose gravel, and a short portion of a compacted earth trail must be traveled to access the observation deck.

Trails

Trails in the park are either crushed stone or compacted earth. When well-compacted, some of the trails are accessible by those using a wheelchair or walker or having other limited mobility disabilities. Other trails, because of their loose or unstable surface and/or steep grade, are not readily accessible.

There have been discussions by the Park Board over the years about paving the trail from the Nature Center, around the arboretum, to the truss bridge to improve accessibility, but so far, that project has been cost-prohibitive.

GRIT Freedom Chair

Funded by a grant from the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County, a GRIT Freedom Chair is now available to borrow for free at McCloud Nature Park. This wheelchair is specifically designed for use on many unpaved trails, and it can either be self-propelled by the user, or the user can be pushed in it by a companion.

W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park was designed with accessibility in mind. It offers much more accessibility to those with disabilities than McCloud Nature Park.

Accessible Parking

All roads and parking lots in the park are paved, and there are multiple accessible parking spots in every lot. Concrete paths leading off the parking lots to shelters and the park's central trail system are ADA-accessible from each parking lot.

Paved Trails

Partially funded by a Land & Water Conservation Fund grant, there are a little over a half-mile of paved trails in the park, as well as an ADA-accessible concrete switchback up one side of the 30-foot-tall observation/sledding hill. The paved trails make a full loop around the two ponds in the park, and they provide paved access to an ADA-accessible dock on each pond.

Additional Trails

Additional trails in the park are either crushed stone or compacted earth. When well-compacted, some of the trails are accessible by those using a wheelchair or walker or having other limited mobility disabilities. Other trails, because of their loose or unstable surface and/or steep grade, are not readily accessible.



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GRIT Freedom Chair

Funded by a grant from the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County, a GRIT Freedom Chair is now available to borrow for free at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. This wheelchair is specifically designed for use on many unpaved trails, and it can either be self-propelled by the user, or the user can be pushed in it by a companion.

Docks

A large ADA-accessible dock was installed on the larger pond in 2021 when the park opened to the public. Partially funded by a Land & Water Conservation Fund grant, another ADA-accessible dock of the same size was purchased and installed on the second pond in 2023. Both docks are accessible via paved or concrete trails.

Restrooms

Funded in part by a Land & Water Conservation Fund grant, two sets of modern ADA-accessible restrooms were installed in the park in 2025. All six restrooms contained within the two buildings are accessible by concrete trails from the respective paved parking lot.

Playground

The playground in the park is on a surface of engineered wood fibers that compact under a wheelchair and make the surface ADA-accessible. Additionally, one of the swings on the swing set is designed for those with mobility difficulties.

Shelters

The two rentable shelters in the park - Bluegill Shelter and Firefly Shelter - are both ADA accessible via concrete trails from the respective paved parking lots. Both shelters sit on concrete pads, have ADA-accessible picnic tables, and feature a permanent ADA-accessible grill.

Vandalia Trail

The entire 4.1 miles of the Vandalia Trail that HCP&R operates is paved, making it fully accessible to those with mobility impairments.

Both trailheads - one in Amo and one in Coatesville - have paved parking lots with marked and striped accessible parking spots as well as ADA-accessible modern restroom facilities and drinking fountains.

Programming

HCP&R currently offers a wide variety of programming for adults and children, including activities held at McCloud Nature Park, the McCloud Nature Center, W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, and along the Vandalia Trail. Programming is also held both indoors and outdoors at the Hendricks County Senior Center, area schools, and other parks that are not operated by HCP&R (in cooperation with each park's hosting agency).



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It is HCP&R's desire to accommodate those with disabilities in all programming activities.

In general, the programs held at the McCloud Nature Center or at other indoor facilities can be adapted to accommodate those with disabilities. The department has successfully made these adaptations on multiple occasions when an individual with a disability has attended a school or other educational program.

As most of McCloud Nature Park's outdoor amenities are not currently accessible, the outdoor programs are, for the most part, not readily adaptable to those with some disabilities. Given the nature of the McCloud Nature Park terrain, it is unlikely that the park will ever be fully accessible. Measures to add accessible routes to those amenities that could be accessible would open additional programming opportunities at the park.

Programs held at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park are held in Bluegill Shelter, Firefly Shelter, or on one of the docks. All of these amenities are ADA-accessible. A future welcome center and administrative office at the park will be entirely ADA-accessible and will become the location for indoor programming at Gibbs.

Programs held along the Vandalia Trail are at the ADA-accessible trailheads in Amo or Coatesville.



Public Participation

Survey Summary

HCP&R contracted HWC Engineering out of Indianapolis to gather public input and to interview stakeholders, including HCP&R staff. Throughout the fall of 2025, a total of 169 people provided input through the efforts of HWC Engineering in the form of interviews, a public workshop, and an online survey.

HCP&R recreated the online survey in January of 2026 and kept it open through early March of 2026. A total of 350 people responded to HCP&R's survey.

A grand total of 519 people provided input through HWC Engineering and HCP&R's combined effort. An additional nine (9) people provided input at the public presentation of this document on March 18, 2026, raising the total to 528.

The survey results revealed that respondents find HCP&R parks to be well-kept, HCP&R staff are well-received and appreciated, and programming is making a positive impact resulting in respondents wanting more of it. This is an interesting contrast to the 2021-25 CMP, where people indicated that programming is not important to them. A wholesale change in naturalist staff over the past few years has made quite a difference.

Most respondents are supportive of the expansion of the Vandalia Trail, both eastward and westward from Clayton. Most respondents are supportive of the new Welcome Center under construction at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

As in 2021-25, survey results indicate a problem with the way HCP&R communicates with the Hendricks County population and markets their properties and programs. A lot of people are missing out on information about programs, events, and department happenings.

Survey respondents would like the department to focus on the improvement to and addition of natural areas, trails, restrooms, a low water crossing on Big Walnut Creek at McCloud, a kayak / canoe launch site on Big Walnut Creek, and trail signage and mile markers. They also expressed interest in art and nature paths at both McCloud and Gibbs.

Among the non-random sample, elected officials and Park Board members are pleased with HCP&R and its superintendent, staff, properties, and programming. Employees are happy overall, and many areas of concern that were expressed have already been rectified.

Survey Methodology

HWC Engineering conducted interviews of the Hendricks County Park Board (7 members), the Hendricks Commissioners (3 members), HCP&R full-time and part-time staff (14 members), and National Road Heritage Trail Inc. president Greg Midgley in August and early September of 2025. Interviews were held in the following four formats: virtual video calls, phone calls, in person at public meetings, and in person one-on-one interviews.



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The Hendricks County Council (7 members) was also presented with an opportunity for input but declined.

The reason for only 14 members of the now-16-member HCP&R staff participating in interviews is that one of the full-time staff was on vacation during the scheduled day of interviews and declined the opportunity to participate on another date. Additionally, one part-time position was vacant at the time.

HWC Engineering also conducted one public workshop on Saturday, September 6, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The workshop was held at the W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park during a very popular event called Farmers Market (a farmers market held in the park), resulting in 60 responses.

HWC Engineering also created an online public survey that was advertised on HCP&R's website, through HCP&R's social media multiple times, at the public workshop, and through Hendricks County's only newspaper, *The Republican*. The survey was made available from the beginning of August 2025 through October 2025. A total of 84 responses were received.

In total, 169 people provided input through the efforts of HWC Engineering.

A three-stage email push was made to people who have signed up for HCP&R programs in the past. The survey was also shared on HCP&R's website and social media, and it was shared in several community chatter groups on social media. A total of 350 people responded to HCP&R's survey.

Public Survey (Random Sample) Summary

A survey with 30 questions was developed and distributed online and with flyers. The survey was promoted on social media platforms and at the public workshop. The survey was made available from the beginning of August 2025 through October 2025. A total of 84 responses were received.

Below is a summary of the input received from the public survey as provided by HWC Engineering:



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	Input	Summary
Age	There was an equal distribution of respondents between the ages of 25 and 54 years old. 5% of respondents were under 24 years old and 16% were over the age of 65.	The median age in Hendricks County is 38.9, which is slightly higher than the state of Indiana at 38, so it aligns that most respondents were middle aged and older.
Location	Nearly 22% of respondents live in the City of Plainfield, 15% in Avon and 13% in Danville and Clayton. 44% of respondents live 5 miles or more from a county park.	Majority of the survey respondents live in Danville, Avon, or Plainfield. This indicated that the park is a local county attraction and not a regional attraction.
Race	The majority of respondents (92%) identify as white/ Caucasian.	This is consistent with the demographics of Hendricks County.
Income	32% of respondents reported an annual household income of \$120,000 or more.	This indicates that approximately 80% of park users have an annual household income of less than \$120,000, and programming fees should be obtainable for the majority of users.
Children	50% of respondents do not have children while 42% have children under the age of 11 years old.	This indicated that programming the park for families with children is equally important as programming the park for non-traditional family structures.

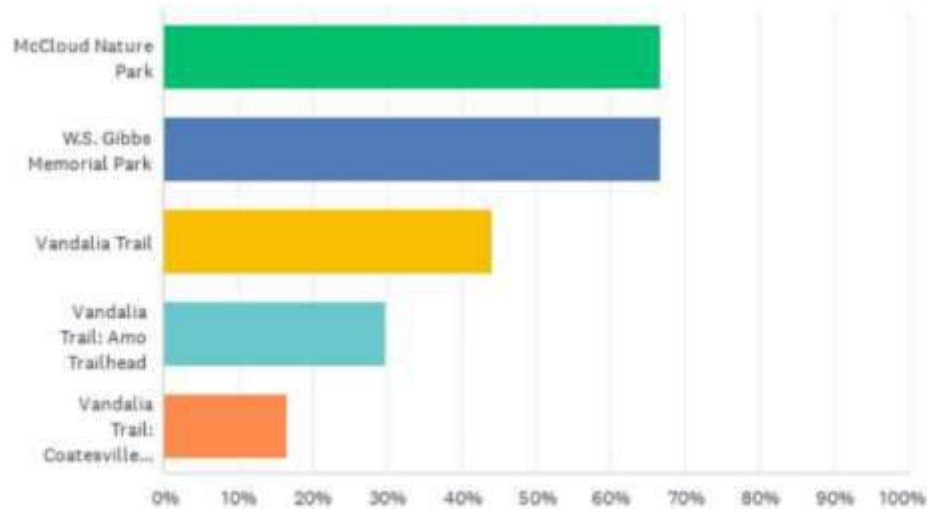
Disabilities	Input
Yes, a member of my family has disabilities	13% of respondents
Yes, I do feel that the park facilities are doing a good job of accommodating my family	11% of respondents
<p>Comments: <i>More help for those with mental disabilities, More disability devices similar to the ones already on hand, better accessibility, including access to bathrooms.</i></p>	



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How often do you use the park facilities?	Input
Daily	10% of respondents
Weekly	44% of respondents
Monthly	30% of respondents
Once or twice a year	16% of respondents

Which HCPR facility do you use?



Top 5 suggested park amenities at Gibbs	Input
Trails	57% of respondents
Reforestation	34% of respondents
Art & Nature Path, Bike Adventure Course	19% of respondents
Educational Programming	17% of respondents
Recreational Programming	15% of respondents
Top trends in additional suggested improvement:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong demand for restrooms 	



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Are there any challenges that keep you from using county park facilities?	Input
Lack of awareness	17.86% of respondents
Too far from my home	29.76% of respondents
Accessibility issues	2.3% of respondents
Lack of Parking	0% of respondents
Fees are too high	1% of respondents
Lack of youth programming	2.3% of respondents
Lack of adult programming	5.9% of respondents
Lack of senior programming	5.9% of respondents
Outdated amenities	0% of respondents
Safety	2.38% of respondents
Lack of restrooms	14.29% of respondents
I use parks outside of HCPR system	21.43% of respondents

Top 5 used park programs & amenities	Input
Walking/Jogging/ Exercise	84% of respondents
Time with family & friends	60% of respondents
Picnicking	45% of respondents
Playground	37% of respondents
Bicycling	35% of respondents
Top trends in additional suggested improvement:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no consistent trends 	

Top 3 outlets the public finds out about park events	Input
Social Media	62% of respondents
Word of mouth	33% of respondents
The Explorer/Brochures/Flyers	32% of respondents



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Top 5 suggested park programs	Input
Community events (festivals, runs, day camps, etc.)	60% of respondents
Hobby/interest classes (crafts, geology, beekeeping, etc.)	48% of respondents
Nature programs/environmental education	46% of respondents
Outdoor recreation (hiking, fishing, etc.)	45% of respondents
Fitness classes (yoga, meditation, nature walks, etc.)	40% of respondents

Additional Comments Themes:

- Adding more dog waste stations throughout the parks
- Commendable work on the Vandalia Trail
- More homeschool program opportunities on other days of the week and more affordable classes for families with multiple kids



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Rate the condition of the following	Input	Comment trends
Play Equipment	Good (55% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the comments praised the play equipment
Trails at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	Good (36% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to see more added Would like to see concrete trails
W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	Good (71% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like the moss at the lake to be treated
McCloud Nature Park	Good (71% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like the park to return to its natural state Enjoy the programs especially, the star gazing events
Farmers Market	Attendance (28% of respondents have attended the Event)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally visitors have enjoyed the event but would like to see more food vendors
Trails at McCloud Nature Park	Good (73% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to see more challenging trails installed
Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center	Good (35% of respondents) I do not use (50% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall the comments were positive and commending the programming
Vandalia Trail	Good (42% of respondents) I do not use (47% of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This portion of the trail is not used as often

Rate your overall experience with the HCPR programs in the last 6 months?	Input
Positive experience	58% of respondents
I have not participated in the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Programs.	41% of respondents
Negative experience	0% of respondents

Have you volunteered at HCPR?	Input
Yes, I have volunteered	10% of respondents
No, I have not volunteered	90% of respondents



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Top 5 volunteer opportunities respondents would be interested in	Input
Trail Cleanup	50% of respondents
Invasive plant management	32% of respondents
Tree Planting	32% of respondents
Gardening	20% of respondents
Facility Improvements (painting, general maintenance, etc.)	18% of respondents

Top 6 suggested park amenities	Input
Natural areas for hiking/ nature-viewing/picnicking (forest, wetland, prairie, etc.)	47% of respondents
Restrooms in parks and along trails	45% of respondents
Kayak/Canoe Launch at Big Walnut Creek within McCloud Nature Park	36% of respondents
Additional bike trails	27% of respondents
Paved Trails	27% of respondents
Kayak/Canoe Rental	28% of respondents
Top trends in additional suggested improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail expansion 	

Top 5 suggested capital improvement projects	Input
Extension of our portion of the Vandalia Trail	39% of respondents
Add more trails for walking/jogging/biking	37% of respondents
Kayak/Canoe Launch at Big Walnut Creek within McCloud Nature Park	32% of respondents
Reforestation	31% of respondents
Add low-water crossing and Big Walnut Creek access at McCloud Nature Park	20% of respondents



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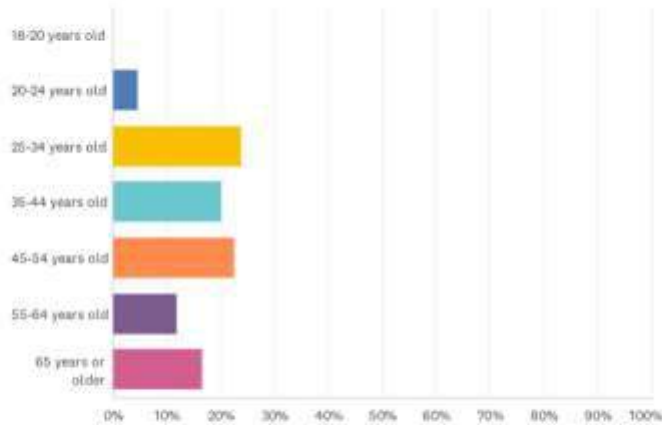
Public Survey (Random Sample) Results

The following survey results and images are from the report provided by HWC Engineering to HCP&R on Oct. 24, 2025.

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q1 Which category below includes your age?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
18-20 years old	0.00%	0
20-24 years old	4.76%	4
25-34 years old	23.81%	20
35-44 years old	20.24%	17
45-54 years old	22.62%	19
55-64 years old	11.90%	10
65 years or older	16.67%	14
TOTAL		84



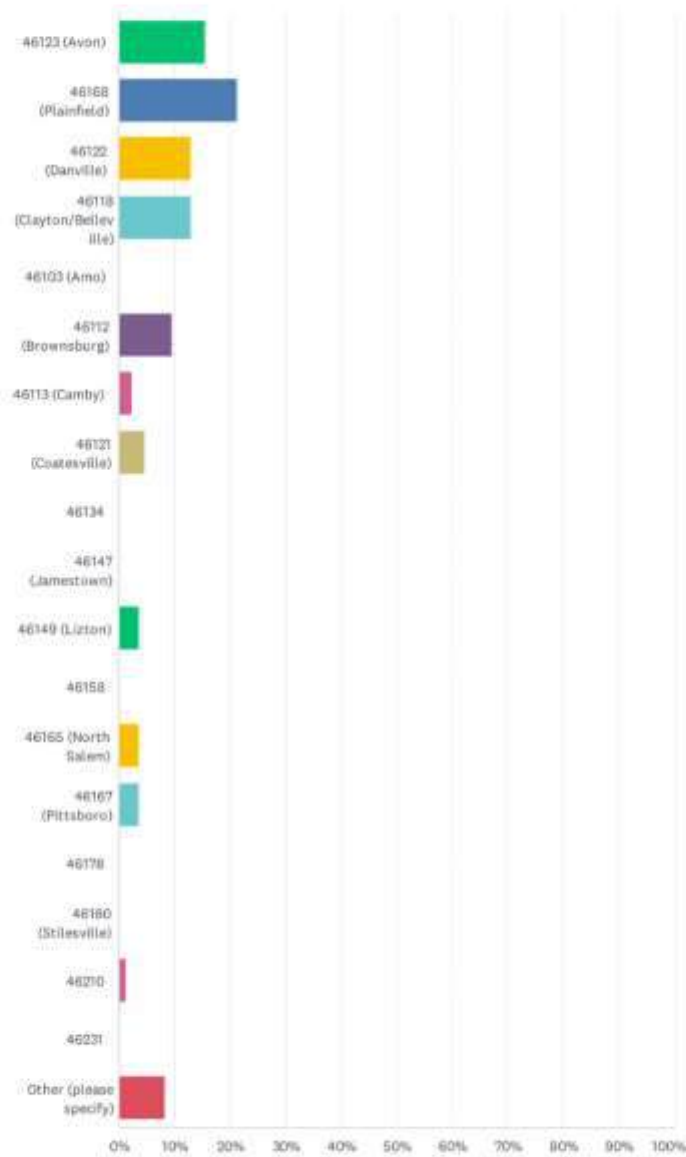
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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q2 In which zip code do you reside?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey





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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
46123 (Avon)	15.48%	13
46168 (Plainfield)	21.43%	18
46122 (Danville)	13.10%	11
46118 (Clayton/Belleville)	13.10%	11
46103 (Amo)	0.00%	0
46112 (Brownsburg)	9.52%	8
46113 (Camby)	2.38%	2
46121 (Coatesville)	4.76%	4
46134	0.00%	0
46147 (Jamestown)	0.00%	0
46149 (Lizton)	3.57%	3
46158	0.00%	0
46165 (North Salem)	3.57%	3
46167 (Pittsboro)	3.57%	3
46178	0.00%	0
46180 (Stilesville)	0.00%	0
46210	1.19%	1
46231	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	8.33%	7
TOTAL		84

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	46172	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
2	46234	9/27/2025 12:39 AM
3	47905	9/20/2025 12:06 PM
4	46151 Mooresville/Martinsville	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
5	46135	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
6	46105 (Bainbridge/Groveland)	8/18/2025 9:22 AM
7	46052	8/18/2025 7:07 AM

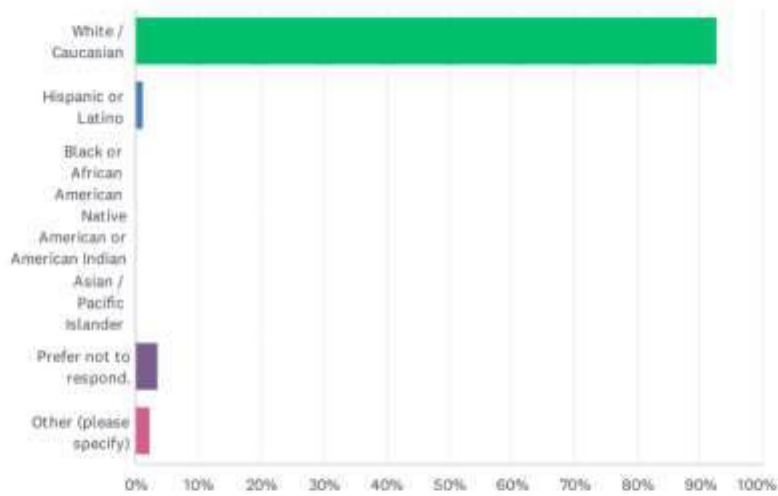


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q3 What race/ethnicity best describes you?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White / Caucasian	92.86%	78
Hispanic or Latino	1.19%	1
Black or African American	0.00%	0
Native American or American Indian	0.00%	0
Asian / Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
Prefer not to respond	3.57%	3
Other (please specify)	2.38%	2
TOTAL		84

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Human race	9/4/2025 7:36 AM
2	White & Asian	8/19/2025 12:34 AM

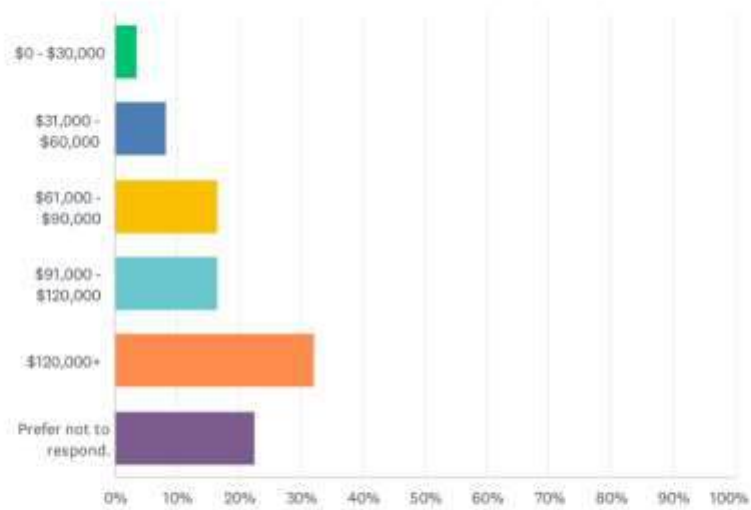


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q4 What is your total annual household income?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
\$0 - \$30,000	3.57%	3
\$31,000 - \$60,000	8.33%	7
\$61,000 - \$90,000	16.67%	14
\$91,000 - \$120,000	16.67%	14
\$120,000+	32.14%	27
Prefer not to respond	22.62%	19
TOTAL		84

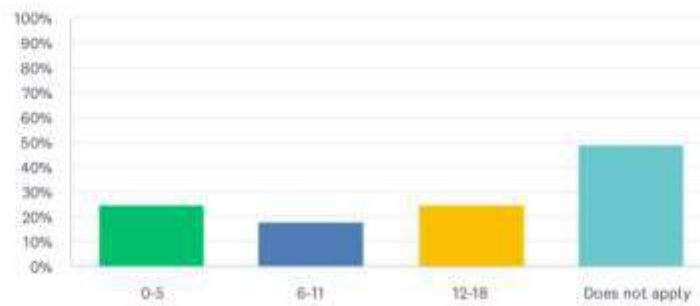


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q5 If you have children, how old are they? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-5	25.00%	21
6-11	17.86%	15
12-18	25.00%	21
Does not apply	48.81%	41
Total Respondents: 84		

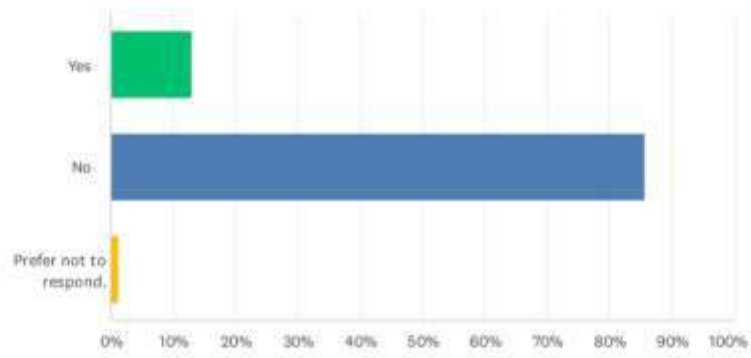


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q6 Do any members of your family have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	13.10%	11
No	85.71%	72
Prefer not to respond.	1.19%	1
TOTAL		84

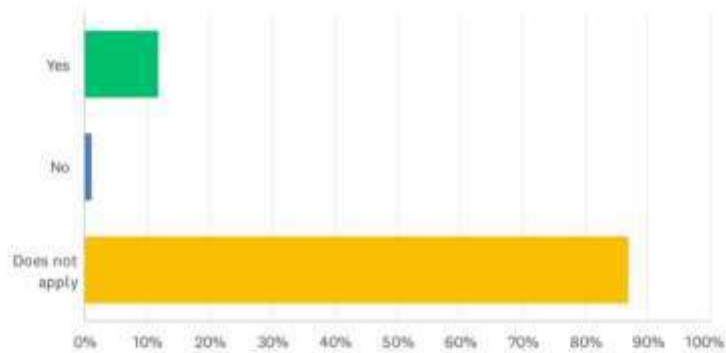


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q7 If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, do you feel that the park facilities are doing a good job of accommodating your family with disabilities?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	11.90%	10
No	1.19%	1
Does not apply	86.90%	73
TOTAL		84

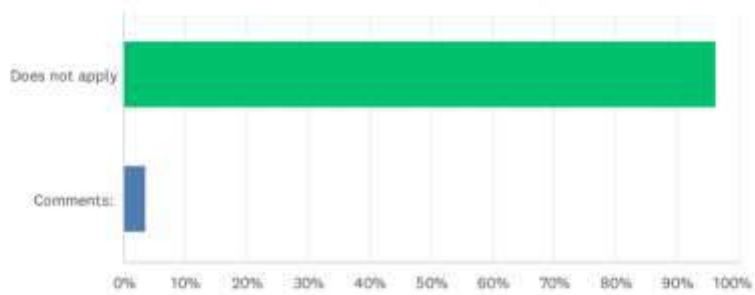


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q8 If you answered 'No' to question 7, how can the park facilities better accommodate your family with disabilities?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Does not apply	96.43%	81
Comments:	3.57%	3
TOTAL		84

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	More help for those with the mental disabilities	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
2	More disability devices similar to the ones already on hand,	8/21/2025 10:58 PM
3	Better accessibility including access to bathrooms.	8/18/2025 9:44 AM

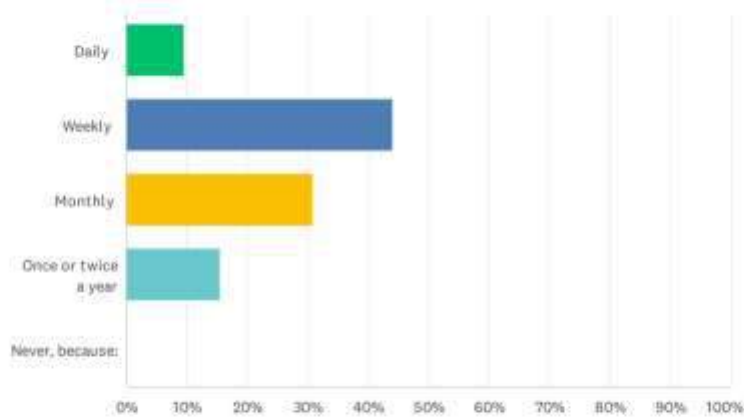


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q9 How often do you use the county park facilities?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	9.52%	8
Weekly	44.05%	37
Monthly	30.95%	26
Once or twice a year	15.48%	13
Never, because:	0.00%	0
TOTAL		84

#	NEVER, BECAUSE:	DATE
	There are no responses.	

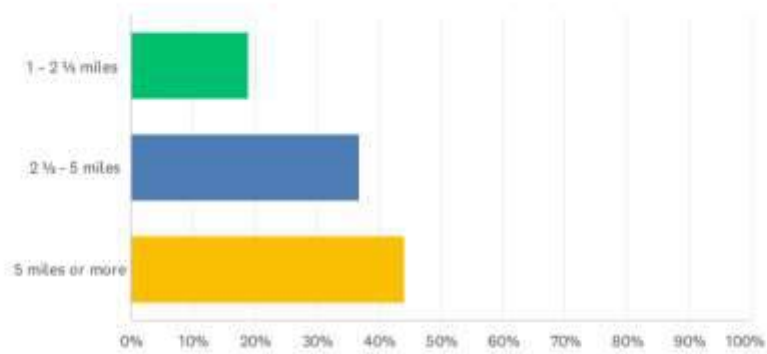


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q10 How close do you live to the nearest county park?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1 - 2 1/2 miles	19.05%	16
2 1/2 - 5 miles	36.90%	31
5 miles or more	44.05%	37
TOTAL		84

