



Lincoln Parks  
& Recreation

[parks.lincoln.ne.gov](http://parks.lincoln.ne.gov)

# Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2007 - 2008

fundamental



In the past century, Lincoln's park and recreation system has grown to become one of the best in the nation. Yet many don't realize that every day, countless number of people of all ages enjoy Lincoln's 125 parks, 128 miles of trails, seven recreation centers and five golf courses. Studies show that many do not understand the value this brings to our community's quality of life.

We feel a responsibility to close that gap—and to inspire more people to learn why a quality parks and recreation system is fundamental to youth development, active living, neighborhoods and families, special places and community events, and economic development. Most of all, we want to inspire you to enjoy the opportunities we offer.

To do this in a cost-efficient and accessible way, we've launched a new Web site—[parks.ne.lincoln.gov](http://parks.ne.lincoln.gov). Our new Web site will connect you to everything you'd like to know about parks and recreation in Lincoln.

You can find a park, see a trails map, check pool hours, sign up for a tee time, buy a tribute brick and register for one of our many programs. Virtually everything about our parks and recreation

system is there at your fingertips. We hope to add even more interactive features to add convenience and save paper!

As our City grows, so does demand for beautiful public places. Even with shrinking City budgets, our staff remains committed to being accessible to you through our new Web site and providing high quality facilities and recreation programs that everyone can enjoy.



Please visit [parks.lincoln.ne.gov](http://parks.lincoln.ne.gov) and discover why *Parks and Recreation is FUNdamental to Lincoln!*

Lynn Johnson, Director

Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department





# Lincoln Parks & Recreation - fundamental to...

## 1. Youth Development

### School's Out Programs.

We believe that character counts in youth development. Our School's Out programs provide structured, supervised and healthy activities designed to enhance development of children's social, physical and academic skills and abilities. During the 2007-08 school year, more than 1,200 children participated each day in School's Out recreation programs at recreation centers and school locations. More than 2,200 children participated in summer day camp programs. More than 60% of participants received financial assistance due to limited family income.

### Community Learning Programs.

The Lincoln Community Learning Centers (CLC) initiative is a cooperative effort of many community partners with three primary goals: improving student learning development, strengthening families, and supporting neighborhoods. During the 2007-08 school year Lincoln Parks and Recreation was a partner at eight CLCs.

**Did you know that physical activity has positive influences on concentration, memory and classroom behavior and a positive relationship with intellectual performance?**



## 2. Active Living

### Trails.

Each year about one million "treks" happen on Lincoln's 128 miles of trails. Trail projects in process include completion of the MoPac Trail bridge over North 27th Street; major renovation of the Boosalis Trail on the north side of Highway 2 west of 27th Street; a new connection to the Bison Trail in the vicinity of 9th/10th and Van Dorn Streets; and extension of the Jamaica North Trail from Calvert to "J" Streets.

### Team Sports.

Parks and Recreation also offers team sports for youth and adults. In 2007-08, 1,580 youth teamed up to play in NFL flag football and boys and girls basketball programs, and 11,650 adults participated in softball, volleyball and basketball leagues.

### Golf.

During 2007-08 more than 196,000 people "played a round" on Lincoln's four 18-hole City golf courses and one nine-hole par three course—all supported entirely by revenues from greens fees and cart rental. Tee-times are now available online at parks.lincoln.ne.gov.

**Did you know that the Ager Junior Golf Course was opened in 1963 and continues to be a model program for introducing youth to the game of golf?**

### Dog Runs.

Lincoln's two fenced "bark parks" are popular destinations. Rickman's Run is east of Holmes Lake Park, and the Oak Creek Dog Run, is north of Oak Lake Park.

### Special Programs.

Each week, about 400 youth and adults with disabilities participate in programs offering social and recreation opportunities. Lincoln Parks and Recreation also coordinates the Lincoln Shooting Stars Special Olympics program.

**Did you know that the Special Olympics USA National Games will be hosted in Lincoln in the summer of 2010?**

### How are the Funds Spent?

- Nearly half of the tax-funded budget pays for park and public tree maintenance.
- Fee-based programs recover from 21% to 96% of their costs.
  - Public Pools - 63%
  - Youth Team Sports - 89%
  - Adult Team Sports - 95%
  - School's Out Programs - 75%
  - Nature Center - 121%

\* The City Golf program is funded through greens fees and cart rentals.

