

## Chapter 11

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES

#### Planning for Community Facilities . . . .

While private enterprise provides many of the services in a community, there are others that are more identified as being supported and administered by public funds. This chapter evaluates the needs of community facilities in McPherson that are or may be supported by public or quasi-public funds. The extent to which such facilities are available often reflects the degree and quality of urban life that may be anticipated. Not too many years ago, government provided only the very basic necessities for health and safety, but today, technical and social changes have given people higher incomes and more leisure time so that an increase in the demand for community facilities has occurred. Modern industries seek out those communities which not only can provide them with land and utilities, but also have the facilities that give their employees the amenities of the "good life". This makes for a lower ratio of turnover in employment and more satisfied employees. The availability of good facilities, particularly those relating to educational, cultural, and leisure time activities, often makes the difference whether a "quality" industry moves to a community.

An important part of planning for the location of community facilities is determining the relationship of service areas to land use, streets, and natural features. Different types of facilities serve varying numbers of people to justify their need. Some facilities serve residential uses and should be located on a neighborhood basis. Others serve the whole community and should be centralized and easily accessible from many directions. There are optimum locations for each facility to maximize their efficiency and economy in serving the public. It is very important to not only plan far ahead for their location, but also to acquire and reserve sites in advance of need in order to avoid their use being preempted by development for other purposes. Each zoning case and subdivision plat should be reviewed in light of the need for easements, rights-of-way, or land acquisition appropriate for public facilities.

McPherson residents are fortunate in not only having good city facilities, but as the county seat, it also has most of McPherson County's governmental facilities. These are further supplemented with some state and federal offices.

Many of the existing community facilities and proposed needs are summarized on the map of Community Facilities, Figure 11-A.

#### Municipal Center . . . .— City staff

The McPherson Municipal Center is located at 400 East Kansas Avenue. This structure, which was originally constructed as a grocery store in 1959, was remodeled for use by the city in 1974. This replaced the City Hall at 111 South Main which was purchased in 1906. The Municipal Center was again expanded and remodeled into its present configuration in 1995. The

building is 16,000 square feet in size and is located on a large property of 77,400 square feet. A large percentage of the remaining property is paved for parking or access drives including 65 paved off-street parking spaces. The remainder of the lot is landscaped open space.

The Municipal Center houses the following city government offices: City Clerk/Administrator, City Public Works Director, City Building Inspector, Community Development Director, engineering department, conference rooms, City Commission meeting room, working offices for the Mayor and City Commissioners, and general public access offices. The building also provides office space for Heart to Heart Child Services which provides child advocacy services to the area served by the City and County law enforcement agencies. Should additional space be needed during the Planning Period, additional room is available on the lot for further expansion of the building and/or parking areas.

## **Board of Public Utilities . . . .** Mark Wurm, Carla Pearson

### **Water Utility**

The Board of Public Utilities (BPU) previous rate increase became effective on April 2, 2007, and has provided the department with sufficient revenue to maintain the production and distribution systems. However, given the need to develop additional water resources to continue to replace aging distribution infrastructure and increased cost, the utility again adjusted rates effective October 1, 2014.

The main driver for the 2007 rate increase was the installation of the blending plant. The facility has worked as intended without placing significant pressure on operations and maintenance costs, but the plant's operational costs have changed due to an increase in electric pumping costs. Hopefully these costs have stabilized somewhat but, looking forward, overall production costs will feel additional upward pressure caused by the search for additional water supplies.

Due to the declining aquifer in and around McPherson, staff has focused extra time on development of additional water supplies outside the immediate McPherson area. Two potential sources being considered are Kanopolis Reservoir and the development of a groundwater well field several miles south of town. A site investigation in and around this potential well field was completed in 2012 with property being purchased at the end of 2013. Engineering studies were completed in 2014 to help determine the viability of this potential water supply.

For the past several years the utility has made an effort to replace older water mains that have experienced frequent failures. Plans are to continue this approach in an effort to keep the system from having to perform a mass replacement program in the future. The current budget contains a line item setting aside \$250,000 for this type of replacement as this amount was a specific line item in the cost of service study performed to establish the October 2014 rates.

## **Electric Utility**

The BPU operates a vertically integrated electric utility consisting of generation, transmission, and distribution. The utility serves approximately 8,600 retail customers and two wholesale customers, the Cities of Moundridge and Galva. Sales in 2014 were 895,486,417 kWh, which was up 0.28% over the previous year.

