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PARKS & TRAILS

INTRODUCTION

Parks and trails are key to Kearney's character and quality-of-life. These elements provide economic benefits by enhancing the value of individual properties, developments, and the community as a whole. A well-planned parks and trails system enriches people's lives and helps to attract new residents and businesses by positively impacting community character, real estate values and land development patterns.

The City of Kearney is located within the Fishing River and the Clear Creek watersheds and includes riparian areas, floodplains, wetlands, and streams. As population growth and development continues, protecting Kearney's natural open space could serve as the "connective tissue" between developed areas of the City and County. By implementation of sustainable practices, the open space that is protected in commercial areas and individual residential neighborhoods can be linked to a larger system through greenway corridors and trails, thus providing seamless recreational experiences for residents while preserving the ecological health of the City.

In the future, there is an opportunity to tie all the pieces together in a comprehensive parks and trails system that compliments the existing parks system, and also protects and manages stormwater, vegetation, and natural resources.

The Parks and Trails Framework recommends a "Concept" to continue to build a parks system that will incorporate the best of Kearney for future generations. The Framework has been developed through an understanding of the planning context, existing conditions, and community input.

National Standards and Guidelines for Parks

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) classification system of 1996 serves as a recreational guideline for park land relative to population. The system describes several categories of parks, recreational areas and open spaces, which in combination make up a unified municipal park network in Kearney.

Natural Resource Areas

Natural Resource Areas serve lower intensity uses. Lands are set aside to preserve unique natural resources and remnant landscapes and may include open or green spaces and areas of visual/aesthetic buffering serving the entire community.

District Facilities/Parks

District Facilities supplement neighborhood and community parks, serving broader based recreation needs. These parks are generally 75-200 acres in size and serve up to a 5-mile radius. The larger size permits development of both passive and active facilities.

Community Facilities/Parks

Community facilities serve groups of neighborhoods within a one to three-mile radius of the site. The minimum desirable size is 20-25 acres; although smaller sites may be appropriate. Development typically includes picnic shelters, playgrounds, tennis courts, soccer and/or baseball fields, bike or pedestrian trails, restrooms, and auto parking. Park services at the community level are provided in a variety of ways.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are intended to serve residential areas within walking distance of one-half (1/2) to one (1) mile radius. Access is mostly by pedestrians or bicyclists, and park sites are located so that residents do not have to cross a major street to get to the site. The sites are generally 5-15 acres in size.

Mini-park

Mini-parks address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs, serving an area of one-fourth (1/4) mile radius.

Greenways

Greenways serve to form interconnected park systems, tying park system components together with green corridors. Greenways range in size from 25 to 200 feet or more in width.

Sports Complex

Sports Complex serves to consolidate a single purpose use, often including concentrations of programmed athletic fields to larger and fewer sites which service entire communities.

TRENDS



Source: Vireo. Splash Park.



Source: Vireo. Dog Park.



Source: Vireo. Bike Park.

Trends in parks and recreation tell us what is popular with the public now and what is becoming more and less favored for public play. Ranking popularity of forms of play (organized sports, picnicking, swimming, playgrounds and more) sets the tone for what is important to the community and where public funds should be spent. The following trends are offered as a guidepost. Kearney does not currently offer many of these facilities, but could benefit from such a provision.

Trails and Connections

Trail construction is rated very high for most communities. This encompasses both trails and connections between existing trails, including walking trails within parks.

Splash Pads

Aquatics facilities are also often rated very high. Additional amenities that are trending as popular in the region are splash pads. In these facilities, water play is accommodated with zero-depth surfacing and fountain components or water spray structures that can be set up to interact with children's actions and input.

Dog Parks

Among K-9 pet owners, dog parks are becoming very popular destinations. These facilities offer fenced areas where dogs are allowed to play off-leash and with other dogs where many urban neighborhoods would otherwise prohibit such interaction. Dog parks provide shade, seating, and water fountains to refresh pets and owners. Kearney does not currently offer a facility like this, but could benefit from such a provision.

Bike Parks

Bike parks offer destinations where bike enthusiasts of all levels can come to exercise and hone their skills. Off-road courses can be dirt or wooden track, and can be outfitted with a set of platforms, curves, ramps and jumps that follow each other in sequence. A variety of courses with a range of obstacles test the avid biker and train the new rider. Other forms of bike parks include BMX tracks and trick parks where facilities are similar to a skate park, yet laid out with larger distances between the features to accommodate the speed of a bike.

Destination Playgrounds

Not your typical playground, destination playgrounds draw children and adults from across the community for extended play visits. The draw is in the design of the playground which often develops around a central theme and is brought to life with a variety of play materials and equipment. Landscape, boulders, trees and shaped earth become things of play, and not necessarily to the exclusion of swings, slides and spinning objects.

Variety, imagination, and amenities that support the extended visit of families (shade, picnic shelters, rest rooms) are what guarantee success of destination playgrounds.

Nature Recreation

Getting out into nature is a trend that is on the upswing across the US. The following activities have seen an increase in days per capita participation and increase in participants: Viewing and photographing natural scenery, flowers, trees, wildlife, birds and fish, Visiting nature centers, Sightseeing, Visiting water bodies, Visiting wilderness, Developed camping, Boating, ATVing, and Kayaking

Outdoor activities can contribute to better physical conditioning, as well as better emotional health. Kearney has an opportunity to use interest in nature as a means of stimulating greater physical activity, while still accommodating participants with disabilities. Trails, overlooks, and wildlife observation sites can be designed to require some physical effort to enjoy. High gasoline prices may further change the mix of outdoor activities that people choose. They will also likely reduce trips to distant destinations. This may mean greater—not less—visitation to local parks, state parks, and federal lands near Kearney.