## 3. Neighborhoods & Families

### Parks.

Our goal is to have a park area within one-half mile walking distance of each residence in the community. We enjoy 125 parks in Lincoln with more than half of them identified as neighborhood and mini-parks. In 2008, a new sprayground and playground were constructed in Trago Park at 22nd and "U" Streets. Two new neighborhood parks will be developed in 2009 – Ashley Heights Park in the Air Park area and Phares Park in southeast Lincoln. Construction will continue on Union Plaza, Lincoln's newest community park and festival area, in Antelope Valley at 21st and "O" Streets. Hazel Abel Park at 18th and "E" Streets will be undergoing a major renovation.

### Public Pools.

During the summer of 2008, 266,644 visitors made a splash in Lincoln's 10 outdoor public pools. 63% of the operating cost of public pools is supported by season pass sales and admission fees.

### Recreation Centers.

A variety of fitness, leisure interest, human service and youth development programs are offered at Lincoln's five recreation centers. More than 227,000 visitors participated in fitness and leisure interest activities at Lincoln's public recreation centers last year.

### Ager PlayCenter.

The Ager PlayCenter in Antelope Park provides indoor play and learning opportunities for pre-school age children. During 2007-08, 38,000 visitors enjoyed the colorful and vibrant play space year-round. The PlayCenter is a great place for your child's next birthday party. Phone 441-6792 to make a reservation.

### Community Forestry.

Lincoln Parks and Recreation manages nearly 123,000 public trees along streets and in parks, so it's no wonder that our Capital City has been recognized as a Tree City USA community for the past 32 years. Only 42 communities in the nation have received this recognition for more than 30 years. The Department distributed 190 vouchers to community residents to plant street trees through a cost-share program during fiscal year 2007-08. Information about the cost-share street tree voucher program is available by phoning 441-7035.

**The Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department recently received the National Community Development Week Award of Excellence presented for Trago Park & Sprayground as an example of outstanding community development and involvement.**

**Did you know that Lincoln's public trees provide an estimated \$2.80 return in economic and environmental benefits for every \$1.00 expended to plant and maintain them?**

### City Tax Dollars

- The City of Lincoln receives about 14 cents of each property tax dollar, and 2 cents of the 7 cents sales tax. Sales tax receipts are the largest revenue source to the City.
- 8.5 cents of each City tax dollar goes to support Lincoln Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.
- The cost per capita for Parks and Recreation facilities and programs in Lincoln is 27% less than the national average.



8.5¢ of each tax dollar

## 4. Environmental Stewardship

### Pioneers Park Nature Center.

For more than 40 years, the Pioneers Park Nature Center has been helping children and families discover nature. A nature-based pre-school program is offered at the Nature Center during the school year, and day camps are available for school-age children during summer months. Last year, more than 300,000 visitors experienced indoor and outdoor animal exhibits, classes and programs, and walking paths through prairie, woodland and wetland areas. The 668-acre site includes 440 acres of native prairie and eight miles of hiking trails. The new addition to the Prairie Building features "green" building techniques, prairie murals by Mark Marcuson, new exhibits including the photos of Michael Forsberg and a children's corner.

### Wilderness Park.

Wilderness Park is a cooperative effort of Lancaster County and Lincoln Parks and Recreation. This 1,475-acre open space area provides flood storage along Salt Creek upstream from Lincoln. Wilderness Park also is managed for diverse wildlife habitat and recreation activities, including 22 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails. Volunteer groups provide significant assistance in maintaining trails in Wilderness Park.

### Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership.

The Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership was initiated in 2003 to preserve nearly 4,000 acres of land associated with the unique eastern saline wetlands in northern Lancaster County. Since its inception, the partnership has purchased nearly 710 acres of saline wetlands and other associated upland habitat, initiated educational activities, participated in saline wetland restoration projects, and provided for operation and maintenance of these areas. Visit the Shoemaker Marsh located one-half mile north of Arbor Road on North 27th Street to experience a rare saline wetland area.

### Rain to Recreation.

Lincoln Parks and Recreation partners with The City's Watershed Management Division to stabilize urban streams and drainage channels in park areas and to implement best management practices to enhance water quality. An extensive channel stabilization project involving a tributary of Dead Man's Run that courses through Taylor Park was completed in 2008. Upcoming projects include a channel stabilization project in Herbert Park in 2009.