BPU's generation resources consist of four General Electric (GE) gas turbines with a total summer capacity of approximately 235 MW. The three units located at Power Plant 2 were installed from 1973 to 1979 and operate as peaking units, typically running less than 200 hours per year. The newest turbine went commercial in 1998 and is located at Power Plant 3 and also typically operates less than 200 hours per year. With the new Southwest Power Pool (SPP) Integrated Market, which started March 2014, the utility's gas fueled turbines have seen increased operations over the previous year. All units receive periodic borescope inspection, and given the increased operation may require additional scheduled maintenance such as hot gas path inspections in an effort to ensure reliable operation. In an attempt to improve system operation, in 2011 Gas Turbine 1 at Plant 2 was retrofitted with new exciter controls and Turbine 2 and 3 received the same upgrade in 2012. The new exciter allows these units to respond quicker to system disturbances which will aid in maintaining a reliable electric grid. GE ceased production and support of the excitation system for the gas turbine at Power Plant 3 so that system was replaced in 2014. GE also stopped support for the control system on all four gas turbines so they were upgraded to GE Mark VI in late 2014 at a cost of roughly \$1,700,000.

Looking forward, staff will continue to perform typical maintenance activities and begin a few significant system upgrades. Given the increased operation, the time frame for some maintenance activities may be moved up. Current plans include a hot gas path inspection for Gas Turbine #1 at Plant 2 and strong consideration is being given to replacing the isomode pads on the generator at Plant 3. Others material items being monitored are the exhaust stack on Gas Turbine #3 at Plant 2 and the generator rotor on Gas Turbine #2 at Plant 2.

The utility owns roughly 20 miles of 115 kV transmission and four 115 kV ring bus style substations. The transmission poles are inspected on a regular schedule and poles found to be structurally deficient are replaced. The utility performs substation equipment and relay testing as stipulated in the utility's operating procedures and tests transformer oil annually. All equipment appears to be in good working order with no significant planned replacements being considered at this time. In 2013 the utility completed its first NERC Operations and Planning Compliance Audit which was performed by the Southwest Power Pool Regional Entity. BPU was audited for compliance with forty-six (46) requirements. Audit results of the Reliability Standard Requirements were 37 "No Findings" and 9 "Not Applicable".

BPU's distribution system consists of approximately 30 miles of 35 kV overhead line, 520 miles of 12.5 kV overhead line, and 30 miles of 12.5 kV underground line. Poles located on main feeder lines are inspected for structural integrity on a set schedule. In recent years, several of the arterial lines located in the rural areas have been rebuilt using ACSR T-2 conductor and stronger poles. Both of these steps are intended to make the lines less vulnerable to ice and wind loading, with the ultimate goal being increased reliability. In general, most rural 12.5 kV lines are in

good condition with no significant planned replacements being considered in the near future. For several years utility crews have been replacing poles on the 35 kV line serving Moundridge. This effort was completed in 2013. Again, as with other replacements, the new poles are stronger resulting in improved reliability.

In the last few years the underground crew has focused efforts on replacement of single phase underground primary that was installed over 40 years ago. This work not only replaced the cable but provided an opportunity to inspect other distribution equipment and catch potential outages before they occurred. In 2014 the utility converted a section of primary overhead to underground and plans are to upgrade another area if the work load allows. Areas being converted are locations with limited access and significant tree population. These types of conversion should reduce long term maintenance costs and improve system reliability.

Overall, BPU has a reliable, well-maintained electric system with plans to continue making improvements necessary to ensure a high level of service.

### **City County Joint Law Enforcement Center (LEC) . . . . Rob McClarty, Police Chief**

The LEC is located at 1177 W. Woodside St. This facility was completed in 1994 and currently houses the McPherson Sheriff's Office and Jail, the McPherson Police Department, McPherson County Communications - 911 and McPherson County Emergency Management.

The McPherson Police Department currently consists of the Patrol Bureau, the Detective Bureau and the Administrative Division. As of June 15, 2013 we have 31- Sworn Officers, 6 - Full-time Civilian Staff, 2 - Contract Labor (Vin Inspectors), 11 School Crossing Guards, 1 - part time Receptionist and 2 - Police Chaplains (non-paid).