Tourism

Also attributable to higher gasoline prices, stay-cations or near-cations have become more popular. Kearney can take advantage of this by promoting a group of park and community destinations as a package. Kearney "Go Cards" could provide tourists with a one-stop admission package to all attractions. This is a great opportunity for partnership between the City and other organizations which offer arts, culture and recreational services.



Source: Vireo. Destination Park.



Source: Vireo. Destination Park.



Source: Vireo. Nature Park.



Source: Vireo.



Source: Vireo. Enrichment Programs.



Source: Vireo. Agri-tourism.

Sustainability

Communities across the US are on a mission of developing new facilities in such a way that they may continue in self-supporting use and expend fewer natural and economic resources over their life cycle. Sustainability is the initiative at work with the goal of increasing public and environmental health while elevating ecological stewardship. Parks can be made more sustainable by powering lights with alternative energy, paving parking and walks with permeable materials to allow stormwater to soak into the ground rather than run off and cause erosion, and mowing less to reduce pollution and the burning of fossil fuels. Native plants reduce landscape maintenance and the use of chemicals to assist plant growth. Sustainable measures are easy to implement and provide positive impacts for people, nature, and municipal finances.

Enrichment Programs

Do to an increase in the number of children who complete their education at home (home-schooled), there is an increased need for ancillary programs which can fill gaps in child socialization, physical education, and health. These programs can be as simple as providing indoor social gathering spaces for children and teens. This space can work in conjunction with indoor gymnasiums and fitness or sports programs public schools would normally provide.

Preventative Health Care

Within a park system, preventative health care is approached differently, yet in concert with what is encountered in the medical field. A few ways park systems can promote preventative health care:

- Increase community desire and ability to walk to their destinations.
- Update/provide walks and trails between neighborhoods and shopping, play, schools, worship centers, and government facilities.
- Provide shade, benches, beauty and clean paths of travel.
- Incorporate fitness equipment in parks and/or along trails.
- Provide educational campaigns relative to getting fit and healthy, including tips on where in the City to do so and what facilities are available.
- Promote community gardens and farmers' markets to increase access to healthy, fresh foods throughout the community.

EXISTING PARK SYSTEM

Parks

The City of Kearney maintains 5 parks comprising close to 300 acres of land available to the public. The parks range in size from 1 acre to 134 acres. In addition to parks, the City maintains close to 7 miles of paved pedestrian/bicycle trails.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are intended to serve residential areas. Access is mostly by walking or bicycling.

- **Lions Park** is a 3-acre park located in the heart of Kearney directly behind the Old Firehouse building which is now serving as a community center building. The park focus is on toddlers with play structures and features appropriate for small children. The park includes an amphitheater, playground equipment, shelters, barbecue equipment, and picnic tables.
- **Future Hall Park Property** is a 1 acre future “senior themed” park located at the corner of S. Prospect Street and E. 92 Highway. The park is currently undeveloped.

Community Parks

Community facilities serve groups of neighborhoods. Development typically includes picnic shelters, playgrounds, ball fields, trails, and restrooms.

- **Mack Porter Park** is a 49-acre park located between I-35 and N. Jefferson St. The park is bordered to the north by Clear Creek. Amenities within the park include 5 lighted baseball/softball fields, 1 day use baseball field, concessions, restrooms, picnic tables, and a 1-mile loop trail. Plans include a future trail connection across Clear Creek to Jesse James Park.
- **Glenside Greenspace** is a 25-acre open space located adjacent to Meadowbrook in the southeastern part of the City. The Fishing River Trail runs along the west side of the open space. Due to its location in the floodplain of the Fishing River, the open space is likely to remain more natural with passive uses like trails.



