

Executive Summary

The future of Prairie Creek Park and Reservoir is of great importance to the citizens of Muncie and Delaware County. It is also a serious responsibility. To ensure that this unique community resource continues to be available for human enjoyment and use by future generations it is important to plan ahead. This plan is a guide for public policy, actions and investments. The plan is not limited in scope to government, but includes many suggestions that can only be implemented by other organizations, private individuals and community groups including those not for profit.

The Prairie Creek Master Plan has been a joint effort between the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission and the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District with input from multiple government and private stakeholders, and the public. This plan elaborates upon key elements set forth in the Comprehensive Plan and has been mindful of the need to protect private property rights. It should be interpreted as a dynamic document frequently updated to incorporate the ongoing changes both at Prairie Creek and in the community at large.

Key elements in the Prairie Creek Master Plan-

- Protecting the future of the park and reservoir as community assets entails extending the city's lease with IAWC beyond the 2021 termination of the current lease and purchasing the land if it becomes available for sale. These measures are essential to ensure that both public access to the area and its ecological health continues.
- Water quality in the watershed is a fundamental concern. Conservation measures must be extended to limit pollution. The impact of development must be mitigated through regulations and creative design. On-site wastewater disposal systems are one source of pollution that needs to be addressed immediately. Measures to reduce sedimentation and accompanying nutrient and pesticide loading in the reservoir should continue and expand.
- Enhance the value of the park and reservoir as an economic, aesthetic (quality of life) and recreational asset for our community. The reservoir and park have regional appeal that should be capitalized on through planning and marketing of special events. The park facilities are in need of an upgrade and should receive priority funding.
- Implementation of this plan should involve public education, amending ordinances, the forming of public and private partnerships and the cooperation of all involved entities.

The time for action is now. The reservoir already shows signs of deteriorating water quality and habitats. At a minimum, officials and property owners need to take measures that will ensure that the existing water quality is maintained.

