

2021 Elkins Parks and Recreation Committee Annual Report

2021 Parks & Recreation Committee Members: Lynn Francis (Chair), Lindsay Watt (City Council Representative), Stephanie Cowan, Paul Graham, Stephanie Burrell, Teresa Graves, LaNae Taylor,

The Elkins Parks and Recreation Committee was reestablished in June of 2019 by Ordinance 06-20-2019A. The Committee has worked to fulfill the duties laid out by the ordinance as well as to pursue our mission to build partnerships between city departments and interested citizens to enhance the quality of life in Elkins by providing safe, well-maintained parks and providing opportunities to strengthen community engagement through a variety of recreational opportunities, enrichment programs, and services for all ages and abilities.

After spending much of 2020 working to improve the structures in Bunch Park, the committee spent much of 2021 working to create an updated Active Transportation Plan for the City of Elkins as well as a strategic plan for improvements to Bunch Park and planning for the planned park in the Rausch Coleman development. To this end, the committee:

- Created and distributed a community input survey to determine resident priorities for parks and trails.
- Submitted two grant proposals for trail development and were successful in winning a \$20,000 award for the City of Elkins from the Arkansas Department of Transportation.

In addition to working on planning for future improvements, the committee helped to facilitate community events in Bunch Park by:

- Working with the Lions Club to help organize and advertise the concessions at the Independence Day Fireworks Celebration
- Organizing, Promoting, and Hosting a community movie night on August 7, 2021.

The committee would also like to acknowledge the work of the Elkins Administration, and Water and Streets employees. In addition to keeping the parks mowed and cleaned, they made improvements to Bunch Park, including:

- Installation of a new pavilion
- Repairs to the existing pavilion
- Repairs to the concession stand plumbing

Looking forward, the committee has identified additional needed repairs for the tennis and volleyball courts, as well as a few of the picnic tables.

The survey results identified a strong community desire for a bottle filling station. The committee is working on grant-writing projects to help fund these needs, as well as additional, accessible playground features, and additional trail expansions.

The committee is excited about the opportunities to expand our impact going forward and has identified the following priorities for 2022:

- Finalize the Active Transportation Plan, including holding a public input session and presenting it to the City Council as an addition to the Master Street Plan
- Organize a Summer Fun Series, consisting of more outdoor family movie nights as well as a concert to take place as part of the Independence Day celebrations.
 - The committee has already secured a \$450 donation from the Lions Club and a \$400 sponsorship from Home Light and is moving forward with securing additional event sponsors.

The committee meets the second Wednesday of each month at the Elkins Public Library Community Room at 6:30pm.

Bunch Park Maintenance & Improvement Plan

Basic Maintenance Needs:

- Replace cracked Window in concession stand
- Find and repair leak in concession stand south wall
- Remove old grill base by picnic tables
- Build new ramp for stage
- Resurface & Paint Tennis Court & Replace Net
- Build a Park Sign/Walking Trail Map to affix to posts by old Pavilion
- Improve Sand Volleyball Court

Recommended Improvements:

- New Fridge/Freezer for Concession Stand
- Plan to purchase or repair 1-2 new picnic tables per year for the next few years

Proposed Grant Projects:

- Tennis Court resurfacing supplies
- Swings and other playground equipment for people with disabilities, possibly picnic tables
- Begin work on improving and expanding Bunch Park Trails to connect to other city services (Library, Schools, etc.)