Source: City of Kearney. Lion Park



Source: City of Kearney. Jesse James Park

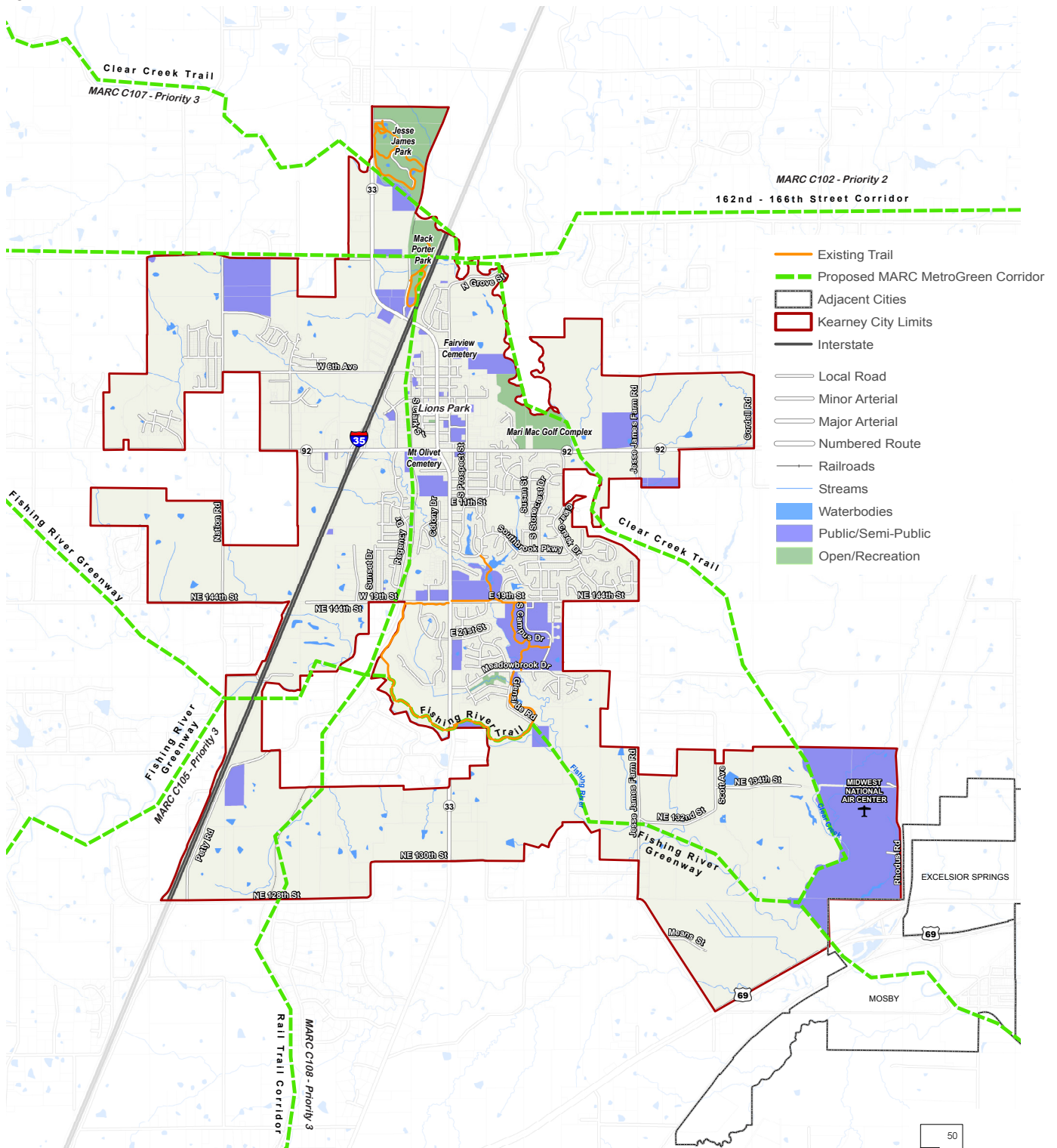
District Parks

District Facilities supplement neighborhood and community parks, serving broader based recreation needs.

- **Jesse James Park** is a 134-acre park located on the northwest side of Kearney between I-35 and N. Jefferson St. Clear Creek is the southern boundary of the park and is the proposed future connection to Mack Porter Park. The park has served as the City's festival grounds for several years and is now home to the Kearney Amphitheater/Pavilion which is used for concerts, movies, festivals, and theater events. Amenities within the park include a lake, 18-hole disc golf course, rodeo arena, 11 soccer fields, a large pavilion, playground equipment, a 1.5-mile loop walking trail, shelters, and concessions.

Existing Parks & Trails System Map (2015)

Figure 13



Source: MARC & Vireo GIS

- **Marimack Golf Course** is a 68-acre golf course, with pool and clubhouse, located north of 92 Hwy along the western side of Clear Creek. The golf course is privately owned but, in the interest of this plan is being included as park land.

Regional Parks

The City of Kearney is located within close proximity to two Clay County parks, one State of Missouri Park, and a federal reservoir.

- **Watkins Mill** is a 560-acre park located approximately 10 miles northeast of the City. The park is owned and managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources in conjunction with Watkins Woolen Mill State Historic Site. The park includes a 100-acre lake, paved walking/bicycle trail, equestrian trail, campground, and numerous shelters and picnic areas.
- **Jesse James Farm and Museum** is a 43-acre historic site owned and managed by Clay County Parks and Historic Sites. The site is located due east of the City off of Jesse James Farm Road.
- **Tryst Falls** is an 18-acre park owned and managed by Clay County Parks and Historic Sites. The park is one of the only natural waterfalls in the area.
- **Smithville Lake** is a 7,200-acre lake located approximately 12 miles northwest of Kearney. The lake provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities including boating, fishing, camping, hiking, trails, and golf, and is a destination for people throughout the Kansas City region. The lake is owned and managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. It also serves as the public water source for the City of Smithville.

Trails

Trails can be used by both pedestrians and cyclists, and are often thought of in purely recreational terms – but they can also fulfill a transportation role if they provide adequate connectivity. The City has three major trails, illustrated in the Existing Parks and Trails System Map.

- In the northern part of the City, the Jesse James Trail is a 9-foot wide paved asphalt path contained within Jesse James Park, just east of Route 33 and generally south of 170th Street. It roughly forms a bisected loop, and is 1.5 miles long.
- The Mack Porter Trail, south of the Jesse James Trail and separated from that trail by 1,400 feet at its closest point, is a 10-foot wide paved asphalt path contained within Mack Porter Park, located adjacent to the west side of I-35 approximately 1,800 feet north of the Route 33 overpass. It is a generally linear 1-mile-long trail with a loop at its southern.
- At the south end of the City, the Fishing River Trail forms a 4-mile loop bounded roughly by the railroad tracks on the west, 19th Street on the north, Kearney High School on the east, and the Fishing River itself on the south. Portions of the trail are concrete, and portions are asphalt; the trail is generally 9-feet wide.