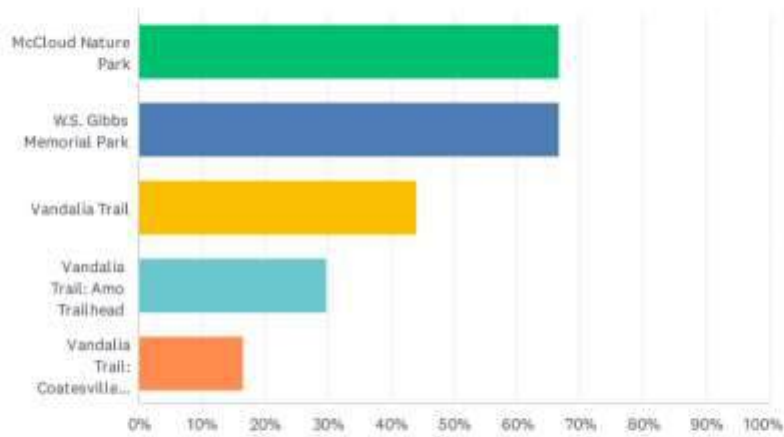


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q11 Which Hendricks County Parks and Recreation facilities do you use?
(Select all that apply)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
McCloud Nature Park	66.67%	56
W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	66.67%	56
Vandalia Trail	44.05%	37
Vandalia Trail: Amo Trailhead	29.76%	25
Vandalia Trail: Coatesville Trailhead	16.67%	14
Total Respondents: 84		

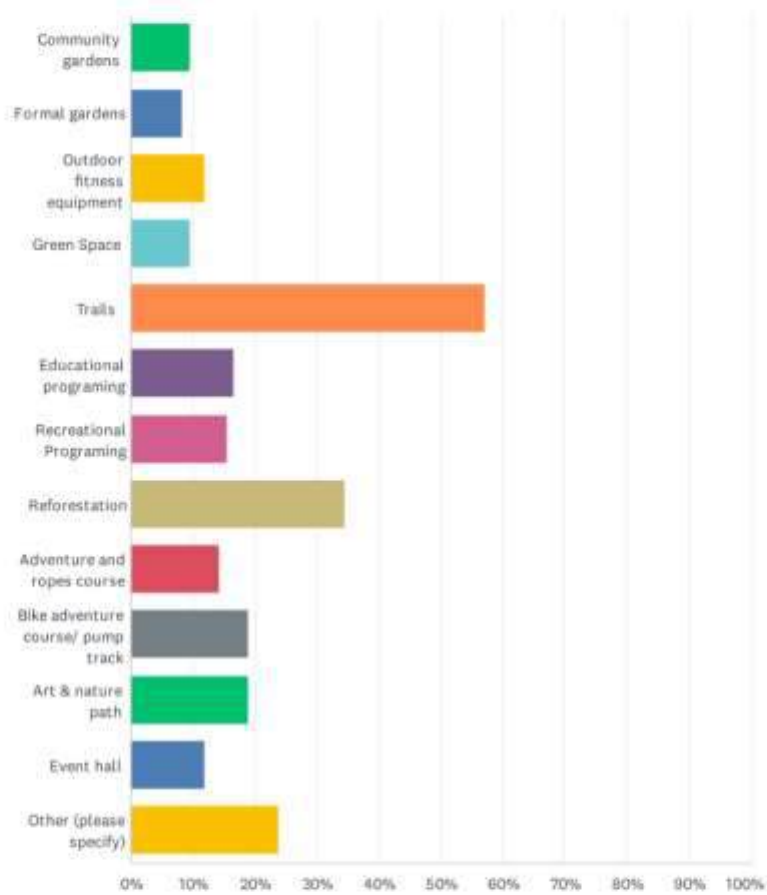


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q12 Which of the following amenities should Hendricks County Parks and Recreation prioritize adding to W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park over the next 5 years? (Please select up to 3)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Community gardens	9.52%	8
Formal gardens	8.33%	7
Outdoor fitness equipment	11.90%	10
Green Space	9.52%	8
Trails	57.14%	48
Educational programing	16.67%	14
Recreational Programing	15.48%	13
Reforestation	34.52%	29
Adventure and ropes course	14.29%	12
Bike adventure course/ pump track	19.05%	16
Art & nature path	19.05%	16
Event hall	11.90%	10
Other (please specify)	23.81%	20
Total Respondents: 84		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Parkour space	10/11/2025 12:00 PM
2	Native plantings	10/7/2025 10:03 AM
3	Outdoor range	10/6/2025 11:02 PM
4	Nature Center	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
5	A better park in Clayton, the one there now is just sad	9/26/2025 6:39 PM
6	restrooms	9/26/2025 11:22 AM
7	RESTROOMS	9/24/2025 11:59 AM
8	Seed Library	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
9	Larger playground	9/17/2025 4:45 PM
10	Bike trails	9/16/2025 7:22 AM
11	Native wildflower gardens, more yoga at the park, weekly farmers market	9/14/2025 4:33 PM
12	Pickleball courts	9/6/2025 6:10 PM
13	I am very pleased with what has been done at the parks. They currently meet my needs.	9/3/2025 11:28 AM
14	Modern toilets	8/30/2025 5:31 PM
15	Environmental/Conservation/Natural Resources Study	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
16	Camping	8/22/2025 10:22 AM
17	Educational nature signage, interactive art statues, photo ops, restrooms at pavilions	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
18	Adult only craft classes	8/18/2025 6:58 PM
19	Bike trails	8/18/2025 5:30 PM
20	Skateboard/roller skate/scooter area	8/18/2025 9:22 AM

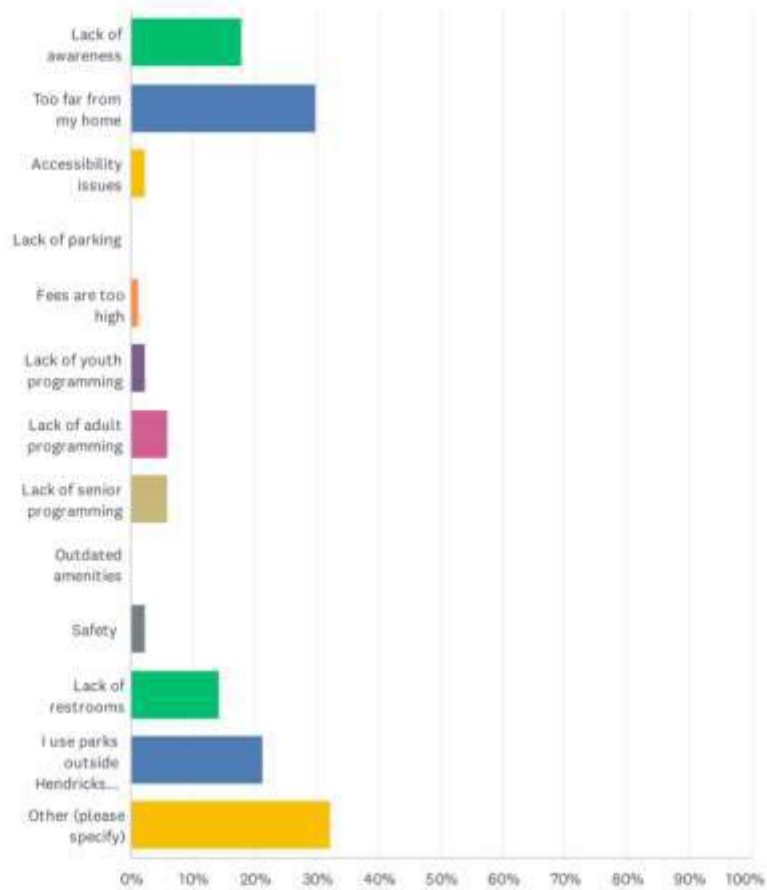


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q13 Are there any challenges that keep you from using county park facilities? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Lack of awareness	17.86% 15
Too far from my home	29.76% 25
Accessibility issues	2.38% 2
Lack of parking	0.00% 0
Fees are too high	1.19% 1
Lack of youth programming	2.38% 2
Lack of adult programming	5.95% 5
Lack of senior programming	5.95% 5
Outdated amenities	0.00% 0
Safety	2.38% 2
Lack of restrooms	14.29% 12
I use parks outside Hendricks County Parks and Recreation system instead.	21.43% 18
Other (please specify)	32.14% 27
Total Respondents: 84	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not the closest but we used Hendricks Parks quite a bit	10/6/2025 11:02 PM
2	There are no limiting factors for our family	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
3	N/A	9/26/2025 7:00 PM
4	busy schedule (parent) and plainfield parks are closer.	9/19/2025 10:14 AM
5	Not enough trails	9/18/2025 11:31 AM
6	the lake at Gibbs is mossy....it limits fishing significantly.	9/11/2025 9:37 PM
7	N/A	9/11/2025 8:38 AM
8	Gravel paths are tough to walk on	9/6/2025 6:10 PM
9	N/A	9/6/2025 6:03 PM
10	Sometimes there are too many dogs!	9/5/2025 6:36 PM
11	N/A	9/4/2025 4:11 PM
12	busy schedule	9/4/2025 1:25 PM
13	None	9/1/2025 8:21 AM
14	Lack of parking / awareness at different points on the Vandavia trail.	8/30/2025 5:31 PM
15	At the moment, I simply haven't the time as I'd like.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
16	NA	8/29/2025 8:36 PM
17	Very happy.	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
18	N/A	8/22/2025 10:22 AM
19	Finding the time.	8/21/2025 10:58 PM
20	None	8/21/2025 3:54 PM



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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

21	No challenges	8/20/2025 2:11 PM
22	None	8/19/2025 10:08 AM
23	N/A	8/18/2025 12:35 PM
24	None	8/18/2025 11:01 AM
25	don't add fees	8/18/2025 10:26 AM
26	Teen specific physical areas	8/18/2025 9:22 AM
27	None	8/18/2025 8:30 AM

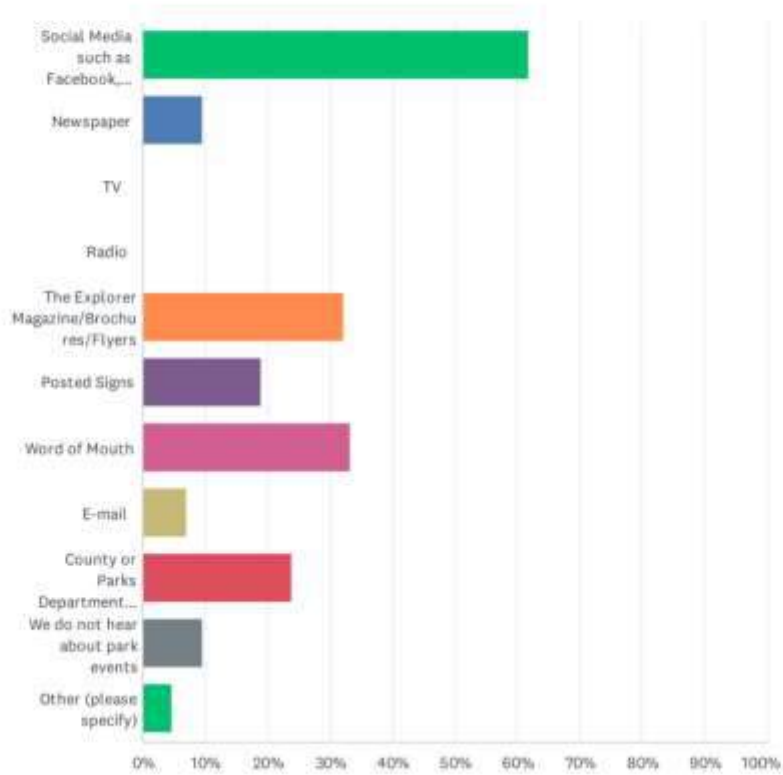


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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q15 How do you or your family find out about county park programs and events? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



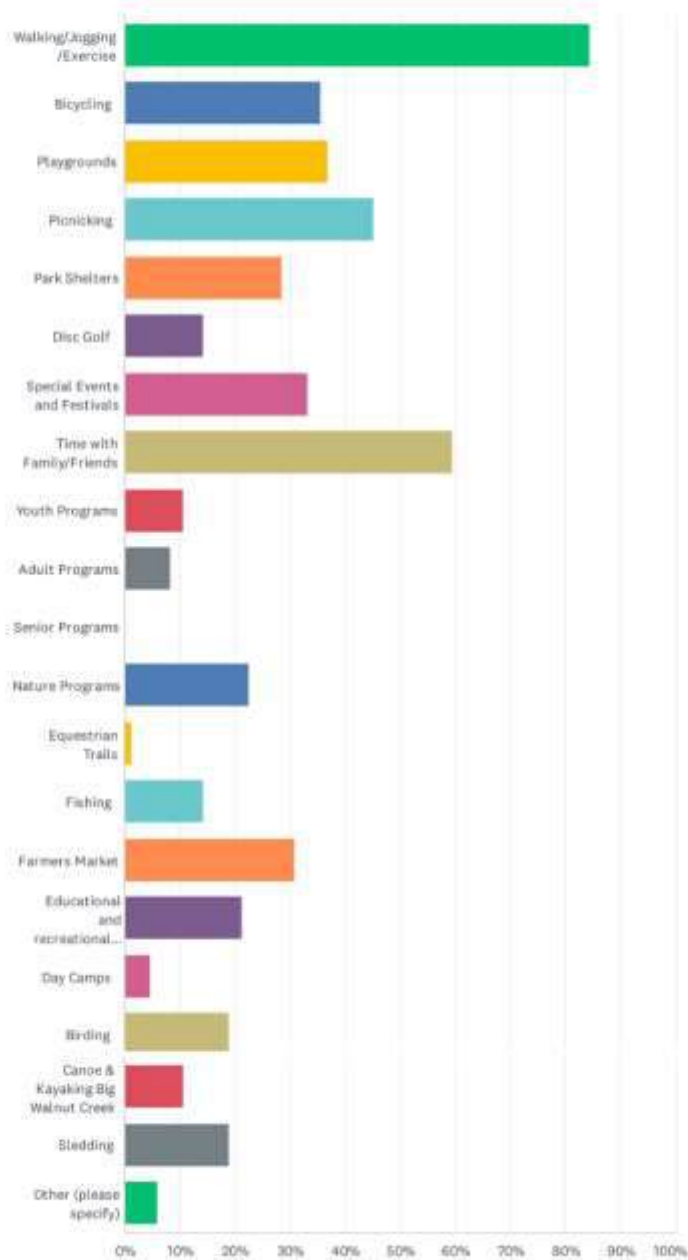


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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q14 What programs or amenities do you participate in or use at the county parks? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0





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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walking/Jogging/Exercise	84.52%	71
Bicycling	35.71%	30
Playgrounds	36.90%	31
Picnicking	45.24%	38
Park Shelters	28.57%	24
Disc Golf	14.29%	12
Special Events and Festivals	33.33%	28
Time with Family/Friends	59.52%	50
Youth Programs	10.71%	9
Adult Programs	8.33%	7
Senior Programs	0.00%	0
Nature Programs	22.62%	19
Equestrian Trails	1.19%	1
Fishing	14.29%	12
Farmers Market	30.95%	26
Educational and recreational programs/ Family programs	21.43%	18
Day Camps	4.76%	4
Birding	19.05%	16
Canoe & Kayaking Big Walnut Creek	10.71%	9
Sledding	19.05%	16
Other (please specify)	5.95%	5
Total Respondents: 84		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Parkour jams	10/11/2025 12:00 PM
2	astronomy programs	9/27/2025 12:39 AM
3	Hiking	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
4	Relaxation	8/21/2025 10:58 PM
5	Photography	8/19/2025 10:08 AM



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube	61.90% 52
Newspaper	9.52% 8
TV	0.00% 0
Radio	0.00% 0
The Explorer Magazine/Brochures/Flyers	32.14% 27
Posted Signs	19.05% 16
Word of Mouth	33.33% 28
E-mail	7.14% 6
County or Parks Department Website	23.81% 20
We do not hear about park events	9.52% 8
Other (please specify)	4.76% 4
Total Respondents: 84	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	The Republican	9/14/2025 4:33 PM
2	N/A	9/4/2025 4:11 PM
3	Didn't know there were events.	8/30/2025 5:31 PM
4	The county website is difficult to access on the phone, can only use on computer which I have limited access to.	8/20/2025 2:11 PM

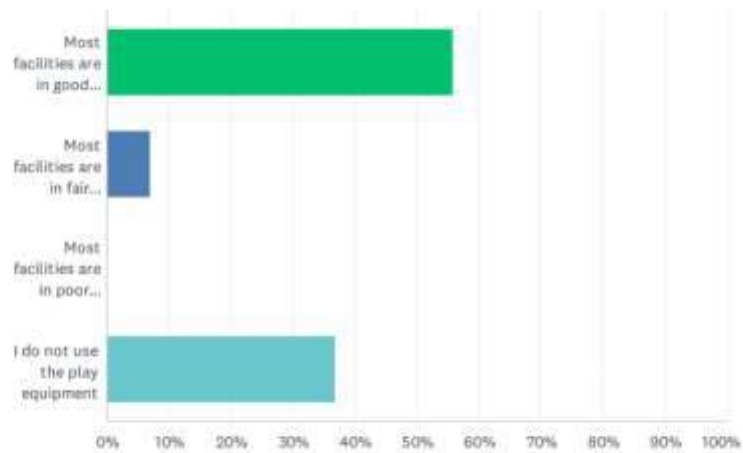


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q16 Please rate the overall condition of play equipment in our county parks: (Please select the rating that best describes your experience)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Most facilities are in good condition	55.95%	47
Most facilities are in fair condition	7.14%	6
Most facilities are in poor condition	0.00%	0
I do not use the play equipment	36.90%	31
TOTAL		84

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	My 3yr old grandson loves the new nature themed playgrounds at McCloud and Gibbs	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
2	Seem to be in good nick	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
3	We love McClouds branch and log play area	8/19/2025 2:53 PM

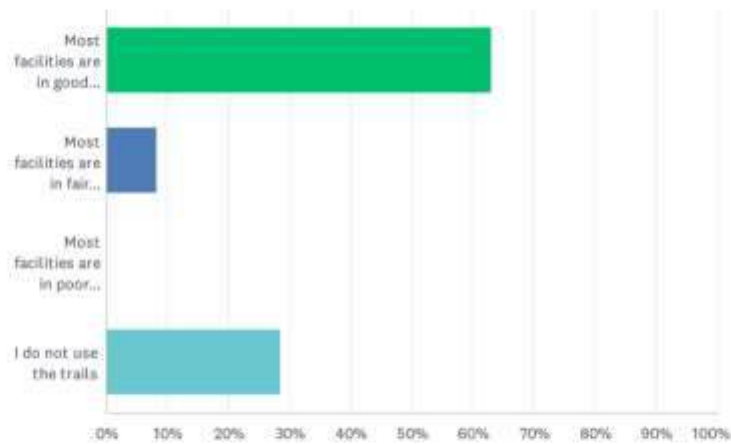


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q17 Please rate the overall condition of the trails at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park: (Please select the rating the best describes your experience)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Most facilities are in good condition	63.10%	53
Most facilities are in fair condition	8.33%	7
Most facilities are in poor condition	0.00%	0
I do not use the trails	28.57%	24
TOTAL		84

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	Thankful for new restrooms being installed	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
2	I think the trails are great but I would love if more were added.	9/26/2025 7:00 PM
3	Bike trails are getting bumpy from tree roots.	9/16/2025 11:15 AM
4	Wish they were concrete	9/6/2025 6:10 PM
5	Unknown, only used the sled hill at this park	9/1/2025 8:21 AM
6	The trails are excellent, particularly given certain water issues.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM

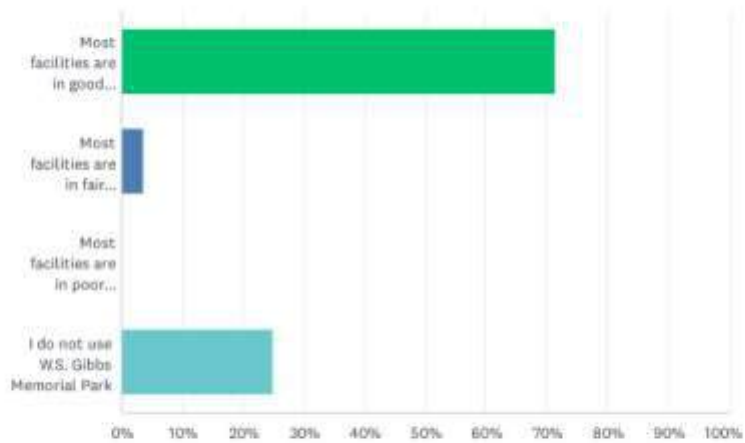


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

**Q18 Please rate the overall condition of W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park:
(Please select the rating the best describes your experience)**

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Most facilities are in good condition	71.43% 60
Most facilities are in fair condition	3.57% 3
Most facilities are in poor condition	0.00% 0
I do not use W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	25.00% 21
TOTAL	84

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	again I wish the lake was treated to get rid of some of the moss	9/11/2025 9:37 PM
2	All are in excellent condition.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM

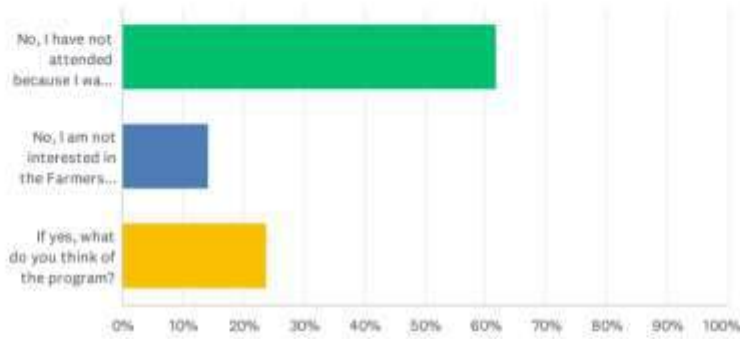


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q19 Do you attend the Farmers Market at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No, I have not attended because I was not aware of it.	61.90% 52
No, I am not interested in the Farmers Market.	14.29% 12
If yes, what do you think of the program?	23.81% 20
TOTAL	84

#	IF YES, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE PROGRAM?	DATE
1	I liked it and I hope it grows. Good variety of vendors. Maybe more food options if possible, but the hotdog guy was good.	10/6/2025 11:02 PM
2	Love the new farmer Market! Great vendors, food trucks, fun atmosphere	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
3	It's okay	9/16/2025 10:24 PM
4	I thought it was great. More food trucks over by the large pavilion would be a plus	9/10/2025 7:51 AM
5	It was nice! Maybe have more food/beverage options	9/16/2025 7:13 AM
6	Would love to see more vendors, weekly market	9/14/2025 4:33 PM
7	Could use more booths	9/11/2025 5:05 PM
8	It's ok, but starts and ends too early.	8/29/2025 10:27 PM
9	Enjoyed all the vendors	8/23/2025 12:09 AM
10	Good variety	8/22/2025 10:22 AM
11	Great event! Coffee truck and more vendors would be nice	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
12	Need more of them!	8/20/2025 2:11 PM
13	Great!	8/19/2025 7:26 PM
14	Parking is terrible	8/18/2025 6:58 PM
15	Good	8/18/2025 5:30 PM



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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

16	It was lovely!	8/18/2025 3:33 PM
17	Good	8/18/2025 12:35 PM
18	We appreciated that the program exists, but felt it could use more food vendors, and more original art.	8/18/2025 10:54 AM
19	It was nice. Just need to watch the holes while visiting booths.	8/18/2025 8:30 AM
20	I thought they were average compared to other farmer markets. More food trucks would add to the experience.	8/18/2025 7:47 AM

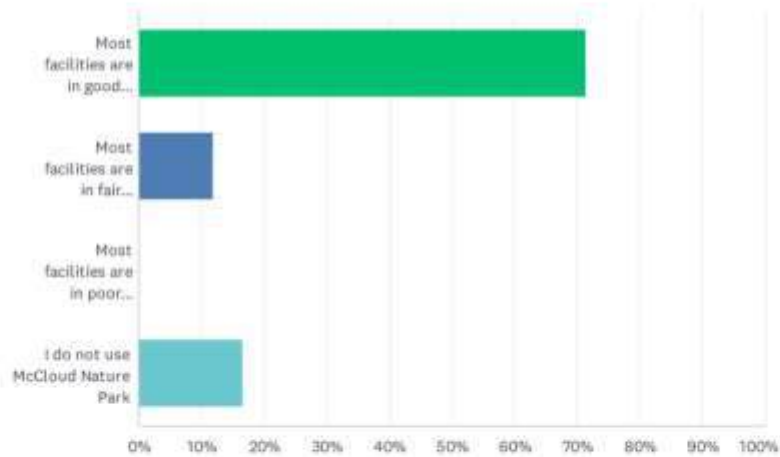


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q20 Please rate the overall condition of McCloud Nature Park: (Please select the rating that best describes your experience)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Most facilities are in good condition	71.43% 60
Most facilities are in fair condition	11.90% 10
Most facilities are in poor condition	0.00% 0
I do not use McCloud Nature Park	16.67% 14
TOTAL	84

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	Excellent nature center and Naturalist Ryann is amazing!	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
2	McCloud is great besides the area near the creek where there is just metal spikes sticking up out of the ground from where a metal grate used to be	9/26/2025 6:39 PM
3	The place needs to return to its natural state as much as possible, particularly the north side.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
4	We attend and participate in the McCloud Star Gaze events. Thank you for that opportunity. We have brought our telescopes out there as well.	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
5	Too far from our house. We have been once	8/18/2025 5:30 PM

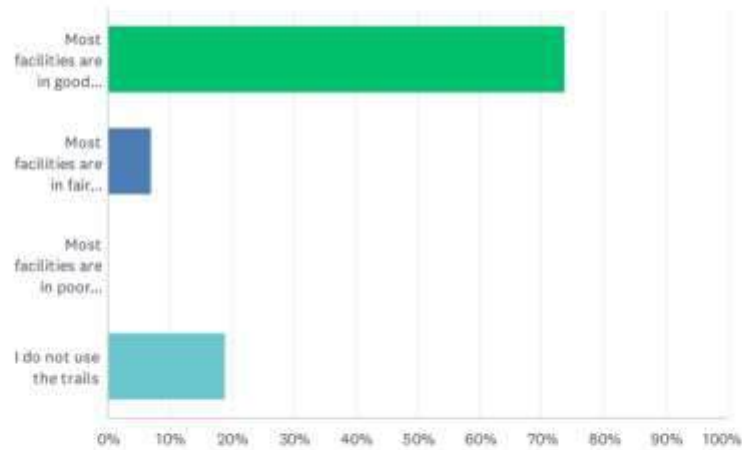


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

**Q21 Please rate the overall condition of the trails at McCloud Nature Park:
(Please select the rating the best describes your experience)**

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Most facilities are in good condition	73.81%	62
Most facilities are in fair condition	7.14%	6
Most facilities are in poor condition	0.00%	0
I do not use the trails	19.05%	16
TOTAL		84

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	The trails are always well groomed and maintained with upmost care	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
2	A seed library wood be a good addition	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
3	Would like to see a challenging trail on the north side and rugged areas not in use or even visible.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
4	I'd like to see a challenging trail there.	8/21/2025 10:58 PM
5	Some trails get extremely muddy. Gravel may help the ones down by the creek in some spots? Or mulch	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
6	Would like to see the various benches throughout the park cleaned occasionally, I.E. bird poop on seating area	8/18/2025 10:26 AM

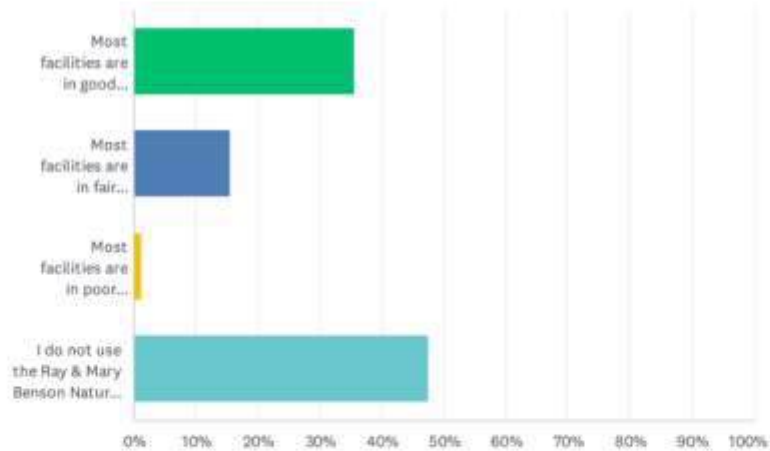


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q22 Please rate the overall condition of Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center at McCloud Nature Park: (Please select the rating that best describes your experience)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Most facilities are in good condition	35.71% 30
Most facilities are in fair condition	15.48% 13
Most facilities are in poor condition	1.19% 1
I do not use the Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center	47.62% 40
TOTAL	84

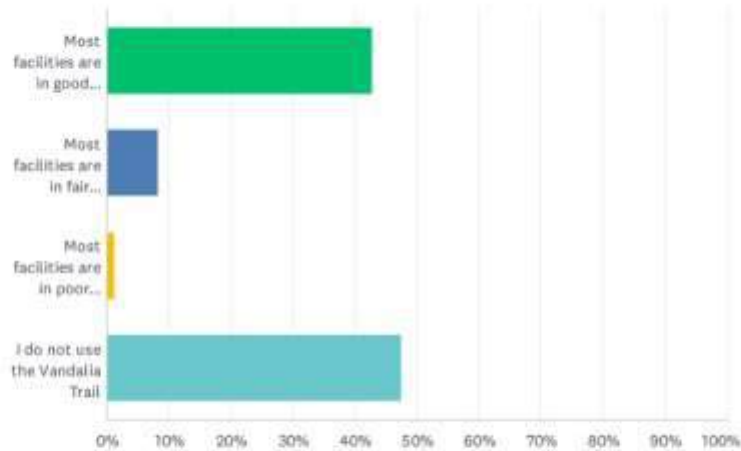
#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	This nature center has grown in excellence for the past 4 years my family and I have been visiting and participating in the programming there. It is above excellent!	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
2	Bathrooms are great! We like the new deck too	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
3	would like to see the bird feeders filled in the bird watching room and the bird area maintained better	8/18/2025 10:26 AM



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Q23 Please rate the overall condition of Vandalia Trail from the Hendricks/Putnam County Line to Amo: (Please select the rating that best describes your experience)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Most facilities are in good condition	42.86%	36
Most facilities are in fair condition	8.33%	7
Most facilities are in poor condition	1.19%	1
I do not use the Vandalia Trail	47.62%	40
TOTAL		84

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	Haven't used this part of the trail	10/11/2025 9:19 AM
2	Never been	10/5/2025 11:02 PM
3	Not many facilities there as of now	9/26/2025 6:39 PM
4	not that section of it	9/19/2025 10:14 AM
5	I don't use that section of trail. I us the Vandalia trail in Plainfield up until the dead end near Concord	9/16/2025 7:51 AM
6	I only use the trail in Plainfield.	9/14/2025 4:33 PM
7	Wish they would connect trail to vandalia	9/6/2025 6:10 PM
8	Would like to see two additional benches, but only if they're realistically priced.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
9	Wonderful, our thanks to the trail and bathroom maintenance personnel!	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
10	I wish this trail had a little more to it. Educational signage or native flower plantings. Benches, picnic tables	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
11	Please connect Amo to Plainfield!	8/18/2025 10:05 AM

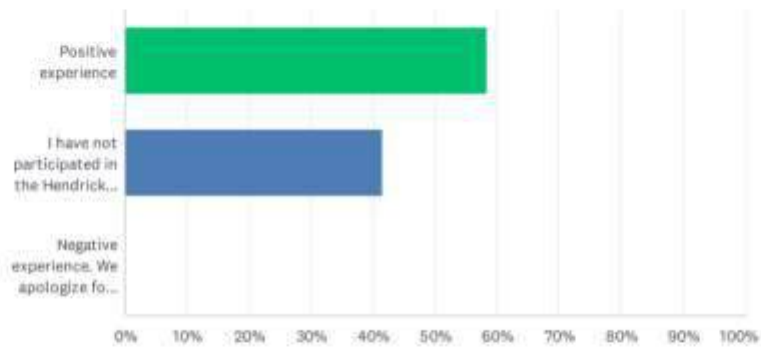


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q24 Please rate your overall experience with the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation programs in the last six months.