It is the Mission of the McPherson Police Department to deliver police services equitably, effectively, and within the context of the constitution, in order to resolve community issues and problems and provide for the safety and security of our citizens. To maintain a professional, progressive, well trained police force; it is necessary for all Officers to receive a wide variety of comprehensive training annually. In an effort to meet the mandatory training needs for the State (KSCPOST) and to strive to achieve a comprehensive training foundation, officers are commonly required to travel to outside resources for training.

#### **Future Needs:**

As the City continues to grow in both size and population the Police Department must also continue to evolve and grow to meet the demands of our community and the ever changing types of crime and criminal modes of operation.

Currently under consideration for development is a new training center which will facilitate general police firearms training. The overall training campus will someday house the Public Utilities training campus, the McPherson Fire Department's Training Tower and the Police Department Range, obstacle course and training facility.

We must also consider, for long term planning, the LEC is quickly reaching its capacity for entities involved. It is nearly a 20 year old facility and is beginning to need repairs. The current case load, evolving professional standards and the expansion in total city area will also push the department to add additional sworn officer positions. The addition of officers will be evaluated annually and be discussed with the City Commission. Due to the growth of all entities at the LEC the City / Police Department will need to consider an addition to the current LEC or construction of a new alternate site facility that will accommodate Police services for years to come. A new alternate site facility should be designed to accommodate both the current level of services we offer as well as considering the potential for expansion as the department evolves and grows to meet the needs of the community.

**Fire Department** . . . Jeff Deal, Fire Chief

**Organization and Facilities:**

The Fire Department is centrally located at 312 East Kansas. This building was constructed in 1962 as "The Safety Center" which included the Police Department, Fire Department, and the Municipal Court. The building is now referred to as the "McPherson Fire Department," since the Police Department and the Municipal Court have moved to other quarters.

Current vehicles consist of:

- 3 staff cars
- 1 front line Engine
- 2 Squads units
- 1 Reserve engine
- 1 Rescue unit
- 1 Rural engine
- 1 Tender
- 1 Ladder Platform
- 1 Command trailer
- 1 Haz-mat Trailer

The Department presently serves not only the city, but also the surrounding townships of McPherson, King City, and one-half of New Gotland. In addition, the department provides hazardous materials and rescue response county-wide.

**Future Needs:**

Vehicle replacement

A comprehensive replacement plan for all response vehicles is based on a 20 year expected life for Engines and Aerial apparatus, and a 10 year life expectancy on all other vehicles. (NFPA suggest a 15 year plan on all front line Engines, but with the departments aggressive and extensive maintenance program, that life expectancy is extended to 20 years).

1. Rescue 1 1990 – replace in 2014
2. Engine 3 1994 (reserve engine) - remain in service (value of a trade not worth replacement).
3. Squad 1 – replace 2015
4. Car 1 – replace 2015 (trade in car 3, hand down Car 1)
5. Car 2 – replace 2018
6. Car 3 – replace 2018
7. Tender 1 1999 – replace in 2019
8. Engine 3 1994 – replace in 2023 (Engine 1 2003 handed down to reserve 1 status)
9. Engine 2 2006 - replaced 2026
10. Ladder 1 2009 – replace in 2029

#### Equipment replacement

There are several pieces of expensive equipment that need to be planned for replacement.

1. Amkus Rescue tool (Jaws) 1999 – replace with new Rescue Engine in 2014
2. Thermal Imager 2006 – replace 2016
3. Thermal Imager 2009 – replace 2019
4. Bauer Air compressor 1995 – replace in 2020
5. Genesis Rescue tool (Jaws) 2007 – replace 2022

#### Structure needs:

The existing site does not provide adequate space for additional training activities. The site is on dedicated parkland, is bounded on all sides by streets or other development, and thus is limited in its expansion possibilities. The provision of a remote training site seems to be the likely solution to this problem. Also desired by the department, for training purposes, is a training tower. Each of these needs is planned to be met by the new multi-department training facility which is currently in the planning stage. It is anticipated that this new facility will become a reality sometime within the period covered by this Comprehensive Development Plan.

Third party training is critical to the future development of the department. To this end the department will continue to strive to send its members to outside training. However, that in no way precludes the vital need for a training facility.

As the city continues to grow to the north and northeast, the response distance from the Fire Department becomes an increasingly important concern, along with heavy train traffic that at times completely blocks north/south traffic. This situation is now becoming enough of a concern that planning on the construction of a north Fire/PD substation is needed. The Fire Department has identified the Northwest corner of Centennial Drive and Northview Road as the ideal spot for the substation but the project has not presently moved out of the ‘future goals’ stage.

