



November 2023

### Special points of interest:

- Why Are Parks Important for Communities?
- Growth Association's Business of the Month — Dan's Garage Door
- Godfrey's Featured Business of the Month — The Round Table Restaurant
- Is A Property Eligible for Incentives?
- Oh, and one more thing...

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**You can see your future from here.**



Michael J. McCormick

Mayor

## Why Are Parks Important for Communities?



Parks and playgrounds can become the hearts of communities. Parks are more than green spaces that beautify a community. Residents, kids and local governments all benefit from the creation of a local park or play space. Parks do this in the following ways:

### Promoting Community Wellness

Many Americans live sedentary lifestyles. By providing places for community members to get outside and be active, parks help encourage a healthier lifestyle.

Spending a small amount of time at a community park can have a significant impact on your health. Even 30 minutes in a park can help:

- *Strengthen your heart and prevent heart diseases*
- *Decrease blood pressure and cholesterol*
- *Reduce inflammation*
- *Boost your immune system*

Public parks can encourage people to take control of specific aspects of their physical health for stronger, healthier communities. Parks and recreation areas can also help improve mental health, allowing the wellness benefits to extend past better physical health. Frequently visiting parks can help reduce depression and anxiety, and exercising in parks can reduce stress and lower cortisol levels by 15%. Simply viewing nature-inspired scenery led to reports of less fear and anger and more considerable attention and peacefulness.

When people have a park nearby, they can ac-

cess open outdoor spaces easily for a healthier, more active lifestyle. Investing in community parks can provide most Americans the access they need to public outdoor spaces where they can freely exercise and decompress from their daily lives.

Creating recreation areas is one way to cater to the needs of both mind and body. Community members may use the park to walk their dog, play basketball, ride their bike or enjoy a picnic. Regardless of how people will choose to use the space, they'll be able to benefit in their own way from the opportunity for physical, mental and social well-being.

### Providing Connection Space

With the internet's prevalence, it's become more common to go from work to home without changing up the routine. Parks give individuals a space for meeting their neighbors in person. Community parks can be spaces for kids and adults to gather and meet new people who enjoy similar activities. Parties and reunions can use picnic areas to provide space for large gatherings.

### Encouraging Activity in Kids

When kids get to play outside, it increases the positive impact of physical activity. Kids who spend time outside have:

- *Better test scores*
- *Better cognitive function*
- *Fewer behavioral problems*
- *Fewer signs of ADHD*
- *Improved self-discipline*

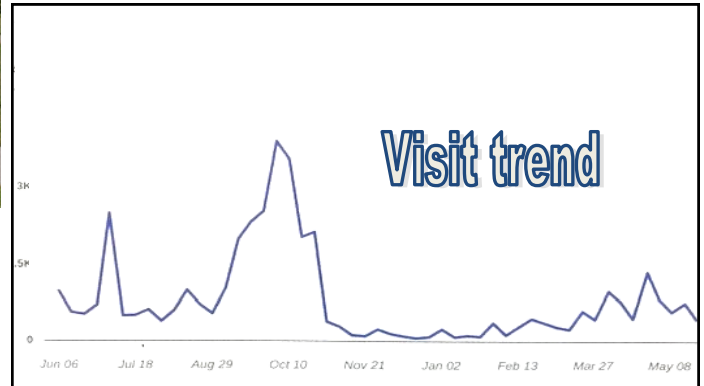
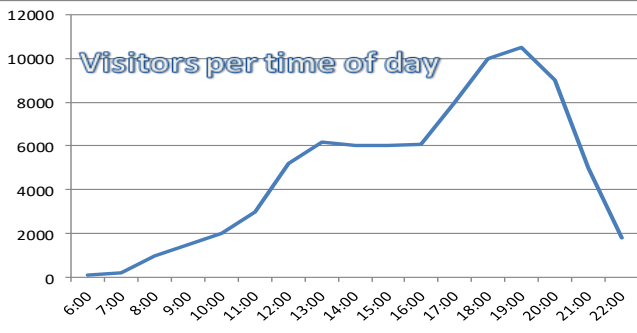
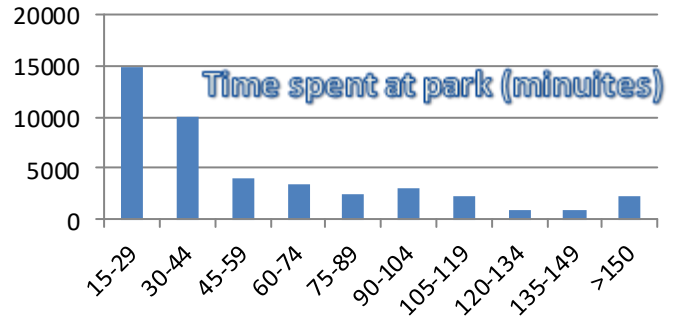
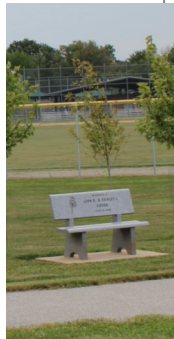
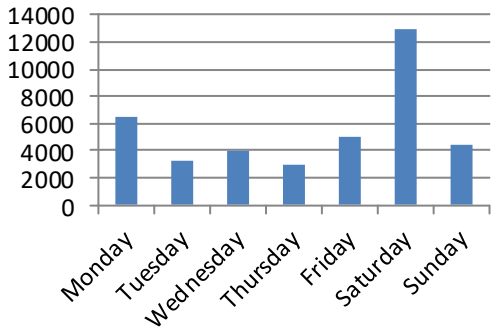
Getting kids to play has risen to such high levels of importance that doctors prescribe time outdoors for some. Pediatricians have recognized the advantages of a park for their patients.

