

The Town of Argos Five - Year Parks Master Plan 2026-2030



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Chapter 1: Introduction

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1.1 Parks Department Overview

Park Board

The Park Board was reestablished in 1996 and is composed of five voting members. Four members are appointed by the Town Council to serve four-year terms, arranged in staggered succession so that no more than two terms expire in the same year. In addition, no more than two appointees may belong to the same political party. The fifth voting member is a representative selected by the local school board.

Members

- Mark Dean - President
 - Damon Binkley - Vice President
 - Valerie Harley - Secretary
 - Phil Dean
- 201 West Walnut Street, Argos, Indiana 46501
574-892-5717

Park Board Functions & Duties

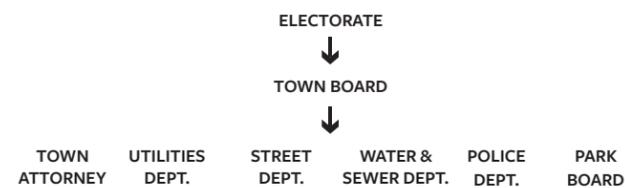
The Argos Parks and Recreation Board serves as the guiding body responsible for the direction, development, and oversight of the town's park system. Its primary role is to establish policies and goals that ensure the effective management of park projects, programs, and activities. The Board provides leadership in shaping a park system that supports recreation, community health, and overall quality of life.

The Park Board acts as an important connection between residents, town leadership, and community organizations. It helps raise awareness about the value of parks, open spaces, and recreation programs, while also encouraging public involvement and volunteer participation. Through collaboration with Town Council and other Town Commissions and Town Departments, like the Redevelopment Commission and the Streets Department, the Argos Park Board seeks the highest level of partnership in order to have a unified vision in all park planning efforts. Engaging with civic groups, local agencies, and private partners, the Board works to strengthen community support for parks and ensure that facilities and programs meet local needs.

Financial stewardship is a key responsibility of the Park Board. The Board works to

secure funding, authorize expenditures, and maintain accountability through careful planning and budgeting. The Park Board successfully secured funding from the Stellar Communities Program which was received by Marshall County Crossroads in 2019 and helped fund the design and construction of Nickle Plate Square in the downtown area. Each year, it prepares and submits an annual report and budget to the Town Council, summarizing accomplishments and outlining goals for the continued improvement of the park system.

The Park Board also establishes rules for the use of park facilities and ensures that parks remain safe, welcoming, and well-maintained. It oversees measures to protect park property, coordinates with law enforcement when needed, and appoints administrative staff to assist with operations. Board members may also serve on other local committees or commissions to help coordinate community efforts related to parks and recreation. Through these responsibilities, the Argos Parks and Recreation Board works to provide safe, accessible, and enjoyable parks and recreation opportunities that enhance the lives of all Argos residents.



Park Board Funding Challenges & Outlook

Across Indiana, reductions in state and federal funding have created challenges for local park systems, limiting access to grants and shared revenues that once supported maintenance and improvements. Many communities now rely more heavily on local budgets and partnerships to sustain operations. In anticipation of these statewide funding cuts, the Argos Park Board has taken proactive measures to maintain financial stability. Careful planning and use of general funds have positioned the Town to continue essential park operations and move forward with scheduled capital improvements without major disruption. While the Parks budget is expected to remain steady, the Board remains cautious of rising costs and fewer external funding opportunities. Continued collaboration, fiscal discipline, and exploration of new funding sources will be key to sustaining and enhancing the Argos park system in the years ahead.





1.2 Definition of the Planning Area

The planning area for this Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan is defined not only by the physical location of park properties, trails, and open spaces maintained by the Town of Argos, but also by the population that utilizes these resources. While Argos is a rural community located approximately 30 miles south of South Bend and adjacent to the U.S. 31 corridor, its parks and recreational amenities serve a broader user base that extends beyond municipal boundaries. Residents from surrounding rural areas, generally within an approximate five mile radius, including nearby communities such as Bourbon and Tippecanoe, frequently utilize Argos's park system due to the limited availability of comparable recreational infrastructure in their home communities.

Within the town limits, Argos oversees four named parks, green spaces, and recreational areas totaling approximately 84 acres. The community is often described as "A Town Within a Park," a phrase that reflects more than a slogan. It illustrates how parks and open space are woven into the town's identity and sense of place. Recreation, particularly youth and community sports such as soccer and baseball, plays a central role in local culture and contributes to consistent visitation from both residents and non residents. This regional draw influences facility demand, programming needs,

and maintenance considerations while also supporting local economic activity through events, tournaments, and visitor spending.

For planning purposes, the project area includes all park properties, trails, natural areas, and open green space maintained by town staff, while the planning area also acknowledges the geographic origin of park users. Argos's parks function as both recreational amenities and essential community infrastructure, providing opportunities for leisure, wellness, and social connection while also serving functional roles such as stormwater management, ecological health, and open space preservation.

Defining the planning area in this dual manner, both physical assets and user population, allows the Master Plan to more accurately evaluate service levels, access equity, connectivity, and future investment priorities. It recognizes that parks in Argos are not isolated facilities, but community anchors that support physical activity, mental well being, and social interaction, reinforce the town's welcoming and close knit character, and contribute to long term economic vitality and quality of life for both current residents and future generations.





1.3 Master Plan Goals and Objectives

The development of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a critical step for the Town of Argos to ensure its park system continues to meet the needs of residents and the broader user population, support community priorities, and enhance overall quality of life. A Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides a structured framework for evaluating existing facilities, identifying opportunities for improvement, and guiding the development of future parks, trails, and recreational spaces. When effectively implemented, the plan becomes a practical decision making tool that supports efficient allocation of resources, pursuit of grant funding, and enhancement of the overall park experience for residents and visitors.

Parks Master Plan Introduction

As Argos continues to grow and evolve, its parks and public spaces must adapt to changing expectations while remaining aligned with community values. The recent acquisition of nearly nine acres of property adjacent to Community Park presents a significant opportunity to expand recreational space and introduce new amenities that strengthen the overall park system. The Town's park network, which includes Community Park, Foker Park, Memorial Park, and Nickel Plate Square, is intended to provide a balanced range of active and passive recreational opportunities, support youth and community sports, and create welcoming environments for social interaction and relaxation throughout the year.

Parks Master Plan Purpose

The purpose of this Master Plan is to serve as a guiding document for the planning, management, and enhancement of the parks and recreation system over the next five years. It establishes priorities, defines measurable goals and objectives, and outlines strategies for improving facilities, programming, maintenance practices, and operations. By providing a clear roadmap, the plan enables informed decisions regarding capital investment, staffing, partnerships, and community engagement while ensuring that parks continue to support public health, community identity, and local economic activity.

This Master Plan also recognizes practical considerations such as budget limitations, maintenance demands, and staff capacity. These constraints require strategic prioritization and encourage collaboration with community organizations, volunteers, and regional partners. Investment in parks and public spaces is not solely an expense, but a long term investment in economic vitality, neighborhood stability, and environmental quality. Well planned parks can attract visitors, support local businesses, and provide lasting physical, social, and ecological benefits.

Developed through coordination among the Park Board, Town staff, and community stakeholders, with input gathered through public meetings, surveys, and engagement efforts, this Master Plan establishes a flexible framework capable of responding to changing community needs, funding opportunities, and recreation trends. As a living document, it is intended to guide continued improvements, strengthen system connectivity, and ensure that Argos's parks remain functional, inclusive, and responsive to both resident and regional users.

Chapter 2: Community Context, Inventory & Analysis

- 2.1 Community Construct
- 2.2 Natural Features & Landscape
- 2.3 Social and Economic Factors
- 2.4 Cultural, Historical & Community Assets
- 2.5 Previous Planning Documents





2.1 Community Construct

Argos is a small rural community characterized by a close knit population and a strong sense of local pride. The town maintains a family oriented culture where residents value connection, support for local schools, and participation in community events. This identity is reflected in the housing pattern, which consists primarily of single family detached homes and established residential neighborhoods.

Parks and recreational spaces function as important community assets and central gathering places for both organized activities and informal social interaction. The town's physical structure centers on a traditional downtown area that is closely linked to the Marshall County Fairgrounds, with neighborhood streets and homes extending outward to create a cohesive and walkable community interior. Residential areas maintain strong physical and visual relationships with nearby parks, including Community Park and Foker Park on the west side of town and Nickel Plate Square and Memorial Park on the east side.

Beyond the residential core, agricultural and light industrial lands define the town's perimeter and reinforce its rural character while also presenting opportunities for open space preservation and future greenway connections. Existing trails and planned pedestrian routes linking neighborhoods, schools, downtown destinations, and parks demonstrate an ongoing community commitment to accessibility, connectivity, and long term sustainability.

Planning Implications

- Park access is generally good within the central portions of town but uneven at the edges.
- Future park and trail investments should focus on improving connectivity between neighborhoods, schools, and parks.
- Growth areas should integrate pedestrian connections and green space early in the development process.

Existing Parks

1. **Community Park:** 59 acres
506 W Walnut St. Argos, IN 46501
2. **Memorial Park:** 3.3 acres
300-348 S Michigan St. Argos, IN 46501
3. **Foker Park:** 23.6 acres
Pond St, Argos, IN 46501
4. **Nickel Plate Square:** 0.85 acres
121 E Walnut St. Argos, IN 46501

Community Assets

5. **Argos Community Schools**
6. **Marshall County Fairgrounds**
7. **ITAMCO**
8. **Sequel Wire and Cable**
9. **New Residential Development**
10. **Altium Packaging**





Walkability Map with Trails and Sidewalks

Walkability in planning refers to the ability of residents to access daily destinations on foot rather than relying solely on personal vehicles. Argos currently has a walk score of 32 out of 100, indicating that it functions primarily as a car dependent community. While this reflects limited access to amenities without a vehicle, the town's compact form and proximity between neighborhoods, parks, schools, and downtown destinations create meaningful opportunities to strengthen pedestrian connectivity.

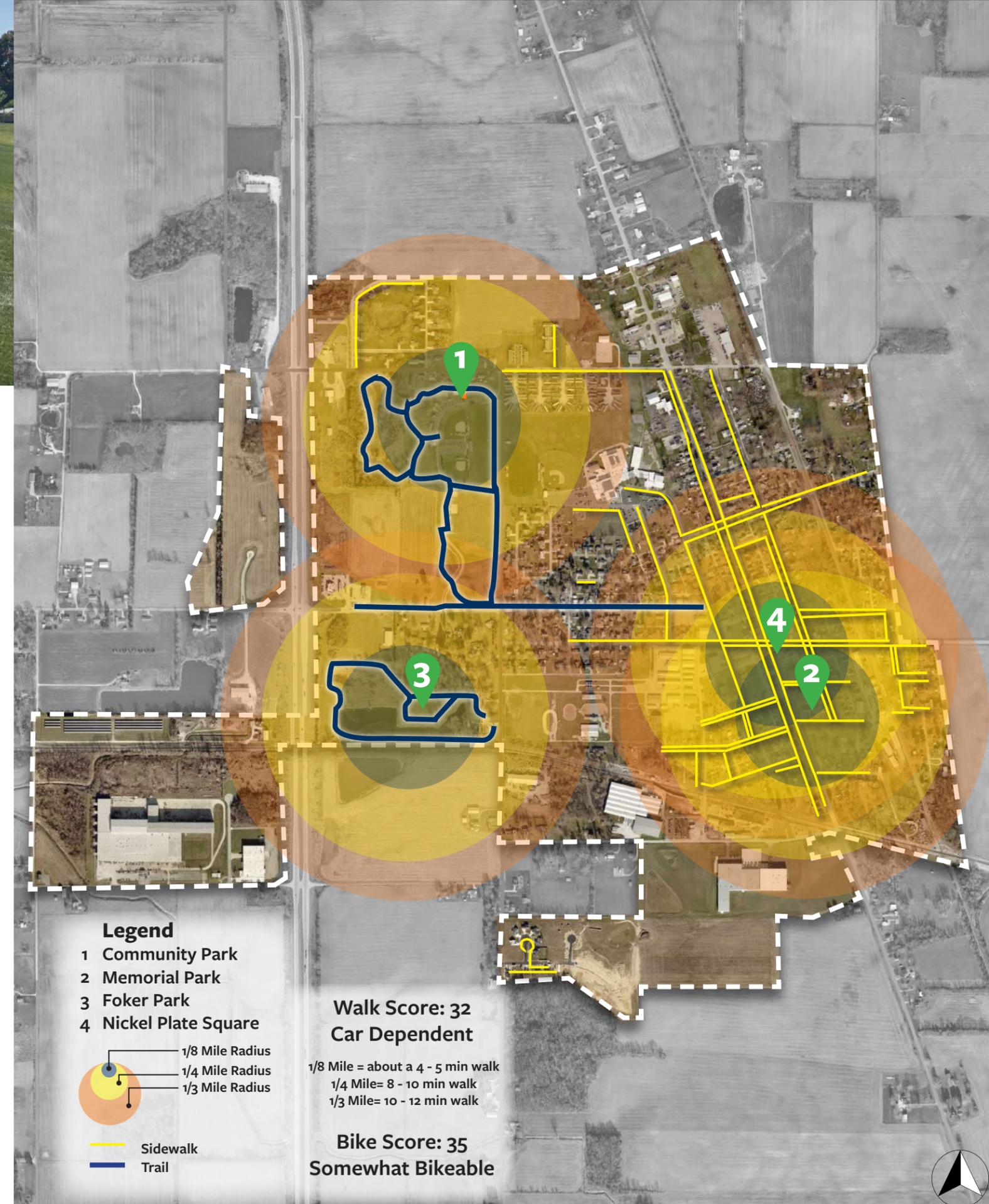
Sidewalk and trail infrastructure within Argos is present but inconsistent. Several residential areas are supported by sidewalks, yet gaps remain where safe and continuous walking routes are limited or unavailable. Most existing trails are located within park boundaries and provide valuable recreational loops, but they offer minimal connection between parks, neighborhoods, and other community destinations. Trails within Community Park and Foker Park are well used and demonstrate strong local interest in walking and outdoor recreation, though these internal routes do not currently function as part of a continuous town wide network.

Pedestrian access varies by location. Foker Park and Community Park are generally accessible to residents west of downtown, although Foker Park lacks dedicated pedestrian access and often requires walking along South Kenilworth Road where sidewalks are absent. Nickel Plate Square benefits from direct connections to the downtown sidewalk system and is surrounded by neighborhoods within comfortable walking distance. Memorial Park is accessible by foot

via the sidewalk along South Michigan Street, which provides a direct and defined route. Neighborhoods in the northeast portion of town experience the lowest level of pedestrian access to park space, and newer residential areas south of the community remain largely disconnected from the existing sidewalk network.

Expanding sidewalks and developing a connected trail system would improve safety, increase equitable access to recreation, and encourage more active travel throughout the community. Strengthening pedestrian routes near the school campus, where athletic events already attract consistent participation, would further support daily use and reinforce Argos's role as a local center for recreation and community activity.

Currently, Argos does not have designated bicycle infrastructure. Introducing bicycle lanes or shared roadway markings along key corridors such as Michigan Street and Walnut Street would support cycling to parks, schools, and downtown destinations while reducing short vehicle trips and broadening transportation options for residents.





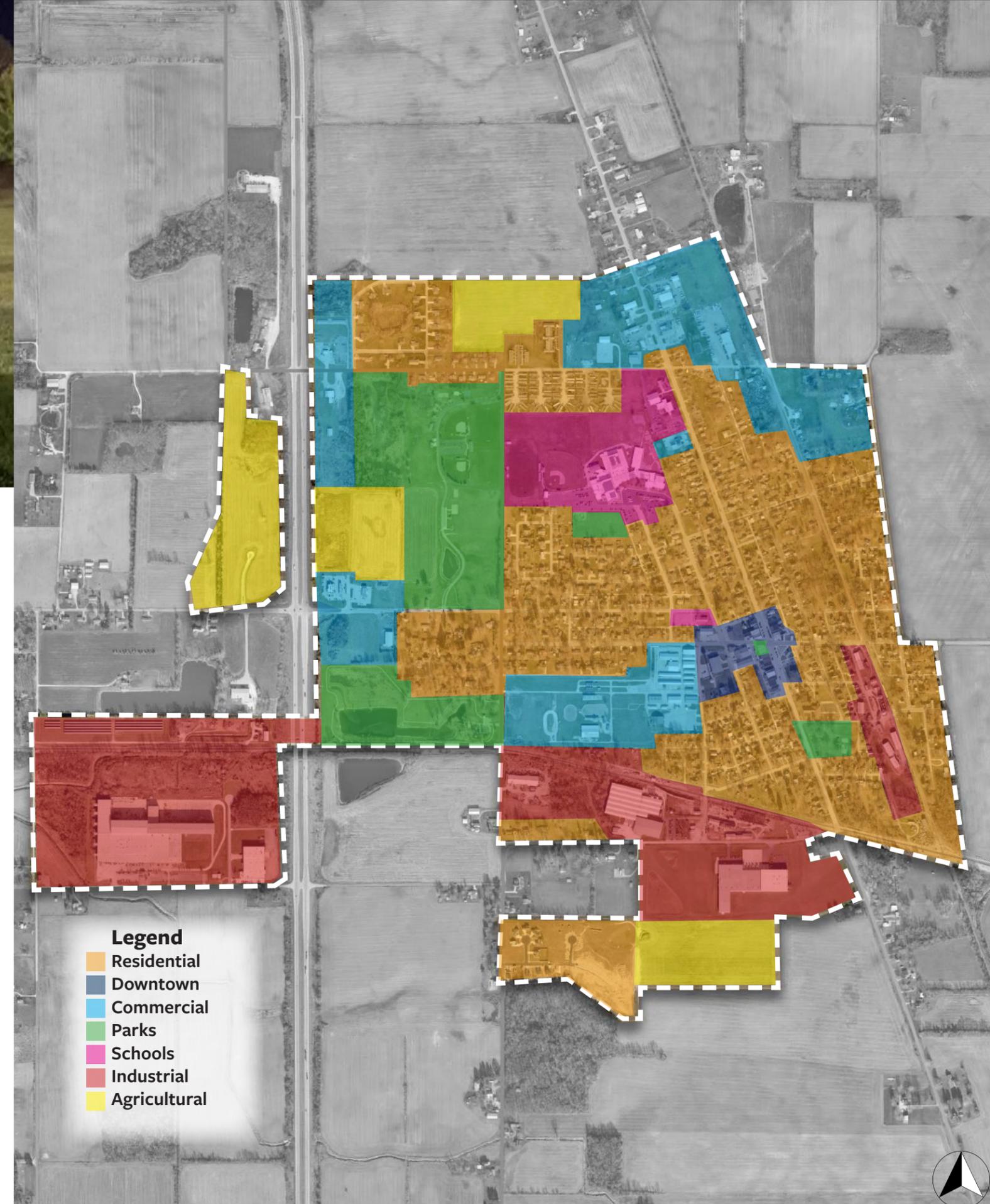
Community Use & Zoning

Community use patterns in Argos illustrate how residential areas, parks, and public destinations relate to one another and where opportunities for improved connectivity exist. Housing within the community consists primarily of single family detached homes, with only a limited presence of multifamily residences. Much of the established housing is concentrated in the central and eastern portions of town, while several of the larger park spaces are located to the west. Expanding recreational amenities or neighborhood scale green spaces on the east side of town would improve geographic balance and increase convenient access for many residents.

Existing land use relationships support frequent park visitation due to the close proximity of established neighborhoods to Community Park, Foker Park, Memorial Park, and Nickel

Plate Square. Despite this advantage, several edge neighborhoods, particularly those in the northeast and southern portions of the community, remain less directly connected to the park system. Strengthening sidewalk routes and developing additional trail connections from these areas would improve safety and provide more consistent access to recreational opportunities. Incorporating small green spaces, pedestrian corridors, and neighborhood connections within both existing and future residential developments would further enhance accessibility and encourage walking and cycling to community destinations.

The Town has demonstrated continued commitment to park investment through the recent acquisition of approximately 8.5 acres adjacent to Community Park, creating space for future amenities that respond to community needs and long term growth. Coordinating residential development patterns with the park and trail network will help ensure that each neighborhood remains functionally and visually connected to the community's recreational and social spaces.





Tree canopy coverage and shade distribution within Community Park are uneven relative to the park's overall size. Athletic fields and much of the southern lawn area remain largely open with limited natural shade, while the wetland and northern amenity areas contain higher concentrations of mature trees that provide more comfortable conditions throughout the year. The central playground has no direct canopy coverage and currently relies on a single picnic shelter for shade. Expanding tree planting efforts, diversifying species selection, and strategically introducing canopy clusters near high use amenities would improve visitor comfort, reduce heat exposure, and strengthen long term landscape resilience. Coordination with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Community and Urban Forestry program may provide access to technical guidance, seedlings, and potential grant opportunities that support these improvements.

distribution across open lawn areas. Public engagement feedback has identified safety concerns related to nearby industrial development, indicating that additional tree planting and the creation of a denser vegetative buffer could improve visual screening, user comfort, and perceived safety while also enhancing ecological value (See Page 92: Public Survey Write in Responses).