In addition, there needs to also be conversation concerning the lack of storage space for current firefighting equipment because there is insufficient bay space. We also need to consider the possibility of needing to assist in the housing of some EMS equipment.

### **Street Department Shop – Gerry Tillet**

A 26,500 square-foot shop building was completed in 1995. The building is largely prefabricated while the office structure on the west end of the building is wood frame and was designed to blend in with the surrounding residential neighborhood. The building is located at 418 North Oak Street just to the north of the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad. The old shop building is now utilized by the Street Department as a maintenance storage building.

An average of ten full time employees currently work at the Street Department. Activities conducted from this facility include maintenance and storage of city equipment, and continuing maintenance of the city's streets, sanitary sewers, and storm sewers. Primary maintenance activity includes asphalt and concrete pavement repair, traffic and street signing, street sweeping, snow removal, and assisting other departments as needed particularly with heavy equipment.

Relatively recent improvements include paving of most of the maintenance yard to reduce debris being tracked into the building by foot and vehicles, and enclosing the materials storage stockpile bins.

### **McPherson Public Library . . . . Steve Read, Director**

The McPherson Public Library, at 214 West Marlin, is located on a 345' x 140' site. The present facility of 27,400 square feet was completed in February 2009, following a building renovation and expansion project which doubled the size of the library. The \$4.2 million project was paid for by a half-cent sales tax, which the voters approved in August 2006 by over a 70% margin.

The number of parking spaces available for library patrons include 46 on-street spaces around the perimeter of the building and 52 in the library parking lot, which is a public lot shared with the YMCA. Other parking is available across the street and in the immediate vicinity.

Citizens of McPherson have always been very supportive of library service, establishing a lending library and reading room as early as 1883. The public library traces its origins to 1902, when the Ladies Reading Circle established a library in unused rooms on the second floor of the courthouse. A Carnegie library was erected on the present library site in 1918, and replaced in 1972 by the building which underwent renovation and expansion.

The McPherson Public Library is a member of the South Central Kansas Library System and is classed as a Major Service Center Level II Library. It has a collection of over 100,000 items, including: books, audiobooks, DVD's, music CD's, magazines, newspapers, eBooks, educational toys, manuscripts, maps, microfilm, photographic images, oral histories, and archives.

The new facility has enabled the library to make available to citizens a variety of specialized services. Children's and Youth Services staff provide both regularly scheduled and special programs throughout the year for infants through teenagers in the lower level

programming area. Patrons appreciate the wireless Internet and printing service for their laptop computers, as well as some two dozen public access Internet and Microsoft Office workstations. Research requests have increased significantly with the presence of the new McPherson Room collection, as has staff assistance to those researching family or local history.

The library has been very aggressive in providing and promoting an interactive and content-rich website. Digitized collections, such as historic photographs, atlases, manuscripts, and the obituary index are being used by the general public on both a national and international scale.

Currently, over 12,500 people pass through the doors of the library each month. The availability of parking spaces near the library is sometimes a concern, particularly when library programs coincide with events at the YMCA and trials at the courthouse. For the most part, however, the parking situation is adequate.

The future of books, reading, information, and library services, as discussed in several research reports, appears to be healthy. Though media formats and their usage is always difficult to predict with any accuracy, the flexibility provided by the interior space of the building will accommodate whatever direction the future takes the McPherson Public Library for many years to come.

### **McPherson Museum . . . . Anna Ruxlow, Director**

Beginning with its development as a museum in the 1960s and throughout its existence as an incorporated, not-for-profit since 1984, the McPherson Museum and Arts Foundation has sought to tell the story of the community's character: who we were, where we came from, how we have lived and how we arrived here.

Through the years, it became evident that effectively telling our story required a facility large enough for all of our exhibits and services, as well as being properly suited to welcome visitors with diverse needs. A \$3.6 million capital campaign was launched in 2011 and on June 15, 2012 the McPherson Museum broke ground for their new 26,000 square foot, state of the art facility.

The new McPherson Museum represents the essence of McPherson: an undeniable pride in community defined by, and built upon, its history. At the Museum, we interpret and display the history of the city and the region by telling the story of its people in a unique and meaningful way, linking the past with the present. We understand our role as stewards of history, protecting the artifacts and documents in our care. We act as a repository for our community's artifacts and art, and as a learning center where information is stored and disseminated.