These trails are important elements of Kearney's current infrastructure, but they are isolated: the City lacks a connected trail system. One of the Mayor's Top Ten priorities for 2015-2019 is the creation of a bridge joining Mack Porter Park and Jesse James Park, allowing completion of a trail connection. At the broader scale, Mid-America Regional Council's (MARC's) MetroGreen plan shows several future trails that would connect to and/or through Kearney, and could become integral to a more connected bicycle and pedestrian network in Kearney. The Existing Parks and Trails System Map illustrates these future trails. Note that these trails mostly fall in MARC's Priority Category 3, with one segment being Priority 2. The MetroGreen Plan describes these priorities in the following way (published in 2002):

- Priority 2 - segments are not yet funded. However, completing these segments has been determined to be a high priority based on public comment and input from government officials. It is expected that Priority 2 segments will be constructed over the next 5-to-15 years.
- Priority 3 - segments are needed to complete the system. They represent the long-term strategy. It is expected that Priority 3 segments will be constructed over the next 15-25 years.

Current Supply of City Parks

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) classification system serves as a recreational guideline for park land relative to population. The table shows the NRPA’s four park classifications in the national standards that pertain to Kearney.

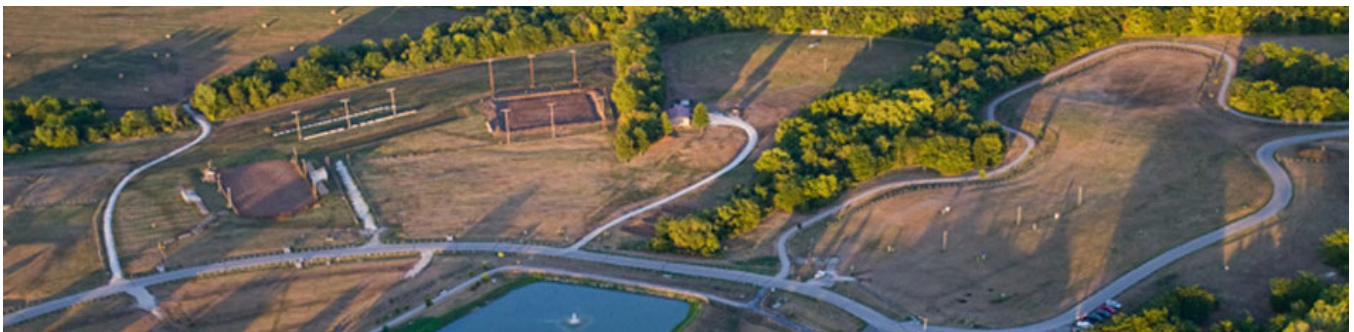
Level-of-service (LOS) analysis is one way that communities measure park land needs and supply. Based on the 2015 City population of 9,261, the current LOS is approximately 33 people per acre of park land.

LOS and other factors will be used during the planning process to identify and evaluate existing and future parks and recreation needs.

Existing and Future Level of Service Needs

Park Type	NRPA Service Radius	NRPA Rec'd Acreages	2015 Existing Parks Acreages	Current Park Needs 2015	Park Needs Scenario C 2035
Regional 7 ac/1000 people 75-200 ac. In size Serves several communities (Not city owned) (Does not include golf courses)	3 - 5-mile	45 – 90 acres	134	0 acres	139
Community 5 ac/1000 people 10-50 ac. In size Services several neighborhoods	1 – 3 mile	45– 72 acres	65	7 acres	100
Neighborhood 2 ac/1000 people 1-10 ac. In size Serves adjacent neighborhoods	¼ mile radius	9-18 acres	4	14 acres	40

Source: National Recreation and Park Association Guidelines



Source: City of Kearney. Jesse James Park

FUTURE PARK SYSTEM

Future Park Needs

Projecting the future size and makeup of Kearney's population helps provide a foundation for park system planning. Kearney is the fastest growing city in metropolitan Kansas City, according to a recent study published by the Kansas City Business Journal. The *2015 List of Fastest-growing Cities* ranked communities by population growth projected from 2014 to 2019. "Kearney, with a current population estimated at 9,261, is expected to see growth of 8.97 percent and reach nearly 10,000 by 2019."

The projected population growth for Kearney is based upon a preferred growth direction resulting in a projected population of **19,978 by 2035**. The previous table shows NRPA guidelines for future population growth for regional, community and neighborhood parks, estimating a need for **279 acres** of park land by 2035.

Preliminary Opportunities

- As part of the public process, the community identified the desire for development of a public facility such as a pool, community center, aquatic center, splash pad, etc....
- Jesse James and Mack Porter Parks serve a large portion of the City given their available amenities. The Kearney Amphitheater and use of Jesse James Park for festivals makes it a destination for residents both within and outside of the City.
- There is a need for neighborhood parks as noted in the Existing Level of Service Table. Opportunities should be explored to add neighborhood or community parks and open space within all new developments. Parks should be strategically located throughout the City, especially south of 92 Hwy and west of I-35. Park land acquired through the City's park land dedication should only be accepted if the property meets established criteria, including the ability to program the park.
- Clear Creek and the Fishing River both have large floodplains which provide constraints for development while at the same time providing opportunities for open space and connectivity. Streamway corridors should be used whenever possible to protect these valuable water resources and natural infrastructure while also providing greenway trails that can be used to connect neighborhoods.
- Opportunities should be explored toward developing an interconnected network of trails to connect existing and future parks. If available, greenways can be used to form interconnected park systems, tying park system components together with green corridors.
- Connectivity between neighborhoods is generally lacking city-wide. Some newer residential subdivisions have sidewalks that assist in making the neighborhoods more walkable.
- The BNSF railroad right-of-way may eventually create an opportunity to extend the walking trail system and contribute to the increase of greenways.
- The floodplain land in Kearney presents an opportunity to work with landowners and developers to use floodplain property for recreation, greenway, wildlife preserve, or open space.
- The topography and natural streambeds in the planning area provide an opportunity to create "greenways" within the community and incorporate a pedestrian trail system.