Weather related impacts such as heavy rainfall, localized flooding, drought conditions, and winter ice events influence turf quality, trail surfaces, and drainage performance across the park system. Ongoing assessment of erosion areas, soil compaction, invasive plant species, and stormwater infrastructure will help prioritize maintenance and capital improvements. Mapping flood prone areas in relation to park boundaries would further support long term planning and risk mitigation.

Foker Park contains a large pond that is regularly used for fishing and paddling and represents another important water feature within the park system. Planned enhancements that improve access, overlook areas, and seating should be paired with continued attention to water quality and shoreline conditions. Tree coverage within Foker Park is concentrated near primary amenities on the eastern portion of the site, with more limited

Seasonal amenities also contribute to year round use. The sledding hill at Community Park remains a well used winter destination that reinforces the importance of maintaining safe slopes and durable turf coverage. By protecting natural resources, strengthening tree canopy diversity, and proactively managing stormwater and vegetation health, the Town can maintain parks that are environmentally resilient, visually appealing, and functional in all seasons.

2.2 Natural Features & Landscapes

Climate & Stormwater Considerations

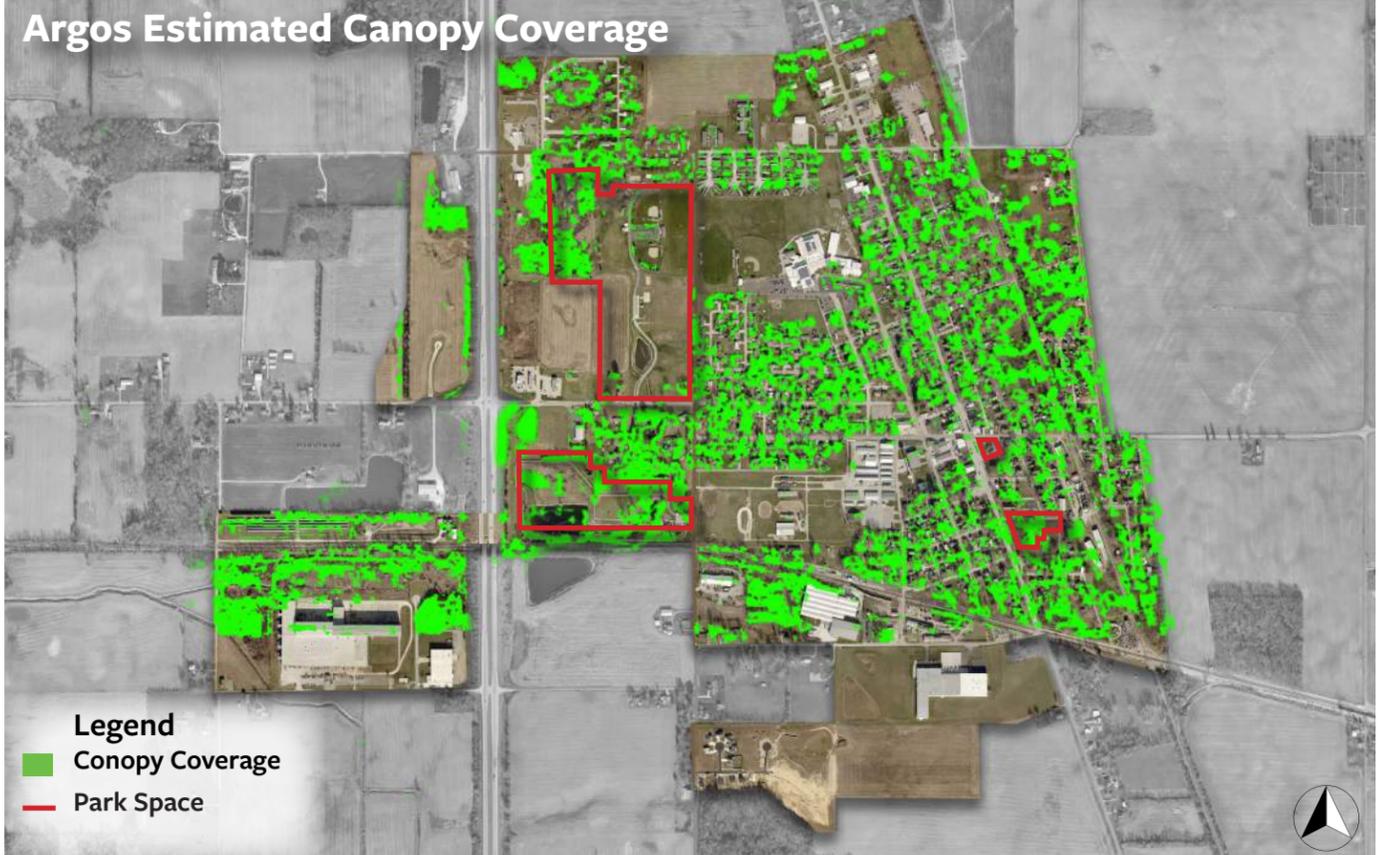
Argos experiences a wide range of seasonal conditions, with warm and humid summers followed by cold and snowy winters. Typical temperatures range from approximately 20 degrees Fahrenheit in winter to the mid 80s in summer, with occasional periods of extreme heat or near zero winter lows. The warm season generally extends from late May through September, while colder conditions occur from November through March. Spring and summer months experience the highest levels of rainfall, which directly influence park maintenance needs, turf conditions, drainage performance, and seasonal use patterns. Designing park amenities and landscapes that respond to these conditions supports year round usability and visitor comfort.



Community Park demonstrates the relationship between recreation and natural systems. The park wetland functions as a primary stormwater retention area that manages runoff during heavy rain events while supporting native vegetation and wildlife habitat. The large pond within the park also serves both recreational and functional purposes by providing fishing opportunities and acting as an overflow basin for adjacent drainage areas. Continued attention to water quality, shoreline stabilization, and vegetation management is necessary to preserve these assets. Site observations and photographic documentation indicate algae accumulation within portions of the wetland and areas of declining turf health, which suggest the need for routine ecological monitoring, weed control, reseeding, erosion mitigation, and targeted restoration efforts to maintain long term environmental quality.



Argos Estimated Canopy Coverage



The Role of Parks in Addressing Climate and Stormwater Functions

The park system in Argos plays an important role in supporting climate resilience, stormwater management, and environmental quality. Through intentional design and maintenance practices, parks can reduce flooding risk, improve water quality, moderate heat, and remain functional throughout the year. The following considerations highlight both existing conditions and opportunities for improvement within the Argos park system.

Stormwater Management and Flood Mitigation Zones:

Community Park has long functioned as a stormwater retention area serving adjacent residential neighborhoods to the east. A standing drain field and overflow basins direct excess stormwater into the park pond, increasing the overall volume of water the site can manage during significant rain events. This integrated system protects nearby homes while reinforcing the pond's functional capacity.

Foker Park is located within a designated floodway fringe and utilizes open space to retain stormwater during heavy rainfall. Ongoing and future upstream development, including a new truck stop north of the park, introduces additional impervious surface that may increase runoff into Foker Park. This condition presents an opportunity to incorporate native rain gardens, bioswales, and vegetated filtration areas designed to capture and treat runoff before it enters the pond. These measures would enhance water quality, reduce erosion risk, and contribute to the visual character of the park.

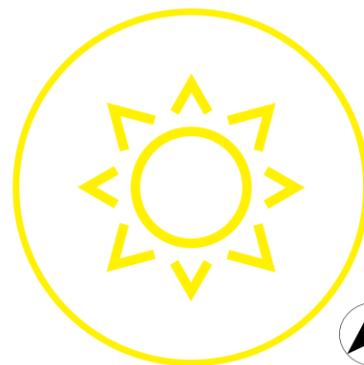
Green Infrastructure:

Green infrastructure practices can further strengthen the environmental performance of Argos parks. Opportunities exist within Community Park and Foker Park to introduce rain gardens and bioswales that manage runoff while enhancing landscape aesthetics and biodiversity.

Nickel Plate Square already incorporates permeable crushed limestone within its tree bosque, allowing water infiltration in a downtown setting that is otherwise dominated by impervious surfaces. Similar permeable pavement applications could be considered for future trail segments, seating areas, and parking improvements within other parks. As improvements are planned for Memorial Park, maintaining and enhancing stormwater permeability through surface selection and grading design should remain a priority.

Shade and Cooling:

Tree canopy plays a critical role in moderating summer heat and improving visitor comfort. Public engagement has identified a need for additional shade at play areas within Community Park. Currently, many athletic fields and open lawn areas lack adequate canopy coverage, and the central playground relies primarily on a single shelter for shade. Strategic tree planting near high use amenities, combined with well designed shade structures where appropriate, would improve comfort, increase biodiversity, and enhance the overall landscape character while maintaining space for active recreation.



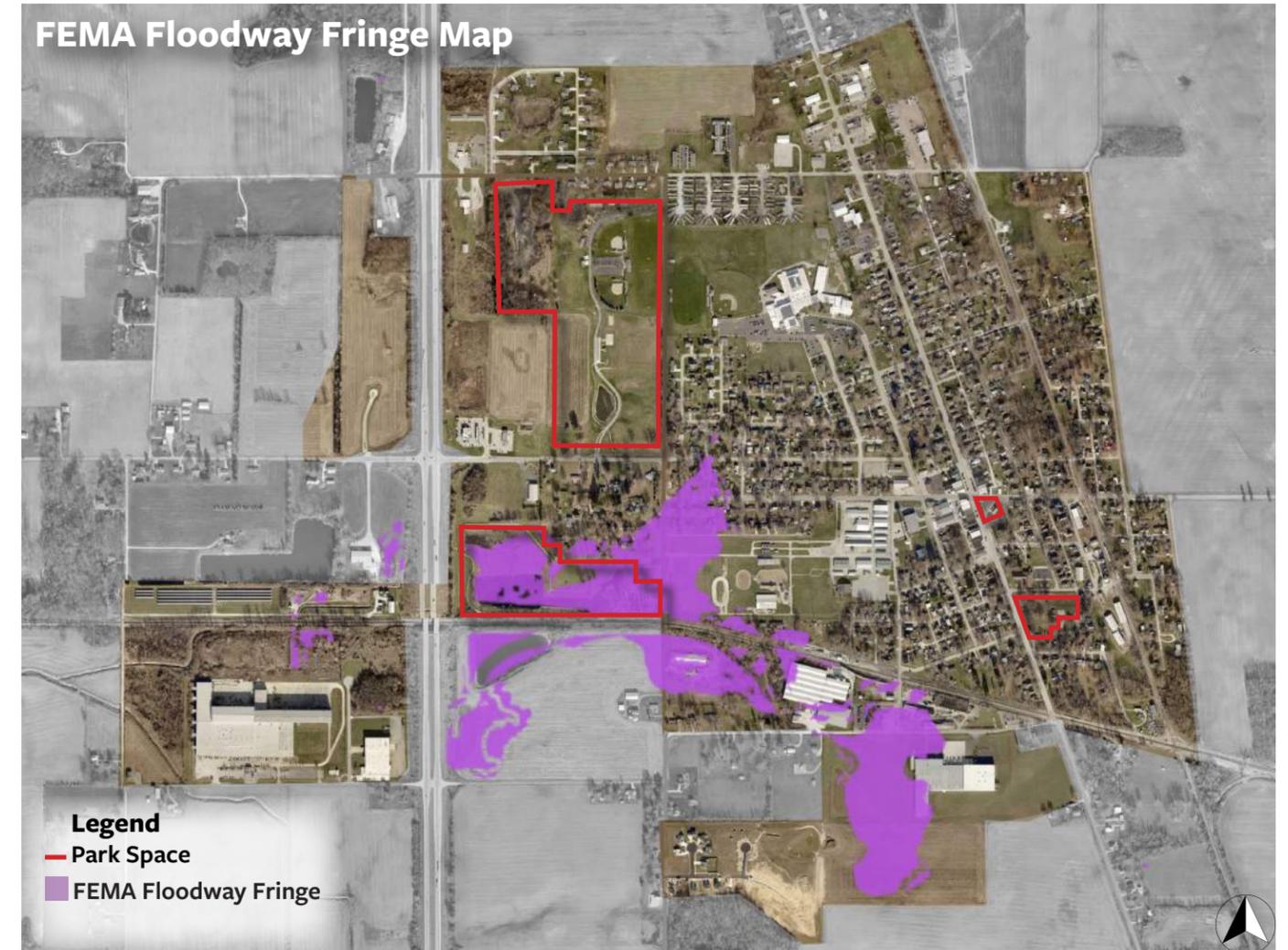
Foker Park and Memorial Park benefit from more established canopy coverage near key amenities, though additional plantings could improve continuity and long term resilience. Coordinated planting efforts that emphasize species diversity and long term health will support both environmental performance and user experience.

Seasonal Adaptability:

Argos parks support recreation across multiple seasons. The sledding hill at Community Park serves as a winter amenity and has potential for expanded seasonal use with appropriate infrastructure and programming. Enhancing winter accessibility through snow clearing and trail maintenance at Foker Park would allow continued physical activity during colder months.

Seasonal programming at Nickel Plate Square and other park spaces can further activate public areas during fall, winter, and spring holidays, reinforcing year round engagement. By aligning infrastructure investment, maintenance practices, and programming with seasonal conditions, the Town can ensure that parks remain accessible, functional, and welcoming throughout the year.

Through continued integration of stormwater management, green infrastructure, shade expansion, and seasonal planning, Argos can strengthen the resilience and long term sustainability of its park system while protecting adjacent neighborhoods and enhancing overall park quality.



2.3 Social and Economic Factors

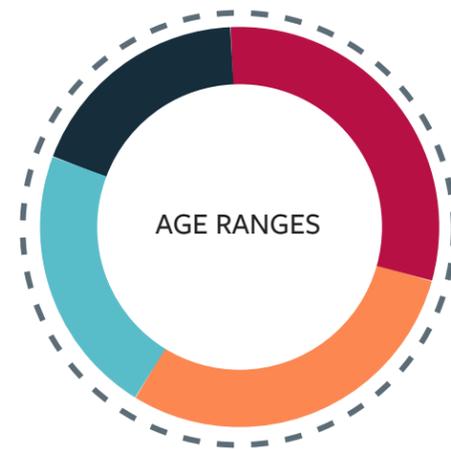
With a total land area of approximately 1.3 square miles and a population of around 1,700 residents, Argos maintains the character of a close knit rural town while experiencing gradual demographic and economic shifts that will influence the future of its park system. Understanding the town's population structure, household composition, and economic conditions ensures that Argos's parks and recreation services continue to meet current needs while anticipating future growth.

Population and Demographics

Argos's population has remained relatively stable over the past decade, peaking at about 1,800 residents in 2020 before settling near 1,700 in the most recent census. The community's compact form and density of approximately 1,340 residents per square mile contribute to its walkable scale. The median age is 34.1 years, and the average household size is 2.6 people, indicating a community centered around young and growing families. About 30 percent of residents are under 18, while roughly 8 percent are 65 or older.

This age distribution highlights the need for recreation opportunities that serve multiple generations. Playgrounds, splash pads, and family friendly trails meet the needs of young families, while shaded seating, accessible paths, and comfortable gathering areas support older adults. Although Argos is a largely homogeneous community, local parks play a critical role in fostering social connection and inclusion among all residents.

Statewide trends documented in the 2021 to 2025 Indiana Department of Natural Resources Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan indicate that Indiana's population growth has slowed, the median age is gradually increasing, and more baby boomers are entering retirement. These broader patterns reinforce the importance of designing parks in Argos that support active aging, accessible infrastructure, and long term wellness. As Indiana's population ages, small towns that offer safe walking routes, attractive green space, and accessible community amenities are better positioned to retain residents and attract new households seeking quality of life.



Household Composition and Housing

Argos contains approximately 706 households and 789 total housing units, with an 89 percent occupancy rate. Most households are family based, and 69 percent of occupied homes are owner occupied. The median home value is approximately \$128,100, lower than both county and state averages. More than half of homes are valued between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and over one third fall below \$100,000.

These housing patterns suggest a predominantly working class population with limited disposable income for private recreation. Public parks therefore serve as vital, cost free spaces for activity, play, and gathering. In communities such as Argos, parks function as essential infrastructure rather than optional amenities.

Research cited in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, including a study conducted by the Ball State University Center for Business and Economic Research, found that households increasingly choose where they want to live based on quality of place, and businesses then follow the workforce. The study identified a strong correlation between the built environment and population movement, noting that recreational amenities such as trails, playgrounds, parks, and open green space significantly influence relocation decisions.

For Argos, this finding has direct relevance. Investment in well maintained parks, connected sidewalks, community gathering spaces, and accessible recreation facilities strengthens the town's competitiveness within Marshall County and the broader region. As manufacturing and health care employment continue to shape much of northern Indiana's economy, communities that provide attractive, healthy living environments are more likely to retain workers and support small business growth.

Additional research summarized in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan highlights the educational and developmental benefits of nature exposure for children. Studies published in *Frontiers in Psychology* conclude that experiences with nature can improve attention, reduce stress, increase physical activity, and foster cooperation and stewardship. In a community where nearly one third of residents are under age 18, access to safe and engaging natural environments in parks such as Community Park, Memorial Park, and Foker Park directly supports youth development and long term community well being.

As residential growth occurs to the south and northeast, Argos has an opportunity to integrate green space, trails, and pedestrian connections early in the development process. Doing so will not only maintain convenient park access across the community, but will also reinforce the type of built environment that attracts residents, supports economic stability, and enhances overall quality of life.



Groundbreaking for Housing Subdivision in Argos Southern End of Town

Economic Profile and Employment

ALICE, which stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, is a measure developed by United For ALICE to identify households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level but below the basic cost of living for their county. These households often struggle to afford essential expenses such as housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and communication services. The ALICE Threshold includes both households in poverty and those who are employed but remain unable to meet the full cost of basic needs.

According to 2023 data from United For ALICE, approximately 45 percent of households in Argos fall below the ALICE Threshold. In Marshall County, the annual survival budget for a household of two adults and two children is estimated at 63,348 dollars. The median household income in Argos is approximately 60,200 dollars, which is below the state median. Of the town's 706 households, 108 are in poverty, 207 are classified as ALICE households, and 391 live above the ALICE Threshold.

Employment in Argos is concentrated in manufacturing, which accounts for approximately 41 percent of local jobs, followed

by retail trade, health care, food service, and education. The prevalence of industrial and service sector employment often results in long or irregular work schedules. These conditions reinforce the importance of safe, affordable, and conveniently located parks that provide flexible opportunities for recreation, youth activities, and informal gathering throughout the day and evening.

Education and Workforce Development

About 85 percent of Argos residents hold a high school diploma or higher, while 11 percent have a bachelor's degree or beyond. Although educational attainment is similar to other small Indiana towns, community-based programs such as youth sports, outdoor education, and wellness classes can supplement formal learning and support lifelong skills. Parks are ideal venues for this type of informal education and community engagement.

Veteran and Senior Populations

Roughly 4.7 percent of Argos residents are veterans, representing service across several generations. Veterans and older residents rely on accessible public spaces for health, reflection, and social connection. Memorial Park, with its monuments honoring local service members and first responders, plays an important civic role in this respect and should continue to provide opportunities for recognition, remembrance, and gathering.

Implications to Park Planning

Current economic conditions within Argos underscore the need for a park system that is affordable, accessible, and responsive to residents with varying income levels. With a significant portion of households facing financial constraints, parks must remain free or low cost spaces that provide reliable access to recreation, gathering areas, and wellness opportunities.