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Positive experience	58.33% 49
I have not participated in the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Programs,	41.67% 35
Negative experience. We apologize for your poor experience and would like to understand in more detail so that we can make future improvements. Please explain your experience:	0.00% 0
TOTAL	84

#	NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE. WE APOLOGIZE FOR YOUR POOR EXPERIENCE AND WOULD LIKE TO UNDERSTAND IN MORE DETAIL SO THAT WE CAN MAKE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS. PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR EXPERIENCE:	DATE
	There are no responses.	

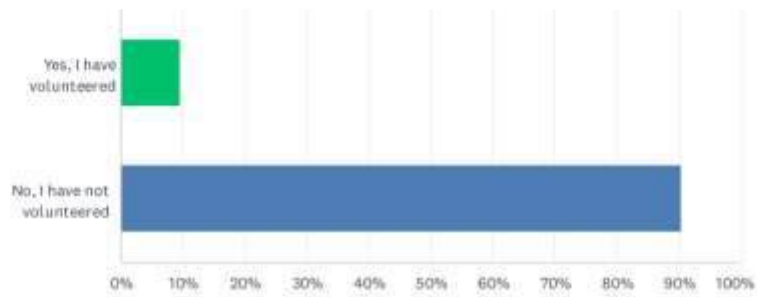


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q25 Have you volunteered at the Hendrick County Parks & Recreation Facilities?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I have volunteered	9.52%	8
No, I have not volunteered	90.48%	76
TOTAL		84

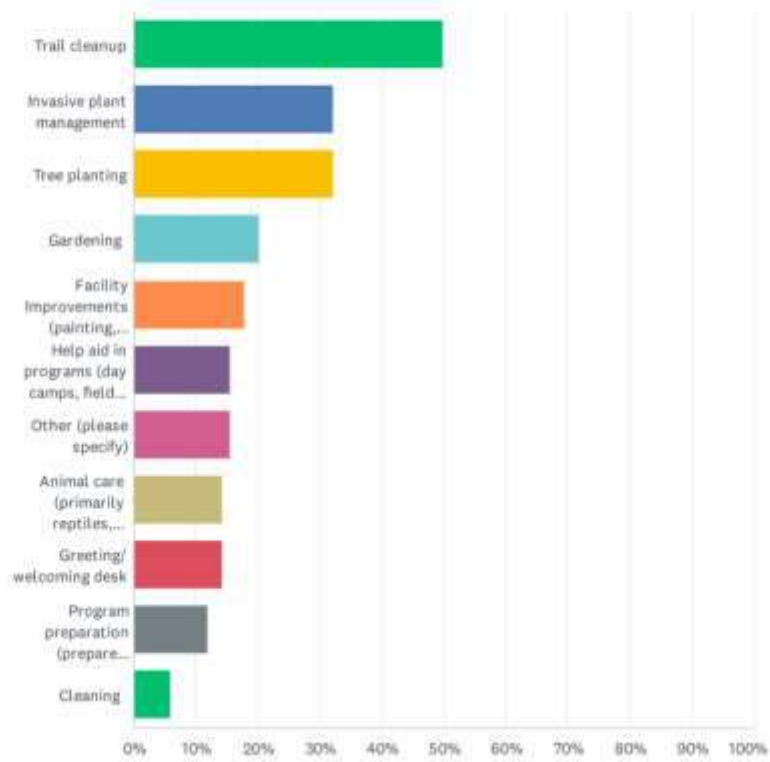


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q26 What volunteer opportunities would you like to see at Hendricks County Parks & Recreation?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0





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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Trail cleanup	50.00% 42
Invasive plant management	32.14% 27
Tree planting	32.14% 27
Gardening	20.24% 17
Facility improvements (painting, general maintenance, etc.)	17.86% 15
Help aid in programs (day camps, field days, fun run, etc.)	15.48% 13
Other (please specify)	15.48% 13
Animal care (primarily reptiles, amphibians, and insects)	14.29% 12
Greeting/ welcoming desk	14.29% 12
Program preparation (prepare materials for activities)	11.90% 10
Cleaning	5.95% 5
Total Respondents: 84	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	-	10/2/2025 12:42 PM
2	n/a	9/27/2025 12:39 AM
3	More Kentucky blue grass and Ontario Gold potatoes	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
4	What I checked is already happening and should continue	9/16/2025 7:51 AM
5	None	9/11/2025 8:38 AM
6	Not interested.	9/3/2025 11:28 AM
7	Invasives work must be as inexorable as the invasives.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
8	N/A	8/26/2025 6:33 AM
9	Develop primitive camping programs, fire building education	8/22/2025 10:22 AM
10	None	8/21/2025 3:54 PM
11	Big events	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
12	N/A	8/18/2025 12:35 PM
13	-	8/18/2025 9:22 AM

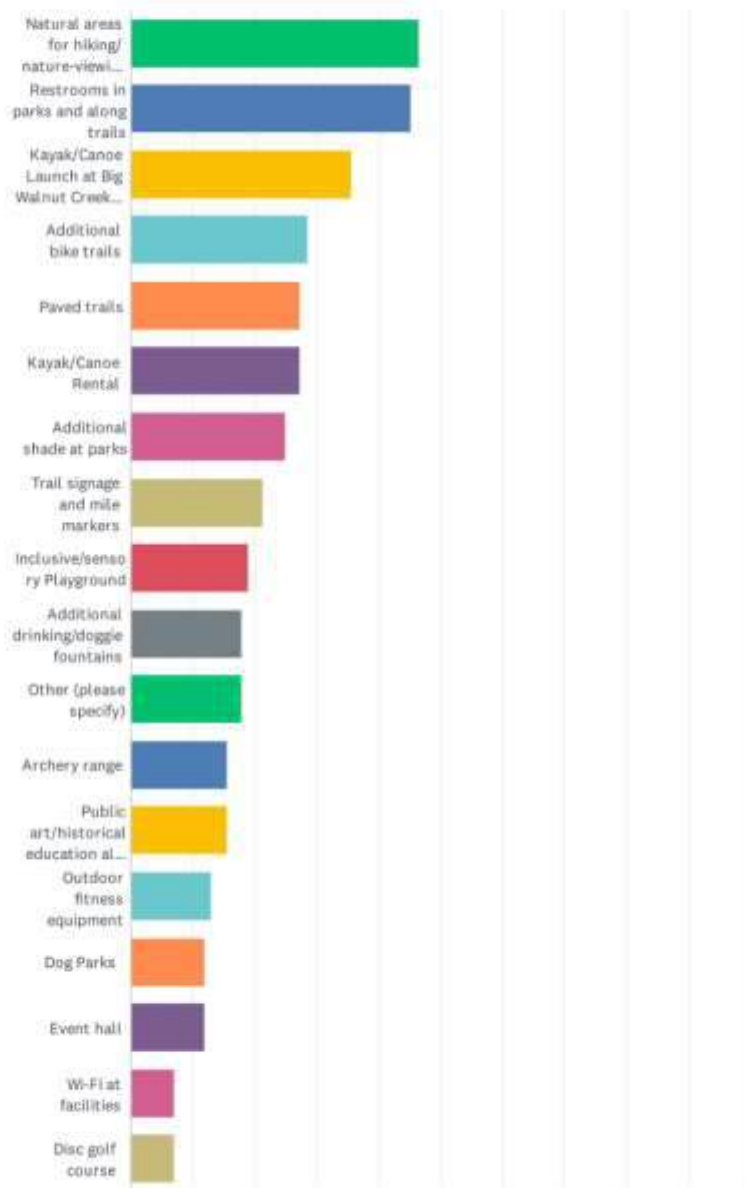


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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

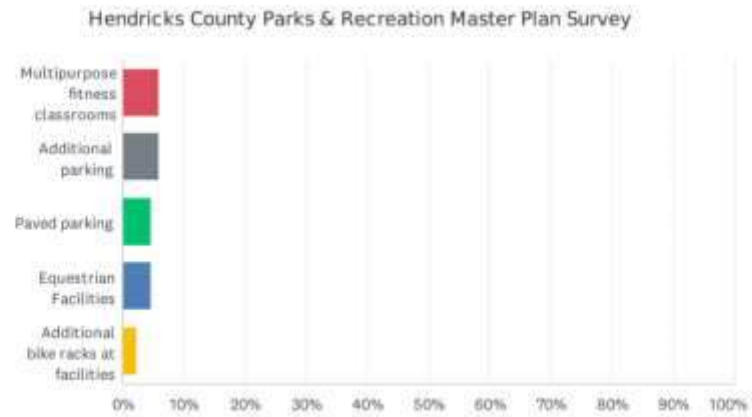
Q27 What facilities or amenities need to be added, improved, or expanded in the Hendricks County Park & Recreation system? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Natural areas for hiking/ nature-viewing/picnicking (forest, wetland, prairie, etc.)	46.43%	39
Restrooms in parks and along trails	45.24%	38
Kayak/Canoe Launch at Big Walnut Creek within McCloud Nature Park	35.71%	30
Additional bike trails	29.57%	24
Paved trails	27.38%	23
Kayak/Canoe Rental	27.38%	23
Additional shade at parks	25.00%	21
Trail signage and mile markers	21.43%	18
Inclusive/sensory Playground	19.05%	16
Additional drinking/doggie fountains	17.86%	15
Other (please specify)	17.86%	15
Archery range	15.48%	13
Public art/historical education along trails	15.48%	13
Outdoor fitness equipment	13.10%	11
Dog Parks	11.90%	10
Event hall	11.90%	10
Wi-Fi at facilities	7.14%	6
Disc golf course	7.14%	6
Multipurpose fitness classrooms	5.95%	5
Additional parking	5.95%	5
Paved parking	4.76%	4
Equestrian Facilities	4.76%	4
Additional bike racks at facilities	2.38%	2
Total Respondents: 84		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Parkour park	10/11/2025 12:00 PM
2	Shooting range	10/6/2025 11:02 PM
3	Nature Center at Gibbs	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
4	.	10/2/2025 12:42 PM
5	If you have signs, education, or stories, please do not make them about sex and sexual orientation. I have young children.	9/24/2025 11:59 AM
6	Seed Library	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
7	Mountain biking trails	9/16/2025 9:19 AM
8	More tree plantings would be great, as would dense native prairie plantings. These could be	9/6/2025 6:03 PM



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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

	used to fill the space around the new, young trees.	
9	Bike trail Connection to b&o trail system	9/1/2025 8:21 AM
10	Stretches of the Vandalia could use some tree shade in the summer. We do need more parking, but paving means run-off.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
11	Please, please, please expand the Vandalia from Plainfield to Clayton! Please!	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
12	I know they've added to restrooms at Gibbs but I'd like to see some at the shelters. Would make renting them way nicer!	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
13	Mountain bike trails at McCloud!	8/20/2025 2:11 PM
14	Dog waste stations	8/18/2025 11:01 AM
15	Connect the Vandalia Trail in Amo to Plainfield	8/18/2025 10:05 AM

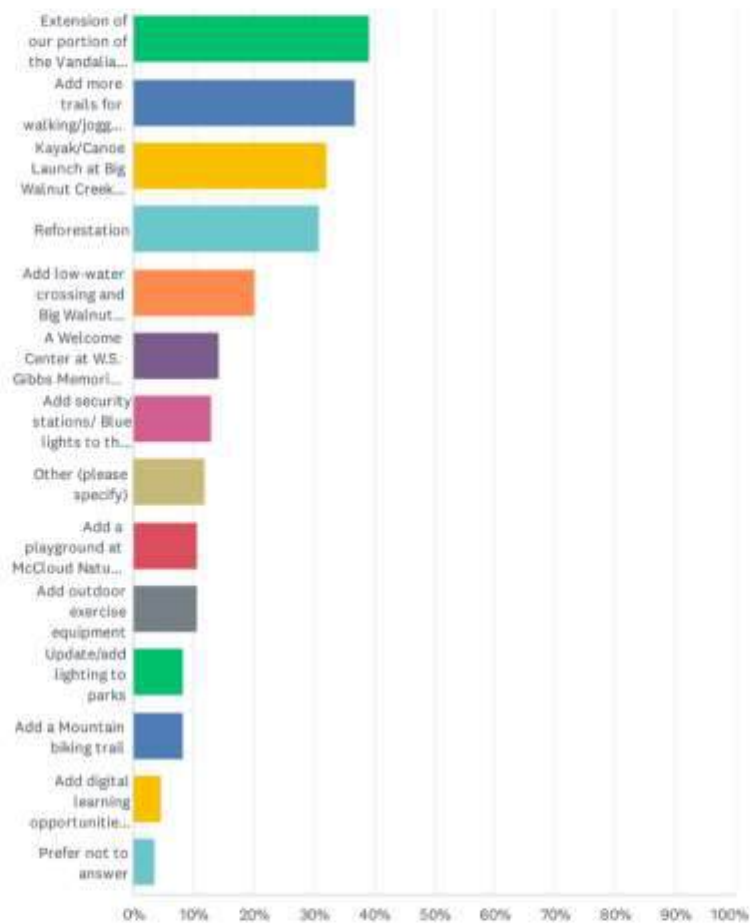


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q28 Of the following potential capital improvement projects, which is of the highest priority to you? (Please select up to 3)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extension of our portion of the Vandalia Trail	39.29%	33
Add more trails for walking/jogging/biking	36.90%	31
Kayak/Canoe Launch at Big Walnut Creek within McCloud Nature Park	32.14%	27
Reforestation	30.95%	26
Add low-water crossing and Big Walnut Creek access at McCloud Nature Park	20.24%	17
A Welcome Center at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	14.29%	12
Add security stations/ Blue lights to the trail	13.10%	11
Other (please specify)	11.90%	10
Add a playground at McCloud Nature Park	10.71%	9
Add outdoor exercise equipment	10.71%	9
Update/add lighting to parks	8.33%	7
Add a Mountain biking trail	8.33%	7
Add digital learning opportunities (QR Codes that lead you to education field guides)	4.76%	4
Prefer not to answer	3.57%	3
Total Respondents: 84		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Outdoor parkour spot	10/11/2025 12:00 PM
2	Swings	9/26/2025 11:22 AM
3	More bike trails	9/16/2025 7:22 AM
4	Non native/ invasives management	9/14/2025 10:00 PM
5	Expanded native prairie plantings and/or additional tree plantings	9/6/2025 6:03 PM
6	Add more opportunities for night time Astro photography after hours	9/1/2025 8:21 AM
7	Vandalia Trail expansion must be of the highest priority. We are part of a statewide vision.	8/29/2025 8:59 PM
8	Again, please expand Vandalia from Plainfield to Clayton!	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
9	Make the pavilion/shelter at McCloud bigger! Would be great for weddings and other bigger events. Even for programs I would imagine.Similar to shelter by the pond at Gibbs	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
10	We desperately need Arno to connect to Plainfield	8/18/2025 10:05 AM

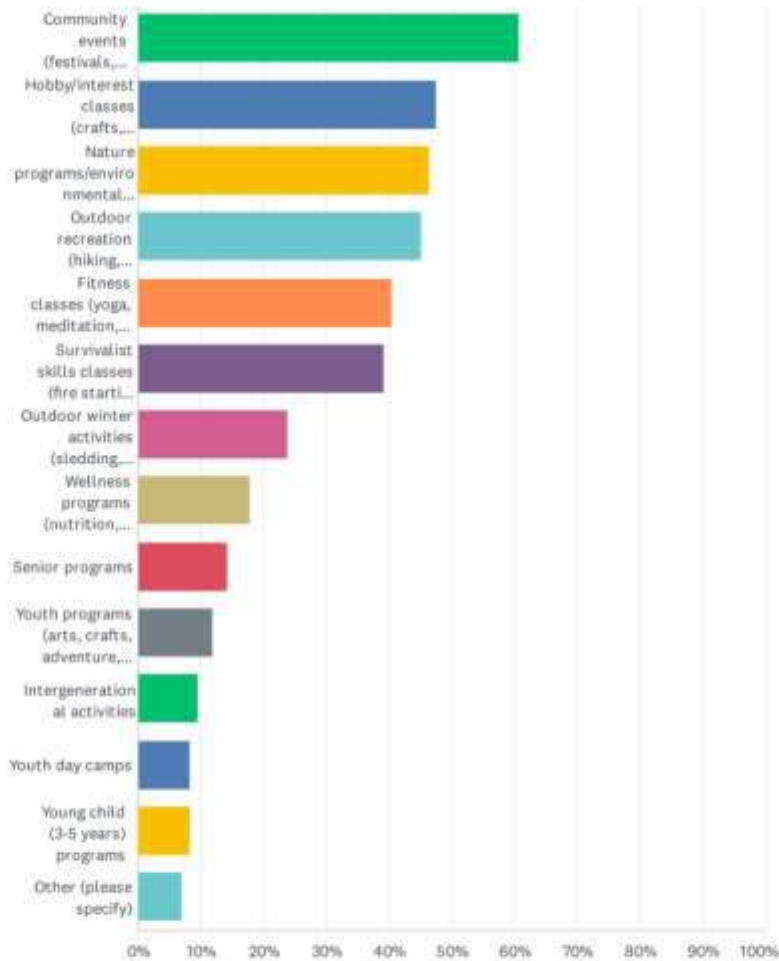


5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q29 Hendricks County Parks and Recreation is dedicated to providing rich and engaging programming for all community members. What programming would you like to see continued or added? (Please select up to 5)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 0





5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Community events (festivals, runs, day camps, etc.)	60.71%	51
Hobby/interest classes (crafts, geology, beekeeping, etc.)	47.62%	40
Nature programs/environmental education	46.43%	39
Outdoor recreation (hiking, fishing, etc.)	45.24%	38
Fitness classes (yoga, meditation, nature walks, etc.)	40.48%	34
Survivalist skills classes (fire starting, tent setup, archery, edible plants, etc.)	39.29%	33
Outdoor winter activities (sledding, skiing, etc.)	23.81%	20
Wellness programs (nutrition, gardening, etc.)	17.86%	15
Senior programs	14.29%	12
Youth programs (arts, crafts, adventure, etc.)	11.90%	10
Intergenerational activities	9.52%	8
Youth day camps	8.33%	7
Young child (3-5 years) programs	8.33%	7
Other (please specify)	7.14%	6
Total Respondents: 84		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Parkour	10/11/2025 12:00 PM
2	Education and opportunities to get involved with eco friendly plantings, native plant sales, seed swaps...	9/14/2025 10:00 PM
3	Foraging, bird watching	9/14/2025 4:33 PM
4	Do not attend programming (yet)	9/11/2025 8:38 AM
5	All of above are wonderful, I checked the ones we would use.	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
6	Teen programming	8/21/2025 10:34 AM



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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q30 Is there anything else that the Hendricks County Parks and Recreation can do to better serve you and your family? Please comment below.

Answered: 37 Skipped: 47

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Love the growth happening at Gibbs and look forward to using that park more as it is close by.	10/10/2025 9:11 PM
2	I think I listed everything I thought above	10/7/2025 10:03 AM
3	Our family loves fun runs/walks and 5k's	10/6/2025 11:31 PM
4	Clean up more at the big walnut beach at McCloud. Our family collects trash down there and brings it to trash can at nature center. A lot of people just don't respect the area and leave their food trash there often. No littering signs and more daily maintenance team clean up would help. Also, adding security to all the parks would be greatly appreciated.	10/5/2025 5:14 AM
5	.	10/4/2025 2:40 PM
6	more weekend activities for kids 4-8yo.	9/27/2025 12:39 AM
7	I can't wait to see the progress on the Vandalia trail. We drive from Clayton to Amo often to walk and bike. It will be so nice when it is completed from Clayton. Thank you all for what you do. I am proud of our parks and I am so thankful that someone cares about getting families outdoors.	9/26/2025 7:00 PM
8	Please update claytons park, preferably an all around renovation and possible purchase of additional nearby land	9/26/2025 6:39 PM
9	We are a homeschool family, so have lots of availability for educational day activities, especially at Gibbs.	9/24/2025 11:59 AM
10	I would appreciate a seeeeeee library.	9/20/2025 12:08 PM
11	N/A	9/19/2025 10:14 AM
12	Finish the vandalia trail before we're too old to enjoy it.	9/18/2025 11:31 AM
13	Connect vandalia trail from Plainfield to Amo	9/16/2025 9:19 AM
14	We have what need from the parks.	9/16/2025 7:51 AM
15	Add more walking and biking trails. Pave the gravel travels please.	9/6/2025 6:10 PM
16	Keep up the good work!	9/6/2025 6:03 PM
17	Would appreciate NO DOG days for walking or NO DOG times. I do not enjoy dogs.	9/5/2025 6:36 PM
18	It would be spectacular if there one or two trails connecting the cities together: Brownsburg to Avon to Plainfield, etc.	8/30/2025 5:31 PM
19	Keep up the great work on having paved bike trails throughout and connecting areas in Hendricks County. While we live in Morgan County, when we downsize and move from here, we will likely move to Hendricks to be around the many bike trails. Of most importance currently would be extending the Vandalia from Plainfield to Clayton. Thank you!	8/22/2025 7:07 PM
20	Love our Hendricks County Parks!	8/22/2025 10:22 AM
21	N/A	8/21/2025 10:34 AM
22	Like I said earlier, the website is impossible to use on my phone. Please fix this issue	8/20/2025 2:11 PM
23	Better publicize events in advance please!	8/19/2025 7:26 PM



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Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

24	Complete Vandalia trail from Plainfield to Amo	8/19/2025 6:16 PM
25	We love McCloud Nature park. I think a trash bin/dog poop bin would be great near the beach/creek area at McCloud. We find trash and dog poop bags near there and pick it up when we see it.	8/19/2025 2:53 PM
26	I love our parks!	8/19/2025 10:08 AM
27	N/A	8/19/2025 12:34 AM
28	I LOVE the hendricks county parks, and especially love Gibbs! It is my new favorite. Thank you for all your hard work!	8/18/2025 3:33 PM
29	N/A	8/18/2025 12:35 PM
30	Dog waste stations!	8/18/2025 11:01 AM
31	Price for homeschool ecology classes are not sustainable for a family with multiple children to attend monthly.	8/18/2025 10:54 AM
32	N/A	8/18/2025 10:47 AM
33	Mccloud is a nature-oriented park, I would NOT like to see more playground equipment, keep it natural.	8/18/2025 10:26 AM
34	In case you didnt read the earlier comments, connection the Amo trail to Plainfield would be the best thing ever!	8/18/2025 10:05 AM
35	Please extend the Vandalia trail starting in Clayton. 2027 is a long time away for local Clayton residents who currently have to drive to Amo's trailhead 2-5 times/week.	8/18/2025 9:15 AM
36	NA	8/18/2025 7:47 AM
37	We homeschool and would love more opportunities that aren't on Fridays.	8/18/2025 7:07 AM



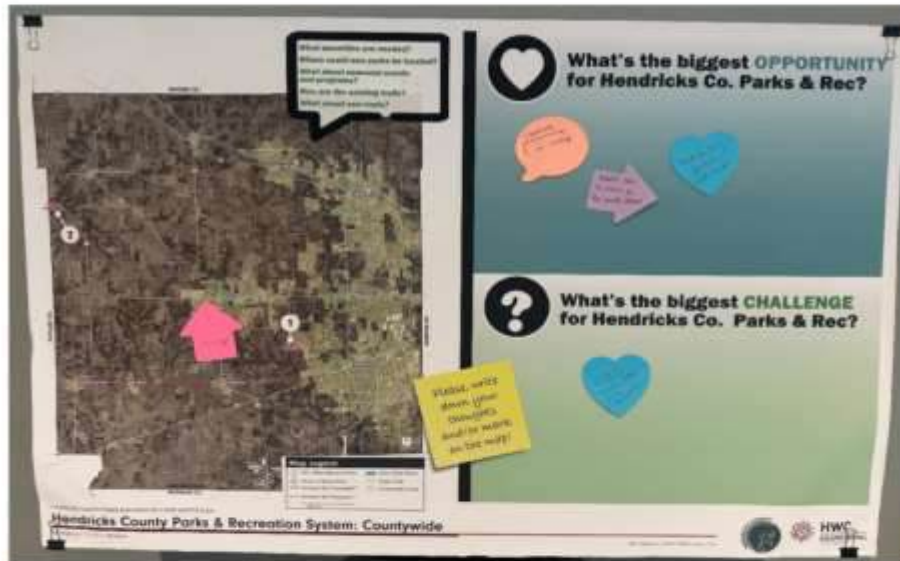
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Public Workshop (Random Sample)

One public workshop was held for the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan. It was held on Saturday, September 6, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The workshop was held at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park during the Farmers Market Event, and HWC reported receiving feedback from 60 people. Below is a summary of the input received from the workshop:

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR HCPR?:

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
Improved access since sites are remote	Coordinating programming not to overlap
	Marketing & Public awareness

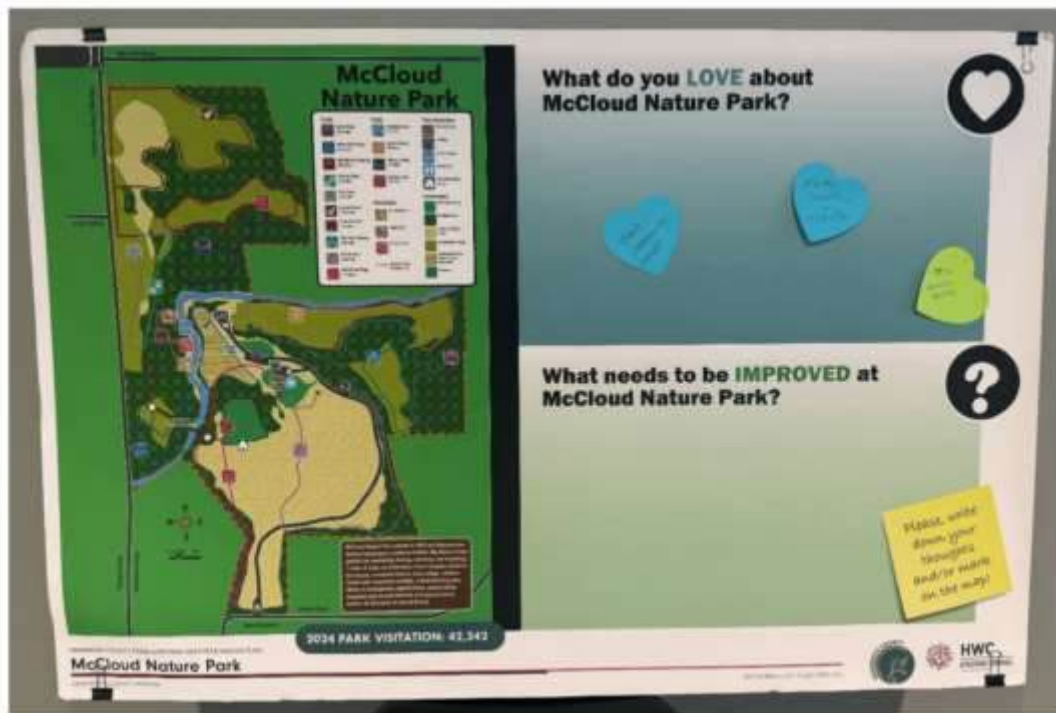




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WHAT DO YOU LOVE OR NEEDS IMPROVED AT MCCLLOUD NATURE PARK?:

LOVE	IMPROVED
Trails & community events	General comment: Not a convenient location
Visitors Center & Trails	-



WHAT PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE PRIORITIZED?:

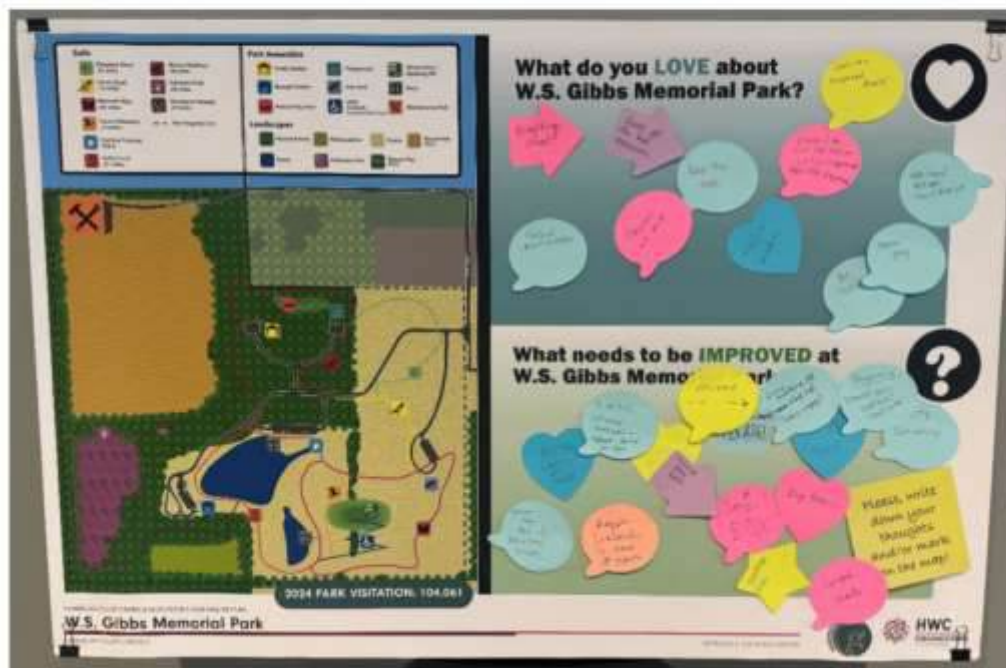
Dog Park	23
Recreational Programing	24
Trail Expansion	51
Mountain Bike Trails	23
Kayak Launch	43
Playground at McCloud's Park	4



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WHAT DO YOU LOVE OR WOULD LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED AT W.S. GIBBS MEMORIAL PARK?:

LOVE	IMPROVED
Everything is great!	Additional restrooms at Disk golf
Excited about restrooms!	Kayak lunch at pond
Trail expansion	Crushed stone trails
Keep the trees	Longer trails
Trails & location	Dog Park
The unpaved trails	Snow machine & Tow rope at sled hill
Love that there is a small playground park and big playground	Geo Caching & Rock painting
-	Zip line
-	Basketball court
-	Outdoor amphitheater





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WHAT DO YOU LOVE OR NEEDS IMPROVED AT VANDALIA TRAIL?:

LOVE	IMPROVED
Pretty Views	Link trails in the county
Restroom facilities are great & clean!	Safety
Biking & Walking Opportunity	Connect Plainfield to Amo
The tree line for shade	Connector to BrewLink (Plainfield)
-	Carterburg to Clayton connection
-	Trail connection from Humle Park (narrow bridge)



Stakeholder Interviews (Non-Random Sample)

The non-random sample of responses was collected by HWC Engineering through scheduled interviews of stakeholders, including the Hendricks County Park Board, the Hendricks County Commissioners, the HCP&R staff, and the president of the National Road Heritage Trail, Inc.

