

CITY OF ORRVILLE

COMMUNITY FACILITIES/PARKS AND RECREATION

This section of the report summarizes the provision of education, public safety, and recreation in Orrville. This discussion includes capacity of each system and any plans or initiatives proposed by service providers. The inventory of services will lay the foundation for proposals of any new community facilities that may be needed based on any deficiencies and new demands that the land use plan will place on the existing systems and services. Figure 5-1 illustrates the location of existing community facilities in Orrville.

Schools

A community's school system is often a key factor in determining business expansions and relocations and parents' decision on where to raise their families. The Orrville City School District produces students who achieve at academic levels significantly higher than the state average for all subjects, which makes the community attractive to both businesses and families. The district includes Orrville High School, Orrville Junior High School, and three elementary schools (Maple Street, Oak Street, and North).

The public school system educates approximately 2,000 students a year. Orrville High School is located on North Ella Street, in the north central portion of the city. Orrville Junior High School is located on East Church Street, in the east portion of the city. The elementary schools are dispersed in the south, west and north portions of Orrville. Oak Elementary and Maple Street Elementary serve the older, established neighborhoods in the southern, central and west portions of Orrville. North Elementary is serving the newer subdivisions to the north and northwest of downtown.



The junior high is in poor condition and undersized for the current student population.

There are tentative plans to build a new high school on a proposed site in the northern portion of the community. The construction of a new high school will allow the middle school to move out of its current building and relocate to the existing high school site. The middle school is in poor condition and undersized for the amount of students. A school's facility plan is currently being completed that will evaluate the condition of the existing school facilities and potential plans for redevelopment.

Libraries

Orrville provides significant library services for city residents with a central library that meets and exceeds national standards for most library services. The library is centrally located on North Main Street in the downtown area and offers more than 66,000 books, 3,500 videocassettes, 5,600 recordings, and six computers linked to the internet for Orrville.

CITY OF ORRVILLE

Figure 5-1

CITY OF ORRVILLE

residents. And even though the library already exceeds national standards, an expansion is underway to increase the library to 25,000 square feet, which will more than double the current size of the building. The expansion will provide additional area for younger visitors, adults, and meeting space.

City Hall and Post Office

Two of the more important social centers in the city are the City Hall and Post Office. City Hall serves as a formal community meeting location and the Post Office is where neighbors casually meet when dropping off or receiving mail. Community interaction is heightened by the central location of both facilities. City Hall and the Post Office are both located in downtown. The City Hall is on North Main Street and the Post Office is on Vine Street. Construction of City Hall was completed in 1994 and effectively doubled the size of the former building. The expansion should provide adequate space to serve Orrville residents well into the future. The decision to building/expand in the downtown location also shows the strong commitment that the city has for the downtown area.



The post office is an important social center of the community.

Public Safety

Police

The Safety-Service Director manages the city Police Department and is responsible for 13 full-time officers, four part-time officers, four reserve officers, and six civilians. The department operates eight police cruisers, one unmarked vehicle, one four-wheeler, and one SRT van. The Orrville police department provides service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The police also provide 9-1-1 dispatch services for the Orrville Fire Department and several nearby villages. Five full-time and one part-time dispatcher/clerks operate emergency dispatch services. The Police Station is located in the Municipal Building on Main Street in downtown Orrville.

Fire

Fire protection services are provided by paid volunteers who also provide protection to portions of four surrounding townships. The department consists of one full-time fire chief and 36 on-call volunteers. There are two active fire stations in Orrville. The Orrville Fire Department is headquartered at Station Number One, which is located at the intersection of Church and Vine Streets. Station Number Three is located on North Crown Hill Road. Station Number Two is a reserve station located on East Pine Street. It is primarily used for storage and maintenance. The fire department fights fires with five pumper trucks, one grass fire unit, an aerial unit, and one

CITY OF ORRVILLE

fire chief vehicle. Plans are underway to construct an addition to Station Number Three to accommodate Station Number Two uses. This will then allow the fire department to vacate Station Number Two, which will be converted to indoor cruiser parking for the Police Department.

Fire hydrants throughout the city have an average flow of approximately 957 gallons per minute (gpm). Pumper capacity is 3,100 gallons of water.