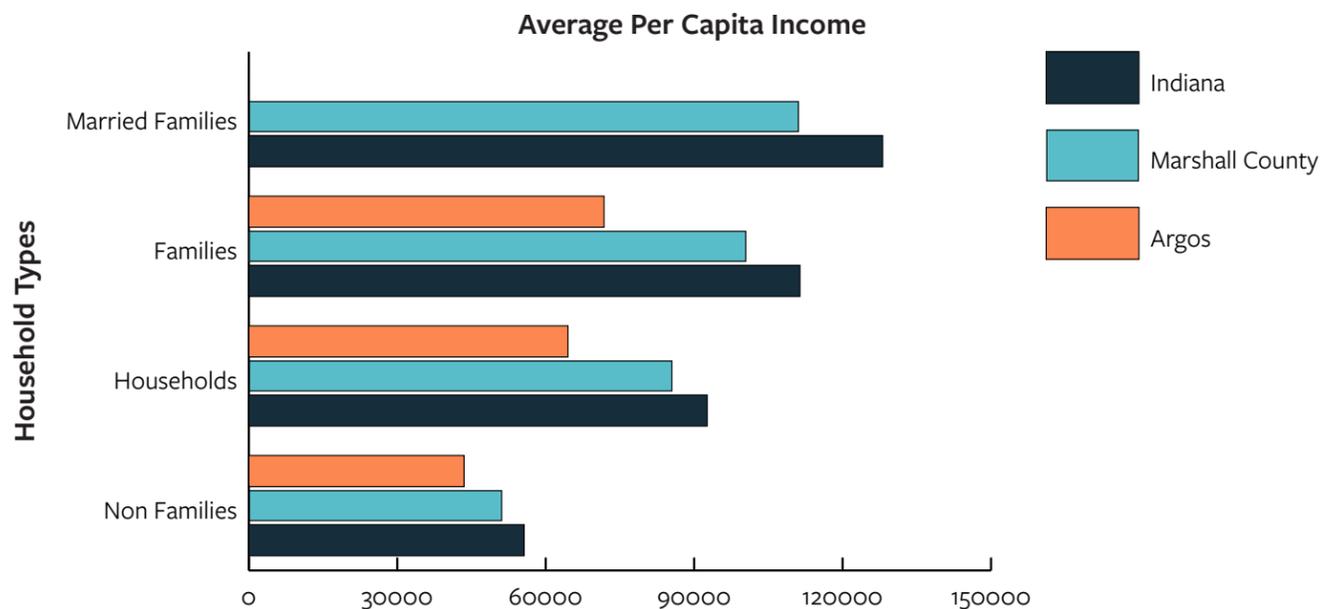
Decisions related to facility improvements, programming, and operations should prioritize inclusivity and cost accessibility. Amenities that support universal access, flexible use, and low cost community events ensure that residents of all ages and income levels can participate. Parks serve as critical spaces where children can play safely, families can gather, and individuals can find opportunities for physical activity and stress relief without financial barriers.

Accessible parks also contribute to broader community stability. Safe and well maintained green spaces encourage regular use, strengthen social connections,

and support overall health outcomes. In a community where many residents work in manufacturing and service industries with demanding schedules, conveniently located recreational spaces are essential to maintaining quality of life.

From a long term planning perspective, an equitable and connected park system supports economic resilience. Quality parks enhance community appeal, support property values, and contribute to a positive environment for future investment. Integrating green space into residential growth areas and strengthening pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and community destinations will help ensure that future development remains cohesive and accessible.

Parks should be recognized as essential public infrastructure that supports health, opportunity, and long term community prosperity. Thoughtful planning and investment will ensure that Argos's park system continues to meet the needs of both current residents and future generations.





Nickle Plate Depot for Argos: NKP Archive

2.4 Cultural, Historical & Community Assets

History Overview

The story of Argos is one deeply rooted in history, craftsmanship, and community pride. The Town of Argos began in the early 1830s with the purchase of 600 acres from the Potawatomi Tribe in 1832–1833. Sidney Williams was tasked with completing the purchase and clearing the land for the development of Michigan Road, the first north–south intrastate route constructed through Indiana. This vital corridor connected the Ohio River to Lake Michigan, spurring the creation of frontier communities along its route and laying the foundation for Argos’s emergence as a connected and prosperous town.

Williams constructed a tavern in the late 1830s just north of what would become the downtown district and later built an inn at the opposite end of the emerging commercial area. The inn, which eventually became Kelly Hospital around the turn of the century, still stands today as an apartment house, one of many examples of Argos’s ability to adapt and preserve its past.

History In The Parks

Argos’s park system is closely connected to the Town’s cultural and historical identity. Memorial Park and Nickel Plate Square, in particular, serve as civic spaces that commemorate local history and support community gatherings, festivals, and seasonal events. These parks contribute to a sense of place and reinforce the Town’s historic downtown character.

Memorial Park site was the location of the town’s first cemetery and school grounds, established in 1838, marking the beginnings of Argos’s civic and educational legacy. When the cemetery and original school were razed in the mid-20th century, the site was reborn as a community park, known today as Memorial Park. Within its bounds stand monuments honoring the cemetery that once rested there, alongside memorials to the community’s veterans and firefighters. Memorial Park serves as both a recreational amenity and a place



New building at Nickel Plate Square honoring the historic Nickel Plate Depot.



An Argos postcard showing the historic downtown area.



An Italianate style residence on Michigan St.

of reverence. According to a 1945 press release, the cemetery was razed and all headstones removed, though it remains unknown if any human remains are still present beneath the site. Ground-penetrating radar (GPR) should be utilized to ensure that no remains are disturbed during construction or landscaping work. The current amenities are well maintained but do not meet the accessibility needs of the community, with the sidewalks not connecting to the picnic pavilion pad or having accessible playground equipment (See page 42-43 for Memorial Parks full inventory).

Nickel Plate Square stands as both a symbol of community revitalization and a celebration of Argos’ rich railroad heritage. At the heart of the park is a building, designed to honor the original Nickel Plate Depot which stood along the railroad that once connected Argos to the surrounding region. This structure not only commemorates the town’s historic roots but also functions as a multi-purpose rent-able facility, hosting community meetings, events, and private gatherings. Adjacent to the depot is a performance stage, which reinforces Nickel Plate Square’s role as a venue for live entertainment, celebrations, and seasonal festivals, helping to anchor downtown as the cultural heart of the community. Being the newest facility maintenance has been little but with time additions of amenities may come forward to better serve the community(See pages 46-47 for Nickel Plate Squares full inventory).

Foker Park is named after a local stonemason William L. Foker, who is one of Marshall County’s most celebrated stonemasons. His artistry became a defining feature of Argos’ architecture and is seen in stonework of homes, civic buildings, and the iconic pillars that mark the entrance to Foker Park. Additionally, Foker Park



Foker masonry pillars at Foker Park.



Bungalow on Walnut St. with Foker masonry.

continues to evolve as a hub for local events and community gatherings, including newer traditions such as the Glow Float during Argos’ annual Octoberfest celebration(the main celebration is held at Community Park), which takes advantage of the pond’s picturesque setting(See page 44-45 for Foker Park’s full inventory).

In addition to their cultural role, Argos parks are linked to key community assets, including Argos Community Schools, the Marshall County Fairgrounds, and nearby employment centers. These relationships influence park use patterns and highlight opportunities for coordination, shared facilities, and improved pedestrian and trail connections.

Community Park has a concentration of athletic fields and facilities that forms a recreation hub at the northeast end of the park. The area includes baseball and softball fields that are heavily used by local youth leagues and the Argos High School softball team. These were added to the community through LWCF funds in 1997/1998. Giving the town a larger reputation for sports. Argos has been know for soccer since the first Indiana High School Soccer Association state championship in 1973, taking the title in 1976 and 1978 as well. Regular wear and tear of the years of heavy use and maintenance has left some areas needing updates (See pages 38-40 for Community Parks full inventory).

Over the next five years, this master plan seeks to strengthen the relationship between parks and these community assets by improving connectivity, enhancing the functionality of civic spaces, and supporting programming that reflects Argos’s history and community traditions.

2.5 Previous Planning Documents

Review of 2016-2020 Argos Five Year Parks Master Plan

The previous Argos Five Year Parks Master Plan (2016–2020) established a strong foundation for the community’s vision of being known as “A Town Within a Park.” The plan emphasized improving the overall quality, accessibility, and functionality of the park system while preserving the small-town charm and strong sense of community that define Argos. Its primary goals centered on enhancing existing facilities, developing new park amenities, improving connectivity through expanded trails and sidewalks, and ensuring that each park reflected the character and pride of the town.

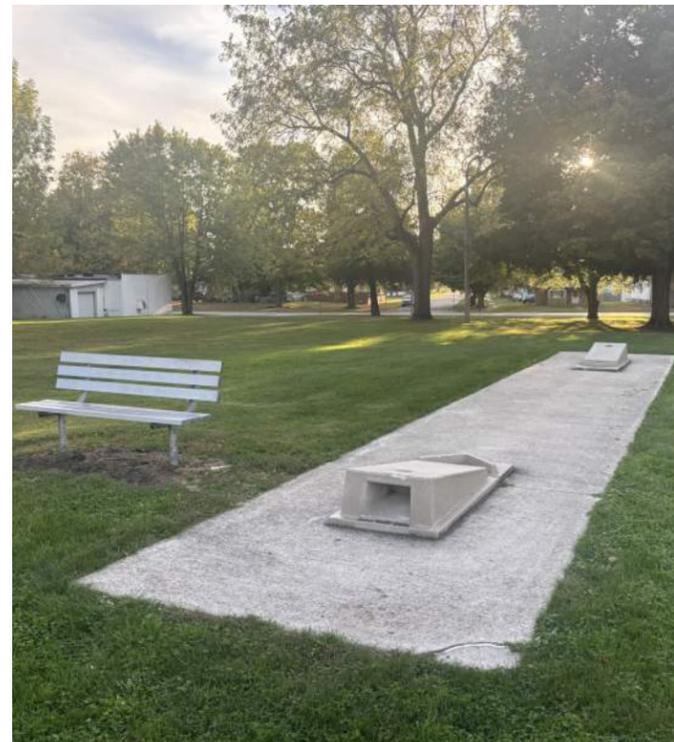
Previous Master Plan Goals

1. Enhance existing park facilities through modernization, maintenance, and accessibility upgrades.
2. Expand recreational programming to provide inclusive, year-round opportunities for all age groups.
3. Improve pedestrian and trail connectivity between neighborhoods, schools, and parks to promote active transportation.
4. Pursue land acquisition opportunities to expand Community Park and increase overall park acreage.
5. Preserve and celebrate local history through park design elements, monuments, and public art.
6. Strengthen partnerships with community groups, local schools, and regional agencies to support shared park use and programming.
7. Increase shade, comfort, and amenities to improve the quality of park experiences and encourage longer visits.
8. Promote environmental stewardship by incorporating sustainable landscaping, stormwater management, and native plantings.
9. Seek funding opportunities through grants, partnerships, and regional collaborations to ensure continued park investment.

10. Foster community pride and engagement through volunteerism, special events, and public input in park planning.

This new Five-Year Parks Master Plan builds directly upon those foundations. It reaffirms the goals of accessibility, inclusivity, and environmental responsibility while focusing on creating a park system that is both resilient and uniquely representative of Argos’s identity. The plan aims to continue the work of enhancing existing parks such as Community Park, Memorial Park, Foker Park, and Nickel Plate Square, each of which serves as a reflection of the community’s history and character. It also broadens the vision by addressing evolving community needs, leveraging partnerships for funding, and designing parks that can adapt to future growth and changing demographics.

Ultimately, this updated plan seeks to honor the spirit and intent of the previous master plan while advancing Argos’s park system into its next chapter, one that emphasizes year-round activity, comfort in all seasons, and the continued blending of heritage, landscape, and community connection that make Argos Parks distinctly Argos.



Success of Previous Master Plan Goals

Since the adoption of the 2016 to 2020 Parks Master Plan, the Town of Argos has made meaningful and measurable progress toward many of the goals set forth eight years ago. Investments in facilities, land acquisition, accessibility, programming, and community partnerships have strengthened the overall park system and reinforced the role of parks as important places of gathering, activity, and community pride. One of the most significant accomplishments has been the expansion and enhancement of park land. The acquisition of the new parcel at Community Park directly fulfills Goal Four, which called for additional acreage to support future growth. This expansion creates greater flexibility for future amenities, trail connections, and open space preservation.

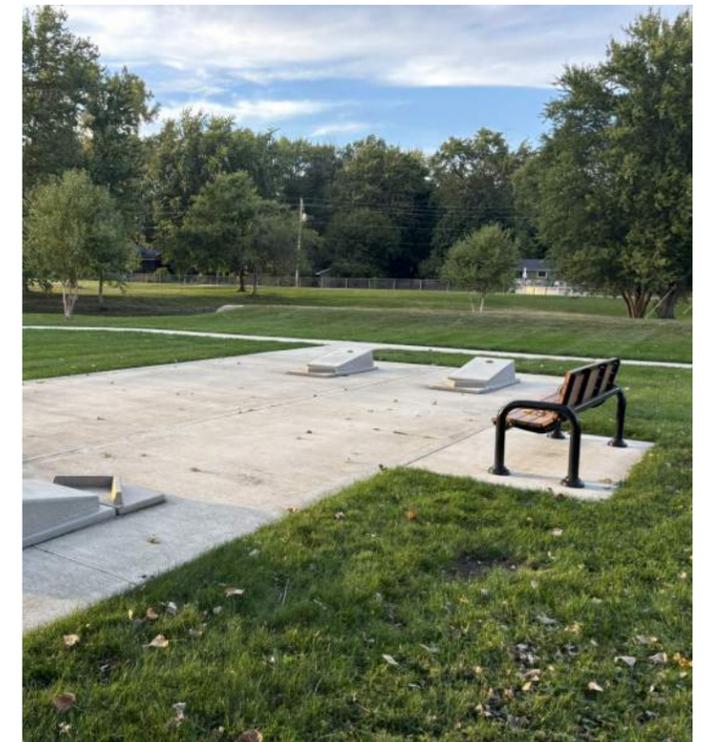
Foker Park has seen substantial improvements aligned with several master plan goals, particularly Goals One, Seven, and Eight. The park has evolved from its early form as an open green space into a large and scenic recreation area with a strong mix of active and passive opportunities. Recent additions include a paved parking lot with accessible walkways, a restroom facility, a pavilion with permanent cornhole boards, a modern playground, an accessible fishing dock, and a kayak launch. These upgrades were achieved through the Stellar Communities process and Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars. The multi-use trail that circles the pond has become a signature feature that connects amenities, natural areas, and gathering spaces into a cohesive park experience. These improvements demonstrate clear progress toward modernization, accessibility upgrades, environmental stewardship, and increased comfort and amenities for visitors.

Nickel Plate Square stands out as another key achievement that connects directly to multiple master plan goals including Goals One, Five, Six, Seven, and Ten. Completed in 2022, the park transformed a formerly abandoned gas station into a vibrant civic destination in downtown Argos. The depot inspired building, performance stage, tree bosque, outdoor dining area, food truck spaces, and pedestrian connections have strengthened the cultural and social role of downtown. This investment celebrates local history, expands accessible public gathering spaces, and increases opportunities for events, concerts, and community celebrations. The project also reflects a strong partnership between the Town, Marshall County, and regional

collaborators, fulfilling Goal Six and Goal Nine through successful grant funding and interagency support.

Partnerships with Argos Community Schools have also continued to grow, supporting Goal Six and expanding shared programming. The cooperative use of park facilities for school events and youth activities has strengthened community ties and maximized available resources. Youth sports programs, including soccer and baseball, remain core recreational offerings and support Goal Two by providing inclusive opportunities for physical activity and youth development. Community events have expanded in both frequency and participation, supporting Goal Ten which focuses on fostering community pride and engagement. Traditions such as Summerfest, Octoberfest, Soccer Fest, the Turkey Trot, Santa in the Park, Winter Wonderland, and the Scholar Sprint have become defining features of community life. These recurring events reinforce the importance of parks as social anchors and strengthen the shared identity of Argos as a connected and active community.

Collectively, these accomplishments highlight the Town’s ongoing commitment to the goals established in the 2016 to 2020 Parks Master Plan. Through focused improvements, strategic partnerships, expanded park land, and increased programming and events, Argos continues to enhance the quality, accessibility, and vitality of its parks and public spaces.



Alignment with the 2030 Comp. Plan

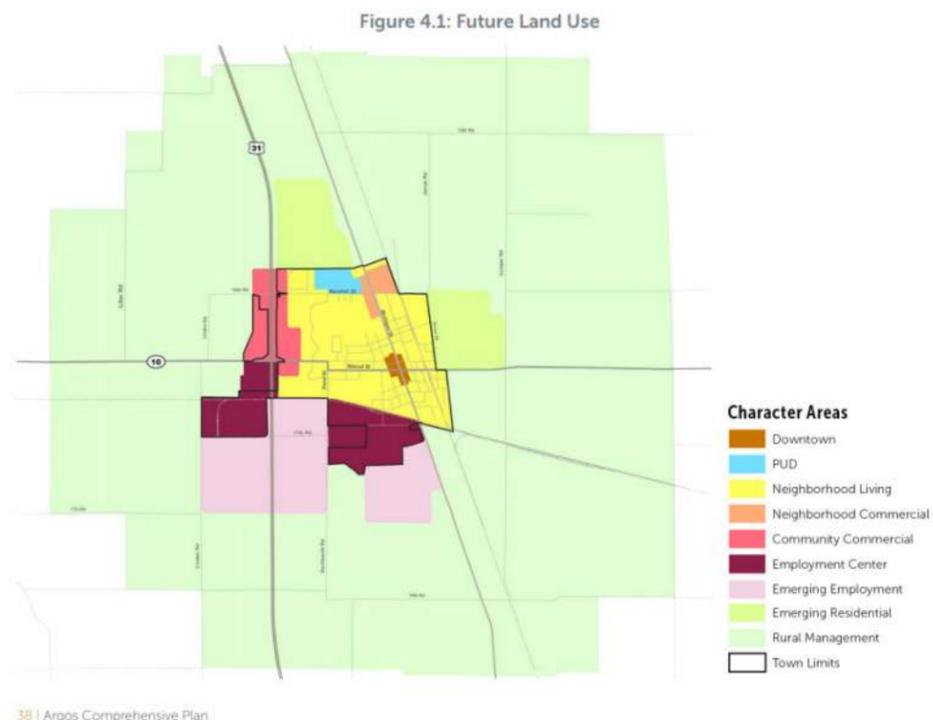
The Argos Comprehensive Plan 2030 builds upon the foundation set by earlier park planning efforts, envisioning a coordinated approach to park development that enhances community life while aligning with broader goals for sustainable growth and balanced land use. The plan recognizes the strength of Argos’s existing park system, anchored by its four major public parks, while also identifying challenges in maintaining facilities with limited funding and staffing resources. To address these needs, the Comprehensive Plan recommends leveraging grant opportunities, considering the establishment of a full-time Parks Coordinator position, and identifying potential locations for new parkland to better serve neighborhoods currently lacking access to recreation spaces.

The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes that future park development should reinforce Argos’s core values of community vitality, balanced growth, and environmental stewardship. It encourages new parks or expansions to occur primarily within existing town limits, maximizing use of existing infrastructure before pursuing annexation, consistent with Argos’s infill-first development strategy. The plan also underscores the importance of designing

parks that complement surrounding land uses, integrate with walking and biking networks, and protect valuable natural resources such as wetlands, open spaces, and mature tree stands that define the community’s rural character.

By linking recreation planning with housing, mobility, and environmental systems, the 2030 Comprehensive Plan establishes parks as essential components of Argos’s long-term growth strategy. It envisions parks not only as recreational amenities, but as community-building tools that enhance livability, foster connectivity, and preserve the landscapes that shape Argos’s identity.

This current 5-Year Parks Master Plan continues to advance those guiding principles. It builds upon the 2030 Comprehensive Plan’s vision by refining strategies for connectivity, sustainability, and equitable access to recreation. The plan identifies opportunities to expand pedestrian linkages, enhance park programming, and strengthen community identity through design that reflects Argos’s history and landscape character. Together, these planning efforts form a cohesive vision for a park system that supports sustainable growth while ensuring that Argos remains a small town deeply connected to its green spaces, true to its motto, “A Town Within a Park.”



2020 Marshall County Trails Master Plan

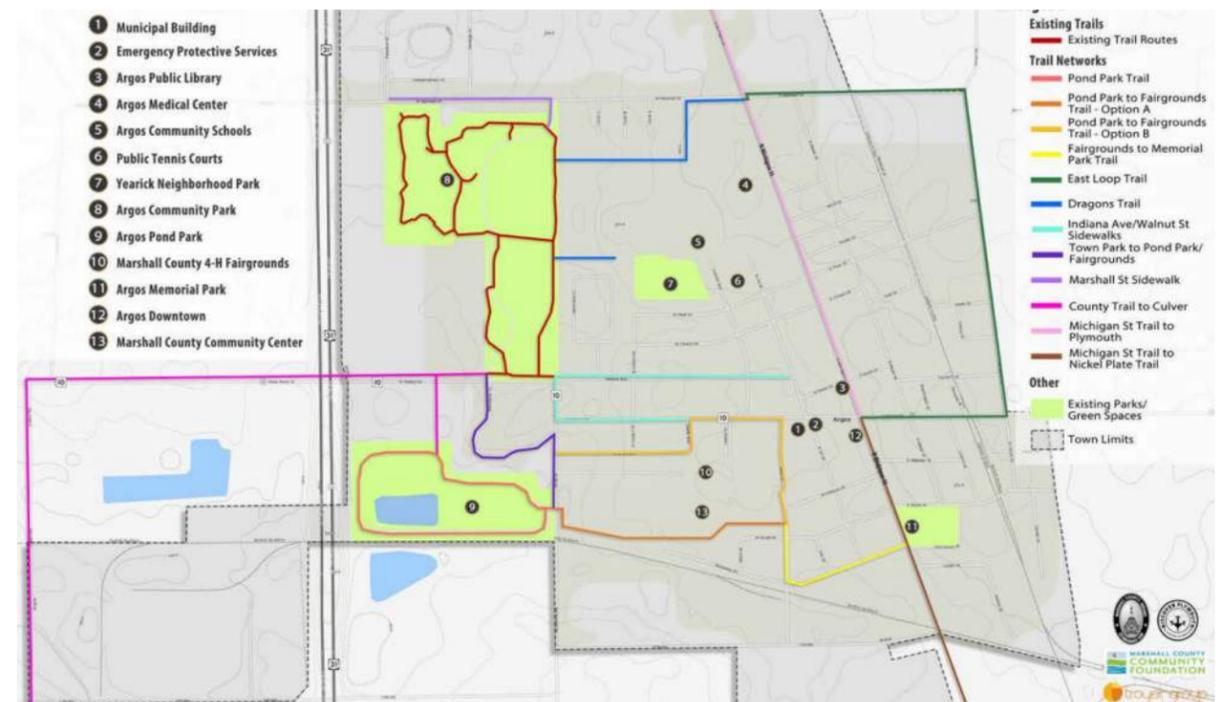
The Marshall County Trails Master Plan establishes a countywide vision for an interconnected system of multi-use trails, greenways, and on-street routes linking communities across the region. Within this broader framework, Argos is identified as a key southern node for future trail connectivity, strategically positioned between the Bremen and Culver trail corridors. The plan outlines opportunities to connect Argos both regionally and locally, expanding recreation access while strengthening the town’s role within the county’s trail network.