Source: City of Kearney. Sports Field.

Parks GOAL No.1:

Encourage the creation and development of neighborhood and community parks throughout the city.

PARK LAND POLICIES

Policy 1. Ensure that a 5-10 acre neighborhood park is planned and developed for approximately every 160 acres of residential development.

Policy 2. Require residential subdivisions and multi-family developments to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access to existing and planned parks, greenways, pathways, and the linear trail network.

Policy 3. Adopt design standards defining how residential subdivisions and multi-family development need to provide pedestrian paths to allow for walking and biking connections to a neighborhood park.

Policy 4. Promote development of park and/or recreational facilities jointly with the Kearney R-1 School District

Policy 5. Prepare a strategic comprehensive park plan to identify suitable sites for future neighborhood and community parks; identify potential funding sources to purchase or place options on the property; and, begin negotiations with property owners.

Policy 6. Identify potential nature preserves within the floodplain and integrate with recreational activities, such as a natural interpretive trail.

Recreation GOAL No.2:

Provide new recreation programs and facilities in City parks based upon local needs and trends.

RECREATION POLICIES

Policy 1. Encourage the development of recreational facilities, such as; skateboard park, swimming pool, and tennis courts.

Policy 2. Encourage the development of a community center.

Policy 3. Prepare a 5-year facility plan identifying existing and new recreation facilities and programs.



Source: Vireo. Example Trail System.

PARKS & TRAILS CONCEPT

The creation of a community-wide parks and trails system is a “Concept” for future development. The Concept is intended to increase pedestrian travel, encourage active lifestyles and expand year-round park and recreation options for all ages. The implementation of a parks and trails system is an effective way to provide multi-generational open space and recreational opportunities. Equally important is its ability to integrate the City’s natural areas with its urban areas and key traffic generators.

The “Concept”

Kearney’s “Concept” is a long-range, visionary idea and should be the basis for future detailed park planning, through which Kearney’s parks and trails system would be continually improved.

A critical issue, which cannot be anticipated in advance of development, is the exact relationship between the facilities proposed by the “Concept” Map and the eventual development that will be introduced into the surrounding area. Therefore, it is anticipated that this Concept will retain a level of flexibility, allowing it to be “fine tuned” at the appropriate time. Successful implementation requires the ongoing cooperation of the City, Kearney’s development community, park user groups, neighborhoods, and many others. Allowing the Concept Map to adjust to specific issues and the positive input of these groups is necessary to secure the Concept’s success.

Every three years, the Concept should be re-examined and amended as necessary. Additionally, unique opportunities, not anticipated in the Concept, may become available. Such opportunities are to be immediately reviewed and, if appropriate, added.

Concept Development

The Concept Map is the result of a “layered analysis”, beginning with the mapping of high priority conservation areas and stream buffers, as illustrated in the Concept Map, then adding future land use and population concentrations based on the Future Land Use Map. Distribution of new neighborhood and community parks was based in part, on the quantity and distribution of future residential land use.

As with land use, the pattern is a balance of managing development and preservation of natural features and areas. Trail locations and sidewalk improvements should ideally link to the City’s roads, downtown, schools, churches, businesses,

recreational facilities, and neighborhoods. Analyzing all of these features together makes the best use of the community’s resources.

Elements

The Concept Map brings the needs assessment, land use plan, and public input together into a unified, connected system. An interconnected system provides linkages for people to safely walk or bicycle from their own neighborhood to other neighborhoods, community services, and parks.

The Map shows the integration of two key elements - parks and trail types. These elements, while capable of functioning separately, together provide an enhanced system that truly interconnects neighborhoods and resources throughout the community.

Elements depicted on the Concept Map include:

- Parks
- Trail Types (trails/sidewalks/bike lanes)