**We extend gratitude to Stacy James, Senior Lecturer of Advertising at the UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications, and her fall 2008 Senior Advertising Capstone Class for their invaluable assistance with this effort.**

## 5. Special Places & Events

### Public Gardens.

We promised you a rose garden – and renovation of Lincoln's municipal rose garden in Antelope Park was completed in 2008. The Hamann Rose Garden features hybrid tea, grandiflora and floribunda roses in a setting that includes a new fountain and artwork. Hardy landscape roses with companion plantings of perennials and ornamental grasses are featured in the Rotary strolling garden.

**Did you know that roses have been grown in Lincoln's public gardens for more than 75 years?**

## 6. Economic Development

What makes Lincoln a desirable place to live and to do business? Quality schools, attractive neighborhoods, numerous parks and Lincoln's extensive trail system contribute to the quality of life we enjoy in Lincoln. Our collective investment in Parks and Recreation facilities and programs through tax support, donations and volunteer time contribute to making Lincoln a desirable place to locate and grow businesses.

### How Does Lincoln Compare?

Metric	Average	Lincoln
Number of parks per 10,000 residents	Avg. 3.9	Lincoln 5.1
Number of public pools per 100,000 residents	Avg. 2.7	Lincoln 4.1
Number of recreation centers per 20,000 residents	Avg. 0.9	Lincoln 0.7
Total Parks & Recreation expenditures per resident	Avg. \$91.00	Lincoln \$69.00

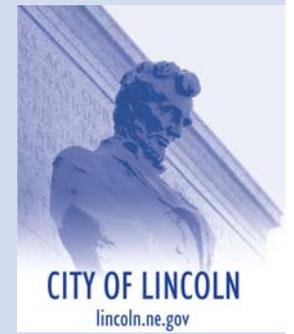
Source: Trust for Public Lands  
City Park Facts - Comparison of 75 largest cities in the U.S., 2007

## Pool Hours &amp; Locations



<b>Aquatics Office Star City Shores</b>	<b>441-7960 (all year)</b>
May 23, 24, 25	Sat, Sun, Mon 1:00-5:00 p.m.
May 30, 31	Sat, Sun 1:00-5:00 p.m.
June 6 - Aug 16	Every day 12:30-8:00 p.m.
<b>Arnold Heights, Ballard, Belmont, Eden, Highlands, Irvingdale, University Place Pools</b>	
June 6 - Aug 16	Mon-Fri 1:00-8:00 p.m.
	Sat-Sun 1:00-6:00 p.m.
<b>Meadow Heights and Woods Pools</b>	
June 6 - Aug 16	Every day 1:00-6:00 p.m.
<b>All Pools</b>	
July 3	Fri, Sat 1:00-5:00 p.m.
<b>Locations to be announced</b>	
Aug 17 - 18	Mon, Tues 1:00-6:00 p.m.

*"Even though Lincoln doesn't have mountains or oceans, we have one of the best park systems in the nation, with 125 parks and 128 miles of trails connecting nearly every part of our City. I can't imagine what our community would be like without our quality parks and recreation facilities that offer something to nearly everyone in Lincoln."*



**- Mayor Chris Beutler**

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Jonathan Cook	John Spatz
Doug Emery, Vice Chair	Ken Svoboda
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Please visit  
parks.lincoln.ne.gov

**Lincoln Parks  
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fundamental

- Find a park or trail
- Find pool hours
- Make a tee time
- Reserve a facility
- Register a team
- Register for School's Out
- Volunteer

## Help our parks, only \$1 each month!

Lincoln Cares offers customers of the Lincoln Electric System (LES) a chance to add \$1 each month to their bill payments to help Parks and Recreation projects and programs.

Each dollar is matched with 50 cents each from our community partners, Time Warner Cable and the Lincoln Parks Foundation. Since 2003, LES customers and matching community donors have contributed more than \$850,000 to Lincoln Cares! These funds pay for the extra programs and projects that make Lincoln an extra special place to live.



## Get Involved

Looking for a way to give back to Lincoln? We offer fun volunteer opportunities for individuals, organizations and businesses for ongoing or one-time activities. We are grateful for community volunteers who donate nearly 30,000 hours each year to care for our parks and trails and provide leadership through our recreation and athletic programs.

## Contribute

As a nonprofit organization, the Lincoln Parks Foundation's sole mission is to help sustain and improve our Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.



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