A highly visible and accessible multi-purpose facility, the McPherson Museum is attractive, inviting, and spacious. In addition to the main exhibit areas, the museum includes educational zones, resource and research room, meeting rooms, innovative temporary exhibit area, a theatre and art gallery. The collection will reveal the breadth and depth of the city's past,

including the educational, social, economic, industrial, scientific, religious, athletic, artistic, military, and agricultural history of our area. With so much to do and see, the Museum is a destination place both for local residents and tourists, a must-see stop, and a place to be educated and entertained.

The Museum is committed to serving and educating a variety of audiences. Some examples: school children engaging in interactive learning activities; high school athletes exploring the rich athletic traditions in the area; art students viewing the varied works from the school district's art collection; local residents discovering key parts of McPherson's industrial history, or revisiting events of historical significance; tourists entertained by innovative, interpretive exhibits. By providing activities and experiences the whole family can enjoy, each visitor will be able to leave with an enhanced sense of having learned something of consequence, of having come away with something new to experience.

### **Community Building** . . . . Wayne Burns, Director of Public Lands and Facilities

The McPherson Community Building is centrally located downtown, one-half block from Main Street, at 122 East Marlin Street. The building was constructed in 1928 and remodeled for new community usage with the help of a bond issue in 1974.

The building presently encompasses a total main floor area of approximately 21,000 square feet. This includes a gymnasium, men's and women's bathroom/dressing rooms, a 1,131 seat auditorium including a high stage area, a kitchen for food preparation, and general storage/gallery area. The front entrance area consists of a meeting room/office and additional restrooms for public use during scheduled events.

A task force of McPherson community business leaders, city government, community building users, and interested citizens is currently redefining the functional needs and associated building architectural changes into the new century.

The Municipal Court has recently been moved into the portion of the building that had originally been used as the firehouse and later by the Firehouse Gallery. The Municipal Court contains a courtroom for the Municipal Judge, space for the clerk, and space for a security officer/vehicle examiner. There is a separate room in the upstairs portion for community use.

### **Opera House** . . . . John Holecek, Manager

The McPherson Opera House was constructed in 1888 at the northeast corner of Main and Sutherland Streets on a 60' x 142' lot. The three-story building functioned for many years as the center of culture for the city. Uses in the building included live entertainment on the large stage, movies that were projected on a screen lowered in front of the stage, various small businesses in the front of the building, and residential apartments in the upper stories.

In 1972, the building was placed on the Historic Register of the State of Kansas by the National Historic Foundation. During this period, the building lost most of its active tenants and fell into a serious state of disrepair. The McPherson Opera House Preservation Company was formed in 1986 for the purpose of purchasing and restoring the building and putting it back into use. In 2015, the restoration process is virtually complete. In 1980, the west wall partially collapsed and was removed in 1987 and replaced with a temporary wall. The temporary wall was replaced by a permanent rebuilding in 1996. Both the theater restoration in the east half of the building and the commercial spaces on the west end of the building were completed and in use in 2015.

Parking for the facility is a combination of on-street spaces along Sutherland and Main streets, and a public parking lot located just to the northeast of the building across the public alleyway. There are approximately 100 parking spaces available nearby.

### **McPherson County Courthouse . . . . Rick Witte, County Administrator**

The McPherson County Courthouse, located at the northwest corner of Kansas Avenue (U.S. 56 Highway) and Maple Streets, is the central focus of history for McPherson County. It is constructed of quarried Kansas limestone near the spot where the original McPherson Town Company founders met to declare their intention of creating what was to become the City of McPherson. It was not, however, the first courthouse for McPherson County and, in fact, the first two courthouse locations were in or near the City of Lindsborg, not McPherson. However, after a county-wide vote on July 7, 1873, the county seat was declared to be the City of McPherson and the courthouse facility was moved into a building at the northwest corner of Main and Marlin streets where it remained until a fire destroyed the building in 1883. All of the county records were saved.

Two separate bond elections were held before the voters approved the first-ever bond sale for the purpose of constructing the present courthouse on blocks 56 and 65 of the Original Town Site, and a jail house on the present site of the YMCA. The total of the bond issue was \$50,000 to be paid off over a 5-year period. Preparations for construction began quickly, but the actual construction took several years to complete. In the interim, temporary offices were located in various Main Street buildings, including the Opera House for a period of four years. The cornerstone was laid on May 1, 1890, beneath which a lead-box "time capsule" was placed. Construction was completed in 1894.