Childhood is a different holistic experience for every child. Kids need hands-on learning opportunities outside of the classroom, and community playgrounds can be an enriching space for kids to learn and have fun.

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Each month you can go to '[www.gotogodfrey.com](http://www.gotogodfrey.com)' and register to win a \$100 gift card to one of our premier establishments around town. There is no obligation for registering; and, you have an opportunity to express your opinion on what you think would make Godfrey even better. The featured business for November is Germania Brew Haus. Register now!

## How is Glazebrook Park Used?



[www.visitgodfrey.com](http://www.visitgodfrey.com)

### Parks continued.....

Playgrounds should excite children. Think thrilling slides and climbing nets. With the latest equipment, kids can play out their adventurous fantasies while they slide and climb through a variety of challenging structures.

When planning play areas for kids, design areas for toddlers and preschoolers who may be too small to reach the equipment on playgrounds built for older children. Consider separate play areas to give these smaller kids thrills designed just for them.

### Improving Property Values

Homeowners view parks as a desirable amenity. Property values increase the closer homes are to a recreational space. With increased property values comes the potential to bring in more property taxes, giving the city funds to further enrich the area.

Prices people will pay for homes closer to parks also increase. People are willing to spend more for an inner-city home located

closer to a park because of the health and social benefits it provides. Greenbelts next to residential communities increase the prices people will pay for homes. Natural areas pay in real estate both for the homeowners and the local government, helping boost the local economy and adding value to green.

### Conserving Wild Areas

The environmental benefits of parks are equally important as the health benefits. Public parks give developers the chance to plant indigenous flora and entice native fauna to the area. Residents get to see what plants grow naturally in the region. Conserving wildlife in parks helps to sustain nature, even in the most populated, urban areas.

Animals are not the only ones who benefit from wildlife conserving parks. With more wildlife in the parks, residents flock to these green areas to engage in animal spotting and bird watching. When residents see native birds and animals up

close, they may become more likely to promote conservation and volunteer for nature preservation programs, especially if the park promotes such opportunities.

### Creating Safe Gathering Places

Residents need to feel safe. If they don't have anywhere to go without feeling in danger, they will remain in their homes. In communities where no one leaves their homes, residents do not get the benefits of outdoor activity or engaging with each other. Parks can help solve this problem by providing residents and their kids with a safe place to go. By having a safe place for their kids, parents may be more likely to let their children outside. When kids engage in physical activity outside, they enjoy more significant benefits.

### Including Everyone in Play

For children with disabilities, finding ways to get active can be difficult. A park with an inclusive playground that allows kids of all abilities to play lets everyone in on the fun. Inclusive playground equipment has a variety of challenges for all ages and

abilities. Even those who use mobility devices can play with other kids on the structures. Kids who engage with others of differing abilities from themselves increase their positive feelings for others. When kids play with other kids on the playground, they can learn to respect different perspectives, backgrounds and experiences. Inclusive playgrounds in recreational areas provide the type of social interaction that can lead to kids growing up with more positive, inclusive feelings toward their peers with disabilities.

#### **Giving Families Free Activity**

Free is always the perfect price, especially for families looking for fun without breaking the bank. Installing recreational areas in neighborhoods offers residents a place to take their kids without spending too much. It can be difficult to keep kids entertained. Community parks can be a fun, cost-effective way to keep kids occupied. Parks, with innovative playgrounds, give parents a break from the usual routine, and kids get the chance to release their energy. Regardless of the number of kids in a family, a trip to the park is easy on a family budget.

#### **Reducing Crime**

Access to public parks and green community spaces can help reduce crime. A study by the CDC linked fewer park visits with increased crime in the area. When people have access to green spaces where there is a strong community presence, it can deter crime in the neighborhood. This creates a positive feedback loop since reduced crime will further increase park activity and help people feel safer in public spaces.

Newly renovated parks or recreation areas must have attractive features to inspire pride from the community. When residents feel strongly about their recreational area and use it frequently, they will help take care of it and increase a feeling of community.

#### **Encouraging Social Skills in Kids**

Playgrounds at parks do more than provide a structure for kids to jump, climb and slide. The equipment also helps build social interactions between kids. With multiple options for play, just about every kid can find something to do. Additionally, many activities, like see-saws, require a partner. Without realizing it, kids will pair up for play.