For Argos, the plan emphasizes several key priorities:

- **Regional Connectivity:** Establishing a future multi-use trail link between Argos and Culver, providing direct access to the regional trail system and enhancing tourism and recreation potential.
- **Local Integration:** Expanding the existing sidewalk and trail network within town limits to connect residential areas, schools, and parks, ensuring safe and accessible routes for all users.
- **Downtown Access:** Creating direct trail connections to Nickel Plate Square and the downtown core to support walkability, economic vitality, and community gatherings.

- **Multi-Modal Design:** Incorporating on-street bike lanes along Michigan Street and other key corridors, aligning with the statewide trail framework and promoting alternative transportation options.
- **Community Partnerships:** Coordinating with Marshall County and adjacent jurisdictions to secure funding, align design standards, and advance shared trail projects that benefit multiple communities.
- **Countywide goals** that strongly apply to Argos include promoting health and wellness through active transportation, connecting people to parks and public spaces, and integrating green infrastructure into trail design. These priorities support the town’s existing focus on accessibility, environmental stewardship, and community connection.

As Argos continues to improve its pedestrian network and plan for future growth, the Marshall County Trails Master Plan provides valuable direction for trail expansion and connectivity. This current Five Year Parks Master Plan builds upon that framework by reinforcing trails as a top community priority, linking neighborhoods, parks, schools, and downtown spaces into one cohesive, walkable system. Through continued collaboration with county and regional partners, Argos can enhance its trail network in ways that advance both local recreation and the broader goal of a connected Marshall County.



Chapter 3: Parks System Inventory & Accessibility

3.1 Park System Overview

3.2 Community Park

3.3 Memorial Park

3.4 Foker Park

3.5 Nickel Plate Square

3.6 Community Trails

3.7 Accessibility Assessment

3.8 Benchmarking & Peer Comparison

3.1 Park System Overview

The Argos parks system is composed of four established public parks: Argos Community Park, Memorial Park, Foker Park, and Nickel Plate Square. Each of these spaces contributes to the park network in its own way, offering recreation opportunities, community gathering areas, and natural landscapes that collectively shape the character of Argos. Together, these parks provide a diverse range of amenities, including playgrounds, trails, athletic fields,

memorial spaces, and open park space, that support both active and passive recreation. They also serve as key social and environmental assets, helping define Argos's small-town charm and fostering connections among residents.

The following section provides an individual inventory and assessment of each park within the system, highlighting existing conditions, amenities, and opportunities for improvement.

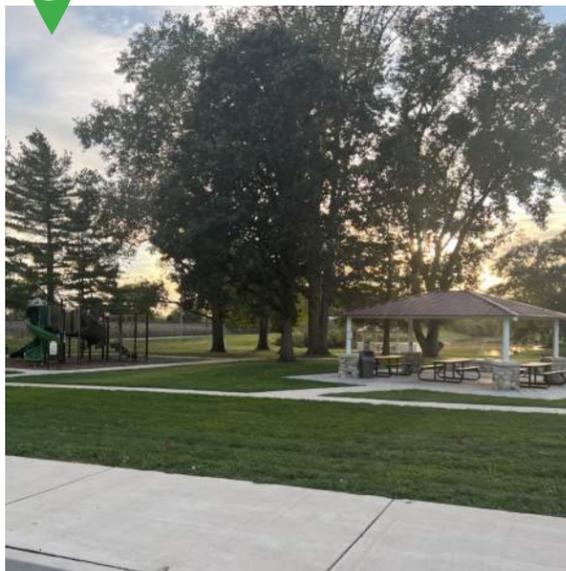
1 Community Park



2 Memorial Park



3 Foker Park



4 Nickel Plate Square





3.2 Community Park

Address: 506 W Walnut St. Argos, IN 46501

Overview of Park

Community Park is the largest park in the Argos park system and continues to expand with the recent addition of 8.5 acres to the southwest making it a total of 59 acres. The park extends in a linear north-south configuration, framed by residential neighborhoods and the school to the east and open land to the west. A single internal drive runs from Walnut Street on the north to Marshall Street on the south, serving as the park's main circulation spine. A paved trail loops around the park's perimeter, with a cross-connection through the center that ties the park's activity areas together. A 27-hole disc golf course weaves through open lawn areas across the entire site.

Northern Activity Zone

At the north end of the park, a lively cluster of amenities forms the community's most active family recreation area. This zone includes playgrounds, a splash pad, multiple pavilions, and newly added pickleball courts, all located near the main drive for convenient access and visibility.

Northwest Wetland Area

To the northwest, a natural wetland serves as a key ecological and educational feature. A trail and wetland overlook allow visitors to experience this environment safely while protecting the area's sensitive habitat. The wetland also functions as part of the park's broader stormwater management system, helping to filter runoff and support biodiversity. Protecting and enhancing this area remains a priority of the Five-Year Parks Master Plan, which emphasizes conservation of natural features throughout Argos's parks.



Central Athletic Hub

At the park's center, a concentration of athletic fields and facilities forms a recreation hub. The area includes baseball and softball fields and multiple soccer fields adjacent to the Argos Community School Athletic fields fence. A pavilion and parking lot anchor this hub, creating a cohesive and functional layout where fields radiate outward from the central gathering space.

Mid-Park Recreation Area

South of the athletic complex lies a smaller cluster of facilities, including a playground, basketball court, and volleyball court. The playground and basketball court remain regularly used by residents, providing recreation opportunities for a variety of age groups. The volleyball court, however, is no longer in active use as the net has been removed. Future improvements in this area could focus on revitalizing the volleyball court or re-imagining the space for another compatible recreational use to strengthen activity along this portion of the park.

Southern Pond and Expansion Area

At the southern end of the park, visitors encounter one of Community Park's signature natural features, a large pond bordered by open lawn and connected to the trail system. Two overlook docks extend over the water, offering scenic spots for fishing and quiet reflection. The pond also plays a vital stormwater management role, functioning as an overflow retention basin for the drainage field located on the east side of the park adjacent to nearby housing. The recently acquired 8.5-acre parcel to the southwest of the park provides opportunities for future expansion of both natural and active recreation amenities. This new land could support additional trails, habitat restoration, or flexible event space while preserving the park's open, natural character.

See page 84 for recommendations for Community Park.



Image Provided by: Town of Argos Website



Photo Taken By: Jeremy Umbaugh



3.3 Memorial Park

300-348 S Michigan St, Argos, IN 46501

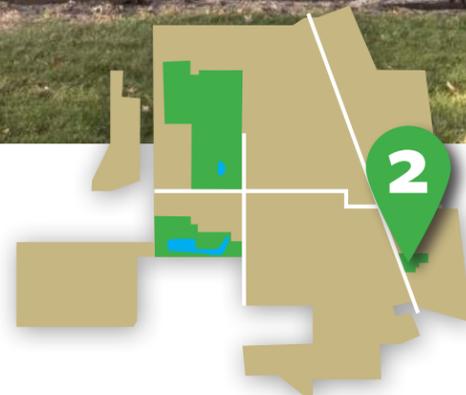
Overview of Park

Memorial Park is a 3.3-acre neighborhood park located at the corner of South Michigan Street and East South Street, serving as both a place of remembrance and a modest recreation space for the Argos community. The park holds deep historical and cultural significance, blending the town's appreciation for its veterans, first responders, and community heritage with opportunities for casual, family-friendly recreation.

Along the Michigan Street frontage, a sidewalk runs north to south, lined with memorials and sculptures honoring veterans, firefighters, and other first responders, as well as a memorial to past community members who were laid to rest here when the site once served as a cemetery. The memorials are spaced along this east-edge walkway, creating a linear sequence of monuments that invite quiet reflection but currently feel somewhat segmented rather than unified. At the southeast corner of the park, a small recreation hub features two playground areas designed for different age groups, a jungle gym dome, cornhole boards, a pavilion, and minimal on-site parking. This portion of the park is active during community events, most notably the annual Easter Egg Hunt, which draws young families each spring.

Beyond the memorial and recreation zones, the majority of the park is open mowed lawn, providing flexible space for passive recreation, informal gatherings, and potential future enhancements. The park's high visibility along Michigan Street and its proximity to nearby neighborhoods make it a valuable green space within the community, though it lacks strong internal pedestrian connections between amenities.

See page 85 for recommendations for Memorial Park.



Legend

- 1 Playground Equipment
- 2 Parking
- 3 Corn Hole
- 4 War Monument
- 5 Greenslope Memorial
- 6 Fire Department Memorial
- 7 Artillery Memorial/ Veteran Memorial
- 8 Pavilion



3.4 Foker Park Inventory

Pond St, Argos, IN 46501

Overview of Park

Foker Park, located off South Kenilworth Road, is the second largest park in Argos, encompassing approximately 23.6 acres. Once known as Pond Park, the area began as an 11-acre open green space before expanding and developing over the past decade into one of the community's most unique and scenic recreation areas. Today, Foker Park offers a mix of active and passive recreation opportunities anchored by its large central pond and looping trail system.

Upon arrival a paved parking lot provides direct, accessible pedestrian connections to the park's core amenities. Adjacent to this lot are a restroom facility, a pavilion with permanent cornhole boards, and a playground, all of which were added as part of a recent Stellar Communities initiative designed to enhance accessibility and meet DNR accessibility requirements. These improvements have made the park's main activity area welcoming and easy to navigate for users of all ages and abilities.

Moving west from the main entry area, the park opens up to its signature feature, an expansive pond that stretches nearly a quarter mile across the site. This water body serves as both a natural focal point and recreational amenity, accommodating fishing, kayaking, and other small, non-motorized watercraft activities. A new accessible fishing dock and kayak launch enhance opportunities for inclusive water-based recreation while maintaining the park's tranquil, nature-oriented atmosphere.

Encircling the pond is a multi-use walking and biking trail, which ties together all areas of the park and provides scenic access to its natural edges and open lawn spaces. This trail has become a defining feature of Foker Park, linking its amenities, natural environments, and gathering spaces into a cohesive recreational experience. The gazebo and picnic shelter provide shaded resting points along the way, and the open lawns throughout the park offer flexible areas for picnicking, informal play, or community events.

See page 86 for recommendations for Foker Park.



Photo by: Josh Saltsman

S Kenilworth Road

Pond St

Legend

- 1 Playground Equipment
- 2 Parking
- 3 Corn Hole
- 4 Pavilion
- 5 Gazebo
- 6 Fishing Piers
- 7 Kayak Launch
- 8 Bridge
- 9 Native Pollinator Field
- 10 Public Restroom
- Walking Trail





Photo: Argos Community Development Corporation website

3.5 Nickel Plate Square

121 E Walnut St, Argos, IN 46501

Overview of Park

Nickel Plate Square is one of the newest additions to the Argos Parks system, completed in 2022 as part of the Stellar Communities Program awarded to Marshall County in 2019. Transforming a former abandoned gas station site, the park now serves as a vibrant civic gateway to downtown Argos and a central gathering point for residents and visitors alike.

In front of the performance area, a tree bosque with tables and benches creates a shaded and inviting outdoor seating area that extends the downtown dining experience outdoors. Residents and visitors enjoy meals from nearby restaurants beneath the trees, transforming the space into an informal social plaza. Colorful flower beds and seasonal plantings frame this zone, adding visual warmth and enhancing the overall aesthetic of both the park and the surrounding downtown streetscape. A prominent entry sign welcomes visitors to Nickel Plate Square and the Town of Argos, marking the site as a symbolic entry point to the community. Supporting amenities include overflow parking that serves both downtown and park visitors, as well as designated food truck spaces that make the park easily adaptable for events and festivals.

Nickel Plate Square was designed to accessibility standards, ensuring barrier-free access across all walks, seating, and amenities. The site connects seamlessly with adjacent downtown sidewalks and nearby neighborhoods, allowing it to function as a transitional public space that links the commercial core, residential areas, and the broader Argos park and trail network.

See page 87 for recommendations for Nickel Plate Square.



Legend

- 1 Gateway Arch
- 2 Depot
- 3 Plaza
- 4 Parking
- 5 Plant Beds
- 6 Town Christmas Tree
- 7 Performance Stage



3.6 Community Trails

Trails Within The Community

Currently, all delineated pedestrian trails in Argos are located within Community Park and Foker Park. These internal park trails provide valuable walking and recreation opportunities but do not extend beyond the park boundaries into surrounding neighborhoods or other community destinations. This limited trail reach represents a significant opportunity for improvement, as expanding trail connectivity has long been identified as a community priority.

The 2016–2020 Parks Master Plan emphasized the goal of establishing a connected pedestrian network, and that objective remains highly relevant today. Trails and walking paths continue to be among the most popular amenities in the Argos park system, and expanding them would respond directly to community demand.

See page 88 for recommendations for Community Trails.



3.7 Accessibility Assessment

Park System Accessibility Overview:

Accessibility is a foundational component of an equitable and inclusive park system. Providing spaces that all residents can use, regardless of age, ability, or mobility, is essential to ensuring that Argos' parks serve the entire community. Accessibility extends beyond physical access to amenities; it encompasses thoughtful design, connectivity, and programming that allow every individual to engage fully with recreational opportunities.

Over the past several years, the Town of Argos has made significant strides toward improving accessibility across its park system. New facilities and park improvements, such as those completed through the Stellar Communities program, have been designed and constructed in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) accessibility standards. These projects reflect the Town's growing

commitment to universal design, an approach that integrates accessibility into every stage of park planning, design, and construction, rather than treating it as an afterthought. Ensuring accessibility is not only a matter of compliance, but also one of community equity. Parks are vital public resources that contribute to physical health, social connection, and overall well-being. When designed inclusively, they remove barriers that may otherwise limit participation and create welcoming environments that serve children, seniors, families, and individuals with disabilities alike.

Continued assessment and prioritization of accessibility improvements will help Argos meet state and federal accessibility goals, strengthen eligibility for grant funding through the DNR and other agencies, and, most importantly, ensure that its parks remain open, inclusive, and enjoyable for all residents. This accessibility evaluation identifies both existing strengths and opportunities within the Argos park system, providing a framework for ongoing improvements that align with ADA best practices and community priorities.



Community Park Accessibility Assessment:

Argos Community Park demonstrates a moderate to high level of accessibility, offering a diverse mix of recreational amenities, including sports fields, playgrounds, a splash pad, picnic shelters, restrooms, and a multi-use walking trail, that serve users of all ages and abilities. The park's proximity to U.S. 31 and its connection via a multi-use trail improve accessibility for both residents and visitors, aligning with the goals of the Argos Comprehensive Plan 2030 to strengthen links between parks, schools, and neighborhoods through active transportation networks. However, while the park provides accessible features, several infrastructure gaps and inconsistencies limit full universal accessibility. Beginning at the north entrance along Marshall Street, sidewalks approaching the park from both the east and west do not extend into the park itself. This lack of continuation forces pedestrians, including those using mobility devices or strollers, to travel within or along the roadway, an unsafe and non-compliant condition. Extending the sidewalks or trail into the park to connect with the existing trail system at the northern end would significantly enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility.

Within the northern recreation hub, the amenities, including the playground, pavilion, and restroom, are connected to the adjacent parking area by paved routes, but not directly to one another by a continuous pedestrian network. As a result, individuals with mobility impairments must travel through the parking lot to access certain features. The playground in this area also lacks ADA-compliant surfacing and inclusive play equipment, while the pavilion does not currently provide accessible tables or benches with companion seating. Establishing designated pedestrian routes between all



amenities and upgrading site furnishings and surfacing to meet ADA design standards would ensure a more inclusive experience for all users. The athletic hub in the central portion of the park features accessible parking, sidewalks leading to restrooms and concessions, and designated paths to both baseball fields' bleacher areas. Notable gaps in this zone include the absence of accessible routes to and between the cornhole boards and to the spectator area for the soccer fields. Adding accessible seating or bleachers and connecting them to the main walkways and parking would provide equitable access for all visitors. In the mid-park recreation zone, accessibility infrastructure is generally in place, including accessible parking and paved routes connecting primary amenities. However, as improvements or replacements occur over time, attention should continue to focus on accessible surfacing, inclusive site furniture, and appropriately designed play areas.

Overall, the walking trail network within Community Park serves as a reliable accessible route through the site and connects to the sidewalks along Walnut Street on the park's south edge, linking users to surrounding neighborhoods. Any future trail extensions or resurfacing projects should ensure slopes, cross-slopes, and materials meet ADA standards for accessible routes. Continued upgrades to pedestrian connectivity, site furnishings, and play equipment will help strengthen Community Park's role as Argos' most inclusive recreation space. By ensuring that future improvements adhere to ADA and DNR accessibility standards, Community Park can continue to serve as the town's model for equitable, barrier-free park design.



Memorial Park Accessibility Assessment:

From an accessibility standpoint, Memorial Park faces several notable challenges that limit its usability for individuals of all ages and abilities. While the park's compact size and central location make it approachable, the existing layout and surface conditions present barriers to universal access. Currently, the only dedicated pedestrian infrastructure within the park is the sidewalk along Michigan Street, which provides access to several of the park's memorial features. Beyond this single route, there are no paved or ADA-compliant pathways connecting key areas of the park. Most internal areas are accessed via grass or gravel surfaces, which create navigation difficulties for visitors using wheelchairs, strollers, or other mobility devices. Establishing a small network of paved walkways that connect the park's memorials, playground, and seating areas would greatly improve the site's accessibility and comfort for all users.

While vehicular parking is available, there are currently no designated accessible spaces that

meet ADA standards for width, signage, or the presence of access aisles. In addition, there is no pedestrian connection linking the parking area to any of the park's amenities, particularly the recreation zone in the southeast corner, where users must currently cross grass or uneven ground to reach the playground or open play areas. Creating accessible parking with compliant access aisles and connecting these spaces to the park's primary features via paved routes should be a top priority for accessibility improvements. Another key limitation is the absence of restroom facilities, which, while not strictly a mobility accessibility issue, significantly impacts the park's usability for families with young children, older adults, and others who rely on nearby facilities. The lack of restrooms reduces the park's ability to serve as a comfortable and inclusive gathering space for extended visits.

Overall, while Memorial Park offers valuable open space and commemorative features, its accessibility infrastructure remains limited. Introducing ADA-compliant parking, defined pedestrian routes, and basic visitor amenities such as restrooms would transform Memorial Park into a more welcoming and inclusive environment, better aligned with the accessibility goals outlined in the Argos Comprehensive Plan 2030 and the Indiana DNR's accessibility standards for local parks.