Emergency Medical Services

The emergency medical services (EMS) unit is located at Fire Station One and has one back-up unit. Emergency medical services are provided throughout the city. EMS is also provided to Green, Baughman, East Union, and Sugar Creek townships. EMS staff consists of 16 Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and three paramedics. The EMTs and paramedics are also firefighters. This service is also provided 24 hours a day.

The operations of the EMS are also unique to Orrville. The 9-1-1 dispatches calls to either a private ambulance service (one of two) or the EMS depending on the nature of the call. Specific policy is followed for dispatch.

Parks and Recreation

The Comprehensive Plan preparation process includes reviewing recreation standards developed by organizations including the National Recreation and Park Association. This section will describe the park system in Orrville and will include an inventory of community, neighborhood, and mini parks.

The park classifications conform to one of three general categories: places for active recreation, resource-oriented areas, and specialized facilities. Space requirements, typical facilities and programs, and unique environmental features further define the park types. The recommended standards for park classifications and land area requirements are described below.

Community Park

A community park is easily accessible to one or more neighborhoods depending on local needs and the population distribution at the time it was developed. When possible, the park may be developed adjacent to a middle or elementary school. Community parks provide recreational opportunities for the entire family and contain areas suited for intense recreational purposes such as a recreation center building, athletic fields, swimming, tennis, and walking/jogging trails. The park may also possess areas of natural quality for outdoor recreation such as viewing, sitting, and picnicking. Community parks have an average service area of 2 to 3 miles and require

CITY OF ORRVILLE

a minimum of 3 to 5 acres per 1,000 population served. Community parks should be at least 25 to 40 acres in size.

Neighborhood Park

The neighborhood park is designed to serve a population of up to 5,000. The park requires 2 to 2.5 acres per 1,000 population served and should be a minimum of 5 to 10 acres, however many times they are smaller. A neighborhood park is typically characterized by recreational activities for families, and is designed to accommodate games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus, picnicking, and space for quiet/passive activities.

The service radius for a neighborhood park is one-half to one mile and is easily accessible to the neighborhood population through safe walking and biking access. Parking may or may not be required. Where feasible the activity areas are equally divided between quiet/passive activities and active play. This type of park may be developed as a school/park or community center facility.

Mini Park

A mini-park is characterized by its relatively small size (approximately 1 acre), and its specialized facilities serve a specific segment of the population (i.e., tot lots or senior citizens). This park is typically located close to higher density neighborhoods such as apartment complexes, townhouse developments and housing for the elderly. The service area for a mini-park is approximately 1/4 mile.

Orrville Parks System

The City operates a park system that includes five parks that range from mini-parks to a community park that serves the entire city. Figure 5-2 illustrates the location of existing parks in Orrville and identifies the approximate service area for each park. Mini-parks are located on Hilltop Street, Mill Street, and Lenore Street. These parks are a maximum of one acre in size and are primarily playgrounds for families that live within a quarter mile of the park. Each of these parks has a swingset and climbing toys and the park on Mill Street also has a small gazebo. The quarter mile service area for these mini-parks allow families to walk to the park. The mini-park on Hilltop Street provides access to a complete 1/4 mile service area, however the mini-parks on Mill Street and Lenore Street very likely do not serve a complete service area due to the nature of development that falls within the 1/4 mile radius. Only the western half of the service area for the Mill Street park is populated and the balance of this service area is vacant land. The Lenore Street park service area extends north beyond the railroad tracks, which essentially eliminates 40



According to national standards, a community similar to Orrville should have 17 acres devoted to neighborhood parks.

CITY OF ORRVILLE

Figure 5-2

CITY OF ORRVILLE

percent of the service area. Currently there are less than three acres of mini-parks in Orrville. For a community the size of Orrville there should be a minimum of four acres of mini-parks that serve higher density development or specific target populations such as seniors.

The city has one park that offers the activities and size that meets the requirements of a neighborhood park. Gailey Park, which is approximately four acres in size, is located just off Wayne Street in the southeast section of the city. The facilities at this park include playground equipment (two swingsets and climbing toys), one picnic pavilion, a small gazebo and one restroom facility. Although Gailey Park does offer some of the activities required to be considered a neighborhood park, it is generally lacking in size and facilities and the park's service area is very likely to be small (1/2 mile). A community with the population of Orrville should have a minimum of 17 acres devoted to neighborhood parks. To meet standards for the current population, the city needs several more neighborhood parks distributed throughout the city.