Community playgrounds offer a better chance for kids with autism to socially en-

gage with other. Since playgrounds do not have a competitive nature, everyone wins. With recess at schools averaging 10 to 35 minutes a day, kids may not have enough time for social interaction at the school playground. Having a park in their neighborhood allows them to meet other kids outside their peer group and learn how to interact with each other. While kids see the same peers at school every day, visitors at a local playground or park may change regularly. With new friends to make and people to meet, kids visiting their community playgrounds can continue to build their social skills outside of school.

#### **Offering Family Bonding Sites**

Because parks have opportunities for people of all ages to have fun, families can engage in activities together. Participating in recreational activities together can help parents engage with their kids. Parks bring families together for fun activities and significant events. Families may gather at a park for a birthday party or graduation celebration because these locations offer activities for everyone without the high cost of indoor venues.

Many families gather with extended relatives for large family reunions. Parks that offer picnic areas or pavilions are popular choices for events like family reunions. Several generations of family members can enjoy all the benefits of parks. With so many ways that families can use parks together to build memories, such recreational areas can strengthen the bonds between family members.

*Excerpt taken from: [www.https://www.miracle-recreation.com/blog/benefits-of-parks-in-your-community/](https://www.miracle-recreation.com/blog/benefits-of-parks-in-your-community/)*



**November Business of the Month**

**DAN'S**  
**GARAGE DOOR SERVICE**

**If you would like to receive the monthly issue of "The Villager" by email, please contact Jim Mager at [jmager@godfreyil.org](mailto:jmager@godfreyil.org)**

#### **Commercial Property Enhancement Grant**

Businesses located in the Godfrey Business District are eligible to take advantage of the "Commercial Property Enhancement Grant" program.

**Funding:** First \$5,000 — maximum grant is 50%; and, \$5,001 and above is 25% of eligible expenses. The grant limit is a maximum of \$20,000 per project.

**Eligible Expenses:** Significant facade renovations, signage, awnings, doors, windows. Landscaping if it follows Godfrey Ordinance No. 15-2007. Parking lots if brought up to ADA compliance and Village codes. All appropriate permits must be secured.

***The grant must be approved prior to commencement of work.***





**Featured Business of the Month:**

**Round Table Restaurant**

The restaurant attracts all types of customers. It may be one person stopping in for breakfast, a couple coming in for a business lunch, or a family coming in for dinner. They have a wide variety of patrons ranging from teenagers to those in their 90's.

does face some challenges. Rising input costs continue to be an issue. Not only are food prices increasing, credit card fees continue to rise and labor cost are increasing.

In spite of challenges being faced, the Round Table appreciates the opportunity to be operating in Godfrey and thank the many loyal customers continue to support them through the years — some visit on a daily basis!

Ah....., great food and warm, friendly atmosphere. That's the Round Table Restaurant where they make you feel like family.

Feeling hungry? Then you need to head to the Roundtable Restaurant the Veseli Family will welcome you, your family and your friends with open arms.

The Round Table serves up American fare in a family-oriented setting. Be it a fish dinner, a plate of fried chicken, or a big platter of bacon and eggs — with pancakes on the side, the hungry person will not be disappointed. Plus, all is served up by members of a friendly staff.

Mr. and Mrs. Veseli started the Round Table Restaurant in 2003 in Cottage Hills. In 2010, he opened in Godfrey, where they enjoy success today.

The Veseli family takes pride in the fact that, each day, they serve up daily specials that provide a delicious dining experience. The home cooked meals are a departure from so many "fast-food" options that are so common. Take the home cooked entrée and couple it with their homemade soups and dining enjoyment awaits.



The Round Table is truly a family run establishment being guided by Mr. Veseli and supported by his children. Not only are brothers and sisters now working in the business, the grandkids are also pitching in to provide great services to the customers. In addition to the family, many long-term non-family employees are involved in knowing the customers by their names.

Like many businesses, the Round Table



**Oh, and one more thing.....**

One of the accomplishments of the Mayor, Trustees and Park and Rec staff is the development of a great park system and programs. Over the years of this development, those individuals demonstrated vision and persistence. When I came across the article on Miracle Recreation's website entitled, "Benefits of Parks in Your Community," that foresight of the administration seemed to really become evident. I hope you might agree.

Congratulations to the Round Table Restaurant on being Godfrey's Featured Business of the month. It is the only establishment of it's kind here in town and they do a great job. Please be sure to stop in and have a delicious meal presented in a very comfortable atmosphere.

I came across a statistic in "Heartland Real Estate Business" magazine (October 2023). It states the Consumer Price Index rose 0.06 percent for the month and was up 3.7 percent over the year. However that does not include groceries and energy, which are up 20%. When those get factored, the CPI rose .3 percent for the month and 4.3 percent over the year. So, if you keep feeling like your money is not going as far as it use to, you're not crazy. Inflation, regardless of what the politicians and pundits tell you, is not going down — it's just the rate of inflation is not "growing" as fast as it was.

*Mark your calendar*

## 18th Annual Snow Flake Festival

December 1, 2023

Glazebrook Park



## Breakfast With Santa

December 9, 2023

Godfrey K. C. Hall

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

\$15 for Adults and Children 13 and over

\$7 for ages 6–12

Under 5 years is free

618-466-1483

**Reservations by December 7**




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