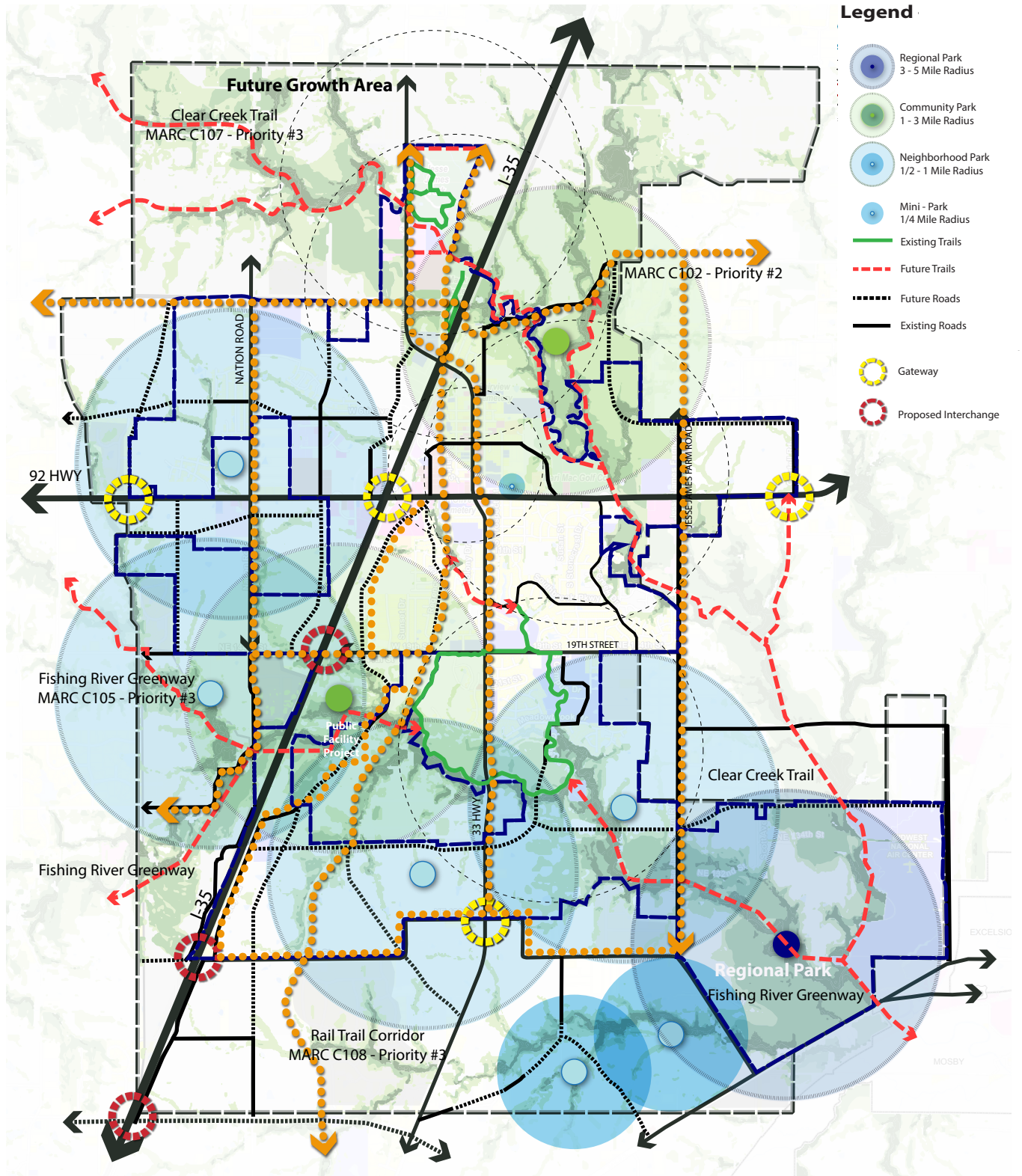
Discussion of each element type follows, including definitions and strategies related to each. Implementation of the Concept Map relies on combining resources and land preservation mechanisms. The strategies explored for the City of Kearney include those most desirable for park development. The Concept recommends a set of strategies for each element. It is important to recognize that combining the available strategies gives the most flexible program and thereby the highest potential for success.



Source: Vireo. Example Trail.

Parks & Trails System “Concept” Map (2016)

Figure 14



Mini-Parks

This is the smallest open space classification, usually 1-acre or less in size, serving a radius of ¼ mile. Mini-parks are used to service small, specific groups or supplement areas with substantial non park-like recreation facilities (i.e., schools) on a walk-to basis. Many school and church playgrounds often serve as de facto mini-parks. These parks are generally situated in neighborhoods, townhouse developments, senior housing complexes, or downtowns. Mini-Parks provide a focal point and green space that functions as a gathering place for residents within a single neighborhood. These greens should be fronted by at least one, preferably two streets with adjacent residences facing or siding, not backing to the property. Typical amenities include picnic tables, playground, support facilities (benches, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, etc) and landscaping. NRPA standards recommend a minimum and maximum standard of ¼ to ½ acre of mini-parks per 1,000 residents, respectively.

Location

The Map “Concept” shows a location for one mini-park at the future Hall Property park location, as well as throughout the City as opportunities present themselves. Older subdivisions generally do not require park lands as part of the development as is required today, the mini-park serves as an added opportunity for the addition of greenspace throughout the community. The final location of any mini-park will likely rest on land availability and price.

Strategies

- Mini-Parks should be part of the open space system in the community but may, or may not, be part of the publicly owned and operated park system. When feasible, provide Mini-Parks in each neighborhood within Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND).

Implementation

- Subdivision Requirements - require planning and dedication of Mini-Park’s through the City’s Subdivision process.
- Neighborhood Associations - require Mini-Parks be maintained by private neighborhood associations. The City should review neighborhood covenants and restrictions to ensure proper provisions exist for long-term maintenance, management, and operation of the space.



Source: Vireo. Sub-division Mini-Park.



Source: Vireo. Example Downtown Mini-Park.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are the foundation of the public park system and serve as the center of recreational activities serving multiple neighborhoods. (usually 2-4) These parks range in size from 1 to 10 acres with an optimum size of 5-acres and serve a radius of ½ to 1-mile maximum. Park development goals are to achieve a balance between active/passive uses and developed/natural amenities. Surrounding areas should be predominantly single family or multi-family residential. Playgrounds and trails are high priorities. As a general rule about half of the park acreage should be dedicated to passive uses. Active recreational areas are best when informal and unstructured. Neighborhood parks should be fronted by a minimum of two streets and surrounding residences should face, not back to the park. Typical amenities include playgrounds, ball fields, trails, shelters, support facilities, passive recreational open space, and landscaping.

Neighborhood Park Acreage

Looking toward the future, population projections for Kearney support the need for 6 new neighborhood parks of 6 to 8 acres in size for a total of 40-acres.

Location

The “Concept” Map shows a location for six new neighborhood parks, along both sides of I-35. The parks should be located along the trail system and should provide a variety of land features allowing for both active and passive recreational uses. The final location of each park will likely rest on land availability and price.

Strategies

- Give high priority to the establishment of neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks may be assembled through park land dedication as development occurs.
- When necessary, the City should program to purchase neighborhood park land if development is unlikely. This may be appropriate where developer requirements do not result in a park of sufficient size.
- Give special attention to new and existing school sites to accommodate neighborhood recreation needs including evening and weekend recreational opportunities through shared resources, acquisition, site design, and enhancement.