Orr Park, which is centrally located on West High Street, serves as a community park. This park is approximately 40 acres in size and includes numerous active recreation facilities such as:

- Six multi-use playground equipment items
- Four swingsets
- Two single picnic pavilions
- Six double pavilions
- One main swimming pool with bathhouse
- One baby pool
- Four tennis courts
- Two full basketball courts and one half-court basketball court
- One sand volleyball court
- Two shuffleboard courts
- Four horseshoe pits
- Two Little League baseball fields
- Two softball fields
- One baseball field
- Two restroom facilities
- Two concession stands

Orr Park is a huge asset to the community and was recently expanded to offer more trails and passive recreation areas. Because of the success of the park, the park is heavily used. This has created parking problems, a crowded atmosphere, and a need for additional park space.

More passive recreation activities include Schmid and Heller Halls and the Rehm Performing Arts Gazebo. Recently the city purchased a 28-acre parcel behind the Boys and Girls Club on Ella Street. This parcel is commonly referred to as the Blackwell-Williams property or the Walking Trails/Wetland Complex. A walking trail system is planned for this park that creates a pedestrian link to Orr Park, which is located across the street. With the improvements to Walking Trails/Wetland Complex, Orr Park more than meets the size requirements for

CITY OF ORRVILLE

an individual community park. The park also exceeds the standards for total acreage for community parks. The service area for this size of park extends beyond city boundaries and the centralized location is adequate, although access from the southern portions of the city is difficult.

Affiliated Recreation Providers

In addition to the recreation opportunities provided by city parks, there are both indoor and outdoor recreation activities provided by the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and the school system. The Orrville YMCA offers indoor swimming and fitness and athletic programs. The YMCA also offers summer camps and social services including parenting and Head Start programs. The YMCA is located in the northwest portion of the city, isolating the facility from the more established neighborhoods in the eastern and southern portions of the city. Vehicle transportation is required for visitors to the YMCA. This is due in part to its distance from most city residents and the overall lack of pedestrian connections to new subdivisions in the northwest portion of the city or from the south. The Boys and Girls Club also offers indoor physical fitness, summer camps, organized sports leagues, and social and service organizations. The city school system has playground equipment, ballfields, and open space that can be utilized by city residents without supervision.



The YMCA is a valuable community asset.

Summary of Community Facilities/Park and Recreation

The City of Orrville takes pride in the quality of life enjoyed by its citizens. A large part of the quality of life for city residents is based on city services and opportunities for quality recreation close to home. The city has been proactive in providing public safety measures that have resulted in lowering many crime statistics and reducing calls to the fire department. These proactive measures have resulted in an overall reduction of public safety calls. However, as population projections show a potential increase and the physical size of the city expands there will likely be the need to evaluate the response times of police, fire, and EMS departments to the northwest portion of the city. The city school system continues to graduate students well prepared for their future, but annexation and population growth will continue to put pressure on the school system to ensure that facilities are most efficiently utilized.

The parks and recreation department provides a valuable resource in the centrally located Orr Park and Walking Trails/Wetland Complex. These parks provide recreation activities for the entire city. In the past, since they are centrally located there were no access issues. Access has become increasingly more difficult as the community grows to the north and as increase in traffic reduces pedestrian connectivity from the south. The only other current issue with parks and recreation facilities is the lack of neighborhood parks in the city. The north and northwest portion of the city has access to Orr

CITY OF ORRVILLE

Park but smaller, family-oriented parks within walking distance of these residents are lacking. The neighborhoods in the south also have to deal with obstacles such as traffic and railroad crossing in order to gain access to Orr Park. This also creates a need for additional parks in the southern portion of the community.

Community Facilities/Park and Recreation Framework

The planning framework for Community Facilities/Park and Recreation translates the issues and ideas expressed throughout the planning process into basic community facilities and park and recreation concepts. The framework is used to develop recommendations that will address the need and desire for community facilities and parks in the future. The basic concept associated with this framework is providing community and park facilities where they are needed to serve today's population as well as future growth. The goal is to provide parks in areas where all residents can use them, without safety constraints preventing use. The goal is also to keep government services in a consolidated location in the heart of the community. This will prevent sprawl, encourage compact development and demonstrates a commitment to the downtown.