A total of 25 responses were collected through the non-random sampling methods.

The following, through page 127, is verbatim from HWC Engineering’s report provided to HCP&R:

Greg Midgley: President of the National Heritage Trails, Inc.

Greg, a Plainfield resident, played a key role in the development of a cross-state trail in 2003, with the Pennsylvania Railroad serving as a pivotal opportunity and catalyst for the rails-to-trails initiative. Since the inception of the Hendricks County Parks and Recreation Department (HCPR), he has been a strong advocate for its mission and growth.

Greg commended HCPR for its strong long-term planning and comprehensive county-wide vision. He expressed appreciation for the department’s communication efforts, particularly through social media and *The Explore* magazine, noting that staff excel at personable and engaging outreach. He also praised the quality of the Vandalia Trail and the cleanliness of restroom facilities at both trailheads.

Looking ahead, Greg would like the department to prioritize trail expansion, specifically the extension of the Vandalia Trail into Plainfield. While supportive of future growth, he emphasized that he does not see any current service gaps or maintenance deficiencies that would suggest an immediate need for additional staffing.

County Commissioners

All three Hendricks County Commissioners expressed similar perspectives regarding the HCPR department. They spoke very favorably of Superintendent Ryan Lemley, commending his effective leadership and ability to manage the department’s operations with limited resources. Several commissioners also highlighted the staff’s professionalism, hospitality, dedication, and commitment to maintaining the parks.

The commissioners were unanimously supportive of the ongoing expansion at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, but emphasized that the Vandalia Trail extension should remain the next priority. As future trail development advances, they noted that cultivating strong relationships with county landowners will be essential to facilitate land acquisition. While they are supportive of long-term park growth, the commissioners indicated they do not see an immediate need to expand departmental staffing.

Parks Board Members

The Parks Board expressed strong pride in both the quality of the county’s parks and the dedication of its staff. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park was highlighted as a remarkable transformation from farmland into a regional destination, and McCloud Nature Park was praised for its natural beauty and state-park feel. Members agreed that the parks are well-maintained and continue to see growing attendance each year. They also emphasized that the department’s focus on passive recreation—like hiking, picnicking, and enjoying nature—fits the mission



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and sets Hendricks County parks apart from nearby community parks. While they felt active recreation should remain limited, there was some openness to small additions, such as a half basketball court at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

Looking ahead, the board was open to measured growth, particularly if new properties meet acquisition criteria and preserve natural, wooded areas. Discussion included a possible 80-acre site along Highway 40 and expanding toward the county's north, west, or east. Priorities for the next five years include expanding the Vandalia Trail, completing W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park with a nature center and office, building a low-water crossing at McCloud Nature Park, and addressing upstream pollution issues. Members also discussed improving park visibility and promotion—especially to Marion County residents—and exploring future opportunities for RV or camping facilities as a long-term goal.

Full-Time Staff Interviews:

Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Park Manager, Maintenance Foreman, & Park Naturalists

HCPR is widely recognized by staff as a well-led, collaborative, and mission-driven organization. Interviews with department leadership, managers, and naturalists highlighted strong team culture, operational efficiency, and pride in the department's innovative approach. At the same time, stakeholders identified several opportunities for growth in programming, facilities, staffing, and long-term planning.

Key Themes

Strengths

- **Leadership & Team Culture:** Staff consistently praised Superintendent Ryan Lemley and the department's leadership team. The workplace was described as authentic, supportive, and family-like, empowering employees to innovate and pursue new skills.
- **Operational Efficiency & Special Projects:** The department was commended for its success in securing grant funding, developing W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park efficiently, and implementing innovative projects like the Prairie Maze.
- **Staff Retention & Structure:** Recent restructuring of maintenance staff improved wages and retention. The department benefits from open communication and supportive management.

Opportunities for Growth

- **Recreational Programming:** Multiple staff members encouraged expanding offerings to complement the department's educational focus. Ideas included lawn games, disc golf, basketball, mountain bike trails, trail expansion, and outdoor tournaments.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** A dedicated Volunteer Coordinator role was recommended to strengthen recruitment, oversee outreach and social media, and represent the department at events.



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- **Facilities & Infrastructure:**

- **McCloud Nature Park:** Improvements needed for comfort, storage, and access to running water in the maintenance building.
- **Welcome Center at W.S. Gibbs Memorial:** Anticipated need for part-time housekeeping support.
- **Other Amenities:** Restroom near Bluegill Shelter, upgraded speakers for events, and expanded signage.

- **Staffing & Succession Planning:** Anticipated growth in naturalist staff, including potential for two Lead Naturalists with assistant support. Calls for a formal leadership succession plan and a stronger, more clearly defined Parks Board structure.
- **Professional Development & Networking:** Staff expressed interest in additional certifications and in creating quarterly gatherings with other county naturalists to share best practices.

Conclusion

HCP&R has built a strong foundation of leadership, teamwork, and innovation. Looking forward, the department's success will depend on expanding recreational programming, strengthening volunteer engagement, investing in facility upgrades, and planning strategically for leadership succession and staff growth.

Part-Time Staff Interviews:

Administrative Assistant & Park Naturalist

Both employees expressed satisfaction with their current part-time roles and indicated no interest in transitioning to full-time positions but identified operational needs—particularly updated technology, a UTV for fieldwork, and more predictable scheduling. They also highlighted opportunities to broaden programming for underserved audiences such as teens, building on proven past models.

Maintenance Technicians

Maintenance staff expressed pride in their work, enjoyment of being outdoors, and appreciation for the department's supportive leadership and communication. Many value the variety of tasks, competitive wages, and feedback from the community. Views on full-time employment are mixed—some would be interested, while others prefer to remain part-time.

Key Themes

- **Strengths:** Maintenance staff appreciate the variety and challenges of outdoor work, feel supported by strong teamwork and communication, are motivated by positive community feedback, and value the department's proactive equipment management and safety practices.



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- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - **Maintenance & Facilities:** Need improvements at McCloud Nature Park barn (comfort, usability, insulation). More attention to small maintenance items.
 - **Communication & Leadership:** Conflicting direction noted at times. Desire for clearer grievance outlets and consistent communication related to daily task directives.
- **Equipment Needs:** Staff expressed strong satisfaction with the equipment and tools currently available, noting only a few items for consideration in next year's budget: a hand auger, a backhoe or excavator/scooping attachment, and a transition to all diesel mowers to improve fueling efficiency.
- **Training & Certification:** Most staff reported no immediate training needs beyond the general sessions they attend annually, though some expressed interest in heavy equipment training and aquatic treatment certification.
- **Growth & Staffing:** There were no immediate concerns with staffing in correlation with trail and park expansion. Overall expansion was viewed positively. There was an emphasis on balancing growth with preservation of the park's natural character.
- **Amenities Suggestions:** The Maintenance staff were prompted to put on their park user hats and express what amenities they would like to see in the future of HCP&R. These amenities consisted of:
 - Dog park to address pet issues
 - More trails across all parks
 - Wedding venue or covered bridge
 - Outdoor exercise equipment at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park
 - Disc golf course at McCloud Nature Park
 - Maintain natural habitats as a defining feature

Conclusion

Maintenance staff are proud of their contributions and value the department's leadership and culture. Addressing facility upgrades, select equipment needs, and communication improvements will enhance daily operations. Staff support thoughtful growth that balances new amenities with the preservation of the parks' natural character.



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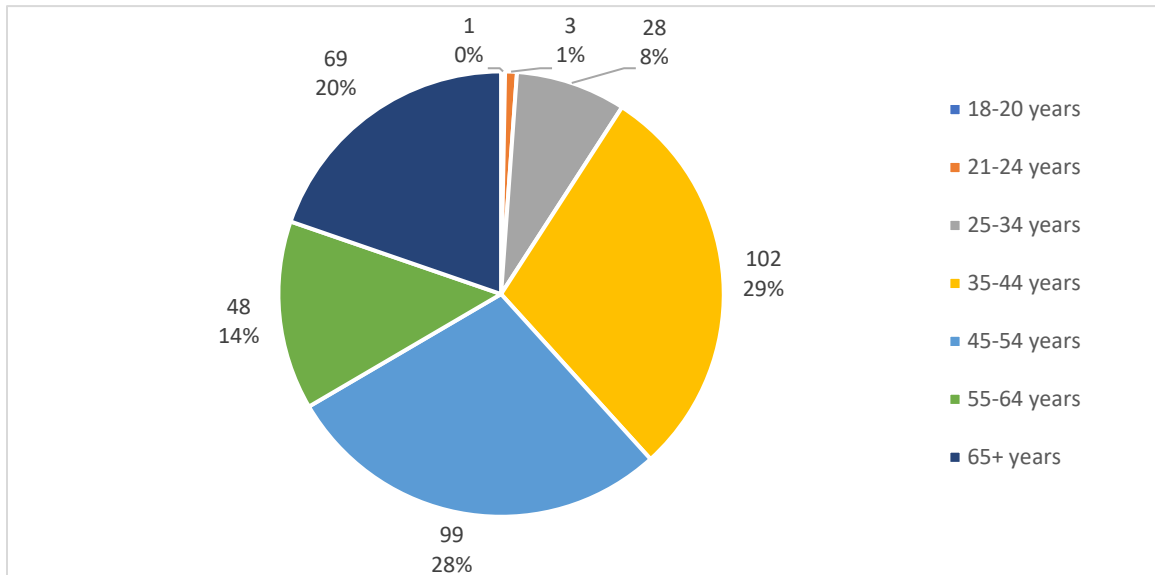
HCP&R Survey (Random Sample)

HCP&R recreated the online survey used by HWC Engineering. The survey was promoted through three email blasts, in *The Republican* newspaper, and on social media platforms. The survey was made available from the middle of January 2026 through early March of 2026. A total of 350 responses were received.

These are the responses:

Q1. Which category below includes your age?

Answer Choices	Responses
18-20 years	1
21-24 years	3
25-34 years	28
35-44 years	102
45-54 years	99
55-64 years	48
65+ years	69
TOTAL	350





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Q2. In which zip code do you live?

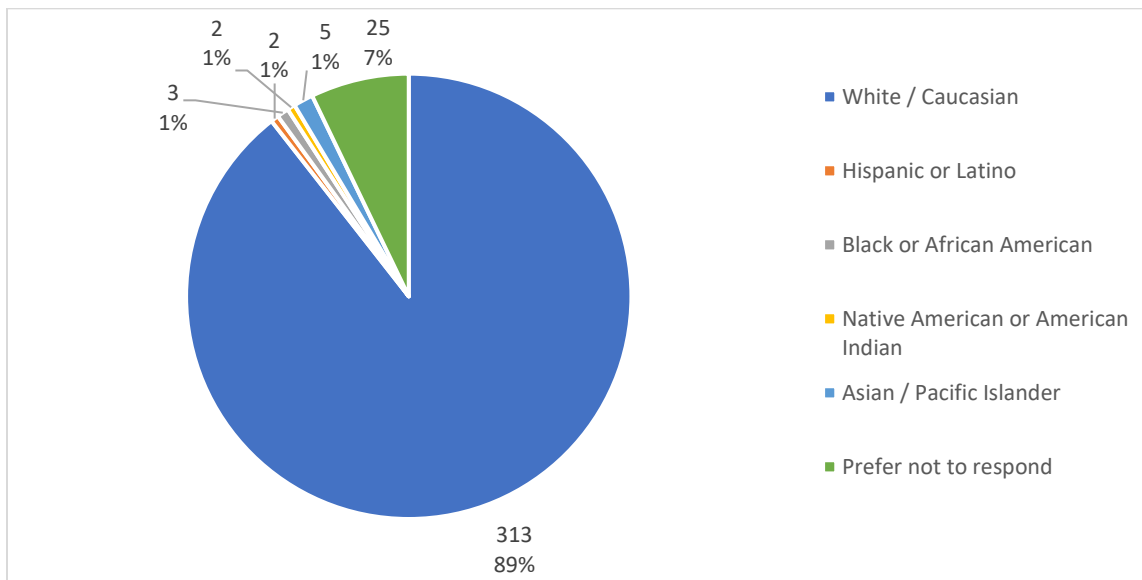
Answer Choices	Responses	
	Number	Pct.
46103 (Amo)	0	0.0%
46123 (Avon)	73	20.9%
46118 (Belleville/Clayton)	18	5.1%
46112 (Brownsburg)	50	14.3%
46113 (Camby)	1	0.3%
46121 (Coatesville)	5	1.4%
46122 (Danville)	58	16.6%
46147 (Jamestown)	0	0.0%
46149 (Lizton)	4	1.1%
46165 (North Salem)	5	1.4%
46167 (Pittsboro)	13	3.7%
46168 (Plainfield)	66	18.9%
46180 (Stilesville)	2	0.6%
46032	1	0.3%
46052	2	0.6%
46075	1	0.3%
46105	1	0.3%
46120	2	0.6%
46128	1	0.3%
46134	0	0.0%
46135	2	0.6%
46151	1	0.3%
46157	2	0.6%
46158	4	1.1%
46172	2	0.6%
46178	0	0.0%
46210	0	0.0%
46214	2	0.6%
46221	1	0.3%
46224	1	0.3%
46227	2	0.6%
46228	1	0.3%
46231	4	1.1%
46234	14	4.0%
46241	1	0.3%
46254	2	0.6%
46256	1	0.3%
47041	1	0.3%
47834	1	0.3%
47905	0	0.0%
47933	4	1.1%
47949	1	0.3%
TOTAL	350	100.0%



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Q3. What race/ethnicity best describes you?

Answer Choices	Responses
White / Caucasian	313
Hispanic or Latino	2
Black or African American	3
Native American or American Indian	2
Asian / Pacific Islander	5
Prefer not to respond	25
TOTAL	350

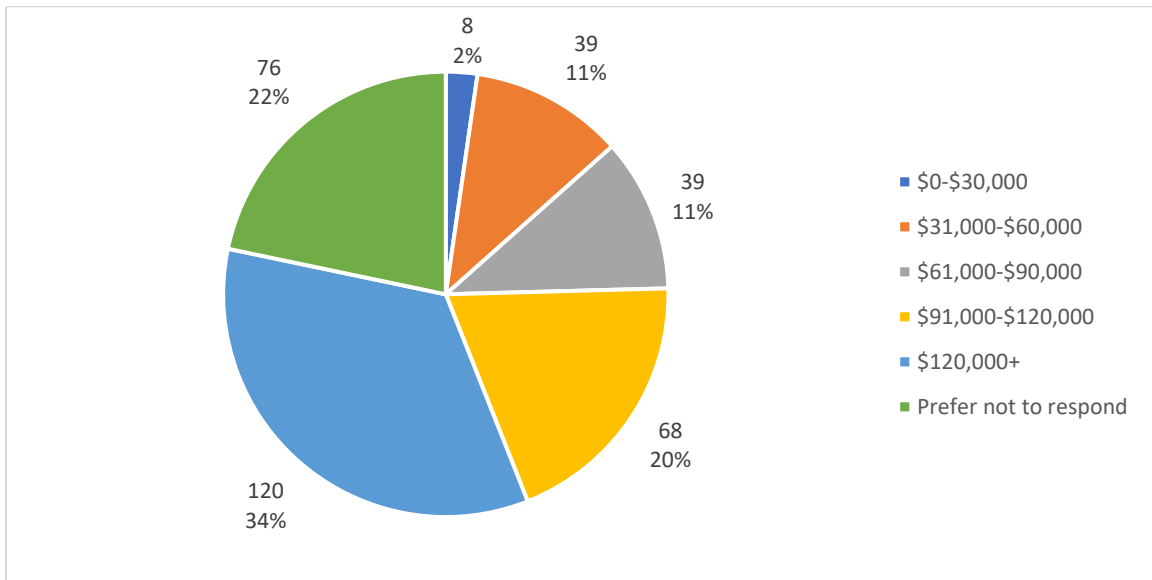




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Q4. What is your total household income?

Answer Choices	Responses
\$0-\$30,000	8
\$31,000-\$60,000	39
\$61,000-\$90,000	39
\$91,000-\$120,000	68
\$120,000+	120
Prefer not to respond	76
TOTAL	350

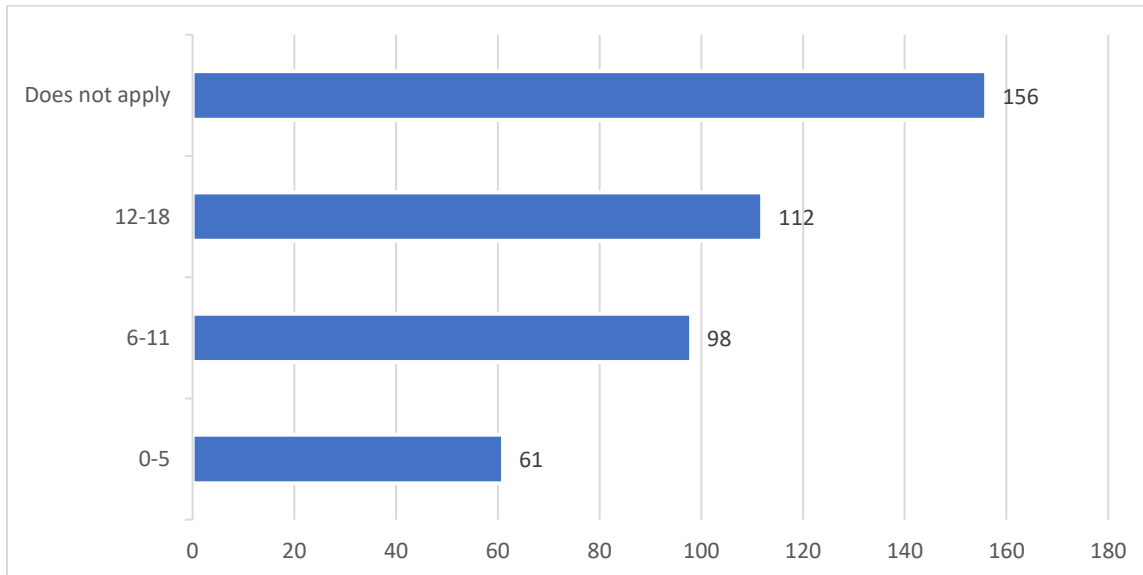




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Q5. If you have children, how old are they? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
0-5	61
6-11	98
12-18	112
Does not apply	156
TOTAL	427

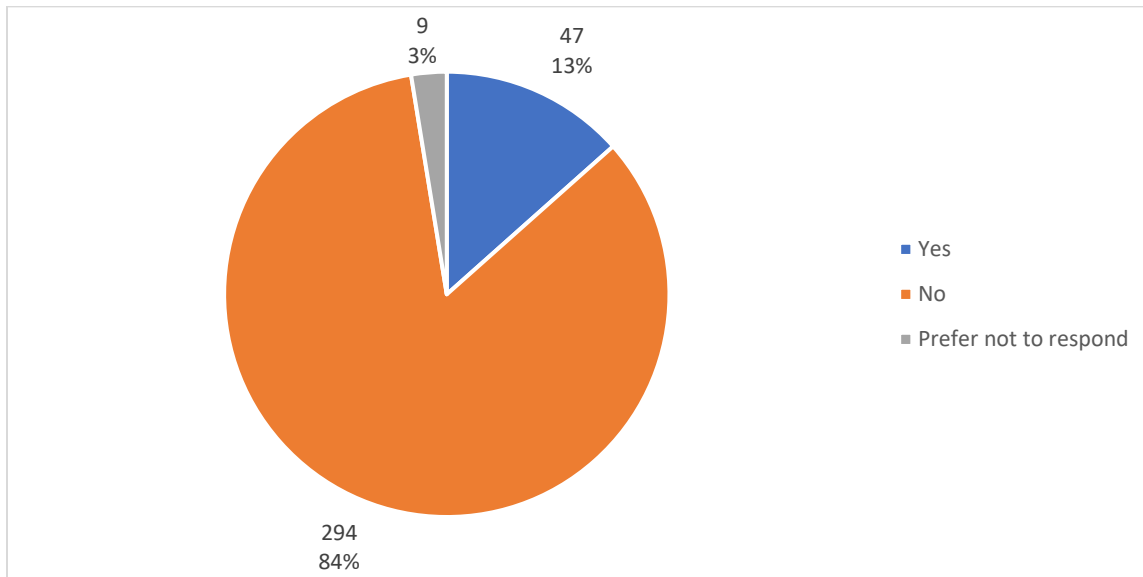




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Q6. Do any members of your family have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	47
No	294
Prefer not to respond	9
TOTAL	350

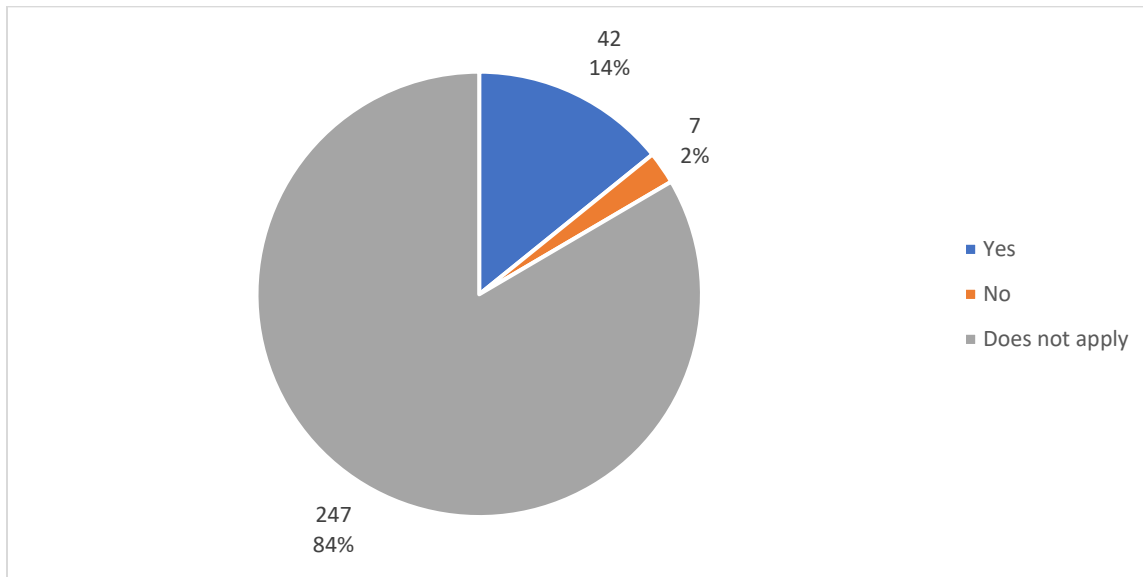




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Q7. If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, do you feel that the park facilities are doing a good job of accommodating your family with disabilities?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	42
No	7
Does not apply	247
TOTAL	296





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Q8. If you answered 'no' to Q7, how can the parks better accommodate your family with disabilities?

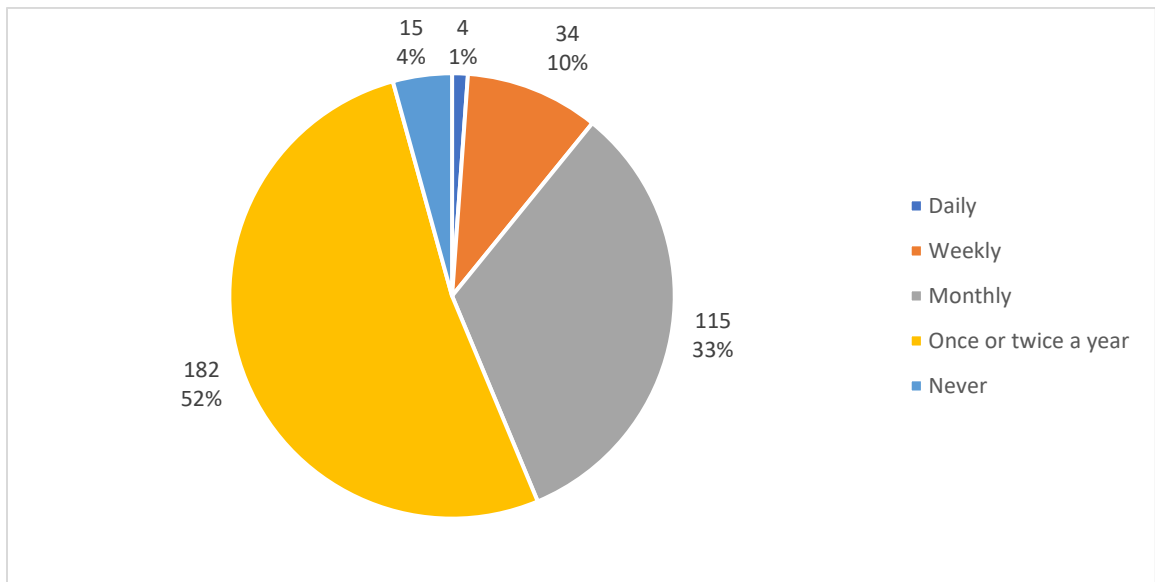
- More help for those with the mental disabilities
- More disability devices similar to the ones already on hand.
- Better accessibility including access to bathrooms
- Child is blind ??
- For younger children, we need more playgrounds specifically designed to integrate play without the need of assistance for children in wheelchairs
- Staff needs to be better educated to work and be mindful of differently abled individuals
- My son is visually impaired, maybe those large binocular mounts
- My cousin is a special olympics champion. They requested a community center with accessible entry to gather and play sports. One where they can hand out and have seating/options. Remediation efforts should occur upstream by the steel mill and all 3 surrounding watersheds to mitigate heavy metal toxicity and diminish onset of disabilities.
- Have rec center employees park away from doors
- It would be nice to have some paved trails for wheelchairs and those who have difficulty walking on uneven surfaces.
- Yellow lines on the edge of walkway, steps, and any place where the terrain changes from solid to soft for visual impaired.
- I feel there should be gated areas for children with autism and more disability play equipment



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Q9. How often do you use the county park facilities?

Answer Choices	Responses
Daily	4
Weekly	34
Monthly	115
Once or twice a year	182
Never	15
TOTAL	350

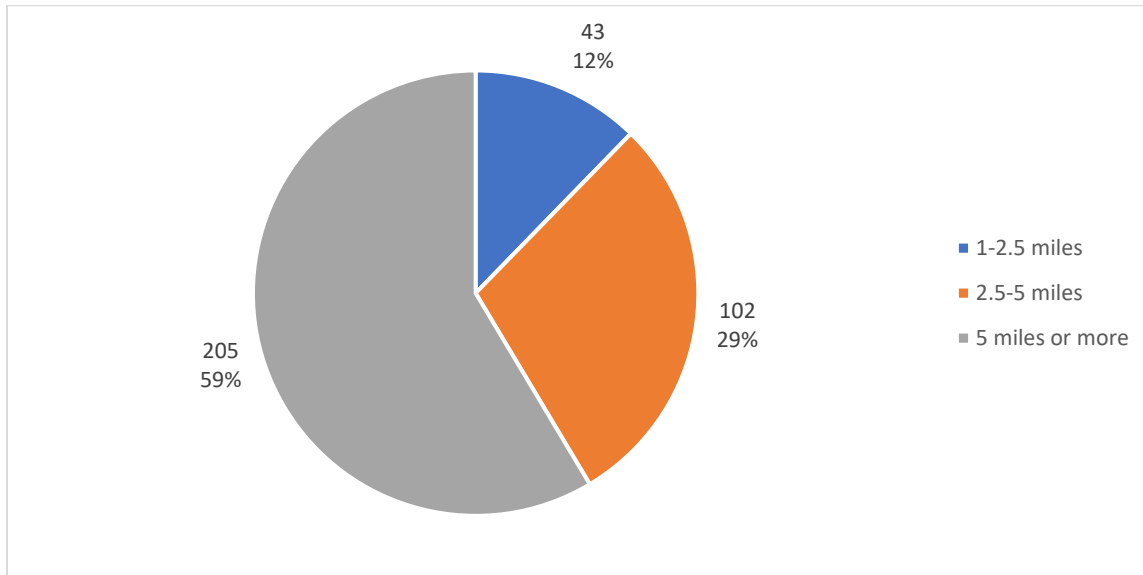




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Q10. How close do you live to the nearest county park?

