

Funded Rehabilitation Projects

The rehabilitation needs of the East St. Louis parks and recreation system are overwhelming. Almost every neighborhood in the city has park and recreational facilities that need renovation or repair. Very few parks are not in need of at least minor repairs or renovation. However, most parks have at least a minimal level of functionality.

Several grants have been received in the last twenty years for various projects in East St. Louis park and recreation facilities. However there are still many park and recreational needs in the city. Some smaller grants to renovate Parson's Field and make some repairs at Virginia Park have been received (see appendix F). This money is just the beginning of funding needed to completely repair and renovate the city's parks when compared to other cities in Illinois with a tradition of strong park districts.

Inventory of Remaining Rehabilitation Needs

To have a complete assessment of the rehabilitation needs of the City of East St. Louis visits should be made to all of the city's park and recreational facilities, including the schools, public facilities and assessments of the condition of the equipment were made, in addition a list of specific kinds of repairs/renovations needed by each facility were noted.

Many of the problems cited at the different parks are very similar. As noted in the 1980 report, the city's softball and baseball fields are greatly in need of repair and little has happened since then. In addition, many of the playground facilities have unsafe equipment that needs to be replaced.

The list of needed repair and renovation is extensive and includes every park owned by the East St. Louis Park District. Repairs and renovations range from larger repairs like new playground equipment and resurfacing baseball fields to smaller needs like broken park benches and picnic areas. The problem lies in where to begin and where funding for the projects would come from. Here is a list of the Park District's facilities cited in poor condition:

New Facilities

A few new facilities have been developed for the East St. Louis community. The Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center opened in Spring 2000. This facility is an indoor recreational outlet for children. The opening is said to have only completed stage one. Stage two, which is said to include a 50 meter indoor swimming pool is suppose to follow shortly.

A new public library is being built and should be opening sometime during 2001. The new library will replace the current library located in the North Central area. Lastly, in a recent press release (12.16.00) Illinois Governor, George Ryan, made a commitment to open 7 new schools in East St. Louis. Presumably, these

new school facilities, when built, should provide additional recreational facilities to the community.