Community Facilities/Park and Recreation Plan

As a community grows and evolves, it is important to continue to provide open space and recreation to all areas of the community. Residents in both new and existing neighborhoods need access to park and recreation facilities to ensure a high quality of life. As new neighborhoods develop, park and open space areas should be provided to support the shifting populations trends. The older, traditional neighborhoods should also have improved access to park and recreation assets. The following recommendations focused on ensuring that parks and community facilities remain integrated into the fabric of Orrville and satisfy current and future requirements.

Parks and Recreation

Based on national park and recreational standards, Orrville has a deficiency of dedicated parkland. This deficiency is also reflected throughout the surrounding county. It is recommended that additional park sites be identified and better connections to existing parks be established.

Orr Park is an outstanding facility and an asset to the community. As the community continues to grow, access to this park will need to be addressed. Currently, access from the south is limited due to the railroads. Designated walking paths/trails need to be identified that will safely accommodate foot traffic from the southern neighborhoods to Orr Park. In the northern neighborhoods, sidewalks and paths should be incorporated into new construction, with eventual links that lead

CITY OF ORRVILLE

to the park. This will allow all residents in the community equal access to the park without total reliance on automobiles.

It is recommended that additional park locations be identified throughout the community. In the future land use plan, two new park sites have been identified. One is the site of the current junior high school. If this school relocates, the site will be an ideal location for park development. It is centrally located, and within walking distance from residents living in the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The second site is located in the southern portion of the community, at the south end of Beaver Street. This land is currently owned by the City, and would serve as an accessible park site for residents living in the older neighborhoods located in this portion of the community. There are other opportunities for park development throughout Orrville. Land negotiations will need to occur between the City and private property owners to acquire additional land for park development.

Trails

The transportation plan proposes the development of a trail system to help improve access throughout the community. By incorporating trails into the existing transportation network, residents will have options to travelling by car. It is important that these trails connect population centers to community areas and parks, as well as other destinations including shopping areas and job centers and industrial activities.

Schools

The location of schools plays an important role in establishing the identity and character of a community. The Orrville School System currently operates three “neighborhood” elementary schools, one junior high and one senior high school. The elementary schools, in particular, are integrated into the surrounding neighborhood and play an important role in the identity of the neighborhood, closeness of the community, and general pride and ownership of the institution. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, neighborhood schools are disappearing through demolition or desertion, noting that *“these schools are often the victims of deferred maintenance, consolidation, development pressure, inadequate government funding, policies promoting the construction of mega-schools in outlying locations, and an often misplaced belief in the superiority of new school construction.”*

The location of the current elementary schools are good, although the schools are currently experiencing some overcrowding and other space issues. The Orrville School Board is currently studying the physical requirements of the school system, with the goal being a plan to satisfy current and future educational facility issues. Proper expansion, renovation, and maintenance of the existing elementary schools can provide a high quality learning environment for new generations of students. Historic neighborhood schools allow young people to walk to class, enjoy a smaller facility with

CITY OF ORRVILLE

neighborhood friends, and be more closely connected with the community. Unfortunately, some of the neighborhood schools are deteriorating. It is recommended that investment be put into the existing school facilities to bring this back into top condition.

A site in the northern portion of the community is being considered as a potential location for a new high school. The relocation of the existing high school to a new facility would allow the junior high to move into the existing high school. This would help alleviate overcrowding at the current junior high and allow this outdated education facility to be closed and reused for another community activity. The proposed site for the future high school is physically separated from the rest of the schools and residential neighborhoods. A school location removed from the core of the community would tend to promote isolation, loss of community identity, and ultimately contribute to sprawl. It is recommended that additional sites be evaluated in the community for school development, before new construction takes place. However, if this site is still preferred, the extension of Elm Street to the north is critical to help incorporate the new school into the fabric of the community.

Government Facilities

A powerful statement was made when Orrville remodeled the existing city building to allow the functions to stay in the downtown area. A similar statement has been made with the renovation and expansion of the Orrville Public Library. This shows a strong commitment to the downtown and reflects the community's desire to maintain a compact development pattern.

It is recommended that all efforts be taken to keep remaining government facilities in the heart of the community, including the post office. Keeping public facilities, including the library, post office, and City Hall, in the downtown area helps ensure a level of vitality at the core of the community. In addition, these activities and the traffic that they create, helps support downtown businesses and services, and minimizes the continued sprawl and loss of identity that typically accompanies suburban growth.



Keeping public facilities in the downtown area helps ensure a level of vitality in the community core.

CITY OF ORRVILLE