Answer Choices	Responses		
	HWC	HCP&R	Combined
1-2.5 miles	16	43	59
2.5-5 miles	31	102	133
5 miles or more	37	205	242
TOTAL	84	350	434

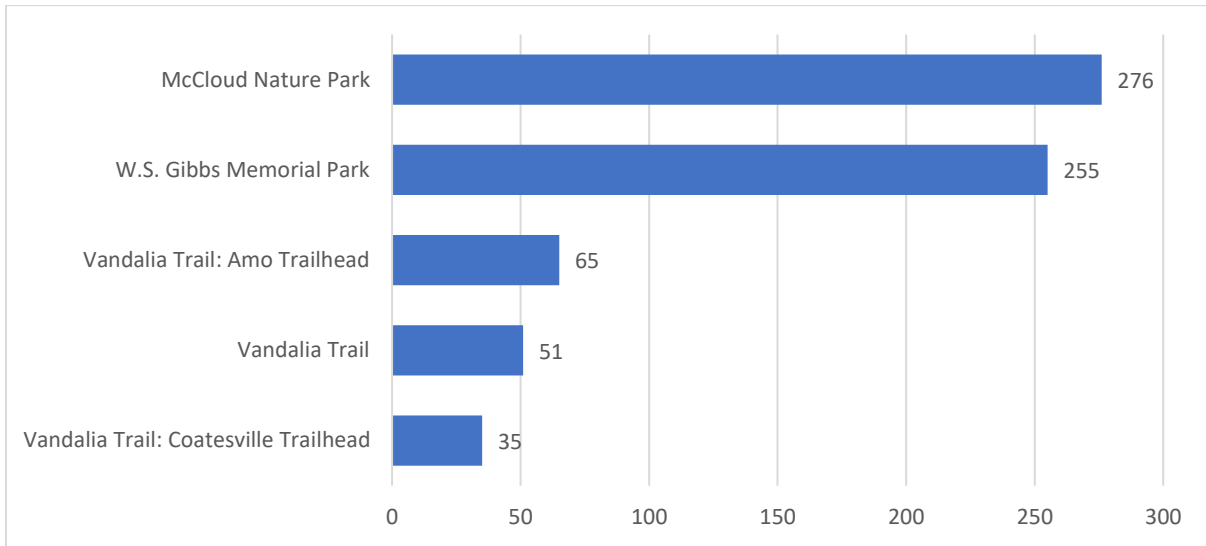




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Q11. Which Hendricks County Parks & Recreation facilities do you use? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Vandalia Trail: Coatesville Trailhead	35
Vandalia Trail	51
Vandalia Trail: Amo Trailhead	65
W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	255
McCloud Nature Park	276
TOTAL	682

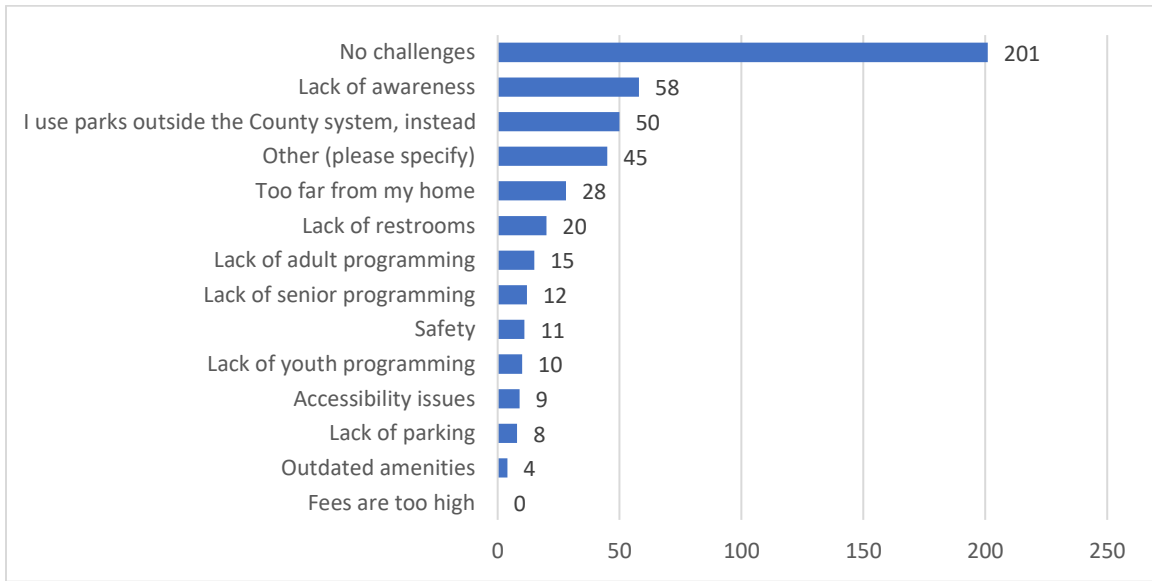




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Q12. Are there any challenges that keep you from using our park facilities? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Fees are too high	0
Outdated amenities	4
Lack of parking	8
Accessibility issues	9
Lack of youth programming	10
Safety	11
Lack of senior programming	12
Lack of adult programming	15
Lack of restrooms	20
Too far from my home	28
I use parks outside the County system, instead	50
Lack of awareness	58
Other (please specify)	45
No challenges	201
TOTAL	471





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- Distance
- Distance
- Not enough lights or trails,
- More interested in class activities than social events
- I like the programming for my grandchildren and take them when I can. We live a little far but are willing to travel.
- Primitive Camping options
- Unless something has changed, access to bathrooms and water fountains year round is what prevents us from visiting.
- we visit many different parks
- There are no challenging hiking trails
- Too far away
- Work schedule
- Vandalia Trail in Plainfield
- Gibbs is not connected to the Plainfield Trail system
- Need paved walking / running trails at Gibbs
- Would be great to have more primitive camping options.
- No time
- The bees at Gibbs are overwhelming in the summer and I am allergic. We avoid this park during peak bee activity, can't have Mom going into anaphylaxis with the kids alone at the park.
- we saw a decline in the quality of homeschool classes after Sarah the Naturalist left and haven't been back as often since. I have heard they have since improved but have yet to attend again
- Distance - there are other parks closer
- Distance from home
- Too far
- Lack of benches in top section of McCloud, like the section after the bridge. At least one of the benches or tables has been taken away.
- More stuff for kids and restrooms. It has been awhile since we have been there. It may be different now.
- Distance
- Too far.
- I use the horse trails at the Vandalia and wish there was safer crossing of the creek for horses.
- Track not fully paved
- Need more places to rest like park benches or picnic tables.
- I am right on the border of Marion and Hendricks, it is just really far away from us
- McCloud NP is further away from my residence which makes it difficult to visit regularly. There really aren't many programming opportunities available at Gibbs Park during the colder months.
- I tend to use parks that are closer to our house more often.
- Time :)
- Travel distance
- live far away



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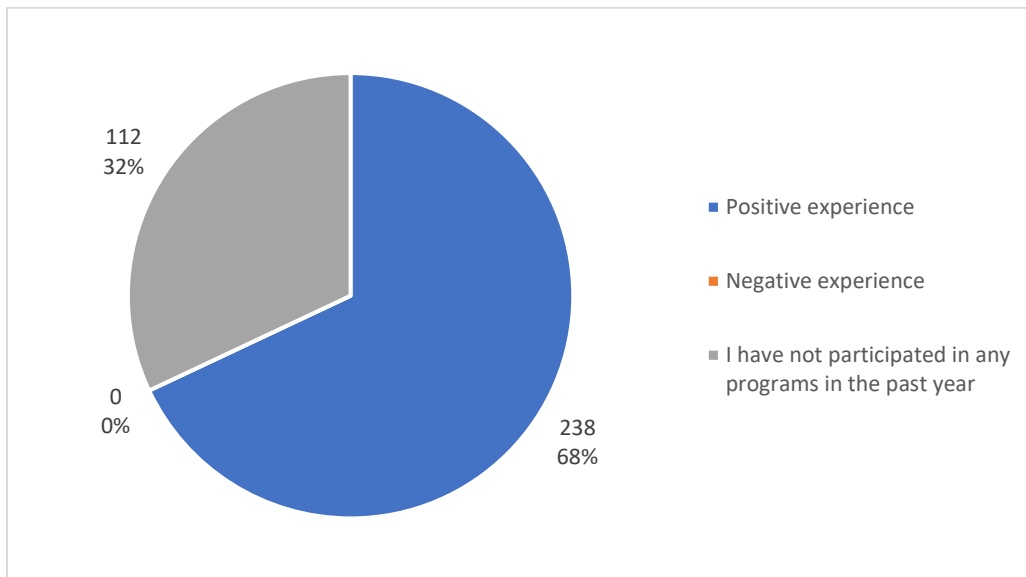
- I am a runner and the parks are too far to run TO... so I have to drive there to run. I like to be able to run FROM my house so the distance is a factor. nothing against the park
- Usually use Pecar and Washington Township Park and Avon Town Hall Park
- Distance from me & better options closer (Eagle Creek)
- Distance from my home.
- to far away
- Time. Half an hour to get to the park, time to participate/be active while there, then half an hour home.
- The distance from my home and poor cell phone reception in the area.
- Little too far
- Mosquitoes are terrible at McCloud's in the summer. I also wish programs would consider large families and offer a family rate so paying for numerous children to participate in programs isn't outrageous.
- Parks in Plainfield have more to offer
- Use Arbuckle and Williams in Brownsburg
- Distance and time constraints in my schedule
- Not easy access from my home
- McCloud is a further drive from where we live and while it's a great park, we don't find it's worth the drive.
- I use Echo Hollow or Hummel since I am in Plainfield.
- time and location



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Q13. Please rate your overall experience with Hendricks County Parks & Recreation programs or special events in the past year.

Answer Choices	Responses
Positive experience	238
Negative experience	0
I have not participated in any programs in the past year	112
TOTAL	350





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Q14. If you've had a negative experience with our programs and/or special events in the past year, we apologize! Please tell us what happened so that we can fix it.

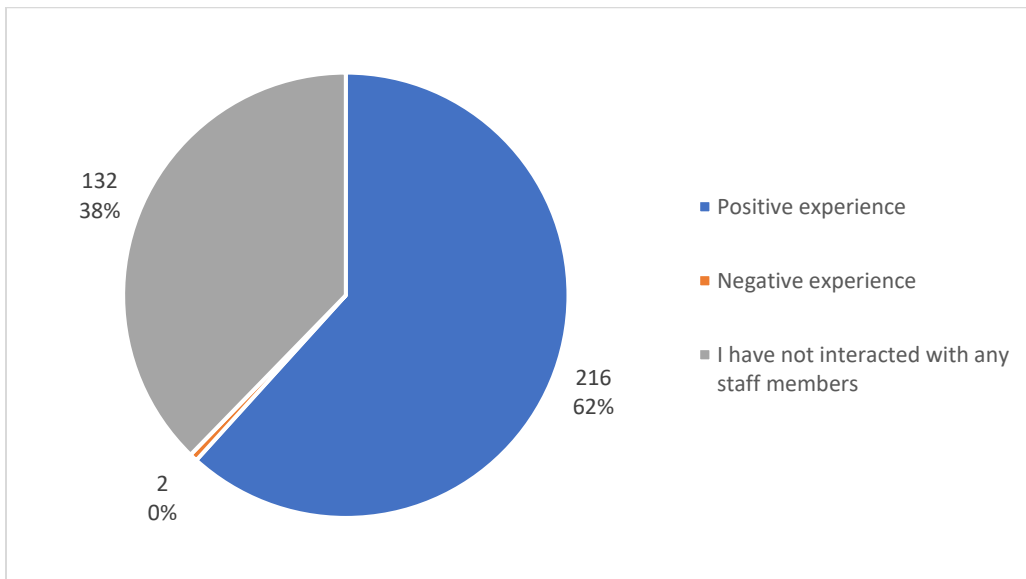
- When we did have a negative experience it was because the depth of information lessened in the homeschool classes, the hands-on activities weren't engaging, and the staff was less skilled in working with children and teaching. Sarah the Naturalist taught in a way that gave my children something more than what we were learning at home or enriched it and after that, the successors did not and it was not worth our money or time. Again, I haven't tried out a class in a while since, so maybe this does not apply anymore. Homeschool Eco series classes with Sarah was what brought us to McCloud most frequently.
- Parking at Ellis during / near Concert series is awful. Golf carts are a problem as they don't follow road laws and think they own the place. [not an HCP&R park]
- A couple times felt uncomfortable walking alone on the trail
- Was not aware of programs available.



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Q15. Please rate your overall experience with Hendricks County Parks & Recreation staff in the past year.

Answer Choices	Responses
Positive experience	216
Negative experience	2
I have not interacted with any staff members	132
TOTAL	350





Q16. If you've had a particularly positive experience that you'd like to share with us, we'd love to hear it, along with the employees involved!

- I love all the staff
- All staff members that I've had experiences with include the superintendent, naturalist, and maintenance staff. They are all wonderful, engaging, knowledgeable, caring, and supportive people. One of the finest collective group of staff that I've engaged within a parks system. Always willing to put forth any extra effort to make programs and experiences for the public as enjoyable as possible.
- Gibbs park was just built a few years ago right down the street so that is so exciting to see everybody using that. It's also great that they gave us a sledding hill. I also love to go to McCloud Park and help volunteer you guys have some great programs during Easter and throughout the year that I love to participate in and the staff is always very friendly and helpful.
- McCloud Nature Park staff has been warm and welcoming every time I go. Very informative and willing to take their time with questions, displays or demonstrations. I have brought my children, multiple GS troops and now my grandchildren . I live on the southside of Indianapolis and will travel to Hendrick's parks before the ones closer to me.
- My son did a lot of the summer day camps and loved them. The staff was very friendly and they remember who he is from the previous year. Made me happy that they remembered him and enjoyed seeing him. They also did a great job at teaching him about tad poles and different animals. We love the different programs.
- Everyone is great! I especially appreciate the guys out there mowing, clearing snow, creating new trails and paths and building new structures. These parks are all really taking shape! Look forward to seeing what the guys will do next!
- I started doing nature walks with my four year old this summer. We were new to exploring one side of the Gibbs Memorial Park and a staff member showed us the trail routes and kept it within our mile walk we liked to take!
- July 13, 2024 - WS Gibbs Memorial Park.... My husband, 8 year old kiddo & myself attended a 'Nature Tie Dye' event. The gal who set it up and ran the workshop was very kind, informative, organized and helpful.
- I attended several craft programs at McCloud nature park, and I have found the naturalists to be extremely knowledgeable, friendly, and full of creative ideas. Attending and chatting is always a pleasure!
- We participated in various day camps over the summer in 2024 and 2025 with Alex and Ryan I believe their names were. We always had a great time and found the value worth the price.
- My mother and I loved the wreath making at McCloud. We were a bit late this year and the staff was so kind, accommodating, and helpful. They made it a wonderful experience.
- We attended a homeschool program, and both naturalists were very patient, kind, and informative with the children (even though not all the children were cooperating.)
- Top notch employees. Always helpful. Always friendly. Besides using your parks, I also vend occasionally at markets. Again, always a positive wonderful experience
- We love the programs provided for families and kids. Camps and events are always fun and educational. We also use Play World at the rec center and LOVE Teresa! [praise forwarded to Plainfield Parks & Recreation]



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- We love the maple sugar days and the pancake breakfast. Its a tradition for our family. I also took a photography class pre COVID that was great.
- We've gone to the candle making program at mccloud for the past 2 years and the employees have all been so wonderful!
- We love Pecar Park. We have camped there. They offer a great price and a great price to reserve the Nature Center. [praise forwarded to Washington Township Parks & Recreation]
- Love the playgrounds and hiking trails! Staff that I have been in contact with has always been helpful and friendly.
- I absolutely love candle making, and it was great I was allowed to bring my mother to share an experience!
- The staff at McClouds preschool program were great last summer. My granddaughters really enjoyed it.
- Wayne maintenance guy is amazing!!!! Plus all your program leaders for preschool are outstanding!
- The attendant at the nature center was very friendly and knowledgeable at McCloud nature park
- We've loved the tadpole times at McCloud as well as Fall Festival and all the staff involved!
- The mowers that mow between Amo and Coatesville always pause their mowing when I run by.
- I can't remember he two girls names but they are amazing at each program we've been to!
- The trail is such a great asset to the community. It helps with my fitness goals.
- The park is very nice and very clean plenty of shade and restrooms are clean .
- I don't remember any names, but the stargazing events at McCloud are awesome!
- Loved the class for Sassafras beads/necklaces. Lots of fun and informative.
- Staff at McCloud that interacts with the youth during events are amazing
- Ryan at mccloud nature park is fabulous! We look forward to her camps
- very helpful and very friendly. Acted like they enjoy what they do
- The naturalists at Mccloud have been great with my children.
- I attended a painting class at McCloud that was really fun.
- We really enjoyed the mystery trail with clues and history
- Miss Riley at Arbuckle for Little Sprouts is awesome! [praise forwarded to Brownsburg Parks & Recreation]
- Ladies running Christmas crafts are doing a good job
- The nature center at McCloud is always friendly
- Brownsburg parks remediation team are great [praise forwarded to Brownsburg Parks & Recreation]
- The employees are always kind and helpful.
- Friendly naturalists at the nature center
- Everyone has always been very friendly!
- knowledgeable and always friendly
- Enjoyed candle making at mccloud
- Enjoy the syrup days in McCloud
- Love the workshops at McCloud!
- Craft Workshop using flowers
- Amber Negerall is terrific [praise forwarded to Plainfield Parks & Recreation]
- Prairie maze is always fun



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- Loved the wreath class
- Always friendly staff



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Q17. If you've had a negative experience with our staff in the past year, we apologize! Please tell us what happened so that we can fix it.

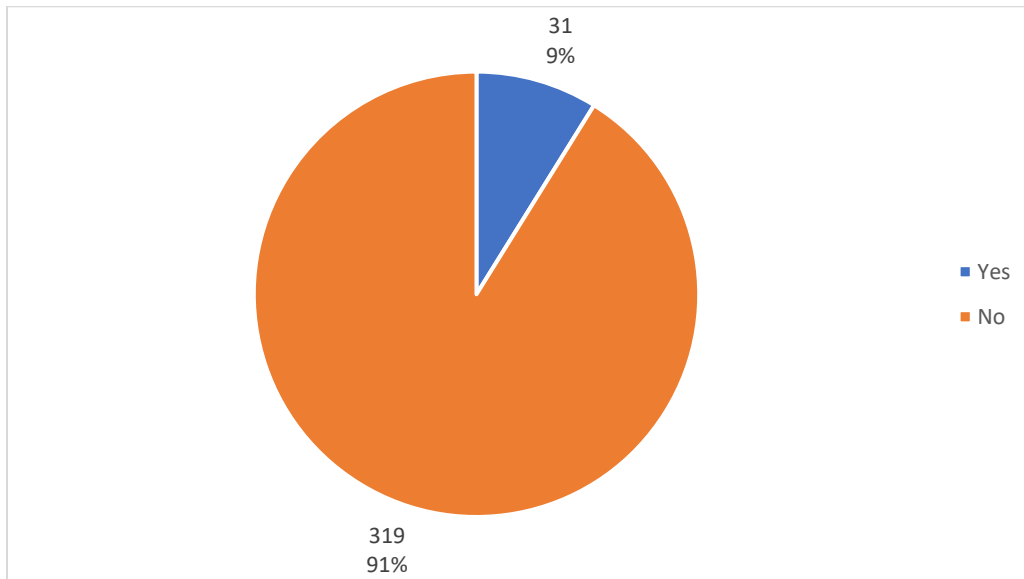
- The Aquatic Center said they found our towels and then they could not locate them. We were directed to go to Goodwill. We never found them. Many phone calls/interactions with staff at the Aquatic Center have left me and others I know with bad tastes in our mouths. We felt the staff were quite inhospitable. [not an HCP&R facility]
- Seems like they don't spray the trails. The kids had numerous bug bites by then of the night even with using OFF.
- There's no management at the b2b trail and is a corridor of invasive species [not an HCP&R property]
- I wish there was more affordable programs for special needs adults [this type of programming not currently offered by HCP&R]



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Q18. Have you volunteered with Hendricks County Parks & Recreation?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	31
No	319
TOTAL	350





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Q19. What volunteer opportunities would you like to see at Hendricks County Parks & Recreation? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Other	7
Cleaning	28
Greeting / welcoming desk	36
Facility improvements (painting, general maintenance, etc.)	50
Animal care (primarily reptiles, amphibians, and insects)	52
Prepare materials for programs and activities	57
Help with programs (day camps, field trips, fun runs, etc.)	72
Gardening	71
Invasive plant management	82
Tree planting	89
Trail cleanup	107
TOTAL	651





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- Blood donation campaign?
- Programming specifically designed for people in wheelchairs or with physical disabilities
- I could help with grant writing.
- Photography
- Na
- Bug spray the trails and the camp ground [HCP&R does not operate a campground]
- All these are good ideas.



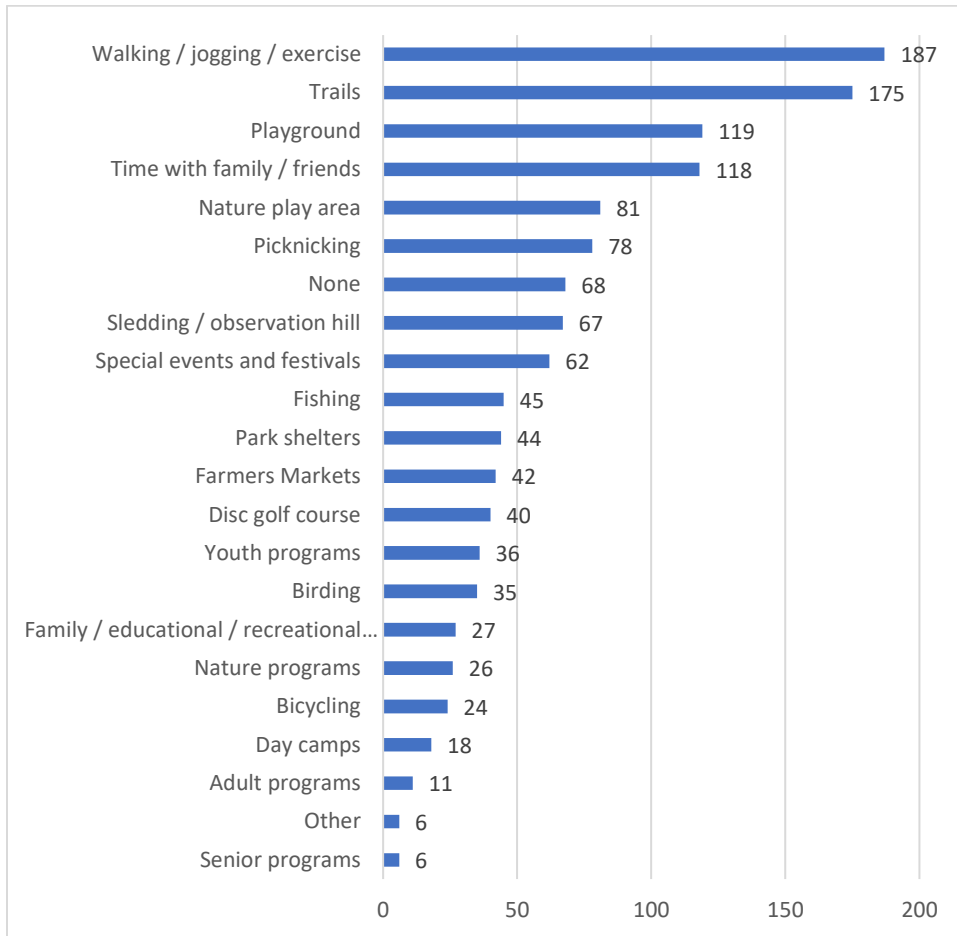
5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q20. What amenities or programs do you use or participate in at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Senior programs	6
Other	6
Adult programs	11
Day camps	18
Bicycling	24
Nature programs	26
Family / educational / recreational programming	27
Birding	35
Youth programs	36
Disc golf course	40
Farmers Markets	42
Park shelters	44
Fishing	45
Special events and festivals	62
Sledding / observation hill	67
None	68
Picknicking	78
Nature play area	81
Time with family / friends	118
Playground	119
Trails	175
Walking / jogging / exercise	187
TOTAL	1,315



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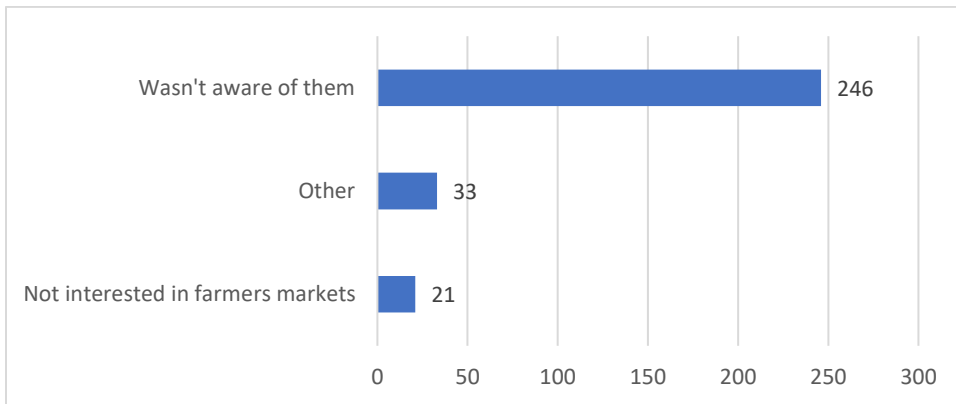
- Cross country practice
- Dog Walking!
- I have not been there yet but plan to go in 2026
- never been to this park
- we loved the Parket Market
- [question left blank]



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Q21. If you have never attended Farmer's Markets at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, why not?

Answer Choices	Responses
Not interested in farmers markets	21
Other	33
Wasn't aware of them	246
TOTAL	300



- Too far
- I heard about them but just didn't get a chance to attend this year (plus we go to other farmer's markets/belong to a CSA program)
- Time/dares not convenient for me
- distance to travel. there are other options closer
- Out of town
- Schedule conflit
- Didn't have time
- Other Farmer's Markets are closer
- Have Farmers market closer to me
- too far away but maybe i would when i retire and have more free time
- Was not aware of Farmers market
- Closer farmers markets.
- conflicts with kiddo sporting event schedule
- We have attended the markets in the past
- Didn't realize they had them, I will look for the schedule
- N/A
- I was not aware of them, and too far
- Location



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- Too far from me
- I live close to the Danville Square Farmer's Market and keep meaning to get to Gibbs but this is closer.
- Not nearby
- I never know about them until it's too late to work it into my schedule.
- On a weekend, which is a busy time for me
- there is no fresh farm food,. Sept day overlaps with Danville Fair on the Square
- I dont live very close to it
- Distance to Avon
- I was unaware!
- I didn't know about the market
- Time and distance
- Vendor list looked like a lot of crafts and I don't need that.
- I have not attended because I just haven't made it to one yet.
- I attend ones closer to where we live
- Forget about it
- Timing did not work



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Q22. If you HAVE attended Farmer's Markets at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, what did you think of the experience?