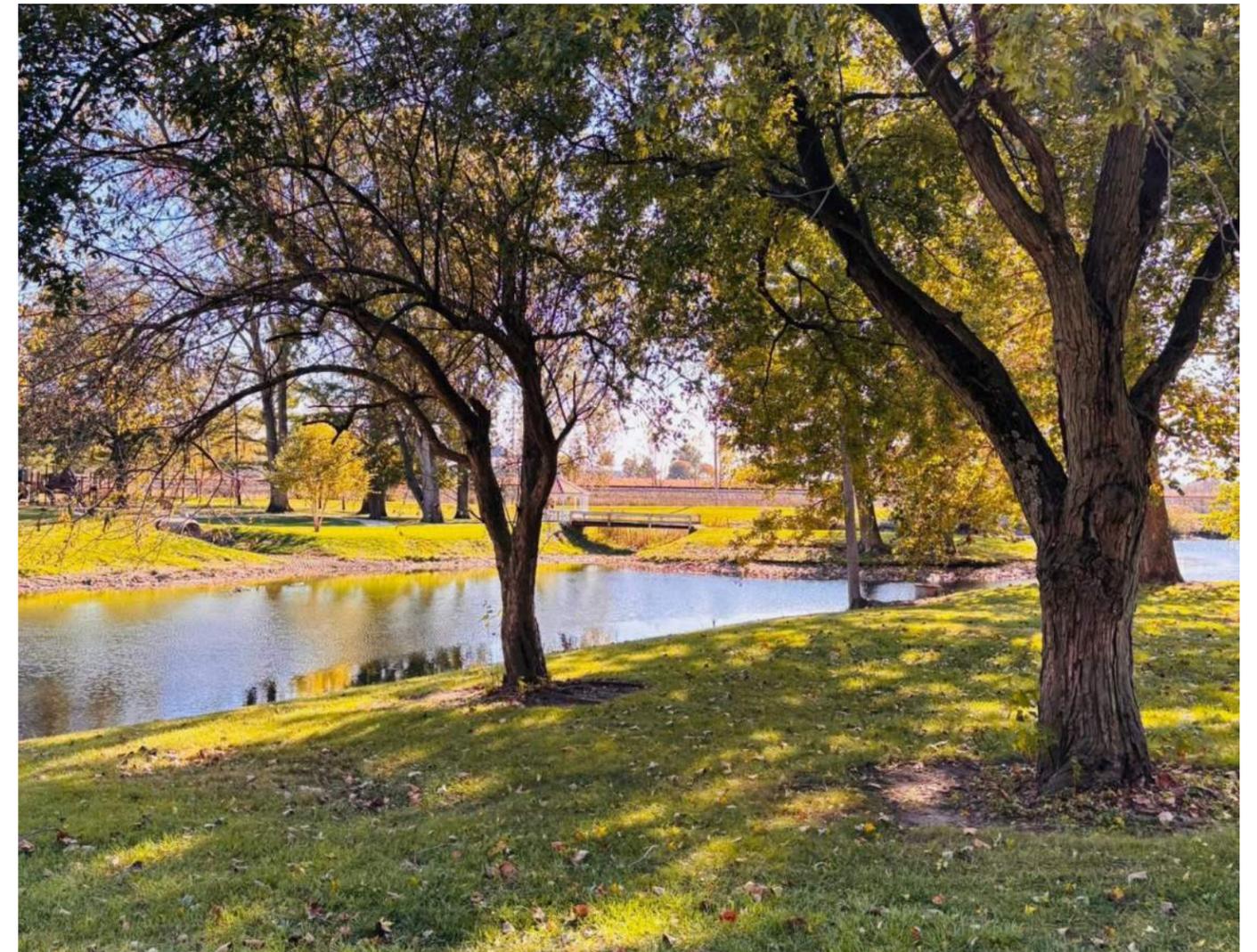
Foker Park Accessibility Assessment:

Foker Park demonstrates a strong level of accessibility, benefiting from recent improvement projects completed within the past five years that were designed in accordance with ADA guidelines. These upgrades have significantly enhanced the park's inclusivity, particularly within the main activity area near the primary entrance off South Kenilworth Road. The park's paved parking lot provides designated accessible spaces and connects directly to adjacent amenities through a network of sidewalks and paved routes, ensuring barrier-free movement between the playground, pavilion, restroom facility, and cornhole courts. These features establish a highly accessible recreation hub that accommodates users of all ages and mobility levels.

Extending from this central hub, the looping multi-use trail encircles the park's large pond. The trail provides a continuous, ADA-compliant surface suitable for walking, jogging, and cycling, while also linking users to key

amenities such as the accessible fishing dock and kayak launch. These elements create equitable opportunities for participation in both land- and water-based recreation, setting a strong standard for accessibility in Argos' park system.

Going forward, maintaining and building upon Foker Park's accessibility achievements will be essential. Any new amenities, trails, or site improvements should continue to prioritize accessibility, including compliant surfacing, accessible seating and tables, and universally designed features that encourage participation from all users. Overall, Foker Park stands as a model for inclusive park design within the Argos park system, offering a high standard of accessibility while balancing active recreation and natural open space. Continued commitment to universal design principles will ensure the park remains welcoming and navigable for every member of the community.



Nickle Plate Square Accessibility Assessment:

Nickle Plate Square demonstrates a high level of accessibility, benefiting from its recent design and construction under the Stellar Communities Program, which required adherence to both ADA and DNR accessibility standards. As one of the newest parks in the Argos system, the site reflects modern design practices that emphasize inclusivity, connectivity, and barrier-free access throughout its layout.

The park's paved surfaces, wide walkways, and clearly defined circulation routes provide universal access to all major amenities, including the depot building, performance stage, tree bosque with compacted limestone fines, and public seating areas. These features allow individuals using wheelchairs, mobility devices, or strollers to fully experience and participate in activities and events hosted at the square. The site's flush transitions and accessible entry points along downtown sidewalks further ensure seamless movement

between Nickel Plate Square, adjacent businesses, and surrounding neighborhoods. Accessible tables and benches positioned beneath the tree canopy offer comfortable, shaded gathering areas for visitors of all abilities. In addition, the performance stage and adjacent plaza have been designed to support inclusive community programming, allowing all guests to attend or take part in performances, festivals, and civic events.

Given the park's recent completion, accessibility across Nickel Plate Square currently meets or exceeds recommended standards. Moving forward, the primary consideration will be to maintain these standards as new features or amenities are introduced, ensuring all future additions, such as expanded seating, event infrastructure, or landscape enhancements, remain accessible and inclusive. Nickel Plate Square stands as a model of contemporary universal design within Argos' park system, reflecting the town's commitment to equitable, community-oriented spaces. Its accessible infrastructure and integration with the surrounding downtown network make it one of the most inclusive and welcoming destinations in Argos.



ADA Grievance Policy.

The Town of Argos is committed to ensuring that all residents and visitors have equal access to parks, recreational facilities, programs, and services, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) accessibility standards. Maintaining equitable access is central to the Town's mission of providing inclusive and welcoming public spaces for all. To uphold this commitment, the Town will maintain a formal ADA Grievance Procedure to address any concerns or complaints related to accessibility barriers within the Argos Parks and Recreation system. This process provides individuals with an avenue to report instances where they believe they have been denied access to a facility, program, or service on the basis of a disability. Residents who wish to submit an accessibility-related grievance should prepare a written statement that includes:

- The name, address, and contact information of the complainant;
- A description of the issue or barrier, including the specific park, facility, or program involved;
- The date and time the issue occurred; and
- Any requested action or resolution.

Alternative formats for submitting a grievance, such as personal interviews, phone calls, or recorded statements,

will be made available for individuals with disabilities upon request. Once a grievance is received, it will be reviewed by the Town's designated ADA Coordinator, who will contact the complainant within a defined timeframe to discuss the issue and potential resolutions. A written response will be provided outlining the Town's findings and any corrective actions that may be taken. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, an appeal process will be available to ensure fair and thorough review. All grievances, responses, and appeals will be documented and retained by the Town for public record-keeping and compliance purposes.

ADA Coordinator Contact Information

Lisa Mullaney
Argos Town Clerk
Phone: 574-892-5717 ext. 222
Email: clerk@argosin.gov

The ADA Coordinator is responsible for receiving, reviewing, and managing all ADA grievance reports from the public and ensuring that each concern is addressed in accordance with Town policy and ADA regulations. Public information regarding ADA accessibility, including facility information, grievance procedures, and contact details for the ADA Coordinator, will be made available on the Town's website, at Town Hall, and at select park facilities to ensure transparency and community awareness.



3.8 Benchmarking & Peer Comparison

Wakarusa, IN

Wakarusa, located in Elkhart County, is a small town of roughly 2,000 residents whose park system reflects a long-standing tradition of civic pride and volunteer engagement. The community's two main parks total approximately 25 acres and are deeply embedded in the fabric of the town's identity. Memorial Park, Wakarusa's primary recreational hub, features a splash pad, walking trail, sledding hill, disc golf course, and pollinator garden, which mirror both the active and passive recreational opportunities valued by Argos residents.

In recent years, Wakarusa has taken a deliberate, forward-looking approach to planning through its 2022–2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which emphasizes improved connectivity between parks, downtown, neighborhoods, and schools. The plan calls for the creation of a unified trail network, enhanced accessibility, and expanded programming, objectives that align closely with Argos's own community priorities.

For Argos, Wakarusa demonstrates how a town of similar size can transform a modest system into a well-connected, inclusive network that fosters year-round recreation. Its focus on creating trails that link daily destinations, as well as its successful use of grant funding through partnerships with MACOG and IDNR, provides a model Argos can emulate. Like Argos, Wakarusa views its parks not just as green spaces but as community infrastructure spaces that support health, environmental stewardship, and social life.



Wakarusa Town Website



Bourbon Town Website

Bourbon, IN

Bourbon, located just 15 miles west of Argos in Marshall County, is a rural town of approximately 1,700 residents that has successfully diversified its small park system to meet evolving community needs. The town's two parks, Bourbon Community Park and Westwood Park, together total around nine acres, yet they offer a robust mix of amenities including ballfields, basketball courts, playgrounds, a splash pad, and most recently, a dog park. Westwood Park's addition of a fenced dog area and pollinator garden demonstrates Bourbon's commitment to adaptability and environmental awareness, even within limited space and funding. The town's parks are well-integrated into residential neighborhoods, and the community maintains a strong base of volunteer support and local partnerships that keep the facilities active and well-cared-for.

Bourbon provides an instructive example for Argos of how smaller towns can create diversity in amenities without expanding their acreage. By focusing on quality, accessibility, and programming rather than quantity, Bourbon ensures that each amenity serves multiple community groups. This approach parallels Argos's goal of maximizing its existing parkland, particularly within Community Park and Foker Park, by introducing new, inclusive features and expanding usability for all ages. Bourbon's example also highlights how smaller, flexible investments like dog parks or pollinator areas can energize local interest and broaden participation in the parks system.

North Judson, IN

North Judson, in Starke County, has a population of approximately 1,800 residents and stands out as a rural community that has made trail connectivity and regional linkages central to its park planning. The town's three parks encompass roughly 39 acres, and includes part of the Erie Trail, a regional rail-trail that runs through town and connects to the broader Hoosier Valley trail system. This trail network provides nearly nine miles of continuous, multi-use paths that link neighborhoods, schools, and downtown, while also promoting tourism and economic development through outdoor recreation. North Judson recently completed a 5-Year Parks Master Plan through the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), positioning itself for state and federal funding opportunities. The plan emphasizes connectivity, inclusivity, and trail-based recreation – priorities that strongly echo those identified by Argos residents through local engagement efforts. North Judson also recently completed a renovation to its Town Park that utilized Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars. This renovation included the addition of a 1/2 mile trail, pickleball courts, volleyball court, and a new playground.

For Argos, North Judson's example is valuable on multiple fronts. It demonstrates how small towns can leverage trails as both community amenities and regional economic assets, integrating recreation with identity and local commerce. North Judson's investment in active transportation provides a roadmap for Argos to close its own sidewalk and trail gaps, particularly between the school, Community Park, and Foker Park. Additionally, its proactive planning approach shows how aligning local goals with IDNR frameworks can increase eligibility for grant funding and accelerate implementation.



North Judson Town Website



North Liberty Town Website

North Liberty, IN

North Liberty, in St. Joseph County, is a community of about 1,600 residents that has taken major steps in recent years to formalize its parks and recreation planning. Its 2024 Five-Year Parks Master Plan outlines strategies for managing 14 acres of parkland distributed across two primary sites. The town's parks include playgrounds, basketball courts, picnic shelters, and a splash pad, while a nearly two-mile trail system links residential neighborhoods with community destinations.

What makes North Liberty a particularly strong benchmark for Argos is its emphasis on balancing neighborhood access, maintenance capacity, and long-term growth. The town's plan focuses on expanding its pedestrian network in tandem with new residential development, ensuring that future neighborhoods are connected to parks from the outset. It also includes detailed assessments of accessibility, ADA compliance, and service area equity – tools that Argos can adapt for its own analysis of park reach and walkability.

For Argos, North Liberty provides a model for strategic, data-driven park planning in a small-town context. Its commitment to maintaining manageable operations while improving trail and sidewalk connectivity reflects the same challenges Argos faces as it grows. The town's comprehensive, incremental approach underscores the importance of linking park expansion with infrastructure planning, aligning perfectly with Argos's need to connect parks, schools, and emerging residential areas in its northeast and southern quadrants.

What This Means for Argos

Each of the benchmark communities – Wakarusa, Bourbon, North Judson, and North Liberty – offers practical insights that can guide the Town of Argos in strengthening its park system. Although these towns vary in size, geography, and resources, they share similar characteristics with Argos, including small populations, rural settings, and strong local pride in their parks. The lessons that follow outline strategies that can help Argos create a connected, inclusive, and sustainable parks and recreation system.

1. Strengthen Park Connectivity and Walkability Informed by Wakarusa and North Judson:

- Wakarusa and North Judson both show how small towns can expand access to parks by linking neighborhoods, schools, and community spaces through well-designed paths and trails. Wakarusa's trail planning and North Judson's Erie Trail demonstrate how connected routes improve both recreation and mobility. Argos can apply these lessons by closing sidewalk gaps and developing ADA-compliant routes that connect Community Park, Foker Park, Memorial Park, and Nickel Plate Square. A continuous network of sidewalks and trails would improve safety, encourage active transportation, and reinforce Argos's identity as a walkable community.

2. Diversify Park Amenities Without Expanding Land Area Informed by Bourbon and North Liberty:

- Bourbon has shown that small towns can provide variety and high-quality experiences within a limited amount of parkland. New features such as a dog park, pollinator garden, and small community spaces have increased participation and attracted new users without adding large maintenance costs. North Liberty has taken a similar approach by improving existing parks before purchasing new land. Argos can follow this model by focusing on

enhancements that add accessibility, comfort, and interest to current parks. Improvements such as shaded seating, inclusive play equipment, and small gathering spaces would have broad community benefits while keeping maintenance manageable.

3. Integrate Trails as Both Recreation and Infrastructure Informed by North Judson:

- North Judson's Erie Trail has become both a recreational amenity and a part of the town's transportation network. The trail connects parks, schools, and downtown destinations while also serving as a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists. Argos can adopt a similar perspective by developing trails that function as essential infrastructure rather than stand-alone park features. Argos has made early progress for this through the Marshall County Trails Master Plan. Also, early planning has begun for extending the Nickel Plate Trail to Argos from Rochester to the South.

4. Align Park Planning with Community Growth and Development Informed by North Liberty:

- North Liberty coordinates its park and land use planning to ensure new neighborhoods are served by nearby green space. Argos can use this approach as new residential areas develop on the north and south sides of town. By integrating parks and trail corridors into new subdivisions, Argos can maintain its "Town within a Park" character and ensure that all residents enjoy easy access to outdoor recreation.



5. Build Partnerships and Local Stewardship Informed by Wakarusa and Bourbon:

- Both Wakarusa and Bourbon rely on collaboration with schools, civic organizations, and volunteers to maintain parks and deliver community programs. These partnerships extend the towns' capacity to manage parks while strengthening local pride and participation. Argos can benefit from forming similar partnerships with the school district, youth organizations, and service clubs. Shared responsibilities for maintenance, programming, and events can reduce the workload on the parks board while encouraging community ownership.

6. Prioritize Year-Round Activation and Inclusive Design A Shared Lesson Across All Peer Communities:

- Each benchmark town has created ways for residents to enjoy parks in every season. Wakarusa and North Judson host community events year-round, and Bourbon and North Liberty have built inclusive playgrounds that attract families throughout the week. Argos has increased its inclusive access to recreation and programs through recent improvement projects at Foker Park and the new Nickel Plate Square, but further improvements are needed at other parks. Expanding accessible trails, hosting winter activities, and adding features such as seating and shade structures would help increase use and make parks comfortable for everyone. All new projects should incorporate universal design so that people of all abilities can participate fully.

7. Use Data and Planning to Guide Investment Informed by North Liberty's 2024 Parks Plan:

- North Liberty's recent parks plan shows how small towns can use data to guide investment decisions. The town uses park service area maps, accessibility audits, and maintenance assessments to evaluate performance and justify funding requests. Argos can apply the same approach by tracking participation, walkability, and accessibility within its parks. This information will help the parks board set priorities, demonstrate measurable progress, and support applications for state and federal grants.

Key Takeaways

1. Land-Rich, Connection-Light.

- Argos provides far more parkland per resident than peers but must convert land abundance into everyday access, especially for the northeast quadrant and new southern neighborhoods.

2. Trails Are the Competitive Gap.

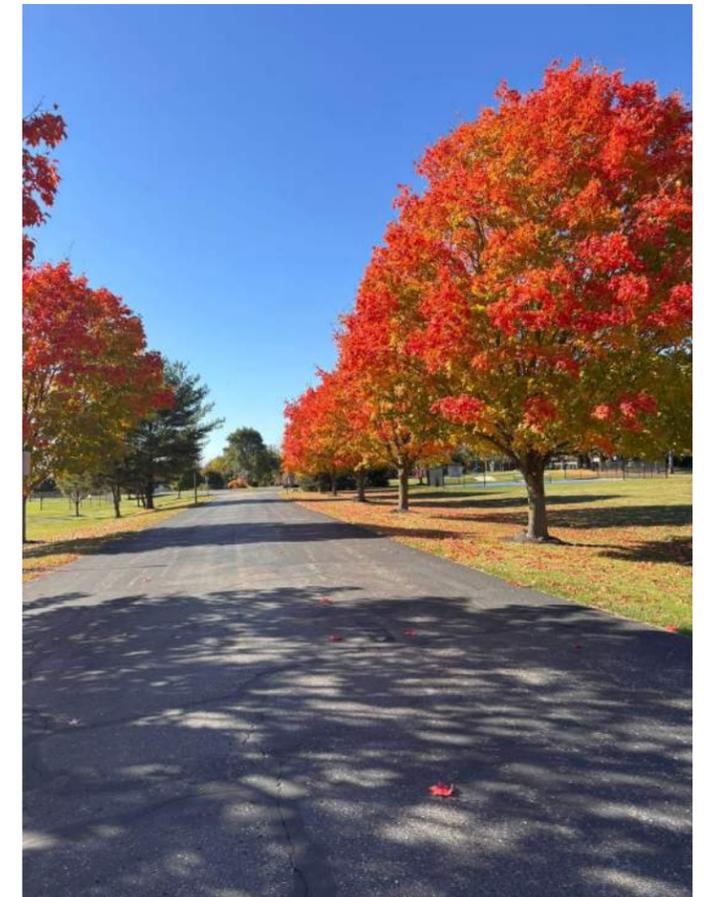
- Peers demonstrate the value of continuous town-spanning trails (e.g., North Judson). Argos' internal loops are strong; the missing piece is safe, ADA-compliant links between parks, schools, and downtown.

3. Amenity Balance & Year-Round Use.

- Argos already rivals peers in variety. Prioritizing inclusive play, ADA fishing access, winter programming (e.g., sledding hill activation, skate loop), and evaluating a dog-friendly facility can maintain an edge.

4. Downtown as a Differentiator.

- Few peers have a signature civic square like Nickel Plate; formalizing events, wayfinding, and joint programming with local partners can maximize its impact.



Five-Year Benchmark Targets for Argos

Potential peer-informed targets to guide capital and programming decisions:

- **Connectivity & Trails**
 - Add new trails and compliant sidewalks that connect the town's parks, school, and residential areas.
 - Continue planning for regional connections, including north to Plymouth and Bremen, and south to Rochester via an extension to the Nickel Plate Trail.
- **Park Access & Equity**
 - Site a new neighborhood-scale green or formalize public open space in the northeast quadrant, consistent with comprehensive plan growth areas.
 - Implement a '10-15 minute walk' access standard for all existing neighborhoods.
- **Inclusive Amenities**
 - Install ADA-accessible routes and viewing areas at soccer/ballfields; add an ADA fishing pier and path at Community Park pond.
 - Replace/retrofit at least one playground to a high-inclusion model (ramps, transfer stations, sensory play).
 - Evaluate dog park or dog-friendly zone feasibility (peers: Bourbon, North Judson).
- **Programming & Four-Season Use**
 - Expand trail-based events (walk/run, adaptive cycling days), winter activation (sled hill events, pop-up fire-rings, skate loop), and nature education tied to the wetland and pollinator plots.
 - Launch a simple, predictable events calendar with multi-channel outreach to improve participation.
- **Performance Metrics (track annually)**
 - Miles of connected, ADA-compliant trail.
 - % Of residents within a 10-15 minute walk of a park.
 - Accessible amenity count (e.g., ADA parking-to-amenity routes, seating).
 - Program reach (participants/event; advance notice metrics).
 - Canopy/shade added at high-use sites (splash pad, playgrounds).

Implications for Capital Planning

Given Argos' exceptional park-acreage position, the most cost-effective returns over the next five years will come from connections, accessibility upgrades, and targeted amenities rather than large new land acquisitions. Grant pursuits (e.g., LWCF/IDNR) should emphasize trail linkages, ADA improvements, neighborhood access in the northeast, and nature-based stormwater features that double as educational assets.



Chapter 4: Public Engagement

4.1 Overview of Engagement

4.2 Engagement Process

4.3 Public Engagement Results

4.1 Overview of Engagement

Public engagement was a central component of the Argos Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Direct input from residents, stakeholders, and Town staff ensured that recommendations reflect community priorities and practical realities. The goal was clear: align the plan with local expectations while building trust and shared ownership in its implementation.