Source: Vireo. Example Neighborhood Park.

Community Parks

Community Parks are larger in size and serve several neighborhoods or the community as a whole. They range from 10 to 50 acres with a recommended minimum of 10-acres and serve a radius of 1 to 3 miles. Community Parks offer the opportunity to provide diverse passive and active recreational opportunities. These parks should be fronted by collector streets rather than neighborhood streets and have access to a major thoroughfare within ¼-mile or less. Typical amenities include playgrounds, ball fields, multiuse courts, trails, shelters, support facilities, passive open space and landscaping. They may include highly used recreational facilities such as amphitheaters, sports complexes, swimming pools and recreation centers. They may also contain large passive open spaces or preserve unique natural features.

Community Park Acreage

Looking toward the future, population projections for Kearney support the need for two new community parks of approximately 40 to 50 acres in size for a total of 100-acres.

Location

The “Concept” Map shows a location for two new community parks. The parks should be located along the trail system and should provide a variety of land features allowing for both active and passive recreational uses. The final location of each park will likely rest on land availability and price.

Strategies

- Investigate opportunities for cooperative purchase of property with the school district as they pursue sites for additional elementary schools, as another community park site.
- Give special attention to acquisition of community park sites well in advance of development pressure.
- It is expected that community parks will need to be purchased rather than dedicated given the planned size of each facility. However, opportunities for dedication in part or as a whole should not be precluded or discouraged.



Source: City of Kearney, Jesse James Park

District/Regional Parks

District/Regional Parks supplement neighborhood and community parks, serving broader based recreation needs. For the Kearney area, regional/district parks are typically provided by the County. These parks are generally 75-200 acres in size and serve up to a 5-mile radius. The standard for district facilities is to provide between 5 to 10 acres per 1,000 people. The larger size permits development of both passive and active facilities. Where possible, district facilities include areas of undeveloped land with natural vegetation and/or water features.

District/Regional Park Acreage

Looking toward the future, population projections for Kearney support the need for one new District/Regional Park of approximately 139 acres in size.

Location

The “Concept” Map shows a location for one new District/Regional park within the existing floodplain. The park should be located along a trail system and should provide a variety of land features allowing for both active and passive recreational uses. The final location of the park will likely rest on land availability and price.

Linear Parks

Greenways and trails are also known as Linear Parks. They provide recreation, transportation options, mitigate stormwater and flooding, improve water quality, protect wildlife movement and ecologically sensitive areas, and offer scenic beauty. They are generally integrated into riparian corridors along streams or associated with major thoroughfares. Particularly, greenways and trails provide key linkages between parks, residential areas, employment and commercial centers, schools, and other institutional uses.

The service radius for trails is typically within walking distance of origins and destinations (1/4 to 1/2 mile). Greenways are significantly wider than trails; a minimum width of 50 -feet is recommended for greenways, while the width of a shared use trail is at least 10-feet. Placement of linear parks along residential rear yards is strongly discouraged. Typical amenities include multi-purpose trails, support facilities, and landscaping.



Source: Vireo. Example Regional/District Park.

Trails

Kearney’s linear parks and trails “Concept” includes a system of trail types that are approximately 14-miles in length. Design of the future trails system “Concept” included the identification of community destination points such as church facilities, grocery stores, parks, banks, convenience stores, schools, health facilities, government offices, post office, library, and senior housing. As the community expands, the future system should continue to create trail and active transportation connections to destination points, as well as follow major streams, riparian areas, and railway/utility corridors, and connect to the City’s parks and beyond.

Strategies

To establish a city-wide trail system, considerations include:

- Provide good connectivity within the system by ending trail segments at a street, sidewalk or other logical end point. Include the necessary curb cuts and ADA detectable warning strips, if warranted.
- Manage stream buffer areas with tall grasses and woody vegetation to support erosion control.
- Consider on-street bike facilities when constructing new roadways.
- Establish a City engineering standard trail section for new construction. Require private developers to construct sections of trail within the City that meet City engineering standards.
- Place trail identification and wayfinding signs at logical points along the trail system, such as the beginning point, street crossings and end points to sections of trail.
- Implementation of the trails system will rely upon efficiently identifying and evaluating priority projects. It is recommended the following criteria be considered:
 - » Those projects with potential for partnership with other agencies and developments and/or secured funding for construction are all candidates for implementation.

- » Trails that connect two existing trails or extend an existing trail are high priorities. These kinds of connections serve the system as a whole by creating higher access to the trail system and increase trail use.
- » Trail segments are a means to create access to and protect all types of natural and cultural resources from over-development. Segments that include educational opportunities, habitat preservation, stormwater solutions and improved water quality are a high priority.
- » Priority should also be given where trail improvements would address difficult impediments such as interstates/highways, and railroad crossings early in the planning process. These kinds of improvements greatly increase trail use, increasing demand for trail development.