- Great!
- The vendors that were there the time I went were very low quality. It felt more like low class junk being sold. It would be nice if it was really a farmers market or true craft market where things were hand made
- Overall, it's a great program, but could use some diversity in vendors and products available to purchase.
- It would be great to set up food over by the wooden playground and keep the center area for vendors.
- Overall positive. Would like to see more fresh produce and food trucks and less 3D print vendors.
- It was fine but small. The farmers market in Danville meet's my same needs and closer to home
- Good overall experience. Would like more food options and more variety of vendors.
- Positive but would like more vendors and for there to be produce
- it was a great experience. organizer were great and helpful
- I like it and the vendors. I hope you all can expand it.
- terrible vendors - who wants crafts at a Farmer market
- It was a lovely experience, and I would go again.
- Great time. Nice to have the restrooms now.
- It's a beautiful space for a Farmers market.
- We enjoyed it. You could have more vendors.
- Nice need more of them regularly scheduled
- I thought they did a really good job.
- Im a vendor at them and it's awesome
- Great! Loved the shaded area
- it was a positive experience
- Needs more advertisement
- It was small but nice.
- Nice for a small start
- Not applicable
- We loved it!
- Enjoyed it.
- Very good
- Wonderful
- Loved it!
- Great!!
- Great
- Nice!
- Fine



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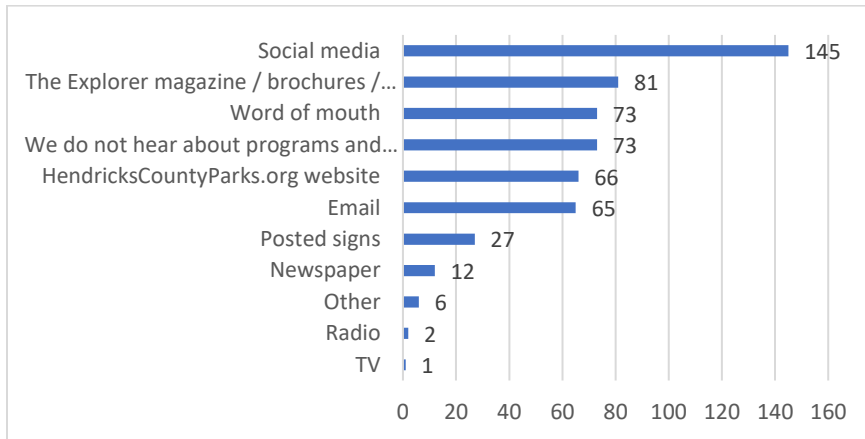
- Fun
- N/A
- NA



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q23. How do you find out about park programs and events at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
TV	1
Radio	2
Other	6
Newspaper	12
Posted signs	27
Email	65
We do not hear about programs and events	73
HendricksCountyParks.org website	66
Word of mouth	73
The Explorer magazine / brochures / flyers	81
Social media	145
TOTAL	551



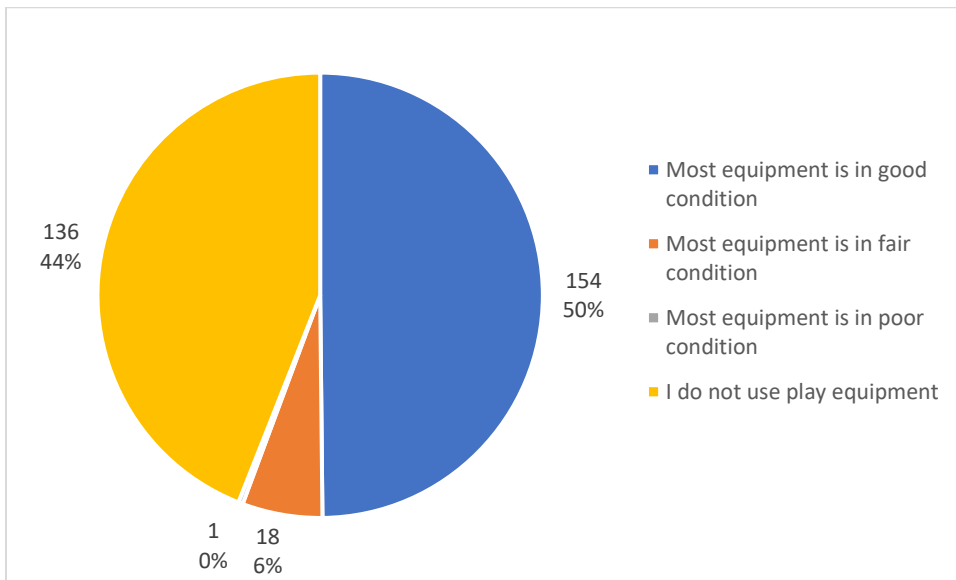
- Plainfield Christian Church Preschool
- Phil Lawson [HCP&R employee]
- Hendricks County Insider
- I live next door to the park, so I see the postings when I walk
- I, don't
- Do not recall



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q24. Please rate the overall condition of the play equipment at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most equipment is in good condition	154
Most equipment is in fair condition	18
Most equipment is in poor condition	1
I do not use play equipment	136
TOTAL	309



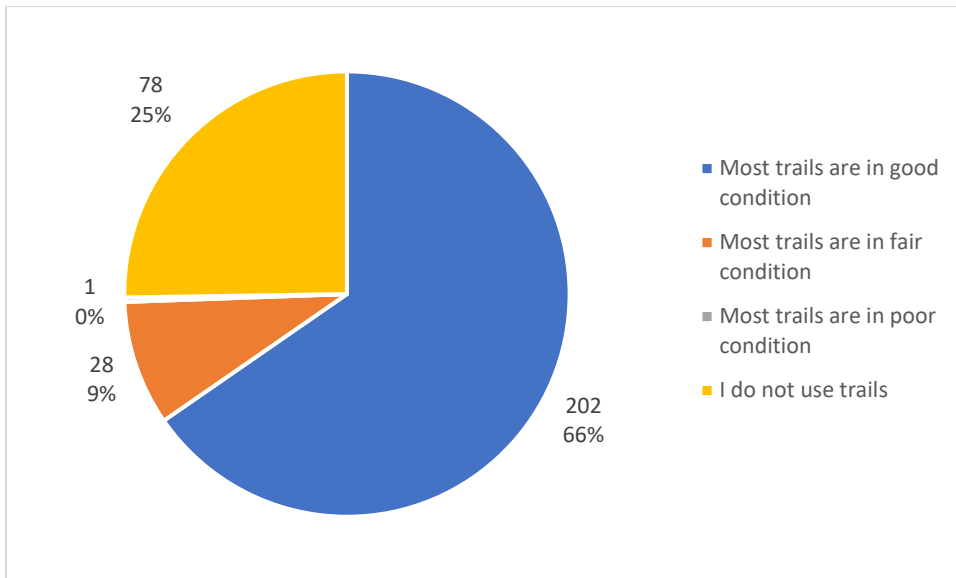
- Don't know
- There can be lots of wasps on playground equipment
- The wasp are so bad that we had to leave this summer.
- no comment
- Haven't been there
- although it has been over a year since we were on the plaground
- N/A
- The wood attracted a lot of wasps



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Q25. Please rate the overall condition of the trails at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most trails are in good condition	202
Most trails are in fair condition	28
Most trails are in poor condition	1
I do not use trails	78
TOTAL	309



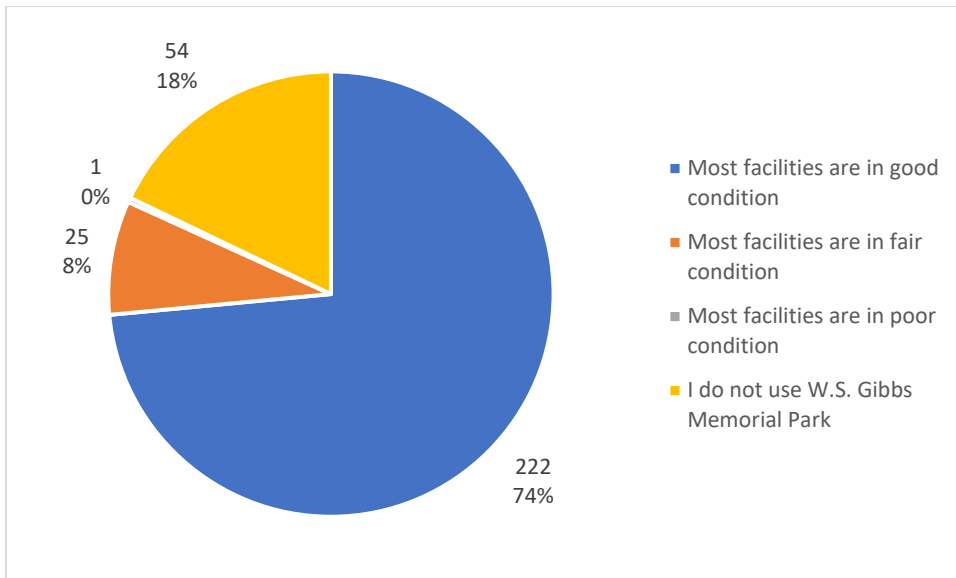
- Unknown
- Have not been on them this year
- Have not yet used them but would like to
- I haven't used the trails in the last year
- N/A
- Would like to see them paved so you can easily walk / run
- The trails we have seen look well maintained



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q26. Please rate the overall condition of W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most facilities are in good condition	222
Most facilities are in fair condition	25
Most facilities are in poor condition	1
I do not use W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	54
TOTAL	302



- Unknown
- Have not yet used it but would like to
- unsure if I have seen any restroom facilities or other buildings, we have stayed outside. I like more natural design of the playground
- I wish it had restrooms
- Last time I was there and needed the facilities; they weren't open, but being worked on
- I have not used the facilities
- N/A



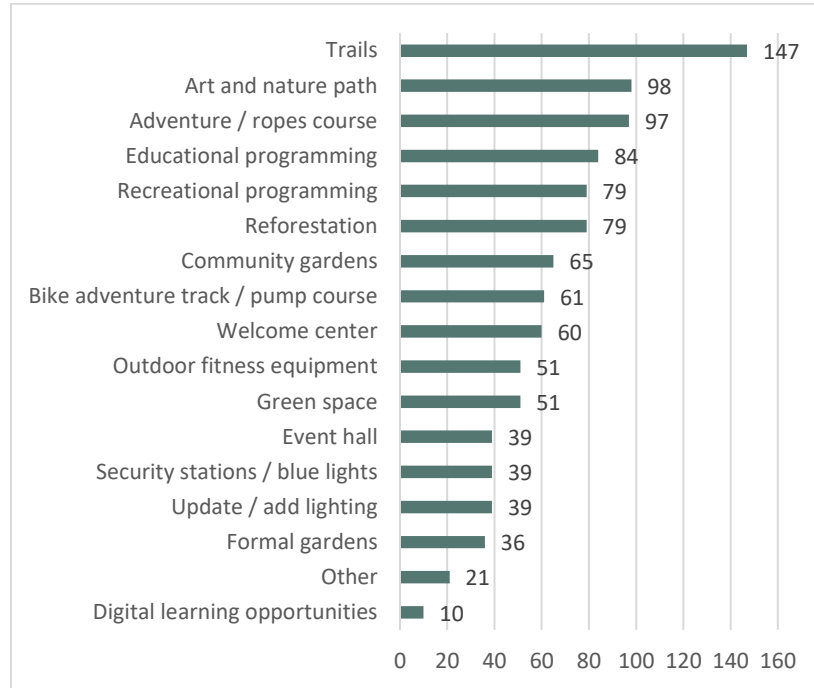
5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q27. Which of the following amenities should Hendricks County Parks & Recreation prioritize adding to W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park over the next 5 years? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Digital learning opportunities	10
Other	21
Formal gardens	36
Update / add lighting	39
Security stations / blue lights	39
Event hall	39
Green space	51
Outdoor fitness equipment	51
Welcome center	60
Bike adventure track / pump course	61
Community gardens	65
Reforestation	79
Recreational programming	79
Educational programming	84
Adventure / ropes course	97
Art and nature path	98
Trails	147
TOTAL	1,056



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- Concrete pad for sports use or open field for event space or sports space
- Primitive camping options
- Camping elective
- Primitive camping spaces.
- native pollinator gardens
- Better signage
- Native plant identification and education. Same for pollinators.
- Restrooms by play area
- Artificial snow and add tubing like Kotewei Run in Noblesville.
- Would love an outdoor ice skating area in Hendricks county or rock climbing.
- Outdoor shooting range
- year round toilet facilities
- Maybe small event area inside for winter/wet weather for 50 to 80 people with kitchen. That is reasonably priced. In the colder months it is hard for our family to do get togethers due to the price of an event area.
- Add more trees. The summer sun is brutal there so we don't use it.
- Bluebird house trail
- Is there a place to refill water bottles?
- not used
- camping



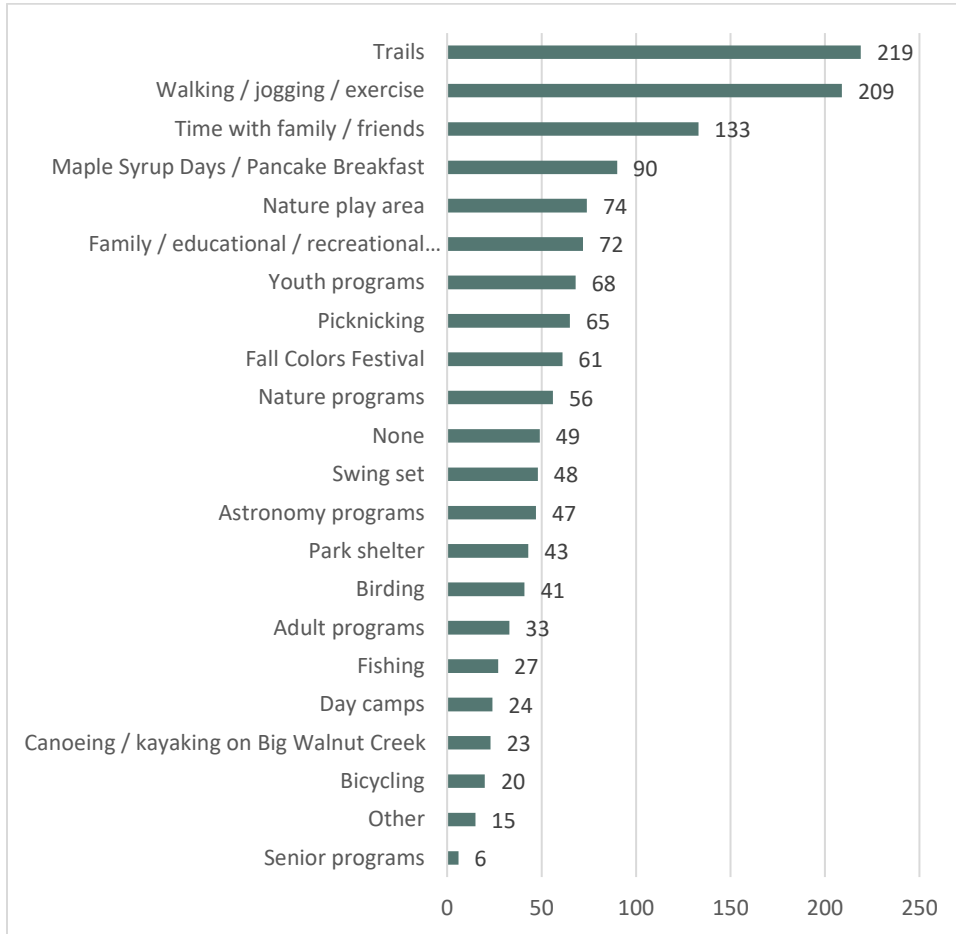
5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q28. What amenities or programs do you use or participate in at McCloud Nature Park? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Senior programs	6
Other	15
Bicycling	20
Canoeing / kayaking on Big Walnut Creek	23
Day camps	24
Fishing	27
Adult programs	33
Birding	41
Park shelter	43
Astronomy programs	47
Swing set	48
None	49
Nature programs	56
Fall Colors Festival	61
Picnicking	65
Youth programs	68
Family / educational / recreational programming	72
Nature play area	74
Maple Syrup Days / Pancake Breakfast	90
Time with family / friends	133
Walking / jogging / exercise	209
Trails	219
TOTAL	1,414



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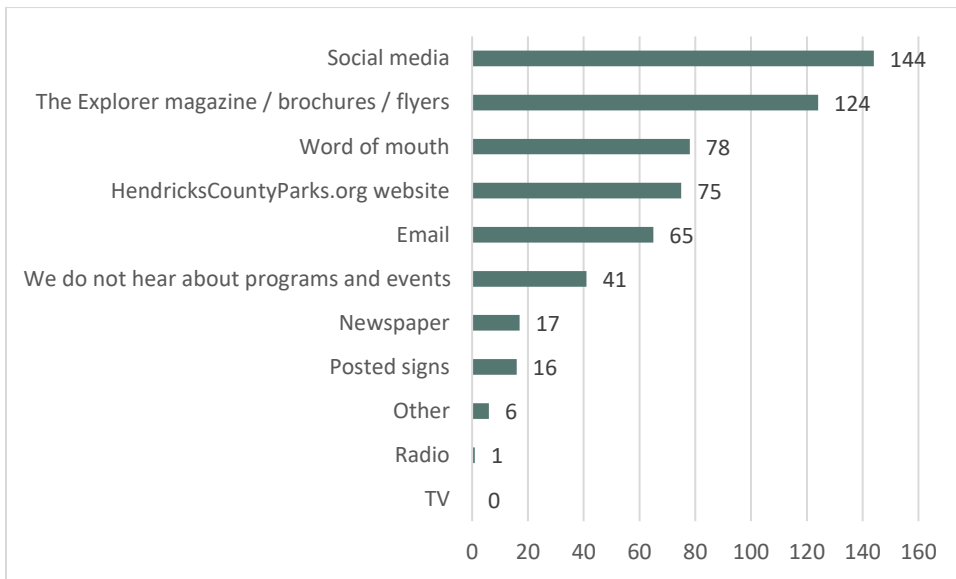
- Creek
- General creek use (walking and observing in the creek)
- Creek splash
- Fieldtrips
- Prairie grass maze
- Fall maze
- Volunteer
- Craft workshop with flowers
- Wreath craft class in Dec
- Did the wreath making event once, that was fun.
- playing in the creek
- Field maze



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Q29. How do you find out about park programs and events at McCloud Nature Park? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
TV	0
Radio	1
Other	6
Posted signs	16
Newspaper	17
We do not hear about programs and events	41
Email	65
HendricksCountyParks.org website	75
Word of mouth	78
The Explorer magazine / brochures / flyers	124
Social media	144
TOTAL	567



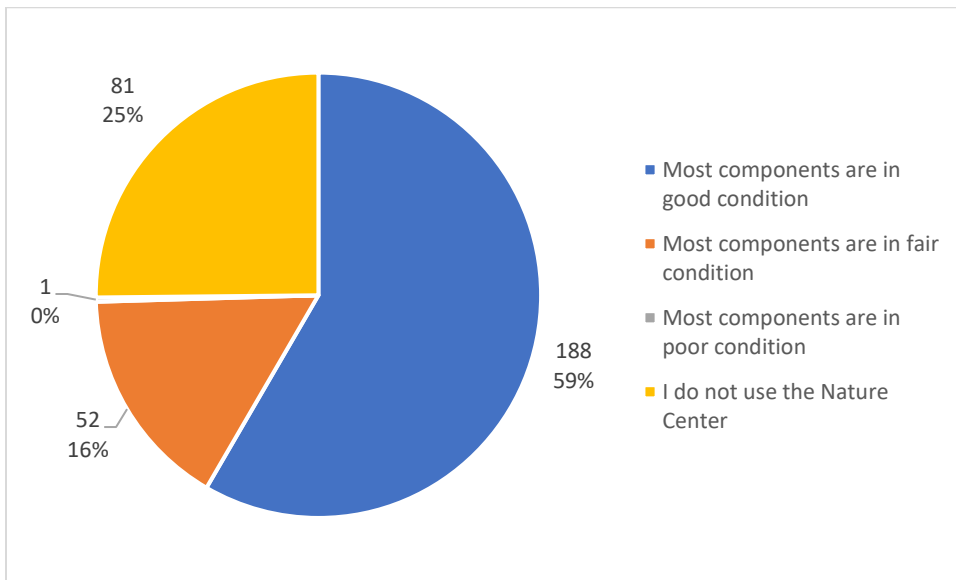
- Hendricks County Insider
- Google
- Homeschool community
- Visit Hendricks County (x2)
- Not used



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Q30. Please rate the overall condition of the Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center at McCloud Nature Park.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most components are in good condition	188
Most components are in fair condition	52
Most components are in poor condition	1
I do not use the Nature Center	81
TOTAL	322



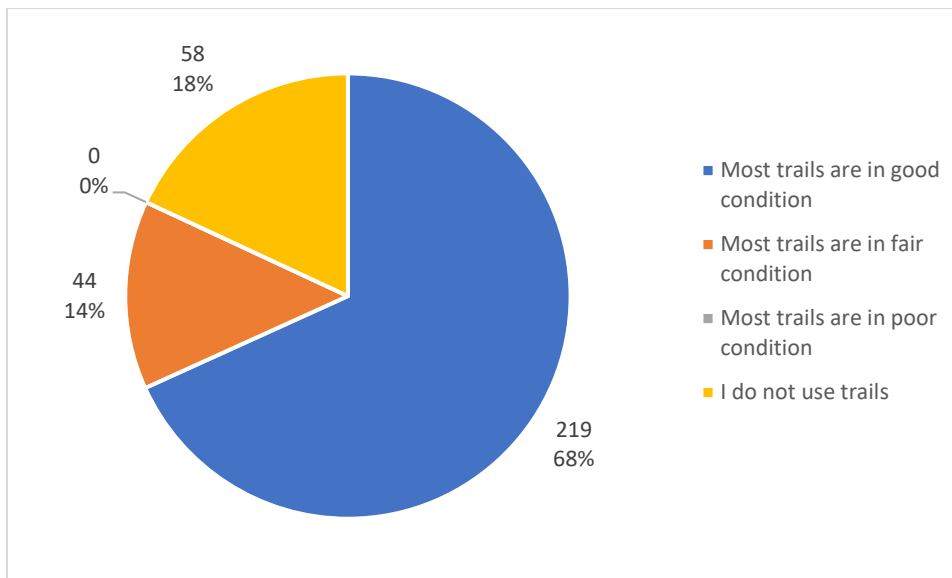
- Needs updated.
- The nature center should not double as an event space. An additional building would be nice for events and rentals.
- An additional event space is very much needed! Let the Nature Center be just a Nature Center. Use and open up the back space of the Nature Center to the public.
- Haven't been inside the facility in several years
- Some amenities like the beehouse were volunteer lead and the facilities have ceased to be operational
- not used
- It's closed too often.



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Q31. Please rate the overall condition of the trails at McCloud Nature Park.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most trails are in good condition	219
Most trails are in fair condition	44
Most trails are in poor condition	0
I do not use trails	58
TOTAL	321



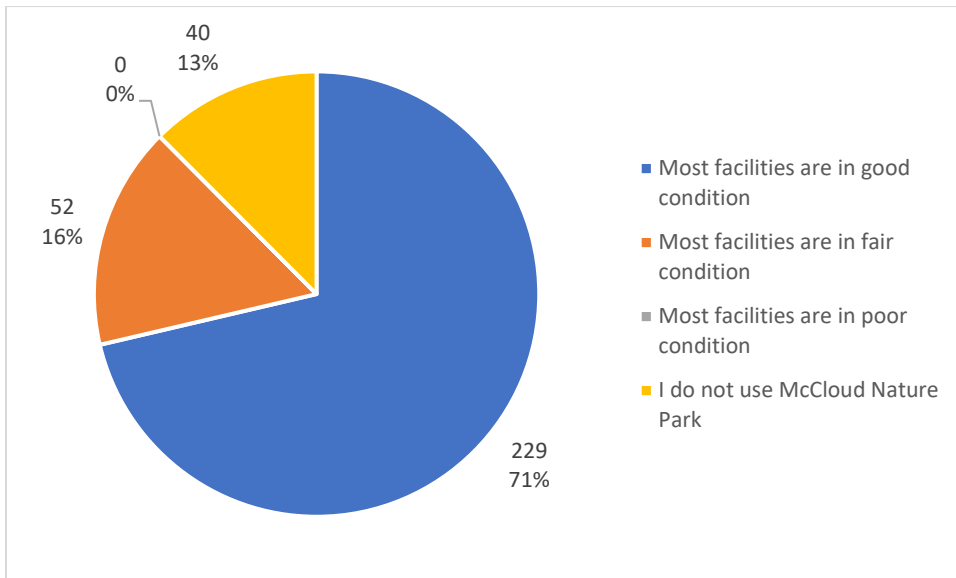
- Unknown
- Haven't been there
- Poor marking. Wish we knew was huge hill that ended no where so we had to climb back up it!
- I don't remember
- NA



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Q32. Please rate the overall condition of McCloud Nature Park.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most facilities are in good condition	229
Most facilities are in fair condition	52
Most facilities are in poor condition	0
I do not use McCloud Nature Park	40
TOTAL	321



- Hope to use the park soon. We generally forgot about it.
- not used
- Have not used other facilities



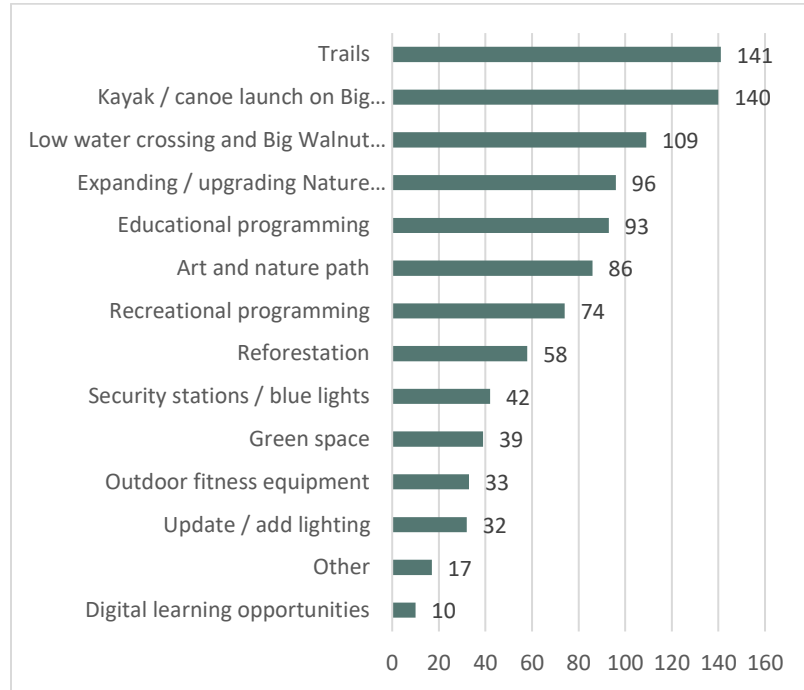
5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q33. Which of the following amenities should Hendricks County Parks & Recreation prioritize adding to McCloud Nature Park over the next 5 years? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Digital learning opportunities	10
Other	17
Update / add lighting	32
Outdoor fitness equipment	33
Green space	39
Security stations / blue lights	42
Reforestation	58
Recreational programming	74
Art and nature path	86
Educational programming	93
Expanding / upgrading Nature Center	96
Low water crossing and Big Walnut Creek access	109
Kayak / canoe launch on Big Walnut Creek	140
Trails	141
TOTAL	970



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- Repair bridges
- Electric camping
- Outdoor shooting range
- Canoe / kayak rentals
- No lighting enjoy the astronomy there.
- Connecting access to B&O trl
- Camping
- Anything homeschool related. Would love to see more outdoor activities, rock climbing, ice rink, kayaking, adventure course etc.
- Additional restroom location
- Mccloud would be such a great spot for some added equestrian trails
- More restrooms
- Beavers. The ecosystem could use beavers, and it would be a great educational opportunity for the community about the assets beavers provide as natural wildlife management.
- I will not go there, too far
- Not sure
- not used
- No additional amenities here. I love that this park is about being in nature. It's very peaceful! A lot of what is listed here would take away from the nature of McCloud.