The Town emphasized transparency and collaboration throughout the process. Two primary engagement tools were used, a community wide online survey and a public open house. Outreach was supported through the Town’s website and social media platforms. These efforts were supplemented by direct coordination with Town leadership and parks staff to identify operational

constraints, maintenance concerns, and implementation opportunities.

A total of 33 survey responses were received. Participation was modest, likely influenced by the recent release of surveys for the Town’s comprehensive planning efforts. While the number of responses was limited, the feedback provided was specific and actionable. Respondents consistently emphasized the importance of maintaining existing assets, improving amenities, expanding trail connections, and preserving accessibility across the system.

Collectively, the engagement process provided focused direction for the master plan. Input from residents and staff helped confirm priority areas for investment and reinforced the community’s expectation that park improvements remain practical, accessible, and aligned with local needs.



4.2 Engagement Process

The public engagement process for the Argos Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan was designed to be transparent, accessible, and responsive to community needs. Recognizing challenges in generating large-scale participation, the Town created multiple opportunities, both in-person and online, for residents to provide input on the current parks system and its future direction.

The engagement process for this plan consisted of three key components:

Stakeholder Kickoff Meeting – Held on September 16, 2025, at the Argos Municipal Building, this meeting included key community stakeholders, including Mark VanDerWeele, Jamie Lidstrom, Mark Dean, and Doug Middleton, alongside the consultant team. Discussions focused on existing park conditions, community priorities, and potential improvements. Insights from this session informed the design of the public survey and open house materials.

Public Open House – Conducted on October 2, 2025, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the Municipal Building, the event targeted accessibility by scheduling after standard work hours and promoting it via the Town’s website and social media. Four residents attended, including Mark VanDerWeele, Rick Shafer, Pam Rosebush, and Jon VanDerWeele, allowing for detailed dialogue on park amenities, desired improvements, and community values.

Online Community Survey – Launched September 30, 2025, and open through November 5, 2025, the survey reached a wider audience through the Town website, Park Board distribution, and social media posts. Thirty-three residents completed the survey, providing insights into park usage, facility priorities, and recommendations for the next five years.

Although overall participation was limited, the combined methods yielded meaningful, actionable feedback. The Town’s efforts to schedule accessible events, leverage digital platforms, and engage key stakeholders reflect a commitment to inclusive, community-focused planning.

Draft Plan Review Public Open House:

Meeting to be determined.



4.3 Public Engagement Results

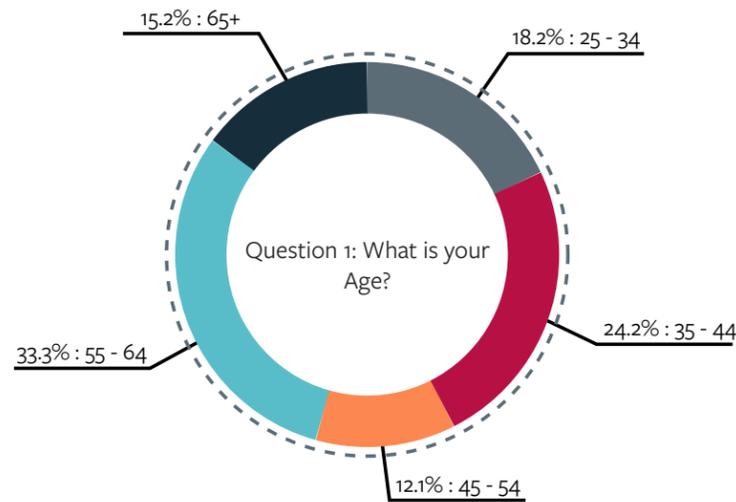
Online Survey Results

The online survey was open to receive responses from September 30th to November 5th of 2025. The survey was separated into Argos Resident and Non-Argos Resident so that we could see the difference in usage and opinions based on residential status. Only one response was received from a non-Argos resident or the results have been combined and "Question 2" has been omitted. The following questions have been renumbered for clarity but may have differed on the actual online survey.



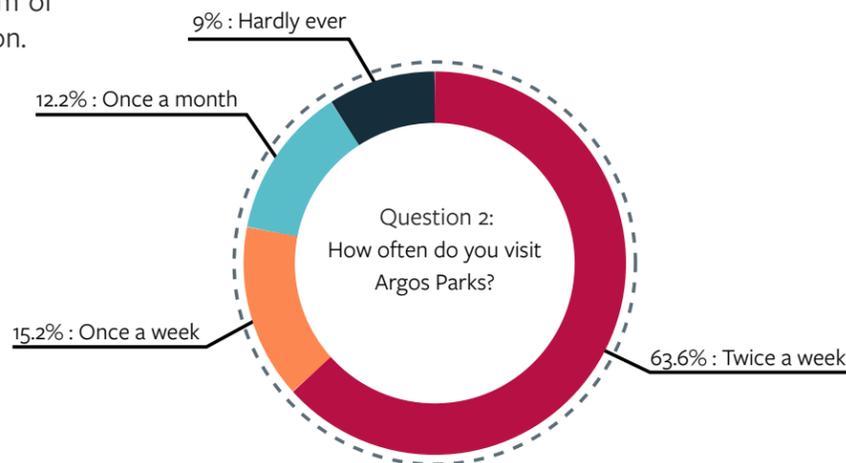
Question 1: What is your Age?

The public survey got a range of age groups but there are 2 age groups missing. Ages 18 or under and 19 through 24. So these results will reflect more of an older generational needs and wants but a good portion of the responders are in the age ranges of parents and grandparents who utilize the parks for themselves and their children/grandchildren. Meaning some of their input is based on how the younger population can also utilize the parks in healthy ways.



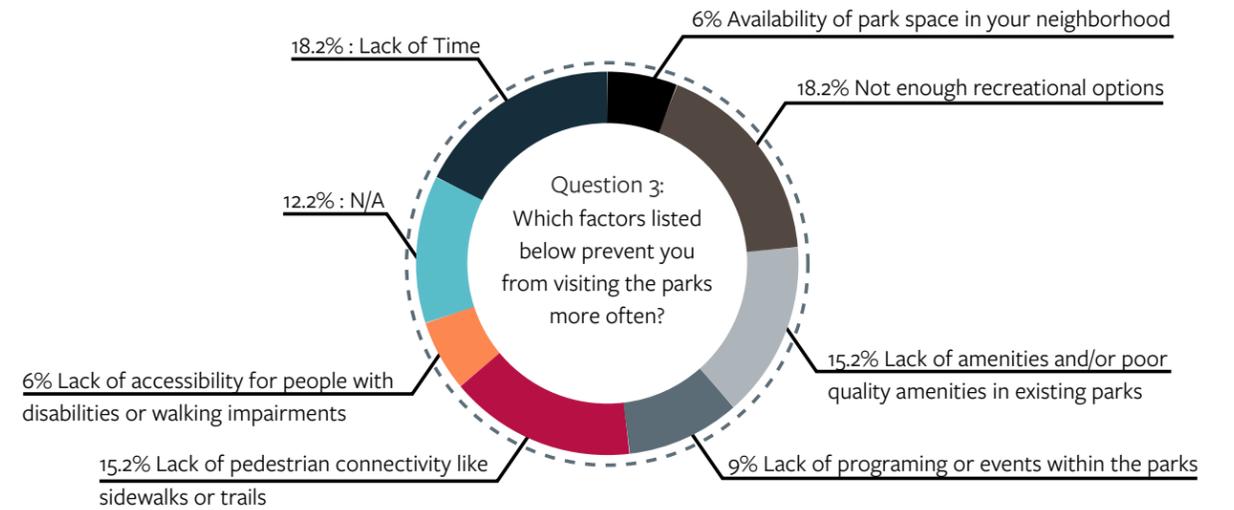
Question 2: How often do you visit Argos Parks?

63.6% of respondents visit the park about twice a week while 9% hardly ever visit. With 78.8% of responders visiting the park at minimum of once a week the parks see a lot of utilization.



Question 3: Which factors listed below prevent you from visiting the parks more often?

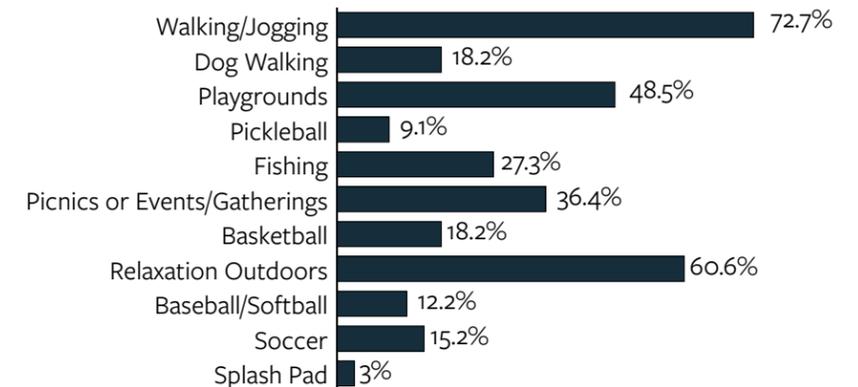
Tied for majority, with 18.2% of respondents each, is **Lack of Time** and **Not enough recreational options**. It could be said that with more recreational options people might make the time to come to the parks. The next items are also tied with 15.2% each but they do not correlate like the previous two. One is **Lack of pedestrian connectivity like sidewalks or trails** meaning there is a good portion of respondents that do not have adequate pedestrian level access to get to the parks. The other was **Lack of amenities and/or poor quality amenities in existing parks**. Participants want more quality amenities in the parks meaning the current ones get refurbished/replaced and the addition of some new amenities would bring residents into the parks more often to utilize these amenities. 12.2% of respondents said N/A so either nothing is stopping them or they just prefer to not answer the question.



Question 4: How do you currently use Argos Parks the most?

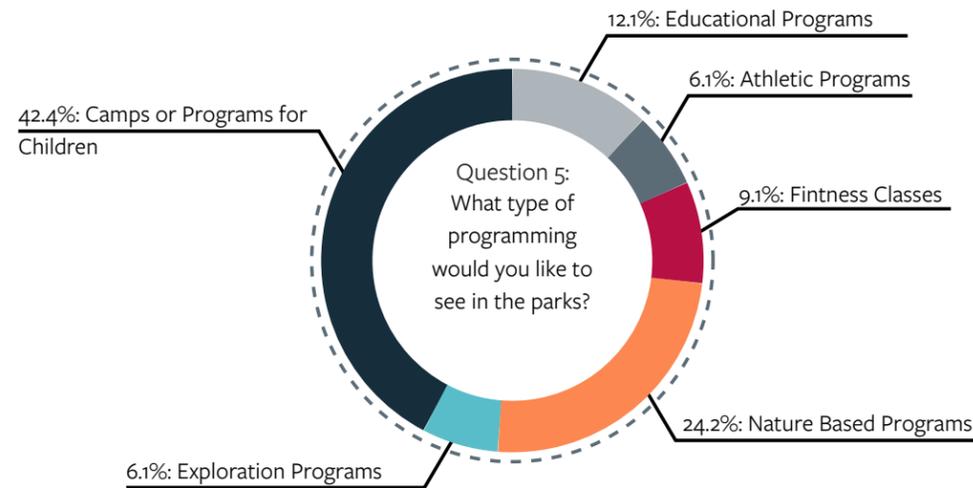
Two uses take a majority of respondents with **walking/jogging**(72.7%) and **relaxation outdoors**(60.6%). This reaffirms Argos's commitment to providing walking trails in its parks. While the splash pad and pickleball received low response rates, it could be skewed due to the low scale of responses and respondents could only select three options they do the most, and it could mean that those facilities need improvements to be used more frequently.

Question 4: How do you currently use Argos Parks the most? (select 3)



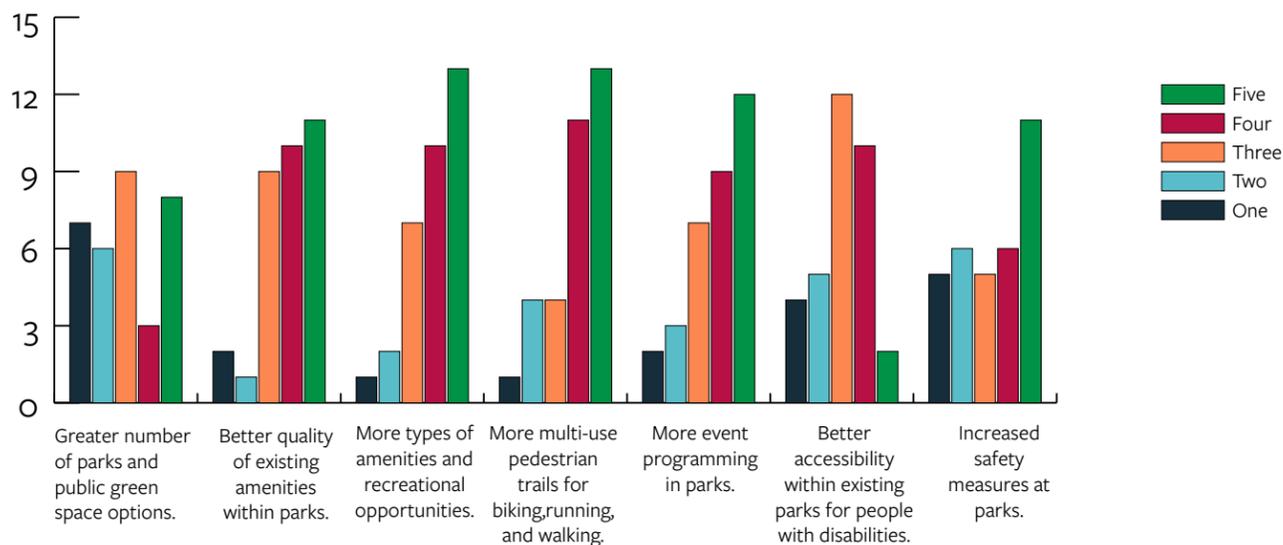
Question 5: What type of programming would you like to see in the parks?

Majority of responders want to see **Camps or Programs for Children** and **Nature Based Programs**. This informs Argos that the people want more outdoor structured activities. The less popular options of **Athletic Programs** shows that maybe a shorter duration sports camp could seem more attractive than a commitment to an athletic program that would require more attention from the parents.



Question 6: Please rank the following ideas based on if you would like to see them included in future plans for Argos Parks (Five being a great benefit to the park experience or 1 being of minimal benefit)?

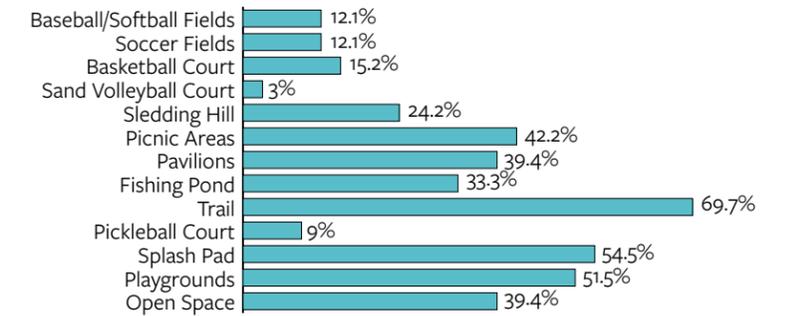
Based on rankings, the greatest benefit to Argos Parks from the ideas presented were **More Multi-Use Pedestrian Trails** and **More Types of Amenities** which aligns well with previous master planning goals. Other idea of great benefit included **Better Quality of Existing Amenities** and **More Event Programming in Parks**.



Question 7: What amenities do you use most at Community Park?

Contrary to the previous park usage question here splash pad is now the second most used amenity meaning a variety of the participants do consider them self as users of the splash pad but maybe not as much as other amenities across the park system

Question 7: What amenities do you use most at **Community Park**? (select 3)

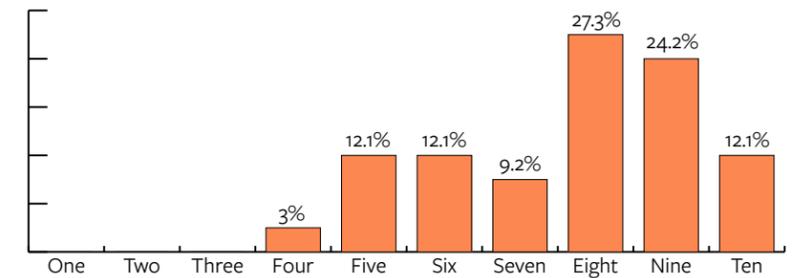


Question 8, 9, & 10: Quality, Variety, Experience & Enjoyment of Community Park

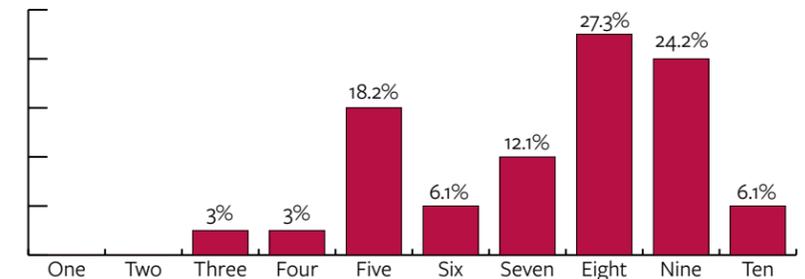
Participants were requested to respond on a scale of one to ten on a few different aspects of Community Park with the first on being on the quality of the existing amenities condition. From their responses many feel the amenities are in okay to good condition. Possibly meaning that many of the current amenities may need some minor maintenance to almost none.

Next participants were asked about the variety of amenities and recreational options currently offered by Community Park. Mixed review most seem to think the variety is okay but could still use more options than what is currently offered. Overall experience/ enjoyment of the park is positive with most of the votes above a rating of five. People enjoy this park and love this park which is strong sentiment for improving the park to make sure there are more people rating the park overall a ten.

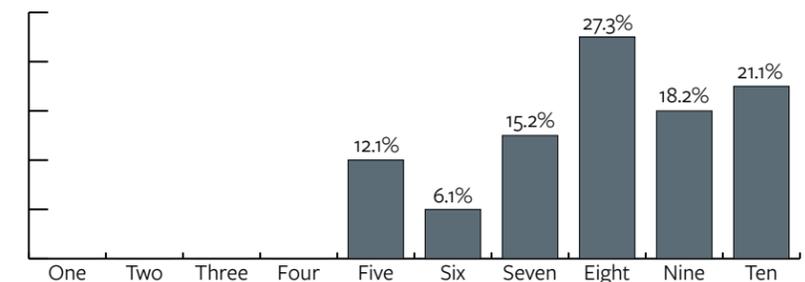
Question 8: How would you rate the quality of the existing amenities at **Community Park**? (One being in poor condition and Ten being in great condition)



Question 9: How would you rate the variety of amenities and recreational options at **Community Park**?



Question 10: How would you rate your overall experience/enjoyment at **Community Park**?



Question 11: What amenities would you like to see added to or improved at Community Park? (select 5)

The community survey responses clearly highlight the amenities residents see as priorities for improvement and investment in Community Park. The most frequently requested feature was an expansion of the splash pad, which continues to be one of the most popular and well-used amenities during the summer months. Expanding and updating the facility would accommodate higher usage and enhance the visitor experience for families and children.

Another highly desired feature was the addition of a natural playground, a play environment built from natural materials such as logs, boulders, and earth forms. These playgrounds foster creativity, sensory engagement, and problem-solving skills while providing an inclusive play experience that connects children to nature.

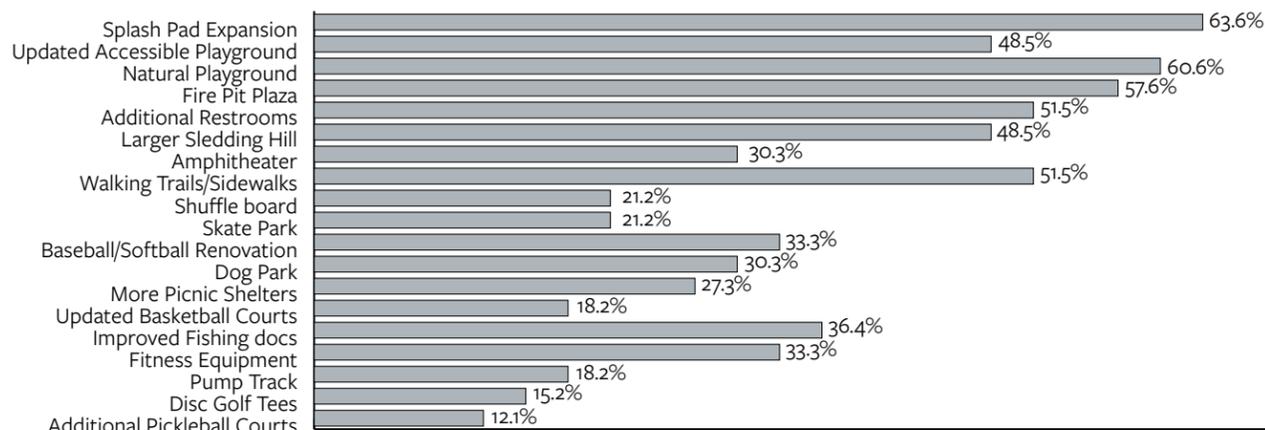
Residents also expressed interest in fire pit plazas or social gathering spaces, which extend park use into cooler seasons and create inviting areas for teens and adults to gather. These types of amenities broaden the park’s appeal beyond families with young children and promote year-round activity.