Trail Types

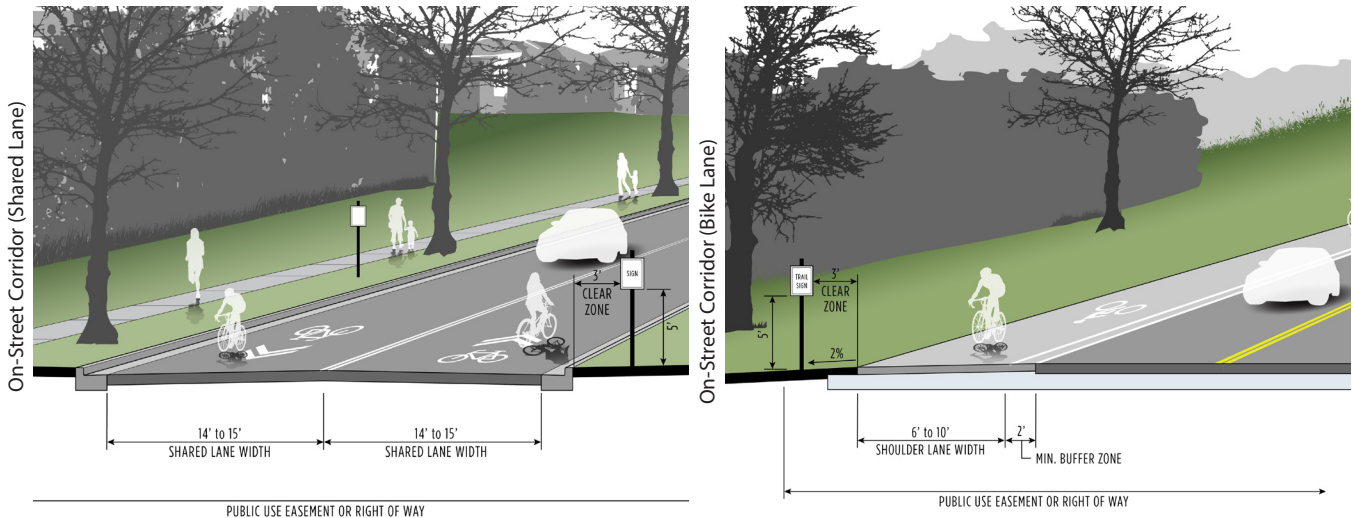
Trail segments, as shown on the “Concept” Map, may be acquired through park land dedication, acquisition, and/or adoption of a stream setback ordinance with pedestrian/ joint use and access agreements in corridors as defined on the Map. The final location of each trail will likely rest on land availability and price.

Three principal trail types would be sufficient to establish connectivity. These trail types include:

- Greenway Corridor (paved and unpaved)
- On-Street Corridor (bike lane and shared)
- Multi-use Corridor (sidewalk)

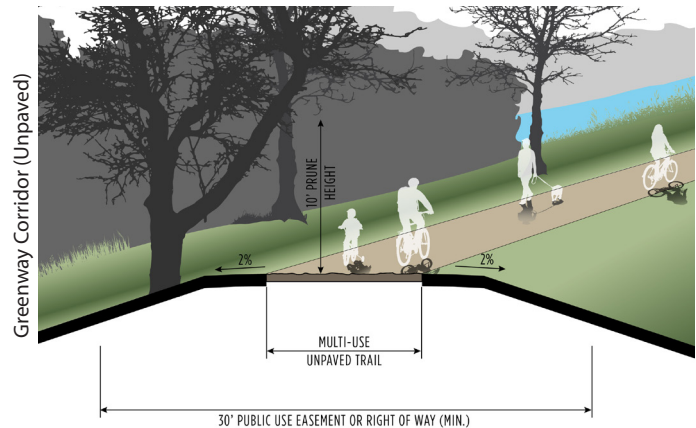
Trail Types

On-street corridor - On-street facilities such as bike lanes could occur on paved shoulders (in rural areas) or within existing travel way as road width allows. Bike lanes are designated with striping and are indicated by pavement stencils and signage alerting vehicles to expect bicycle traffic along roadway. On-street facilities such as shared lanes (or sharrows) can be utilized where right-of-way width is limited and traffic speeds do not exceed 35 mph. Shared lanes are identified with high-visibility pavement markings that alert motorists that bicycle traffic may be present.



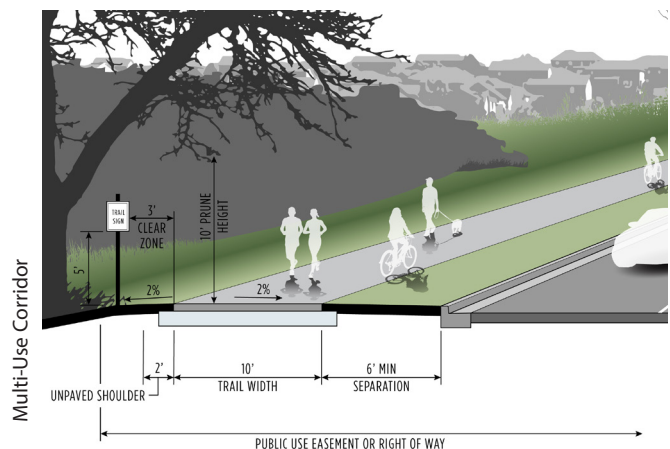
Greenway Corridor

An unpaved greenway corridor is characterized by a soft-surfaced trail located along the river, greenway and/or stream. These trails are open to all users except equestrian and motorized vehicles. A paved greenway corridor is characterized by a hard-surfaced 10-foot wide trail located along a river, greenway, and/or stream. These trails are open to all users except motorized vehicles. It is common for experienced cyclists to use this type of trail if the greenway creates a shorter route to destinations.



Multi-use Corridor

A multi-use corridor is characterized by a hard-surfaced 10-foot wide trail (sidewalk) located adjacent to streets. These trails are open to all users except motor vehicles. These corridors are good for inexperienced cyclists and runners but are problematic when many commercial driveways are present. This creates conflicts between motorists and trail users and should be addressed in site specific planning and design.



Source: Vireo.



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