In 1973, minor repairs were made to the exterior of the courthouse, and repairs were made to make the 4<sup>th</sup> floor usable. The years 1976-79 were fraught with controversy as the courthouse was nearly torn down in favor of a modern facility which was to house all of the city and county governmental agencies. Public resistance to the loss of the courthouse was spirited, however, with several options for moving, restoring, and reusing the old structure being put forward. On November 21, 1976, the structure was recognized and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. On August 1, 1978, on the general election ballot, voters overwhelmingly approved a bond issue for a half-million dollars for the purpose of restoring the courthouse for its continued use as a courthouse. Renovation of the interior and exterior of the

building was begun in 1979, and completed in 1980, for a total cost of \$675,000. A rededication ceremony was held on October 18, 1980. In 1994, the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the courthouse was observed. During the celebration, a time capsule was buried.

Parking for the courthouse is located, primarily, on-street with diagonal spaces along Maple and Marlin streets and parallel spaces along Kansas Avenue. The circular drive to the west of the building also provides some employee parking spaces. A two-story public parking deck has been constructed in the center of the block just to the east of Maple Street which is also used by employees and customers of the courthouse.

#### **U.S. Post Office** .... Mark Kerschner, Postmaster

McPherson County has had over 60 post offices over the years. The first post office building in the county has since been moved to the City of Lindsborg where it was restored for historical display. The first post office in the City of McPherson was opened on January 21, 1873, in the 100 block of North Main Street. The first Postmaster was Mr. C.L. Raff. Since that first location, it has moved at least seven times until it reached its present location at 115 East Kansas Avenue.

The present building cornerstone was laid in 1914 with the building being completed and occupied in 1915. The building is two stories in the front and one story in the back and is of brick construction with stone trimmings. The building has seen several construction projects with a major expansion in 1936 and a face lift in 1976 during which the four columns on the main south face were replaced.

It has customer parking, and handicapped accessibility. Parking spaces are on-street with diagonal spaces on both sides of Ash Street and parallel spaces in front of the building on Kansas Avenue. At peak traffic times, these spaces are frequently blocked by traffic in the streets. The mail drop-off boxes are currently located on the Ash Street side of the post office in the public parking lot across the street. There are three additional mail drop-off locations on Main Street and one in the Wal-Mart parking lot. There are also two lobby collection points inside the Post Office lobby.

#### **McPherson Cemetery** .... Cody Kraemer, Sexton

The city has owned and operated the McPherson Cemetery since 1915. It formerly had been the property of the McPherson Cemetery Association. It presently occupies 53 acres southeast of the railroad presently known as the Union Pacific Railroad, east of Maxwell Street and north of Avenue A. The 366-crypt mausoleum at the east end of the cemetery was built by private investors around 1930. It was taken over by the city in the early 1980s. Recent additions to the cemetery provide enough grave spaces to meet future needs for thirty years. In addition, 40 acres has been acquired to the north for future cemetery development. With this additional land, there should easily be enough cemetery space to serve to the year 2150.

A part of the new addition was the construction in 1996 of a building. The building houses three vehicle maintenance bays, an office space, conference room, ADA conforming restrooms, a storage area, and a covered patio. The patio area is designed to provide a location for holding a funeral service in inclement weather.

## **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space . . . . Wayne Burns, Paul Katzer**

Parks and recreation areas provide space for passive and active recreational opportunities for all age groups, and have long been associated with the physical, emotional, cultural, educational, and economic well-being of individuals and communities. Higher educational attainments, increasing incomes, additional leisure time, and increased population growth and population mobility are all factors contributing to the increased demand for recreational facilities and activities. The provision for such facilities today is considered more of a necessity than a luxury. In 1913, the Park Board was organized to oversee operation of the parks in the city.

### **Park Standards:**

Park and recreation standards are useful as guidelines in evaluating existing facilities and estimating future needs. Several national recreational organizations have studied and considered park and recreational standards. A minimum standard generally accepted by these organizations for the total amount of parkland required in a city is one acre for every one hundred people, however, many urban areas exceed this figure.

For a city the size of McPherson, there are generally two basic types of parks or recreation areas: neighborhood facilities and community facilities. As implied by these category names, the basic difference between the two types is the service area.