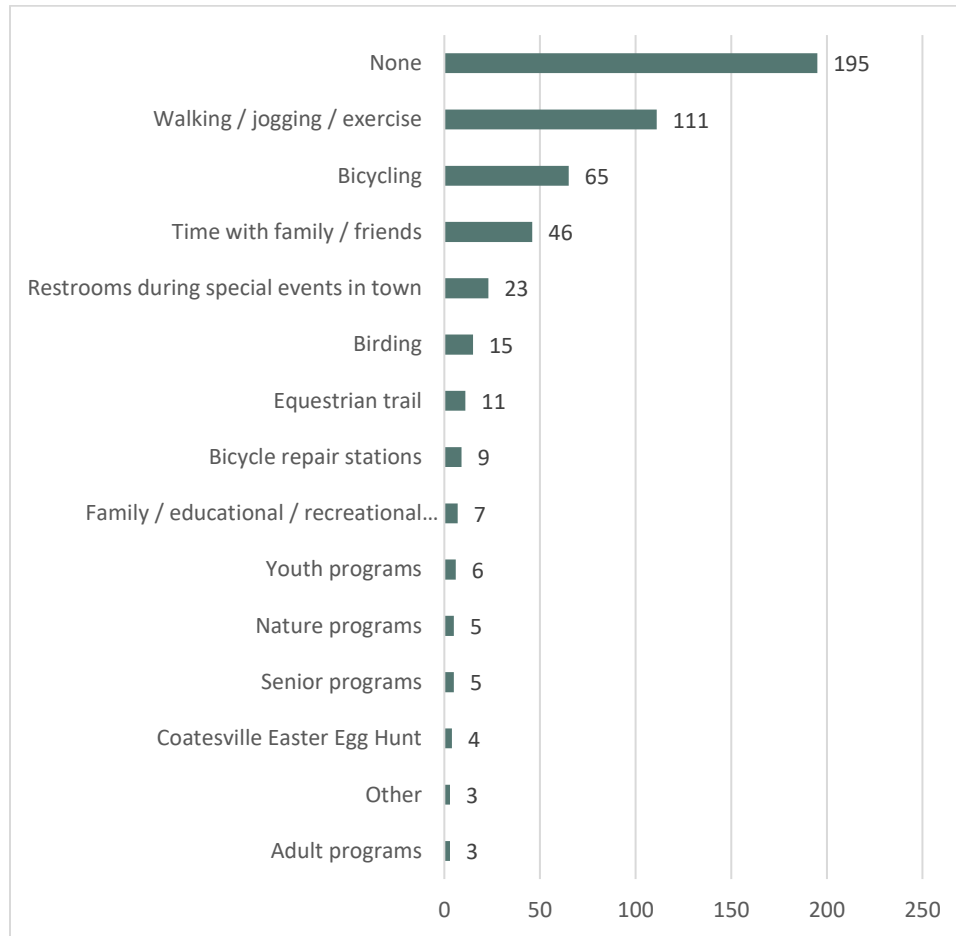
5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q34. What amenities or programs do you use or participate in on the Vandalia Trail? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Adult programs	3
Other	3
Coatesville Easter Egg Hunt	4
Senior programs	5
Nature programs	5
Youth programs	6
Family / educational / recreational programming	7
Bicycle repair stations	9
Equestrian trail	11
Birding	15
Restrooms during special events in town	23
Time with family / friends	46
Bicycling	65
Walking / jogging / exercise	111
None	195
TOTAL	507



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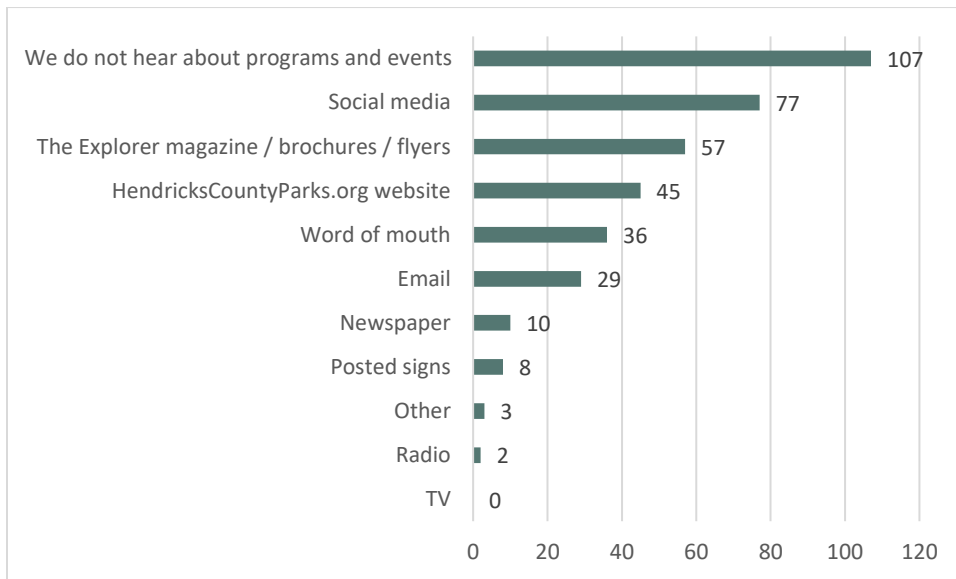
- Dust Bowl Bike Race
- never been to any of the trails
- I have not been on it but plan to in 2026



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

**Q35. How do you find out about park programs and events on the Vandalia Trail?
(Select all that apply)**

Answer Choices	Responses
TV	0
Radio	2
Other	3
Posted signs	8
Newspaper	10
Email	29
Word of mouth	36
HendricksCountyParks.org website	45
The Explorer magazine / brochures / flyers	57
Social media	77
We do not hear about programs and events	107
TOTAL	374



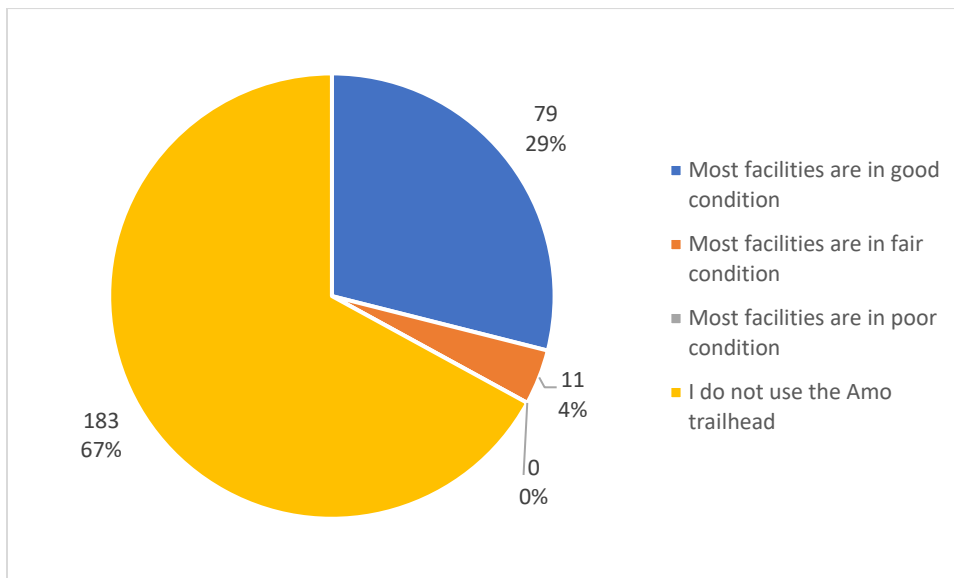
- I have no idea where to park or access this trail. It looks like an out and back overall.
- Google
- This survey



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Q36. Please rate the overall condition of the Amo trailhead.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most facilities are in good condition	79
Most facilities are in fair condition	11
Most facilities are in poor condition	0
I do not use the Amo trailhead	183
TOTAL	273



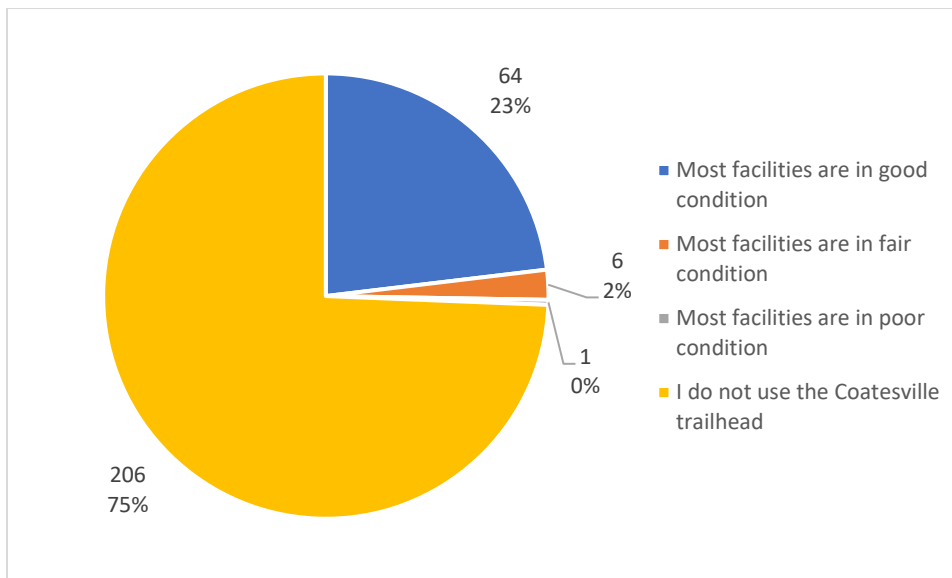
- N/A
- Didn't know it existed.
- Never heard of this one
- NA
- I used it several yrs ago and all was good.



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Q37. Please rate the overall condition of the Coatesville trailhead.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most facilities are in good condition	64
Most facilities are in fair condition	6
Most facilities are in poor condition	1
I do not use the Coatesville trailhead	206
TOTAL	277



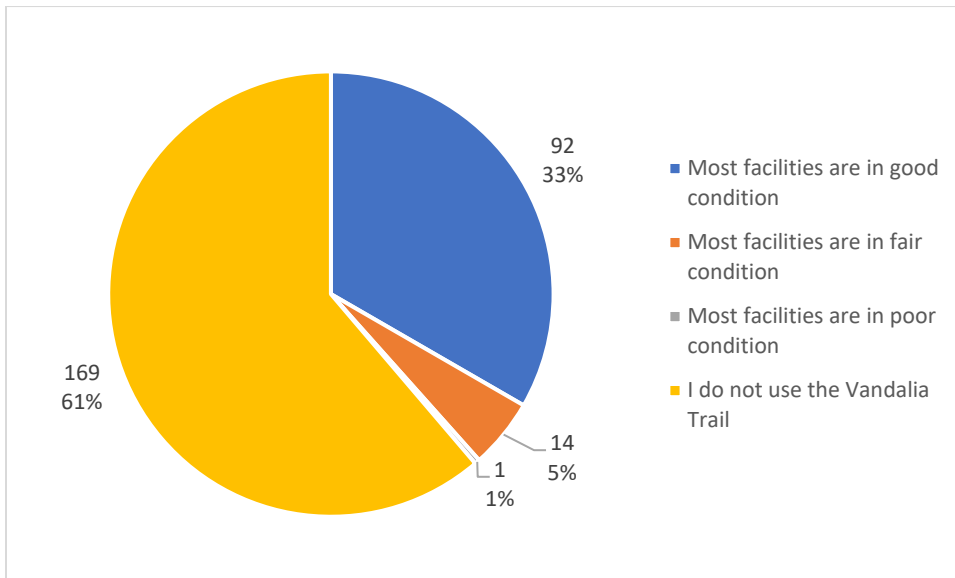
- Neve heard of this one
- Have not been out that far yet!



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Q38. Please rate the overall condition of the Vandalia Trail.

Answer Choices	Responses
Most facilities are in good condition	92
Most facilities are in fair condition	14
Most facilities are in poor condition	1
I do not use the Vandalia Trail	169
TOTAL	276



- The horse crossing at the creek is dangerous for horses and riders as is. It is also dangerous crossing SR-75 with horses.



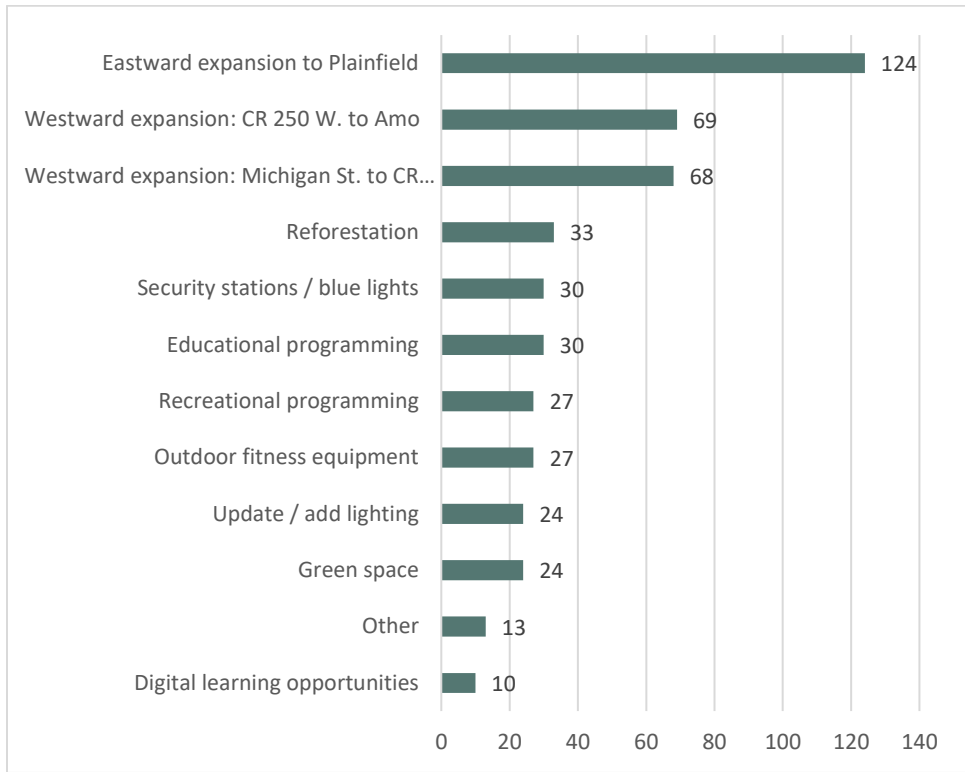
5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030

Q39. Which of the following amenities should Hendricks County Parks & Recreation prioritize adding to the Vandalia Trail over the next 5 years? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Digital learning opportunities	10
Other	13
Green space	24
Update / add lighting	24
Outdoor fitness equipment	27
Recreational programming	27
Educational programming	30
Security stations / blue lights	30
Reforestation	33
Westward expansion: Michigan St. to CR 250 W.	68
Westward expansion: CR 250 W. to Amo	69
Eastward expansion to Plainfield	124
TOTAL	479



5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan, 2026-2030



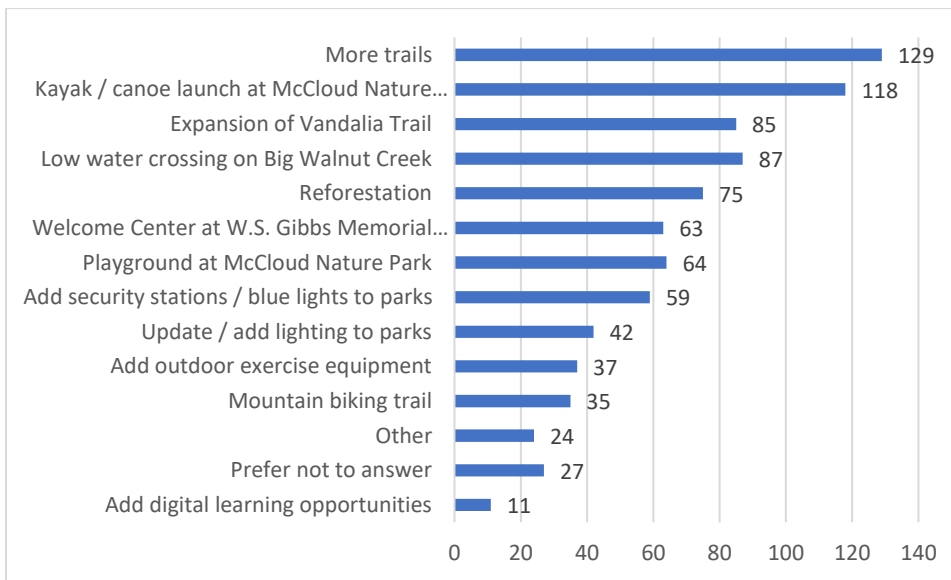
- Bathrooms!!!
- Connect BELLVILLE to the trail!
- More restrooms/water fountains along the way
- Safer creek crossing for equestrians.
- Please continue the trail east!!!
- Continue maintenance on equestrian trail
- Safe crossing of creeks and state roads for horses and hikers/bikers.
- horse trails
- Never knew these trails existed
- I'm not sure
- I don't know. I don't use it.
- NA
- Not familiar with the park
- I'm not familiar enough to suggest amenities or improvements.
- Fishing access to White Lick Creek



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Q41. Of the following capital improvement projects, which 3 are of the highest priority to you? (Please select up to 3)

Answer Choices	Responses
Add digital learning opportunities	11
Prefer not to answer	27
Other	24
Mountain biking trail	35
Add outdoor exercise equipment	37
Update / add lighting to parks	42
Add security stations / blue lights to parks	59
Playground at McCloud Nature Park	64
Welcome Center at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park	63
Reforestation	75
Low water crossing on Big Walnut Creek	87
Expansion of Vandalia Trail	85
Kayak / canoe launch at McCloud Nature Park	118
More trails	129
TOTAL	856





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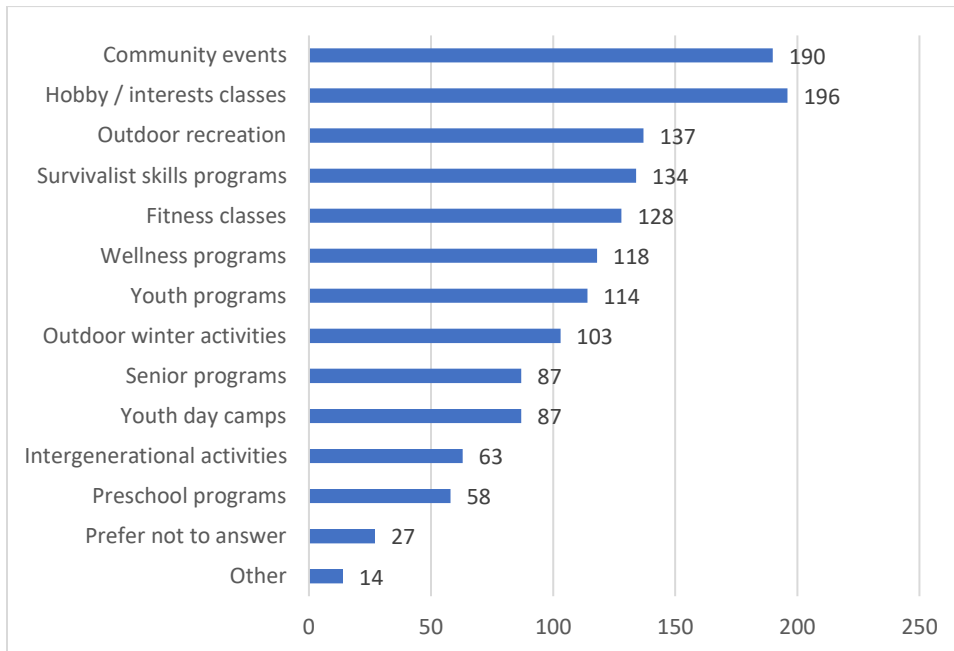
- Camping options.
- Primitive camping options!
- Garden
- Nature Center at Gibbs
- camp sites
- Remediation and monitoring pollutants and widening the riparian corridor buffer. Consider how lights, like in scamahorn are on full blast after 10pm, but if a car pulls in the lot a police officer says the park is closed. Light pollution for the sake of light pollution is harmful and sends mixed signals to community. Consider kinetic or sensor light where desired. Consider the impact urbanization and industrialization has had on land use and study the loss of ecosystems over time to understand what communities are going extinct in the area. Prairies.
- Adding lights to McCloud in my opinion would have a negative affect on night hikes and astronomy programs.
- Archery at Gibbs Park
- Please keep McCloud as is with nature.
- Rentals
- Dog parks
- Don't take more tax dollars. It's fine as is.
- Trails to get to these parks via bicycle or walking
- More accessible restrooms off trail. I seem to always need a restroom when im far back in the woods. Benches in shade for when my knee starts hurting.
- more access for people in the eastern part of the county
- Disc Golf
- Connect trail on Avon Ave and 100S to Washington Park Trail
- Additional restroom at McCloud (farther into the trails)
- Really, I don't know. I'm just thankful for what's available.
- Not sure
- More trail opportunities for equestrians
- Handicap hiking trails
- I would like to see more Adult Education/Art/Craft classes therefore appropriate centers or classrooms for classes
- I prefer McCloud exactly like it is
- not used



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Q42. Hendricks County Parks & Recreation is dedicated to providing rich and engaging programming for all community members. What programming would you like to see continued or added? (Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Other	14
Prefer not to answer	27
Preschool programs	58
Intergenerational activities	63
Youth day camps	87
Senior programs	87
Outdoor winter activities	103
Youth programs	114
Wellness programs	118
Fitness classes	128
Survivalist skills programs	134
Outdoor recreation	137
Hobby / interests classes	196
Community events	190
TOTAL	1,456





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- Inclusive activities
- Sand volleyball with a tiki hut in the middle of an octagon of courts with a tiki hut in the middle (precedent in Mason, OH)
- Tai-Chi in the park
- Primitive camping options!
- Firefly hike at McClouds
- Stop spending tax money.
- Water aerobics in Brownsburg and ballroom dancing in Brownsburg
- Teen programs and youth volunteer opportunities
- please keep mccloud exactly like it is.
- Guided bird walks
- not used
- Equestrian trails and activities



Q43. Is there anything else that Hendricks County Parks & Recreation can do to better serve you and your family?

- The homeschool classes you used to have at McCloud with Sarah were great. We haven't been in a while because they went a bit downhill. We don't want to be inside or using a tablet for these classes but rather outside. Having someone plan programming who has kids or has homeschooled in the past would be wonderful. Additionally your website has become difficult to navigate and find programs. Not sure if that has been fixed yet or not. Would love more facilities or activities that get people outside in winter that aren't just walking on a trail. Ice skating. Climbing. Archery. Snow shoeing (if enough snow). And so on. Also some more advanced classes for people with some outdoor/gardening/foraging knowledge but who want to learn more. Thanks for all your work!
- Our family visits many local Nature Preserves in IN, and have done so for a long time. The one thing we value most is still the feeling of nature in its true environment. We would like to see the Nature Parks stay as close to the feeling of being in Nature as possible with not to much modernization. Some of the state parks have gone this route, and we enjoy places that are more like Indiana's natural habitat. When our kids were little, we first missed a playground at McCloud, but we soon realized that it was not needed in this kind of environment! The purpose of the Nature Parks and Preserves should be to immerse people of all ages in the beauty of nature around them, and to appreciate what Indiana once was! Just my opinion!! 😊
- McCloud is too far away & primal. Gibbs is small & boring, but cute pond. Hummel is better designed with LONG trails, activities, playgrounds, nature, live entertainment all together with paved walkways. Lots of people smiling and having fun. Multiple parking lots. Ellis is good that way too. Also, McCloud gravel roads makes your car dirty, who wants that after a hike? Costs you \$20 to wash car after, not worth it.
- our kids are mostly grown but as a homeschooling family we used the park programs a lot especially at McCloud park because it was one of the first parks to have programs and trails. Now we have a high schooler still at home we use the state parks more often but have still occasionally enjoyed hanging out at Hendricks County parks with friends.
- I think having an open green space at Gibbs for events or sports use would be really beneficial! Where they do the farmers market now is crowded with trees. Possibly removing some of those could open up the space? Thanks for all you guys do!
- Just dont ever give into big businesses and give up the land for any amount of money. Give wayne the maintenance guy a raise and huge atta boy!!!! Hes the best!!!!
- Add some cool things to the Brownsburg area - we feel underserved compared to the great parks, trails, and programs in the west side of the county!
- Would love a mountain-biking trail. Nice job with youth programming--kids are grown, but can see bringing grandkids in the future.
- I love the peace and quiet at McCloud! Thank you for preserving such a lovely, quiet place for us to retreat to!



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- Working toward watershed restoration is more important than a bridge over polluted waters/encouraging water play
- We need more access to fish the many creeks within Hendricks county including White Lick and Big Walnut
- Anything that is a boon to Scouting America units (Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, and Venturing).
- I've truly enjoyed being part of this process look forward to coming to the meeting
- We need something in Belleville, there is NOTHING for the youth to do there.
- Some type of safety feature on all trails for people walking by themselves.
- I have noticed several over-populated parties at Washington Township park.
- although i don't use your park, all parks are greatly appreciated
- Keep up the great work! McCloud Nature Park is a true hidden gem.
- More opportunities to serve with programing instruction
- more facilities in the northeast part of the county
- Spray for bugs and ticks in wooded areas.
- Love what you all are doing. Thank you.
- Thank you! We love our parks and trails!
- Keep up the good work! Happy Camping 😊
- Thank you all for doing this work!!!
- Better communication of events.
- Thank you for all you do!
- Thank you for all you do.
- Keep up the good work!
- Keep up the good work
- Glad you did this
- anything outdoors
- Camping options.
- Love you all



Survey Data Analysis

Examining Both Survey Results

In examining the results of HWC Engineering's survey and those of HCP&R's survey, the pattern of answers in the questions both surveys had in common did not differ significantly. Expressed preferences and priorities were nearly identical in both.

By asking 13 additional questions that HWC Engineering did not ask in their survey allowed HCP&R to drill down a little deeper into park guests' satisfaction with the department's properties, programming, and staff.

In retrospect, HCP&R should have made the three-pronged email push for the HWC Engineering survey so that a second survey would have been unnecessary. HCP&R staff were told by HWC Engineering at one point that the number of responses was "a little low" at one point, and HWC asked HCP&R to make another social media post about the survey, which was done. Only when HWC provided HCP&R with the survey results was the department made aware that only 84 responses were gathered online.

What People Want from HCP&R

The #1 answer in both surveys for what facilities or amenities HCP&R needs to focus on adding, expanding or improving over the next five years was natural areas. Since preserving nature and ecological systems are driving factors in what HCP&R is all about, it was encouraging to learn that survey respondents agree with the department's mission.

The second-most popular answer in both surveys – and only a combined single vote behind natural areas – was the addition of restrooms.

This will be a challenge for HCP&R, as none of its properties are on municipal water or sewer systems, so every restroom would require a permitted well and septic system, which is a lengthy and costly process.

Since they double as storm shelters, HCP&R prefers using prefabricated concrete restrooms on its properties, and those structures cost hundreds of thousands of dollars each, depending on the model and amenities in each one. Wooden structures would be less expensive to construct but would require much more maintenance over time, and the cost of labor and supplies adds up quickly.

Survey respondents seem to want restrooms in more remote locations, such as the north side of Big Walnut Creek at McCloud Nature Park, along the Vandalia Trail, and along less-traveled trails in W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. As HCP&R has learned in Coatesville, restrooms in remote locations are prime targets for repeated vandalism and costly damage.

Rental of porta-potties is extremely expensive, as HCP&R learned over the four years that W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park did not have modern restrooms. They, too, are commonly targets of vandalism, which adds to the expense.



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While additional restroom facilities over time are not out of the question, the process is more involved and expensive than most respondents are probably aware, so the implementation will be slower than most respondents probably desire.

A little surprising were the #3 and #4 answers on both surveys - a kayak/canoe launch and kayak/canoe rentals at McCloud Nature Park. HCP&R staff have been discussing a kayak/canoe launch for several years, so this is something that could be implemented sooner rather than later. The rental of kayaks and canoes will require some research to determine what kind of staffing and equipment needs would be necessary and whether the department would offer the rentals or if a private business would be allowed to offer rentals instead.

Coming in at #5 in the combined survey results was the addition of trail signage and mile markers. There is currently a statewide project to unify the Vandalia Trail across towns and counties so that every entity that operates a portion of the trail uses the same logo and a unified system of mile markers and trail signage. HCP&R will hold off on adding any additional signage and mile markers to the Vandalia Trail until that unified system is implemented. In the meantime, there are some mile markers along the trail currently, as well as signage that has been created by the department.

Trail signage and mile markers could certainly be added to trails inside McCloud Nature Park and W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. This would be a project completed by the department's maintenance crew as time allows. Materials and labor for such signage would not be excessive, and it would make a lot of survey respondents happy.

The public wants HCP&R to make trails the #1 priority over the next five years. HCP&R recently added about two miles of trails in McCloud Nature Park and is currently working on designing a rugged trail on the north side of Big Walnut Creek. Trails have been regularly added to W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park as it becomes more developed, and there is still acreage to be developed on that property, which will very likely entail more trails. Trails are always the top priority in public surveys, so this result was no surprise.

A kayak/canoe launch at McCloud Nature Park, as previously discussed, was the #2 priority, and expansion of the Vandalia Trail - currently in progress between Lambert Park in Clayton and County Road 250 W. along the north side of County Road 500 S. - is the #3 priority.

What People Want at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

The results from both surveys provided HCP&R with a better understanding of why park guests come to W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park which, in turn, helps the department determine what type of amenities are important.

When asked what HCP&R should focus on at Gibbs over the next five years, the top priority was trails.

The second-highest priority was the implementation of an art and nature path. This will certainly be discussed by HCP&R's naturalists and administrative staff to come up with a plan and location for such an amenity. This project is well within the department's budget.

A very close third was an adventure/ropes course. This idea has been discussed by HCP&R staff and the Park Board in the past, and there are considerable liability and safety concerns with an amenity like this. This may be a feature that can be outsourced, but more research will need to be done first.



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Rounding out the top five priorities are the addition of educational and recreational programming. HCP&R already holds a considerable number of programs at Gibbs, but the addition of the new Welcome Center at the park will allow much more programming to be held at this park, regardless of weather. HCP&R's naturalists are already excited to increase programming at Gibbs.

What People Want at McCloud Nature Park

As with Gibbs, the survey results provided HCP&R with information about why park guests come to McCloud Nature Park.

As with Gibbs, trails are the top priority at McCloud, according to survey respondents.

A kayak/canoe launch was the second-highest priority, and a low-water crossing in Big Walnut Creek so that park guests can access the north side of the park a little easier came in as the third-most important priority.

Expanding and upgrading the Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center was the #4 priority, and expanding educational programming rounded out the Top 5.

A fairly close sixth place was an art and nature path, so if the path at Gibbs goes over well, one can certainly be added to McCloud.

What People Want on the Vandalia Trail

To the surprise of no one, survey respondents want to see the Vandalia Trail expanded. The top priority was to expand eastward from Clayton to Cartersburg to Plainfield. That is absolutely a priority for HCP&R, but it's more of a long-term goal than one that can be accomplished over the next five years. Still, efforts toward land acquisition in that direction can certainly be started.

The next highest priority was expansion of the trail westward from County Road 250 W. along the north side of County Road 500 S. to the Amo trailhead. HCP&R is actively working to acquire the necessary land or right-of-way from property owners in that area. It is a lengthy process, and some property owners are understandably resistant at this point in time, but the department continues to work toward that goal.

Only one vote behind second place was expansion of the trail westward from Lambert Park in Clayton to County Road 250 W. Phase I of that project was completed in late 2025. Phase II will likely begin in 2027 or 2028. HCP&R has been awarded a Land & Water Conservation Fund grant to help offset the cost of Phase II, and the trail has already been designed by engineers. Once the department has funding in place to match the grant, construction will begin very quickly.

Reforestation was the fourth-highest priority, and that is certainly directly on HCP&R's radar. More than 20,000 bare-root trees have already been planted in the area where Phase II expansion will take place, and a perpetual priority for the department is reforestation along the trail in sections that lack trees.

Tied for fifth is the addition of security lights and the addition of programming. HCP&R can look into solar-powered security lights similar to those in place at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park while also being considerate of homeowners along the trail. HCP&R's relatively new naturalist staff has already started increasing programming at the two trailheads.



Communications / Marketing

Reaching the public with communications and marketing continues to be a huge challenge for HCP&R, as it has been for years. Despite keeping an up-to-date website, active social media, publishing a magazine three times a year, and being featured in the local newspaper frequently, an alarming percentage of survey respondents do not know about the department's properties or programming. In today's age of information overload, getting a message through all of the noise has proven to be extremely difficult for the department.

The hope is that the new Welcome Center at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – HCP&R's most visited park – will help. Wayfinding signage that has been added throughout the county over the past five years has helped some. The department also observed some effectiveness through its three-pronged email blast to get more responses to the survey, but that is a means of communication that can quickly become ignored.

It may behoove HCP&R to seek some professional marketing assistance, advice, or training in the future to improve this situation.

Customer Satisfaction

The results of both surveys and HWC Engineering's interviews indicate that stakeholders, employees, and citizens are all overwhelmingly happy with HCP&R's staff, properties, and programming. Suggestions by employees were all constructive in nature, and many of the staff concerns have already been resolved through a change in staffing. Some of the staff members who were praised by respondents do not work for HCP&R, but that praise was passed along to leadership in the employee's correct parks department.