A fully accessible playground was another key priority. Such facilities go beyond ADA compliance to provide equitable play opportunities for children of all abilities, physical, sensory, developmental, and cognitive, encouraging social interaction and inclusive recreation.

Finally, respondents emphasized the need for expanded multi-use trails within and around Community Park. Improved trail connectivity would provide greater access, encourage walking and biking, and strengthen links between neighborhoods, park amenities, and the broader community.



Question 11: What amenities would you like to see added to or improved at Community Park? (select 5)



Other Comments Collected Regarding Argos Parks Summary:

The following is a summary of the open ended question that concluded the survey and asked respondents to provide any additional thoughts and ideas in terms of Argos Parks and the Five-Year Parks Master Plan

Infrastructure & Amenity Improvements

- Parking capacity is inadequate and should be addressed before future development.
- Bigger / updated splash pad requested multiple times.
- Desire for additional baseball/softball diamond.
- Volleyball court maintenance needed to make it usable.
- Requests for disc golf upgrades (concrete tee pads; QR-code course map).

Accessibility & Safety

- Strong advocacy for improving handicap accessibility.
- Desire for fenced playground areas, especially for toddlers and children prone to elopement.
- Concern regarding safety, especially as it relates to Foker Park trails; desire for privacy/safety fencing.
- Request to improve senior access to west side of Foker pond for fishing.
- General belief that existing parks are safe and well-maintained — mixed perspective.

Trail & Park Connectivity

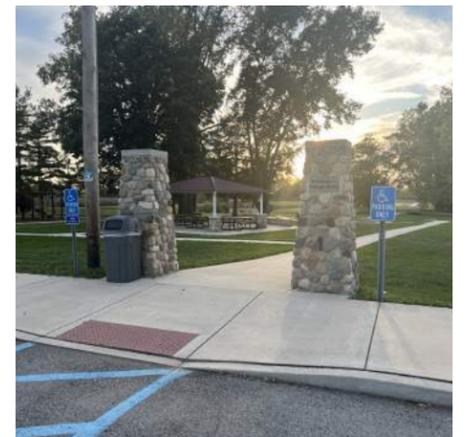
- High support for connecting Foker Park to Community Park by trail or bridge.
- Several comments note frequent trail usage.
- Wayfinding improvements suggested (QR-codes guiding visitors to disc golf and other amenities).

Outdoor Recreation & Natural Features

- Support for:
- Natural play areas
 - Additional scenic/nature-based spaces
 - Potential camping
 - Dog park
 - Expanded pond or kayak landing at Foker Park

Programming

- Interest in additional recreational programs and events.
- Some residents feel current parks are sufficient but open to enhanced programming.



Chapter 5: Needs Analysis, Goals & Recommendations

5.1 Needs Analysis

5.2 System Goals & Objectives

5.3 Park-Specific Recommendations

5.4 Strategic Priorities & Action Plan

5.1 Needs Analysis

Needs Analysis Overview:

The needs analysis for the Argos Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides a comprehensive look at the condition and functionality of the entire park system, identifying opportunities to improve accessibility, connectivity, and alignment with community needs. This analysis is the product of multiple inputs, including detailed park inventories, field observations by Town and Park staff (Stakeholder Meeting On September 19, 2025 at Argos Municipal Building)), public feedback gathered through community engagement efforts (pages 64-71) , and professional evaluation by Troyer Group, the Town’s design consultant. These collective efforts establish a clear picture of where Argos’ park system currently stands and what strategies will most effectively guide its evolution over the next five years.

The Argos Parks system today demonstrates a strong foundation of community assets. Its four primary park sites, Community Park, Memorial Park, Foker Park, and Nickel Plate Square, and the developing trail network, provide a diverse range of experiences, from active recreation and community events to natural reflection and environmental connection. Each park contributes a unique role in shaping the overall system, offering spaces for youth activities, family gatherings, downtown placemaking, and passive outdoor enjoyment. In reviewing the Argos Parks System as a whole, several common themes emerged across all parks and engagement feedback that point to system-wide needs and opportunities for improvement:

- **Aging and outdated amenities** – Many park features, particularly in Community Park and Memorial Park, are showing signs of wear or no longer align with modern expectations for accessibility, safety, and inclusivity.
- **Limited pedestrian and trail connectivity** – The lack of sidewalks and multi-use paths between parks, neighborhoods, schools, and downtown was identified as one of the most significant barriers to park access. The expansion of the town’s trail network is a top community priority.
- **Accessibility gaps** – While recent investments in Foker Park and Nickel Plate Square have advanced ADA compliance and inclusive design, other parks still lack accessible routes, connections between amenities, and ADA-compliant facilities.
- **Need for updated and relevant amenities** – Public feedback emphasized the community’s desire for new and modern recreation opportunities that appeal to a broader range of ages, including teens and adults. Amenities such as expanded trails, splash pad enhancements, fitness and wellness features, and social gathering spaces were among the most requested improvements.
- **Cohesion and identity** – Some parks, particularly Community Park and Memorial Park, exhibit a linear or segmented layout that causes amenities to feel disconnected. Future design work should focus on creating more cohesive activity clusters and clearly defined park zones that enhance the user experience.

Together, these themes illustrate a parks system that is rich in potential but in need of strategic updates to meet current and future demands. The needs analysis provides the foundation for guiding those improvements, balancing the preservation of Argos’ local character with the community’s desire for modern, inclusive, and connected park spaces. The following pages provide a detailed summary and analysis for each individual park and trail area within the system, outlining the key observations, opportunities, and priorities identified through this process.

Community Park Needs Analysis:

Community Park is the Town’s primary recreation hub and most heavily used facility. Due to its size, diversity of amenities, and frequency of use, this park represents the highest concentration of reinvestment needs during the five-year planning period.

Infrastructure and Maintenance Needs

- Rehabilitation or phased replacement of aging playground and splash pad equipment
- Shelter repairs and upgrades
- Maintenance and potential resurfacing of walking paths, pickle ball courts and ball fields

- Parking lot improvements and striping updates
- Replacement of worn site furnishings and signage

Accessibility Improvements

- Improved accessible routes between parking, playgrounds, shelters, and restrooms
- Evaluation of playground components for inclusive play opportunities
- Surface upgrades where needed to meet ADA standards
- Drainage and Environmental Considerations
- Improvements to stormwater management areas
- Stabilization of low-lying or erosion-prone areas
- Strategic tree planting and canopy maintenance



Memorial Park Needs Analysis:

Memorial Park functions as both a neighborhood park and civic commemorative space. Needs at this park focus primarily on preservation, accessibility, and enhancement of its character.

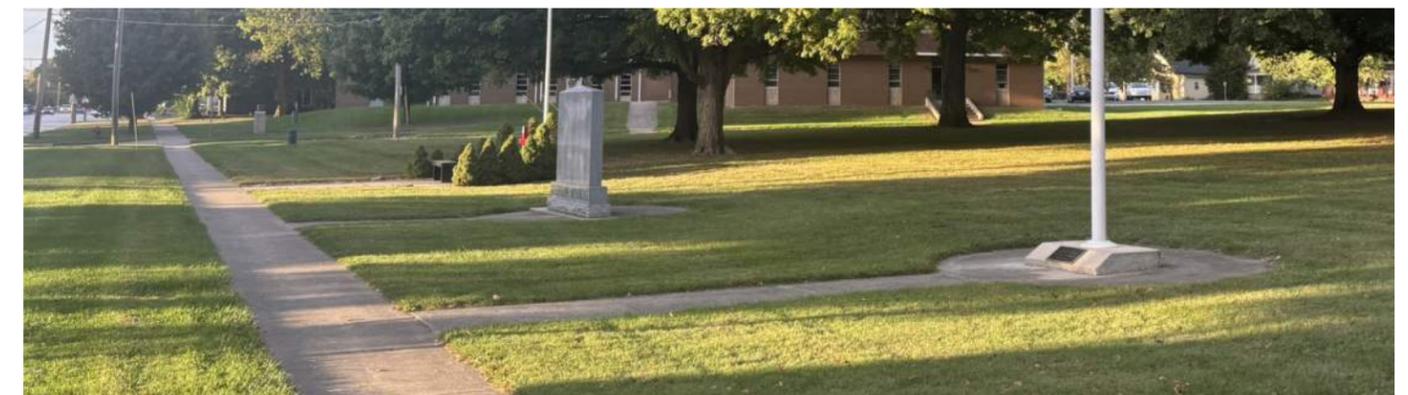
Infrastructure and Site Improvements

- Maintenance of memorial features and landscaping
- Pathway repairs and surface improvements
- Seating replacement or upgrades as needed

Accessibility Enhancements

- Review of accessible routes to memorial features and gathering areas
- Improved transitions between hardscape and lawn areas
- Civic Space Enhancements
- Lighting evaluation for safety and visibility
- Minor aesthetic improvements that reinforce the park’s commemorative function

Improvements at Memorial Park during the five-year period should be modest in scale and focused on preservation and usability rather than expansion.



Foker Park Needs Analysis:

Foker Park provides neighborhood-level recreation and open space, with environmental features influencing its use and development potential.

Usability Improvements

- Enhancements to open lawn areas for improved playability
- Evaluation of opportunities for small-scale, low-maintenance amenities
- Seating or shade additions where appropriate

Environmental and Drainage Needs

- Ongoing maintenance of stormwater and natural areas
- Erosion stabilization where necessary
- Vegetation management and tree maintenance
- Accessibility Considerations
- Assessment of pedestrian access routes
- Surface improvements to enhance safety and ease of use

Foker Park improvements should be phased and scaled appropriately to match neighborhood use patterns and maintenance capacity.

System-Wide Needs

In addition to park-specific priorities, several needs apply across the entire Argos park system:

- Continued pursuit of IDNR and other grant funding opportunities
- Phased implementation of capital projects to align with available resources
- Ongoing evaluation of ADA compliance across all parks
- Wayfinding and signage consistency throughout the system
- Coordination between the Park Board and Town Council during annual budgeting

Summary of Five-Year Priorities

Across all parks, the primary focus for the 2026–2031 planning period is reinvestment in existing assets, improved accessibility, and targeted enhancements that increase usability without overextending operational capacity.

By organizing needs by park, this chapter provides a clear framework for prioritizing improvements, allocating funding, and tracking progress over the next five years. These identified needs directly inform the goals, objectives, and prioritized action plan presented in the following chapters



Nickel Plate Square Needs Analysis:

Nickel Plate Square serves as a downtown civic plaza and event space. Needs at this location focus on maintaining functionality, safety, and visual appeal.

Hardscape and Furnishing Improvements

- Repair or replacement of aging hardscape elements
- Seating and site furnishing upgrades
- Evaluation of lighting and electrical capacity for events

- Accessibility and Connectivity
- Maintenance of accessible routes through the plaza
- Improved connections to surrounding sidewalks and downtown destinations

Event and Programming Support

- Enhancements that improve flexibility for community events
- Infrastructure improvements that support seasonal programming

As a highly visible public space, ongoing maintenance and selective upgrades at Nickel Plate Square are essential to preserving community pride and downtown vitality.



5.2 System Goals & Objectives

System Goals Overview:

The following goals and objectives provide a framework to guide the continued growth and enhancement of the Argos Parks and Recreation system over the next five years. These goals are a direct derivative of the comprehensive work undertaken throughout this planning process, including park inventories, accessibility assessments, public engagement, and analysis conducted by the Town of Argos, Park Board, and Troyer Group design consultants.

Each goal reflects the themes and needs identified through public feedback, town staff discussions, and a detailed evaluation of the park system's existing conditions. Together, they define a unified vision for the future of Argos Parks: a system that is accessible, connected, inclusive, and environmentally responsible while continuing to serve as a source of community pride and align with Argos's slogan, "A Town Within a Park". The objectives listed under each

goal outline specific, actionable strategies that will help achieve these long-term priorities. As implementation progresses, these goals and objectives will serve as both a roadmap for decision-making and a benchmark for measuring success across projects, funding efforts, and partnerships.

Goals:

Goal 1: Enhance Park Accessibility and Inclusivity

Goal 2: Strengthen Connectivity Across the Park System

Goal 3: Modernize Park Amenities and Recreation Opportunities

Goal 4: Foster Community Involvement and Programming

Goal 5: Promote Environmental Stewardship and Sustainable Design



Goal 1: Enhance Park Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Ensure that all parks and recreational facilities in Argos are universally accessible, equitable, and welcoming to residents of all ages and abilities.

Objectives:

1.1 Conduct ADA accessibility upgrades across all parks, prioritizing pathways, parking, restrooms, and site furnishings that meet DNR and ADA standards.

Targeted accessibility improvements will ensure that high-use amenities such as walkways, parking areas, restrooms, and site furnishings comply with ADA and DNR accessibility guidelines. Prioritizing these upgrades will enhance equitable access, support user safety and comfort, and ensure the park system meets regulatory requirements.

1.2 Integrate accessibility and universal design principles into all new park improvement and construction projects.

Applying accessibility and universal design standards to all future park projects will ensure that facilities are welcoming and usable for individuals of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Emphasizing inclusive design from the outset will reduce barriers, promote equity, and create a more user-friendly park system.

1.3 Strengthen pedestrian connectivity between park amenities, neighborhoods, and downtown to ensure all residents have safe and equitable access. Improving pedestrian linkages throughout the community will allow residents to reach parks, neighborhoods, and downtown destinations safely and comfortably. Enhancing sidewalks, crossings, and wayfinding will promote equitable access, encourage walking, and support a more connected community

1.4 Develop and maintain an ADA Transition and Grievance Policy to ensure continued compliance and accountability. Creating and routinely updating an ADA Transition Plan and Grievance Policy will help the town ensure ongoing compliance with federal accessibility standards. These policies will establish clear procedures for identifying and addressing accessibility barriers, as well as provide a transparent process for community members to submit concerns, supporting accountability and equitable access for all users.

1.5 Expand inclusive recreation opportunities such as accessible playground equipment, sensory-friendly spaces, and universally designed site furnishings. Increasing inclusive amenities throughout the park system will ensure that people of all ages and abilities can participate in recreation. Providing features such as adaptive play equipment, sensory-friendly environments, and universally designed furnishings will promote equitable access, support diverse user needs, and help create welcoming spaces for the entire community.



Goal 2: Strengthen Connectivity Across the Park System - Create a cohesive network of trails, sidewalks, and bike routes that link Argos' parks, schools, neighborhoods, and downtown into a unified recreation and mobility system.

Objectives:

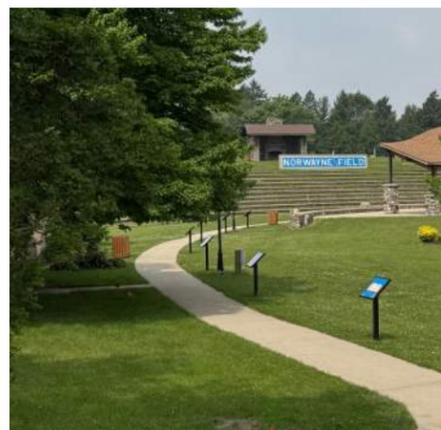
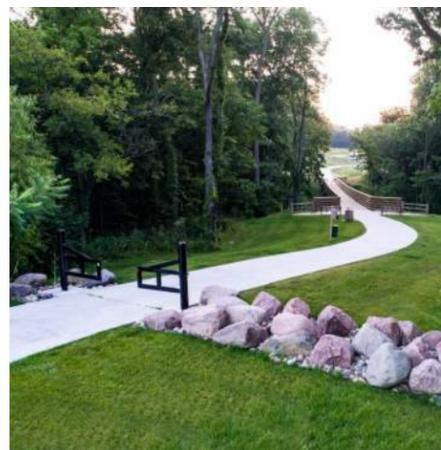
2.1 Expand existing trail systems at Community Park and Foker Park to connect with adjacent neighborhoods and destinations. Extending trail networks from these parks into nearby residential areas and key community destinations will improve accessibility, encourage active transportation, and strengthen park-to-neighborhood connectivity. This expansion will help create a more cohesive and integrated community trail system.

2.2 Identify and implement strategic trail corridors that provide safe, direct connections between parks, schools, and downtown. Establishing these corridors will create intuitive routes linking key destinations throughout the community, allowing both current and future residents to reach parks, schools, and civic spaces more efficiently. Improved connectivity will enhance recreation access, encourage active transportation, and support a stronger sense of community cohesion.

2.3 Upgrade crosswalks, lighting, and signage to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety. Improving these elements will provide safer access to parks, trails, and sidewalks for pedestrians and cyclists. Enhanced visibility, wayfinding, and roadway awareness will support a safer and more comfortable network for users of all ages and abilities.

2.4 Pursue partnerships and grant opportunities to fund trail expansion and infrastructure improvements. Argos should actively seek collaboration with regional partners and leverage available grant funding, such as the Indiana Trails Program (ITP) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), to support the development of new trails and related infrastructure. Utilizing these resources will help reduce local financial burdens while accelerating implementation

2.5 Establish wayfinding signage and trail branding to create a consistent identity and improve navigation throughout the park system. Implementing cohesive wayfinding and trail branding will help users navigate the park system more easily while reinforcing a recognizable community identity. Clear signage, maps, and branded trail markers will enhance user experience, encourage trail use, and create a unified visual presence across all parks and pathways.



Goal 3: Modernize Park Amenities and Recreation Opportunities - Upgrade and diversify park facilities to meet current community needs while maintaining the character and identity of each park.

Objectives:

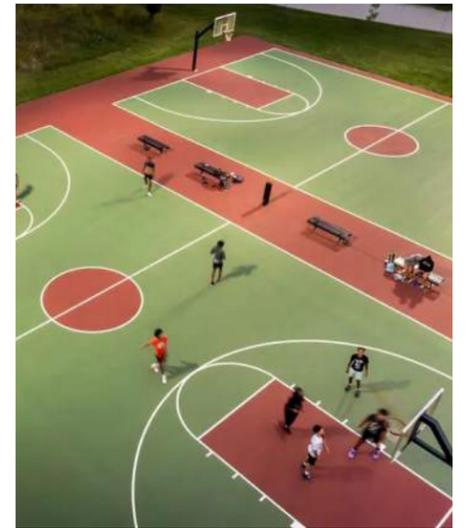
3.1 Replace outdated equipment and infrastructure with modern, inclusive, and durable alternatives. Upgrading aging park equipment and facilities with contemporary, accessible, and long-lasting options will enhance safety, usability, and overall visitor experience. Prioritizing inclusive and durable materials ensures that amenities serve a wide range of users and reduce maintenance needs over time

3.2 Introduce new recreational amenities that serve a wider range of age groups, including teens, adults, and seniors. Expanding recreational offerings to accommodate diverse age groups will encourage greater community participation and engagement. Adding amenities tailored for teens, adults, and seniors will create inclusive opportunities for active recreation and social interaction across the generations.

3.3 Incorporate innovative park features such as outdoor fitness zones, adventure play areas, and year-round recreation amenities like sledding hills and fire pit plazas. Adding creative and versatile park features will enhance the user experience and encourage active, year-round engagement. Outdoor fitness zones, adventure play areas, and seasonal amenities provide opportunities for recreation, socialization, and community gatherings, appealing to a wide range of ages and interests.

3.4 Ensure all new and upgraded amenities follow DNR design standards and best practices for accessibility and sustainability. Adhering to DNR guidelines and incorporating accessibility and sustainability best practices will ensure that park improvements are safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible. Following these standards supports long-term durability, reduces maintenance needs, and creates welcoming spaces for all Argos community members.

3.5 Expand opportunities for year-round use through improved lighting, seating, and sheltered gathering spaces. Enhancing park amenities with adequate lighting, comfortable seating, and weather-protected gathering areas will encourage use throughout all seasons. These improvements support safety, social interaction, and recreational activities, making parks more welcoming and functional for the entire community year-round.



Goal 4: Foster Community Involvement and Programming - Encourage community involvement, partnerships, and programming to enhance park use, promote local pride, and ensure the park system continues to reflect the voice of Argos residents.

Objectives:

4.1 Maintain consistent public engagement through surveys, open houses, and stakeholder meetings to guide future park initiatives.

Ongoing community involvement ensures that park planning reflects the needs and priorities of residents. Regular surveys, open houses, and stakeholder meetings provide valuable feedback, foster transparency, and build community support for current and future park projects.