A neighborhood park is meant to serve a relatively small residential area. The radius of its service area should generally be one-half mile or less depending upon the population density. Neighborhood parks should generally include picnic facilities and a playground area designed for elementary school age children. Depending upon the needs of the neighborhood, such a park could also include a play area with equipment designed for preschool children. When possible, it is desirable to locate neighborhood parks adjacent to elementary school sites so that playgrounds can be used and developed cooperatively.

Community or city-wide park facilities are generally meant to serve up to 25,000 persons. This type of park should contain play fields and facilities for both children and adult use, and should serve both passive and active recreational pursuits. Some community park facilities are special purpose areas, that is, they are designed to only serve a specific activity. Examples are baseball fields and tennis courts.

### **Existing Park Facilities:**

Table 11-A lists the parks and recreation areas in the McPherson Area and describes their characteristics. The locations of these facilities are also shown graphically in Figure 11-A. As shown by the table, there are presently 14 parks containing 163.1 developed recreational acres. By the previously described standard of one acre per 100 persons, the city should have about 130 acres of parks. It, therefore, exceeds the standards for total developed recreational area by about 33.1 acres.

Lakeside Park contains about 47 acres and remains the most used of all the parks. Included in this park is the city's water park facility, which consists of a 500-foot lazy river, a giant water slide, deep diving area, 8-lane 50 meter pool, and a children's spray area. Party shelters are also available for rental. The water park replaced a previous 50 meter pool constructed in 1969 which, in turn replaced a unique, beach-type circular pool which had been constructed in 1939.

The office and maintenance buildings of the City Park Department are located in what was the Kansas National Guard building at 607 West First Street. The department maintains its own greenhouse for growing and storing plants and flowers as well as conducting all its own equipment maintenance at this site. Other buildings operated by the park department are located at the Udie Grant Sports Complex, Wickersham Park, and Light Capital Diamonds underneath the stadium.

**Table 11-A PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS (See also Figure 11-A)**

Name	Type	Acres	Improvements and Facilities
Challenger's Park	Special purpose	2.0	Lighted tennis courts (4)
Countryside Park	Neighborhood	4.0	Open space, playground equipment, picnic space.
Hess Park	Neighborhood	4.0	Playground equipment, picnic shelter, open space for kite flying, etc.
Homeside Park	Neighborhood	2.5	Small ball field, playground equipment.
Lakeside Park	Community	47	Picnic areas and shelters, swimming pool, band shell, rest rooms, play-ground equipment, Frisbee golf course, small lake, open space, horseshoe pits.
McPherson Dog Park	Special purpose	5.0	Recreation space for both large and small breed dogs.
Linnea Square Park	Community	2.1	Picnic shelter, playground equipment, landscaped open space.
Memorial Park	Special purpose	2.7	Memorial monuments, fish pond, restrooms, picnic facilities, play-ground equipment, landscaped open space.
Oak Grove Park	Community	8.6	Soccer fields, open space, picnic shelter
Rolf Park	Special purpose	2.3	Lighted softball field.
Sycamore Trails Park	Neighborhood	5.3	Open space for soccer, kite flying, etc.
Sunflower Triangle	Neighborhood	4.0	Picnic area, open space.
U.S. "Udie" Grant Sports Complex	Community	41.5	4 soccer fields, 2 softball fields & 2 lighted baseball fields
Wall Bicentennial Park	Community	69.0	Picnic shelters, handicap restrooms, playground equipment, tennis courts, lighted handball courts, lighted baseball field, lighted softball fields, batting cages, lake for fishing, open space for soccer, kite flying.
Wickersham Park	Neighborhood	2.0	Open space, picnic areas.
Main Street Plaza	Community	0.8	Pocket park, outdoor stage

**Other Recreation Facilities:**

In addition to the parks and recreation areas just described, there are also several other facilities.

**YMCA / McPherson Recreation Commission:** - Pam Axelson, Business Operations Manager

The McPherson Family YMCA facility is located at 220 N Walnut Street and was constructed in 1966. It replaced the previous YMCA which had been in the 200 block of South Main Street since 1910. A major northeast addition was constructed in 1985, which included a gymnasium, three racquetball courts and renovation to the lower level spaces under the original facility. In 2010, another major construction project was completed consisting of an additional family swimming pool, new hot tub and sauna, renovated lap pool, new lobby, front desk area and offices and new Program Room space. Both pools have UV systems. This facility is a valuable