

## Park Classification System

The size, location, ownership, and type of activities determine the functional classification of parks.

Municipalities generally provide neighborhood or community type parks. Neighborhood parks provide recreation activities primarily to children and are located within a safe and convenient walking distance of those intended to be served. Open space is available for spontaneous activities in addition to ball fields and play equipment. Community parks are larger in size and the service area often extends across the entire city. These parks can accommodate a large number of persons in all age groups, providing more extensive facilities such as swimming pools, tennis courts, lighted ball fields, picnic shelters, and restrooms. Community parks often attract users from beyond the municipal boundaries.

Municipal facilities play an important role in the total recreation picture but are not included in this plan because they are the responsibility of the cities. Nationally recognized standards are available to determine current municipal deficiencies and it will be the function of each city to assess its needs for future park and recreation facilities.

Regional parks are generally centered around the natural environment and usually emphasize the preservation of natural resources. State parks function in this capacity, identifying with natural features such as water, scenic vistas, woodlands, and unique resources such as the quartzite rock outcroppings found at Palisade State Park. Camping facilities offer park users the opportunity for an extended visit. Trail systems are also common along with passive types of recreation. Highly developed facilities such as lighted ball fields are usually absent from regional parks. Depending on the uniqueness of a regional park, the service area includes a one hour or more driving time.

County parks are also included in the regional classification system. Although few South Dakota counties are in the park and recreation business, it is this level of government that is in the best position to fill the void which often exists between municipal and state facilities. A county park may have a somewhat smaller service area but exhibits many of the same characteristics as a regional facility, with the exception that camping facilities are absent and a user fee is not required.