4.2 Partner with schools, civic organizations, and community groups to develop shared programming and volunteer opportunities. Collaborating with local institutions and community groups will expand recreational, educational, and cultural offerings while fostering civic engagement. Shared programs and volunteer initiatives provide residents with meaningful ways to contribute, strengthen community connections, and maximize the use of park resources.

4.3 Expand educational and cultural programming, including historical interpretation, environmental education, and youth activities. Enhancing park based educational and cultural offerings will provide opportunities for learning, engagement, and community connection. Programs focused on local history, environmental stewardship, and youth enrichment encourage exploration, promote lifelong learning, and foster a deeper appreciation for the natural and cultural resources within the park system.

4.4 Utilize parks like Nickel Plate Square and Foker Park as key venues for community events and seasonal gatherings. Designating these parks as primary locations for festivals, markets, and seasonal activities will strengthen their role as community hubs. Hosting regular events in accessible spaces fosters social interaction, encourages park use, and enhances a sense of community identity and pride.

4.5 Increase visibility and awareness of park offerings through coordinated marketing, social media, and outreach strategies. Implementing a comprehensive communication plan will ensure residents are informed about park amenities, programs, and events.



Goal 5: Promote Environmental Stewardship and Sustainable Design - Preserve Argos' natural resources and integrate sustainable practices into the planning, design, and maintenance of all parks and recreational spaces.

Objectives:

5.1 Convert select mowed lawn areas to native landscapes, pollinator gardens, or rain gardens to reduce maintenance and enhance biodiversity. Transforming portions of lawn into native plantings and rain gardens will lower maintenance needs, support pollinators and wildlife, and improve ecological resilience. These sustainable landscape practices promote biodiversity, enhance aesthetic value, and contribute to healthier, more environmentally friendly park spaces.

5.2 Protect and improve water quality through responsible shoreline management, stormwater design, and habitat restoration. Implementing best practices for stormwater management, and habitat restoration will safeguard local water resources and support healthy ecosystems. These strategies reduce erosion, filter pollutants, and create sustainable habitats for numerous species, enhancing both environmental quality and community enjoyment of natural areas.

5.3 Incorporate sustainable design principles into all park improvements, including energy-efficient lighting and low-impact materials. Integrating sustainable design strategies ensures that park developments minimize environmental impact, reduce energy consumption, and promote long-term resilience. Using energy-efficient lighting, durable low-impact materials, supports environmental stewardship while creating functional, safe, and sustainable recreational spaces.

5.4 Develop educational opportunities and signage to increase public awareness of local ecology and sustainability initiatives. Providing interpretive signage, guided programs, and interactive educational activities will help residents and visitors understand local ecosystems and the importance of sustainable practices. These efforts foster environmental stewardship and encourage responsible use of these natural areas.

5.5 Continue to model environmental leadership through the success of Foker Park, reinforcing Argos' commitment to balance recreation with natural preservation. Foker Park serves as a benchmark for sustainable park management, demonstrating how recreational amenities can coexist with ecological stewardship. By building on its success, Argos can continue to showcase environmental leadership, promote biodiversity, and provide residents with high-quality outdoor experiences that respect and preserve natural resources.



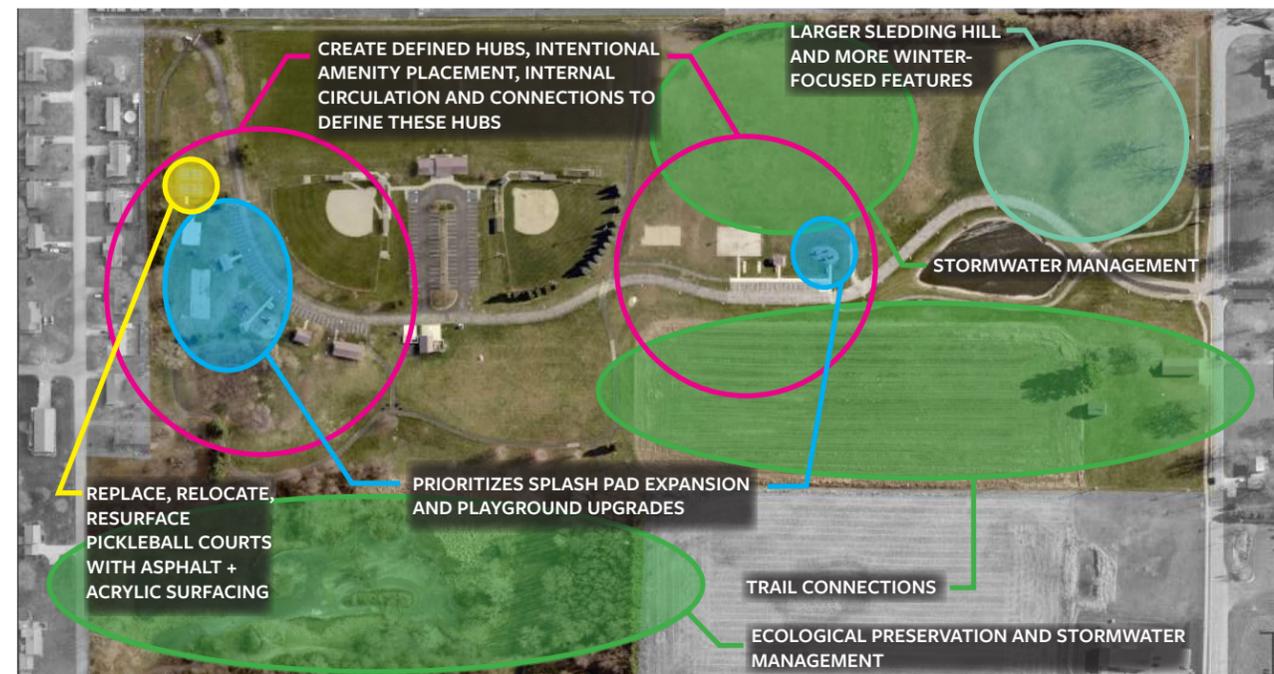
5.3 Park-Specific Recommendations

Community Park Action Items:

- Create defined hubs at the north and mid-park clusters so amenities feel like intentional places (hub-and-spoke or plaza-based organization), rather than a string of disconnected stops along the drive.
- Improve internal circulation within each cluster (short connector paths, seating groupings, landscape thresholds, signage) so users can move easily between amenities in the same hub.
- Prioritize splash pad expansion and playground upgrades, reflecting their high ranking in the public survey.
- Replace, relocate, or resurface the north pickleball courts with asphalt + acrylic surfacing to match community expectations and boost usage.
- Introduce winter-focused features (fire-pit plaza, larger sled hill) to promote year-round activation.
- Use circulation, landscape, and furnishing to define the recreation hubs (sidewalks/trails, trees, shade structures, benches) so each cluster becomes a clear destination that supports programming, socializing, and events.
- Continue investments in trail connectivity, ecological preservation, and stormwater management so the park remains resilient and enjoyable across seasons.

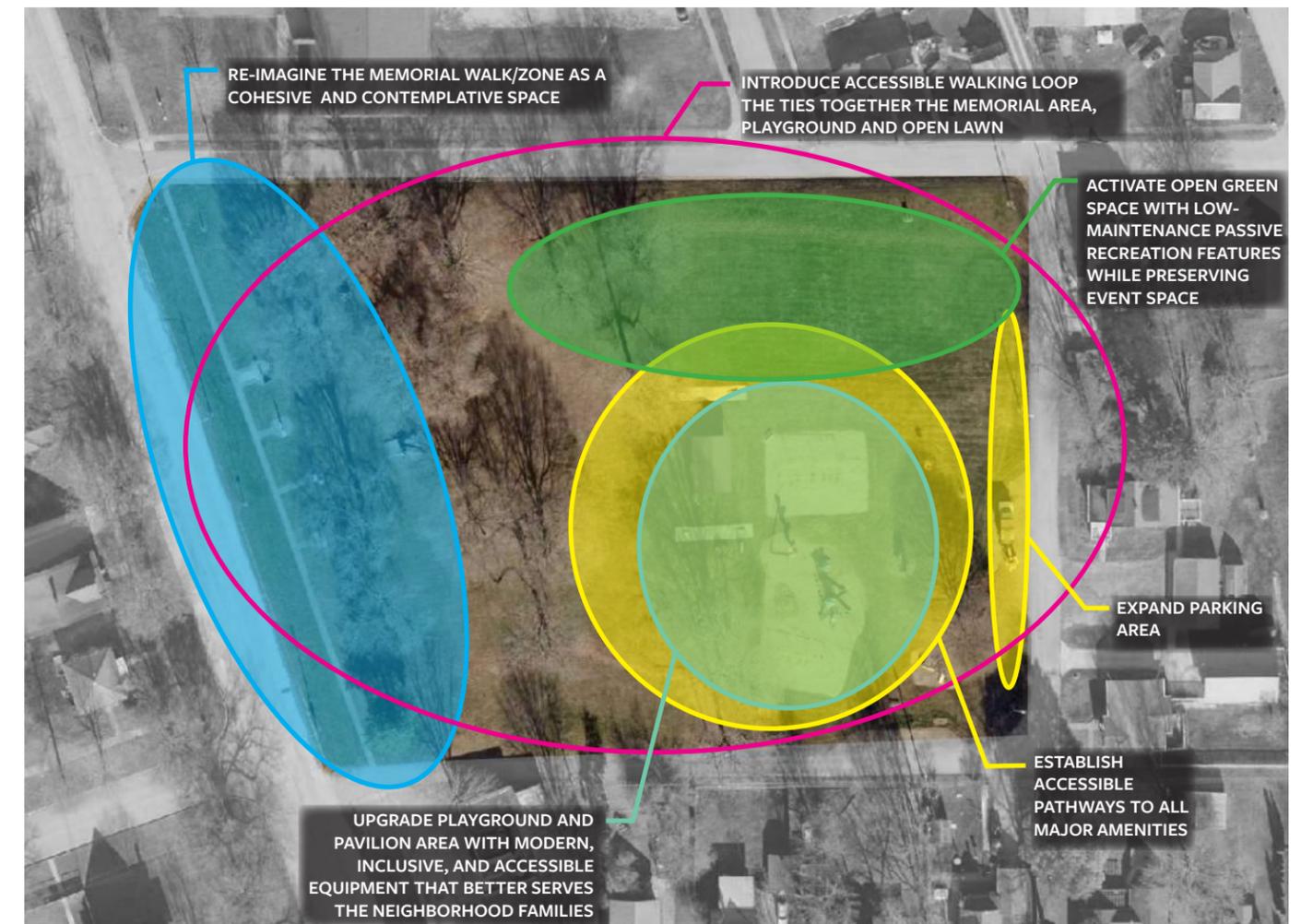


These focused hub improvements will make the park feel more intentional and navigable: rather than trying to stitch the entire linear park into one continuous plaza, the goal is to strengthen the park's existing cluster identities, so each area functions as a lively, cohesive center of activity.



Memorial Park Action Items:

- Re-imagine the memorial walk/zone as a cohesive and contemplative space that unites the individual monuments through landscaping, seating, and information plaques.
- Enhance accessibility and circulation, expanding the small parking area and establishing accessible pathways between all major park amenities.
- Introduce a walking loop that ties together the memorial area, playground, and open lawn, encouraging both reflection and light recreation.
- Upgrade the playground and pavilion area with modern, inclusive, and accessible equipment that better serves neighborhood families.
- Activate open green space with low-maintenance passive recreation features such as social spaces and unique seating while preserving event space.
- Add restroom facilities with pedestrian connections to the parking lot and other amenities like the playground, walking trail, and pavilion.
- Strengthen visual and thematic unity through coordinated materials, plantings, and signage that balance the park's memorial and recreational functions.
- Position Memorial Park as a model neighborhood park that combines reflection, recreation, and community gathering within a single, cohesive design.



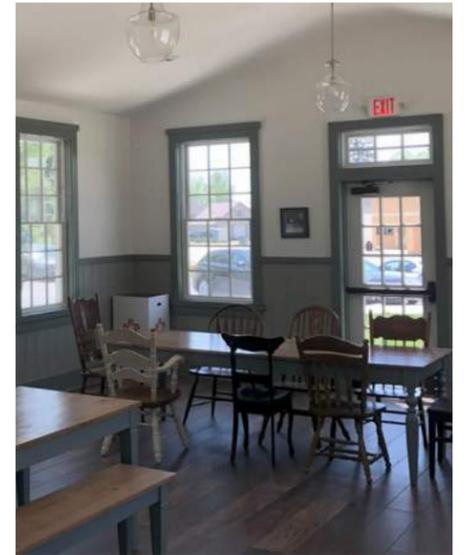
Foker Park Action Items:

- Incorporate the planned Labyrinth as a central contemplative feature that strengthens the park's reflective identity.
- Add passive recreation amenities such as hammocks or gardens that encourage regular, relaxed park use.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity between Foker Park, adjacent neighborhoods, and the broader Argos park system.
- Introduce trail lighting and rest areas to expand safe, comfortable usage and highlight the park's natural scenery.
- Convert select mowed areas to native gardens or rain gardens to enhance biodiversity and reduce maintenance.
- Explore landform play elements to provide imaginative recreation opportunities that harmonize with the park's natural setting.
- Create educational programming partnerships with schools and camps to utilize the park as a nature based exploration and learning experience.



Nickel Plate Square Action Items:

- Install interpretive history boards or interactive exhibits to share Argos' rail and industrial heritage and support educational programming.
- Incorporate small-scale recreation elements such as lawn games, hammock posts, or art installations to encourage daily casual use.
- Create educational programming partnerships with schools and camps to utilize the park as an outdoor learning space.
- Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections between downtown, surrounding neighborhoods, and other park spaces.
- Enhance wayfinding, signage, and lighting to promote safety and visibility within the downtown core.
- Continue placemaking efforts that celebrate both Argos' history and its evolving civic identity.



Community Trails Action Items:

- Expand the existing trail networks at Foker Park and Community Park into adjacent neighborhoods.
- Identify priority corridors for future trail and sidewalk development that connect parks, schools, and downtown.
- Implement multi-use paths and crosswalk upgrades along key routes to improve accessibility and safety.
- Introduce wayfinding signage and trail branding to unify the park system and improve user experience.
- Pursue partnerships and grant funding (such as DNR or regional mobility programs) to accelerate trail implementation.



5.4 Strategic Priorities & Action Plan

The following matrix was derived from the combination of Goals, Objectives, Park Recommendations, and the Needs Analysis. Timelines are organized by size of action item and priority.

Prioritization and Implementation Matrix				Timeline		
Strategies and Action Items	Estimated Cost	Potential Partners/Funding	1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6+ Years	
General Park System Improvements						
Promote Parks Identity/Awareness	N/A	Park Board, Town Council		Ongoing		
ADA Transition Plan + Grievance Policy	N/A	Park Board, Town Council	X			
Park System Furniture, Materials, & Plantings Standards Manual	\$5,000 - \$10,000	Park Board, Town Council, Consultants		X		
Expand Website and Social Media	\$1,000 - \$2,000	Park Board	X			
Annual Maintenance Needs Assessment	\$2,000 - \$5,000	Park Board, Town Council	X			
Volunteer / "Adopt-A-Park" Programs or Similar	\$1,000 - \$2,000	Park Board, Town Council, Local Community Groups, Schools		X		
Develop a Programs and Activities Calendar	N/A	Park Board, Town Staff	X			
Identify Funding Sources	N/A	Park Board, Consultants, Grant Writers		Ongoing		
Community Park						
Parking Improvements	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Town Council	X			
Recreation Hub Improvements (Plazas, Furnishings, Pavilions)	\$75,000 - \$125,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
Splash Pad Expansion and Seating Improvements	\$200,000 - \$300,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
Internal Connector Paths & Trails Within Park	\$70,000 - \$100,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
New Accessible Playground Equipment	\$200,000 - \$300,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Natural Playground	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Sahde Structures at Play Areas	\$25,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Sidewalk/ADA Access to Current Amenities	\$50,000 - \$100,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
Gazebo Renovation	\$60,000 - \$80,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Park Wayfinding & Signage	\$15,000 - \$25,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Lighting Improvements for Park	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Pickleball Court Resurface/Relocation	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
Softball Fields Renovations	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Fishing Pier	\$2,000 - \$5,000	Park Board, Donations, Grants		X		
Add Softball Field	\$120,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Sledding Hill Addition	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants			X	
Fire Pit/Warming Station	\$60,000 - \$80,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Disc Golf Wayfinding	\$2,000 - \$5,000	Park Board, Donations, Grants	X			
Disc Golf Updates	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Park Board, Donations, Grants		X		
Dog Park	\$150,000 - \$200,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding			X	
Basketball Court	\$30,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Volleyball Court	\$30,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Turfed Soccer Field	\$200,000 - \$300,000	Park Board, Town Council, School, Grants			X	
Shuffleboard	\$30,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Donations, Grants		X		
Ampitheater	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Skate Park	\$200,000 - \$300,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding			X	
Tree Planting	\$20,000 - \$30,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Stormwater Bio-Swales & Rain Gardens	\$20,000 - \$30,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding			X	
Memorial Park						
Ground Penetration Radar Survey	\$1,000 - \$5,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
Memorial Walk Redesign/Updated Memorial Zone	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants			X	
Sidewalk/ADA Access to Amenities/Internal Walking Trail	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Update Playground Equipment/Accessible Equipment	\$100,000 - \$150,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Seating	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Park Signage	\$5,000 - \$10,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Restroom Facilities	\$80,000 - \$100,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Landscape	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Foker Park						
Labrinth	\$30,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
Passive Recreation Elements	\$20,000 - \$30,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding	X			
Native Tree & Perennial Plantings for Gardens/Rain Gardens	\$20,000 - \$30,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Educational Programming	\$1,000 - \$5,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Park Signage/Educational Signage	\$20,000 - \$30,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Additional Park Seating/Rest Areas/Pond Overlooks	\$20,000 - \$30,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Lighting	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Town Council, Grants			X	
Fishing Pier	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grant Funding		X		
Landform Play	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Expanded Stormwater Management	\$40,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants			X	
Nickel Plate Square						
Interpretive History Signage	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Small Scale Recreational Elements (Lawn Games/Hammock Poles)	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Educational Partnerships with Schools, Camps, 4-H Community	N/A	Town Council, Schools, Community Organizations, Donations	X			
Art Installations	\$20,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants		X		
Seating and Shade Structures on Southeast Side of Building	\$20,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Donations, Grants	X			
Trails and Connectivity						
Develop Trail Network in Argos	\$75,000 - \$125,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grants	X			
Trailhead Infrastructure (Restrooms, Parking, Rest Stops)	\$75,000 - \$125,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grants		X		
Trail Branding, Signage, & Wayfinding	\$25,000 - \$50,000	Park Board, Town Council, Consultants			X	
Sidewalk Connections	\$50,000 - \$75,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grants	X			
Foker Park Pedestrian Connection	\$200,000 - \$300,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grants		X		
Trail Lighting & Safety	\$200,000 - \$300,000	Park Board, Town Council, Grants			X	
Bike Lanes	\$200,000 - \$250,000	Park Board, Town Council, IDNR/INDOT			X	

Chapter 6

Appendices



Public Engagement Write In Responses

- Need more parking before anything else is done!
- Would love to use the volleyball court. It needs to be properly maintained.
- We use the walking trail in Foker park a lot but will probably stop using the outer trail once the truck stop goes in unless there is a privacy fence to separate the path from the lot for safety
- Would be great if we could have a third baseball diamond
- Need to make splash pad bigger and update it
- I think it is imperative to make Argos parks more handicapable. I would love to see some fencing put up around some playground structures for toddlers and children that elope. I think its important to make the parks both accessible and safe for everyone.
- Our parks are already quite good. Very happy with how the town is currently managed.
- I think it is appalling that the town would approve a truck stop that tore down a whole section of trees, and will be brining sketchy truck drivers into our town and the littering/trash/crime that comes with them. My niece is no longer aloud to go to the Fokler Park for these reasons. It's sad that greed outweighed the want for a safe community and anyone that voted to approve the truck stop should be removed from their position.
- Bigger splash pad - concrete the t pads for disc golf - updated playground
- The park is amazing. But would love to see more come to town. Expand on playsets but also more nature and scenic places. Also camping area would be nice too.
- Dog park would be nice
- Well kept
- So many people I run into the park do not know the frisbee golf map. (Neither do I) It would be nice to have QR Codes on the signs showing the layout. This could also be used to guide people to other amenities within each park as well. Maybe in the future you could have a bridge or trail connecting Folker Park with the community park.
- Bigger splash pad
- Connecting the trails from Foker to Community Park would be a top priority for us. Senior citizens need access to the west end of Foker Park for fishing. A kayak landing at the west end of Foker pond would be nice and would also need access. Expanding Foker pond might be possible if the state builds the proposed interchange. I would propose renting some park ground for construction company equipment storage and offering fill dirt from the pond area. Money paid for fill dirt and the storage area could be put toward park amenities.
- Natural Playground would be Awesome
- Are parks are great
- They are pretty great as is but could use some programs
- Lack of rock wall