Negative encounters with staff and at properties that were reported through the surveys involved facilities that are not operated by HCP&R, and many of the concerns about HCP&R properties that were expressed – such as the gravel drive at McCloud, which was chip-and-sealed several years ago, and the lack of year-round restrooms at Gibbs, which have been in place since the fall of 2025 – have already been resolved.

One of the most encouraging results is all of the positive feedback about the department's naturalists and their programming. Both staff and programs had been unsatisfactory for several years, but after considerable upheaval and turnover, the entire naturalist staff has been rebuilt throughout 2024 and 2025. HCP&R leadership feels like the right people are now in place, so it was good to see so much affirmation of that belief from survey respondents.

HCP&R is proud of its entire staff. The well-deserved praise they received from stakeholders and the public is deeply valued and very much appreciated.



Needs Analysis

While collecting qualitative information from Hendricks County citizens, stakeholders, and employees as described in previous pages, HCP&R conducted a benchmark comparison five years ago between itself and five other parks departments to obtain some quantitative information. The qualitative and quantitative information was then combined and used to complete a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the department.

Benchmark Comparison

The purpose of benchmarking is to assist the planning team in setting standards for HCP&R's parks and recreation facilities and to measure where HCP&R stands in comparison to other chosen agencies regarding park acreage, services, budgets, staffing, cost recovery, and other attributes. This information provides an indication of how HCP&R delivers services to residents compared to the other agencies.

The benchmark process is not intended to find counties that match Hendricks County exactly. The main purpose is to assist the county in finding comparisons for measurement and setting standards.

The following benchmark agencies were selected:

- Zionsville (Indiana) Parks & Recreation
- Hamilton County (Indiana) Parks & Recreation
- St. Joseph County (Indiana) Parks & Recreation
- Whitman County (Washington) Parks & Recreation
- Fairfield (Ohio) Parks & Recreation

The benchmark communities were chosen because of their similar qualities to HCP&R. Zionsville and Hamilton County are both geographically close to Hendricks County, Zionsville manages nature parks, and Hendricks County is often compared to Hamilton County - primarily because they are both among the fastest-growing counties in Indiana. St. Joseph County is comparable in population and land area to Hendricks County.

Whitman County (WA) is a department that operates parks that are very similar in nature to HCP&R's parks in unincorporated areas of a largely agricultural area of the state. Fairfield (OH) is a city department that operates nature parks in addition to traditional city parks. Its proximity to Cincinnati mimics Hendricks County's proximity to Indianapolis.

Again, this benchmark process was completed for HCP&R's last Comprehensive Master Plan, but since departments don't change very quickly, the results are likely very similar today. A new benchmark will be completed for the next Comprehensive Master Plan.



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Benchmark: Agency Resources								
Item	Zionsville, IN	Hamilton County, IN	St. Joseph County, IN	Whitman County, WA	Fairfield, OH	Average	Median	Hendricks County, IN
Population (est. 2019)	28,357	338,011	266,709	50,104	42,558	145,148	183,184	170,311
Population Growth (2010-19)	16.3%	23.1%	-0.1%	11.9%	0.1%	17.1%	11.5%	17.1%
Total Land Area (sq. miles)	71	398	457.85	2,159	20.94	621.36	1,140	407
Total Land Area per 1,000 people (sq. mi.)	2.5	1.18	1.71	43.09	0.49	9.79	21.79	2.39
Number of Parks	19	13	9	6	29	15	18	3
Total Park Acreage	454.4	1,550	1,452	700	574.25	946.13	1,002.2	302
Total Park Acreage per 1,000 people	16.03	4.59	5.44	13.97	13.51	10.71	10.31	1.77
Total Hard Surface Trail Miles	20	17.5	1	6.5	13.62	11.72	10.5	4.1
Total Hard Surface Trail Miles per 1,000 people	0.71	0.05	0.004	0.13	0.32	0.24	0.16	0.02
Full-Time Employees	7	15	25	2	19	13.6	13.5	6
Full-Time Employees per 1,000 people	0.25	0.04	0.09	0.04	0.45	0.17	0.25	0.04
Part-Time Employees	0	50	20	8	0	16	25	6
Budget Appropriation	\$2,011,378	\$3,461,734	\$1,971,978	\$396,591 ¹	\$5,022,289	\$2,572,794	\$2,709,440	\$1,155,356
% of Total Government Budget	4%	4%	2.9%	1.6%	6.6%	3.8%	4.1%	3.3%
Expenditure per person for Parks & Rec	\$70.93	\$11.43	\$0.007	\$5.53	\$118.01	\$41.18	\$59.00	\$6.78
Total Revenues from Fees and Charges	\$2,089,373	\$252,830	\$305,155	\$15,000	\$2,511,100	\$1,034,692	\$1,263,050	\$27,695

¹\$276,591 General Fund Appropriations; \$40,000 For Interlocal Trail Maintenance Agreement; roughly \$80,000 From Gas Tax for paths and trails.



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Overall, Hendricks County's population is slightly higher than the average population of the five benchmark agencies, but its growth rate is identical to the average of the other five departments.

Removing the outliers of the rural Whitman County and the urban Fairfield, Hendricks County's total land area per 1,000 people is comparable to that of the other three Indiana counties.

HCP&R by itself has the lowest number of parks, the lowest park acreage, and the lowest park acreage per 1,000 people of all agencies in the comparison. However, adding in the parks and acreage of other parks departments within Hendricks County results in over 30 parks in the county totaling 1,554.72 acres, which provides 9.15 acres per 1,000 people. That places Hendricks County right in the mix with the other agencies.

HCP&R by itself is on the low end of hard surface trail miles, but again, adding mileage found throughout other parks and trails in the county makes Hendricks County comparable to the benchmark agencies. Also, soft surface trails are not considered in this analysis, and HCP&R has 6.5 miles of soft surface trails within McCloud Nature Park with an additional 2 miles coming in Phase I development of W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

Staff size is on par with agencies that operate nature parks (Zionsville, Whitman County) but lower than those agencies that operate traditional city parks (water parks, sports fields, playgrounds, etc.). Budget appropriations mirror that pattern, as would be expected, since nature parks require fewer staff and less money to operate than city parks.

HCP&R is on the low end of revenue collection, but its model is to provide as much free programming as possible (or only charge enough to pay for program supplies) to its citizens, as well as free admission to its park and trail. HCP&R does not operate an aquatic center, a gymnasium, sports fields, or other common forms of revenue collectors.

All things considered, nothing stands out in comparison between HCP&R (or Hendricks County in general) and the other organizations chosen for this benchmark analysis.

SWOT Analysis

Combining the quantitative measures of the benchmark agency comparison and the qualitative results of the public feedback, HCP&R completed a SWOT analysis, measuring its **strengths**, **weaknesses**, **opportunities**, and **threats**.

Strengths

Feedback from the public indicated that the overwhelming majority of park guests are happy with the condition of McCloud Nature Park, W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, and the Vandalia Trail.

HCP&R is the clear leader among parks departments within Hendricks County in providing green space; natural beauty; emphasis on ecology, education, and preservation; and a state park-like feel to its properties at a county level. Washington Township Parks & Recreation started focusing on this approach through its Pecar Park, but most other agencies in the county specialize in recreation and other amenities common to city parks.



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HCP&R staff is paid well, compared to employees of other agencies in the county, and full-time employees enjoy excellent benefits as part of their employment. Under the leadership of the current superintendent, staff morale is high.

HCP&R has a good working relationship with the Hendricks County Council, the Hendricks County Commissioners, other departments within Hendricks County Government, and other agencies and businesses in the area. Benefits of this good relationship include consistent annual funding, support of HCP&R's projects, and regular constructive feedback.

Because of the experience and skill level of the maintenance crew, HCP&R can complete a lot of projects in-house that would cost considerably more money if contracted out.

Hendricks County residents overwhelmingly feel that parks are important to residents and to the community. As a whole, residents are very supportive of HCP&R.

HCP&R is, for the most part, on par with five other parks and recreation agencies from around Indiana and the United States in terms of staffing, funding, size, and other factors described above. There are no glaring deficiencies within HCP&R compared to other departments.

Weaknesses

As described in a previous section of this document, the public feedback revealed a serious breakdown in communication between HCP&R and Hendricks County citizens. Many respondents to the survey assume HCP&R operates all parks within Hendricks County, despite HCP&R's attempts to educate the public on its role in the county's parks system. A substantial percentage of residents have never visited McCloud Nature Park or the Vandalia Trail. HCP&R needs to find more reliable ways to communicate with the public.

The locations of McCloud Nature Park and HCP&R's portion of the Vandalia Trail seem to deter many people from visiting, as evidenced by the public feedback. Both properties are located on the extreme western edge of the county in its most rural and sparsely populated areas, both bordering Putnam County. Residents of the eastern half of the county find it quicker and easier to enjoy town parks or parks located in Marion County, such as Eagle Creek Park. Respondents also cited distance as a reason they don't attend events at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

The Coatesville trailhead along the Vandalia Trail is vandalized frequently, causing HCP&R great expense in labor and repair materials. Increasing programming in Coatesville so that the residents build a personal relationship with HCP&R staff has not eliminated or reduced this issue. Working with town officials and local law enforcement has not worked, either. The town installing a camera outside of the building has not worked and, of course, privacy protection eliminates the ability to install cameras inside the restrooms.

The department has had to remove a Little Free Library from the trailhead because books were destroyed and thrown in the toilets. Graffiti on the walls, mirrors, and doors have been removed or covered repeatedly. Countless toilet paper dispensers and paper towel dispensers have been replaced, along with their contents, after vandals have destroyed the dispensers and stuffed the paper products in the toilets. Human feces have been smeared on the walls and restroom fixtures.



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The Amo trailhead - located 3 miles away from the Coatesville trailhead in an equally small town - has not had these problems. People in Amo recognize the trailhead's value to their community, take pride in it, and even contact HCP&R when a toilet is clogged or a sink is not working so that it can be repaired. HCP&R keeps the restrooms open late for community events such as the extremely popular annual Amo Fish Fry and still have never had the vandalism issues that it has in Coatesville.

A viable solution to the Coatesville problem has remained elusive. The department has discussed multiple options including, but not limited to, replacing all of the fixtures in Coatesville with prison-grade fixtures, closing the trailhead permanently, and/or relocating the building to Clayton where the trail is being expanded. No decision has been made yet.

Opportunities

Grant money is available through a number of sources for a wide variety of projects. HCP&R already takes advantage of these opportunities and applies for grant money from time to time, depending on what projects are underway. Submission of this Comprehensive Master Plan will also make HCP&R eligible to apply for grants through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

HCP&R is fortunate to have a large contingency of volunteers available and willing to help the department with daily operations, property maintenance, and special events. This provides the department with the opportunity to complete daily operations and host events at a reduced cost. These volunteers are vital to HCP&R's ability to keep their properties looking good and operations running smoothly.

Threats

With a substantial amount of HCP&R's budget coming from Food & Beverage taxes and Innkeepers taxes, the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative effects on numbers of people eating in restaurants and staying in hotels in Hendricks County leaves the department vulnerable to significantly reduced financial resources in coming years. Another major pandemic, an economic crash, or any other event that heavily impacts people's willingness to go out to eat or stay overnight in Hendricks County is a threat to HCP&R. Much of the annual budget for park development and improvements, three full-time employees' salaries and benefits, come from Food & Beverage and Innkeepers taxes. A large reduction in these funding sources would make normal operations quite difficult for HCP&R. A complete loss of these funding sources would be catastrophic for the department.



Priorities and Action Schedule

Based on public feedback, the needs assessment for HCP&R, information about other parks departments, and their own vision and desires, the Hendricks County Park Board has developed a list of priorities for HCP&R over the next five years.

Without question, the top two priorities are the construction of a Welcome Center at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park that will also serve as administrative offices and a nature center and the Phase II expansion of the Vandalia Trail from Michigan Street in Clayton westward to County Road 250 W. along the north side of County Road 500 S.

HCP&R has already been appropriated \$5.5 million in Food & Beverage funds for the construction of the Gibbs Welcome Center. Another estimated \$500,000 will be added to that funding source from other HCP&R appropriated budget lines in 2026 and 2027. Construction began in mid-April of 2026 and is expected to be completed in 2027.

About half of the funding for the Vandalia Trail expansion has already been secured through a Land & Water Conservation Fund grant. The remainder will be provided by other HCP&R appropriated budget lines in 2027 and 2028.

HCP&R capital projects will likely be paused for a yet undetermined number of years after the completion of these two projects. Hendricks County officials have other capital projects that need to be funded in the next several years, and HCP&R will need some time to recover financially from the large hits to its appropriated budgets in 2026 through 2028.

The HCP&R maintenance crew is already designing a challenging trail on the north side of Big Walnut Creek at McCloud, and they have already started managing the bare root trees along County Road 500 S. that were donated and planted by the Central Indiana Land Trust.

Architectural engineers have already inspected Mill Cottage at McCloud Nature Park and determined that it is structurally sound. However, remediation of a mold infestation must be addressed before any study on converting the building to a lab can be pursued.

Once the capital projects have been completed, HCP&R can focus on the other priorities, as none require additional funding beyond what is normally appropriated to the department annually.

Acquisition of land for park and trail property is important, given Hendricks County's designation as a critical county by the State of Indiana's SCORP. The extension of the Vandalia Trail across the county to Plainfield Parks & Recreation's section of the trail is a necessary component of the National Road Heritage Trail - one of the Indiana DNR's Visionary Trails.

However, the Park Board intends to be cautious in spending, consistent with the concerns of elected officials and public feedback. They will keep lines of communication wide open with elected officials as plans for future park development evolve.



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Priorities and Action Schedule - 2026 to 2030

<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Property</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Est. Cost</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
2026-30	McCloud	Acquire additional property for expansion	Unknown	Land Acquisition (Food & Beverage), Non-Reverting Capital budget lines
2026-27	McCloud	Develop challenging northside trail	\$15,000	Harlos Fund through Hendricks County Community Foundation, Maintenance & Repairs (County General), Development of County Parks (Innkeepers), Other Park Improvements (Food & Beverage) budget lines
2026-30	McCloud	Conduct study on Mill Cottage as potential lab for college students to study local watersheds	\$5,000	Professional Fees (Innkeepers), Development of County Parks (Innkeepers), and Other Park Improvements (Food & Beverage) budget lines
2028-29	McCloud	Establish long-term vision for Nature Center	Unknown	Professional Fees (Innkeepers), Development of County Parks (Innkeepers), Other Park Improvements (Food & Beverage) budget lines



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2026-30	McCloud	Update McCloud Master Plan	\$35,000	Professional Fees (Innkeepers) budget line
2026-27	McCloud	Investigate purchase of motorized wheelchairs for guests to borrow	\$30,000 each	Grants, donations
2026-30	McCloud	Reevaluate programming (perhaps add more programming for adults)	\$0	N/A
2026-30	VT	Manage/enhance CILT planting/reforestation	\$10,000	Professional Fees (Innkeepers) budget line; donations / volunteers from CILT
2026-30	VT	Work toward acquiring ROWs along CR 500 S. between CR 250 W. and Amo to fully connect Amo to Clayton	\$30,000	Professional Fees (Innkeepers) budget line
2026-30	VT	Coordinate with Clayton, Cartersburg, Plainfield, and land owners on eastward expansion	\$30,000	Professional Fees (Innkeepers) budget line
2028-29	VT	Complete Phase II of westward expansion from Michigan St. in Clayton to CR 250 W. along CR 500 S	\$2.6 million	Land & Water Conservation Fund grant and Development of County Parks (Innkeepers), Other Park Improvements (Food & Beverage) budget lines
2026-27	Gibbs	Complete Welcome Center/Admin	\$6 million	Budget appropriation (Food & Beverage) for this project, Development of County Parks (Innkeepers) and Other Park Improvements (Food & Beverage) budget lines, Gibbs Fund through Hendricks County



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				Community Foundation
2026-30	Gibbs	Update Gibbs Master Plan	\$35,000	Professional Fees (Innkeepers) budget line
2026-27	Gibbs	Investigate purchase of motorized wheelchairs for guests to borrow	\$30,000 each	Grants, donations
2026-30	Gibbs	Reevaluate programming	\$0	N/A
2026-30	Hendricks County	Investigate land acquisition throughout Hendricks County	\$180,000	Land Acquisition (Food & Beverage) budget line and Non-Reverting Capital



Public Presentation of CMP

Upon receiving constructive feedback from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources on the rough draft of this Comprehensive Master Plan, a public presentation was scheduled and held on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 7 p.m. in the Hendricks County Government Center.

The meeting was advertised in advance through *The Republican* newspaper, where it appeared on the front page above the fold on February 26, 2026. It was also advertised through HCP&R's website and social media, and HCP&R superintendent Ryan Lemley personally invited members of the Hendricks County Council, Hendricks County Commissioners, and Hendricks County Park Board to the presentation.

Lemley, assistant superintendent Eric Ivie, and administrative assistant Patricia Seymour represented the HCP&R staff. Hendricks County Councilmembers Larry Scott and Dave Cox attended, as did Hendricks County Park Board president Brad Eisenhart. Jim L., Karen L., Steve B., Timothy C., Kenneth S., and Paul Z. were in attendance from the public.

Ivie gave an hour-long overview of HCP&R and the CMP, including the Park Board's list of priorities and actions, throughout which he and Lemley responded to questions from the audience.

Q: I have a question about the invasive species. Have you guys heard about the Weed Wrangles?

A: Yes, we've participated in those in the past.

Q: Does your staff sponsor those? Or, you know, Weed Wrangles at your properties?

A: Yes. We have in the past. We haven't recently, but we want to make those reconnections, and we are going to talk to our naturalists about that because...

Q: The reason I was asking is because over the years, I've worked quite a bit with Brownsburg Parks on their Weed Wrangles. I've also worked in Plainfield with their Weed Wrangles, and there was a group that was forming in Hendricks County that would specifically look at invasive species management in Hendricks County. So if you needed someone who had quite a bit of experience with that, I might be willing to lead that type of activity. I know someone who might be interested in helping with that.

A: That would be great! [Made arrangements to communicate with each other at a later date.]

Q: I think the invasive species management also helps tie in to one of your goals, which is reforestation because many people don't know that these invasive species - some of them produce toxins in their root system that actually prevent the germination of other seeds like oaks and hickories and maples and the pretty flowers that are about to come up in the next few days. I'll be sure to get you my information. Something I would be interested in the county, you know, to push out this idea and awareness of invasive species and how much trouble they are, especially along the Vandalia because you mentioned that earlier. I was there with Greg Midgley when he first started working from Amo out to Crittenden Creek. It was all invasives.



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A: We made a huge dent in that from State Road 75 to the wastewater treatment plant. A couple of years ago, our entire maintenance team worked on that throughout the winter. We need to continue to work on that, as well. When we started implementing and managing projects at Gibbs Park, it was full of invasives. It was unbelievable. And a lot of those invasives are a result of erosion control measures that the Indiana Department of Transportation brought in, and we thought these were effective ways to implement erosion control, and it backfired on us. And then they spread like wildfire.

Q: They absolutely do. Like you said, at one time, it was considered a good idea to put those plants up there, but they really do impact our environment. So the things that we like at our parks - like pretty trees and flowers and birds and other animals - the invasives just don't let that happen.

A: Yeah, they just choke everything out. Those are great educational opportunities and also volunteer opportunities. It's not typically a glamorous thing to host because most people aren't excited about it, but we do have folks who *are* excited about it.

Q: Well, as I said, I've been working with Brownsburg, and they've been pulling in a pretty good group. You have to keep that communication going. You have to kinda foster them along. They've had some really turnouts of people. Also, the corporate folks and there was a small park I was working in along U.S. Highway 136, and the Subaru/Isuzu folks sent like 20 people! We nailed it. Made a huge dent.

A: We've talked a lot about our volunteer groups as well. We've started hosting a lot of school groups. Avon Junior Day of Caring comes out every year. This will be the 7th year for them at Gibbs. We've tried to educate their students on invasives so that they can help out on those projects, as well. Same for Mill Creek Community Schools, Danville, Tri-West... It's good to educate our youth, as well. They're going to be the next generation to lead us in those environmental efforts.

Q: I have a question for you. Would camping at McCloud - either primitive or not-so-primitive - would that be feasible at McCloud in order to get some more people knowledgeable about McCloud and whether that would be revenue-generating or cost-prohibitive?

A: Very valid point, and we have talked with our Park Board in the past. We do offer some family camping weekends at McCloud, so that is good exposure. I [Lemley] worked for DNR for 16 years before I came here. I resided in the campground at Raccoon Lake for 12 years. The answer to your question about allowing camping at McCloud would be "yes," but the financial burden would be pretty extreme for the County Council because of staffing. You'd have to have security on-site. It's inevitable that sewage issues happen, emergencies happen. When people get in remote areas, a lot of times, they think they can just cut loose and party. Long term, I think camping at McCloud could be a great possibility. But short term, with our current staff of 16 employees, we do not have the staff to successfully implement a campground at this time. When I was a manager at Raccoon Lake and lived on grounds, we had 42 seasonal intermittent staff. A lot of state parks are going to have really high numbers. What they helped us prepare for was that increased demand with camping and boating, and that was primarily in peak recreation season, so that was spring through summer and into the fall.

Q: Earlier, you made the statement that trying to communicate with people about the parks and things. I don't think I have an answer for you, but I know that this is supposed to be the Age of Communication. Well, it is, but there's so much of it that we're not really communicating. I just get covered up in emails and texts. Not necessarily from the county but for our own personal things. So you get to where you just



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don't respond, or you get on there to check it out and next thing you know, you've been on there for 3 or 4 hours, and you haven't accomplished anything. I think there's overcommunication because it's difficult to pick out what's important and what's not. And it looks like the bulk of it is not important to each individual. So I don't know how you do that. From a political standpoint, we're kind of in a void here in Hendricks County because there's no coverage from Indianapolis newspapers and TV and stuff. So if you're trying to run for office or you're trying to take care of some issue or sell something, it's very difficult to communicate, so I understand your problem. If there's a solution out there for it, I'd sure like for it to be discovered.

A: Ever since the *Hendricks County Flyer* went away - I [Seymour] know that *The Republican* is here, but I feel they have such a small circulation within the county - but with the *Hendricks County Flyer*, everybody knew because that was kind of the go-to source of what's going on.

Q: With the change of ownership of *The Republican*, they are expanding, and with the upcoming election, they're going to be doing the voter's guide again, and it should be coming out soon. I think their circulation, because I've written there for years, especially when I was the County Assessor, I think their circulation was 4,000 or 5,000. I think it's maybe doubled now. But there's 190,000 people in Hendricks County. It's headed in the right direction, I think, but it's still tough.

A: We produce *The Explorer* magazine in-house, and since COVID, we have reduced the number of hard copies of the magazine that are actually printed, and that's a result of hard copies - to the younger generation - are really not important, so it's just a waste of resources.

Q: That's really sad because - I don't want your guys' heads to explode - but *The Explorer* is GOOD! Honestly, it's well put together. The articles and everything you talk about in there is great. And the printing of it - that's top quality! The magazine is excellent, but it's.... Well, it's my generation and the one under me....

Q: Have you ever worked with the tourism bureau [Visit Hendricks County]?

A: Yes, we do. A lot. Eric [Ivie] actually works for them in his off-time and writes a lot of articles for them, so yes, we have a great relationship with Visit Hendricks County.

Q: I actually have several questions. That Vandalia Trail expansion that you foresee over the next five years? How many miles?

A: That will add 2.4 or 2.5 miles of trail.

Q: That sounds about right. Do you know that the B&O Trail just added 11.5 miles, and it was just over \$1,000,000?

A: Yes. The Welcome Center and administrative office at Gibbs is a top priority for us this year and that will spill into the spring of next year, too. We have about a \$1,000,000 grant to support that development [of the Vandalia Trail], and the design and engineering is also done. We obviously have to have that conversation with the County Council in a budget hearing to see where the County Council is with funding at that time, so that will kind of dictate when we implement that [expansion of the trail].



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Q: I see that \$5.5 million spike in your budget this year. So that's going to drop back down?

A: Yes, that was a one-time appropriation specifically for the Welcome Center at Gibbs. Next year, we'll drop back to our normal budget request.

Q: Speaking of the B&O Trail, any connections you see coming up to the B&O Trail?

A: It would be nice one day. Not in the immediate future, but McCloud would be the most logical connection, given its location and the direction the B&O Trail is heading. We have certainly kicked around the idea. So to answer your question: "sort of." It's on the horizon but not the near horizon.

Q: Linear parks would really be a way to really add a lot of area to parks. Have you looked at anything like using utility easement areas and stuff like that for park areas?

A: We have. Our concern on County Road 500 S. is that the speed limit there is just...a suggestion. If you're not going 60 mph on that county road, you're getting run over, and the utility easement is just too close to the road for our comfort. God forbid, a car leaves the roadway and enters the trail, and people are on the trail... We can use it in a pinch for short distances, and we have a plan for guard rails if we have to do that during the Vandalia Trail expansion, but we much prefer purchasing a right-of-way from the property owners. It gets the trail a little further off the road. Now, the trail's not meandering into anyone's front yard or anything like that, but it gets people further from the road and reduces the safety risk. But in a pinch, yes, the utility easements are an option.

Q: Vandalia Trail, B&O Trail, I've been on all of those trails, and they're all very nice. They're really well done. And Amo, going toward Putnam County is very nice. It's a beautiful trail.

A: Thank you!

Q: Have you got anything up in the northeast part of the county? It's kind of a "park desert" up there. Is there a way to connect it with Eagle Creek Park somehow in case some land ties in?

A: We haven't thought about connecting to Eagle Creek Park, but we are aware of the "park desert" in the northeast part of the county. That would be a challenge for us with a park in the northwest corner of the county and a park in the southwest corner of Washington Township. Logistically, we would be burning up a lot of man-hours, fuel, and tires going back and forth, but we haven't ruled it out. We've had a couple of properties come across our desk in the past 3 or 4 years, but none of them panned out. I want to say that a township purchased one of those properties and turned it into a small township park. I think if the right opportunity arose, the Park Board would be interested in discussing it, at least.

Q: I live up that way, and I see that a lot of the bicycle traffic from Eagle Creek Park comes into Hendricks County, especially on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Q: I can verify. I, too, live in the desert.

Q: Just one other thing: the idea of tying the B&O to Vandalia. Some years ago when I was on the Avon Parks Board, there was some talk about how to prioritize the White Lick Creek Corridor, which would



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basically run through Avon out by the new Easton Grey development and connect up with the B&O from there.

A: We did discuss that at one Park Board meeting. You know, kinda throwing stuff up on the wall, about the White Lick Corridor and what they're going to connect it to.

Q: There might be some opportunity there for land acquisition for a smaller pocket park that'll make that happen a little sooner. Because we talked about that 15 years ago when I was on the Parks Board. At any rate, that's my input.

A: Thank you. Our biggest hurdle in development of the Vandalia Trail is the land acquisition. We have a land acquisition agent who communicates with landowners, and it's just us continuing to share our vision. My [Lemley] family lives along a section of the Vandalia Trail, and I share my positive experiences. Positive comments from folks like yourselves, those spread well and help us accomplish our goals, as well, in expanding the trail system.

A: I [Ivie] think that especially in the western portion of the county, which is predominantly agricultural, a lot of the landowners out there don't see the need for parks because they have these huge expanses of land. And especially if it's agricultural land, that's money we're taking out of their pockets every year. They could farm that land. Along 500 S., there isn't a lot of that farmland, so a lot of the right-of-way would be fairly close to the road and not heavily impacting farmland, but still, the mentality there is "Why do you need parks? Why do you need trails? Because I have 80 bazillion acres out here. I can do whatever I want. I can shoot guns. I can hunt. I can farm it. I can do whatever I want." And I completely understand that outlook. So as Ryan was saying, it's a very delicate process of trying to explain what we're trying to accomplish - taking people and bicycles off the road, so that when you're doing 80 mph down 500 S., you're not creaming people. It's safer for the public. It's more enjoyable for the public. There isn't traffic blowing past right next to them. That kind of thing. And then gradually changing their minds without forcing them. It's a delicate process, it takes time, and it has worked. One of our biggest opponents from the get-go since I've been with the department [10 years], over time saw what we were trying to do and sold us the right-of-way. We're hoping that once the trail starts being developed, landowners will see, "Oh yeah, this is actually a pretty good thing." People are walking on it. It's not the trash-fest that I thought it would be. My neighbors are reporting that no one is breaking into their house from the Vandalia Trail. That sort of thing. That's kinda how we approach it.

Q: Yeah, I haven't done as much of that as, probably, many people in here, but just having that concept on another master plan kinda plants that seed, and then it takes a few years to grow. The thing with the B&O Trail, Diana [Virgil] worked on that for 30 years. Three decades. And they're just now really beginning to solidify that whole concept. And that's just in Hendricks County. That's not even all the way to the Wabash River yet.

A: I [Ivie] know that they've had the same struggles with landowners that we have. It's just a different way of looking at things, and I understand it. I understand. But I also understand what we're trying to accomplish.

Q: It sounds like you get good support from the Hendricks County Commissioners and Council.

A: Yes, very much so.



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Q: And you got a good relationship going with the DNR. Support from them.

A: Yes.

Q: Is there anything coming from the State Legislature that you need support on? Is there any new laws coming down the pike right now that would affect you?

A: Governor Holcomb was very supportive of trail development, Next Level Trails. I [Lemley] do not think that is as much of a priority for the Braun administration. I don't want to get into politics here, but I don't foresee any funding coming down the pipeline from the State anytime in the near future. We've got a really good relationship with our friends with the DNR, and they were happy that we got into the what they foresee is the last Land & Water Conservation Fund grant cycle that is supported by Indiana and funded by the National Park Service, and that was our grant to expand the Vandalia Trail. That is the first Land & Water Conservation Fund grant in Indiana that supports trail development, uniquely enough. A lot of times, those grants came from Next Level Trails or other grants, but not the Land & Water grant. So we were unique and very successful in that aspect. Did I answer your question?

Q: Yes.

The meeting concluded at 8:31 p.m.