

Bogert Park Observation Report  
Spring 2022  
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(I.) Introduction:

Bozeman, Montana's historic Bogert Park is located just southeast of Main St. and downtown. The park has numerous amenities including a public ice rink open during the winter, a pool open during the summer, a field, a basketball court and a playground. It is closely connected to Bozeman's rich network of city parks, trails, and open spaces. Because of this, Bogert Park is often passed through to get to other parts of town or other parks and trails. By conducting a series of observations on Bogert Park, I hoped to:

- determine how the park is actually used by people during the park's off-season
- find out how people move around in the park

Understanding this will help reveal what about the park is valuable and what could be done to improve the park to make it an even better fixture of the community.

**Key Findings:**

- There is still a considerable amount of activity at the park during the winter and spring
- The playground is the park's most popular feature
- Many people travel to the park on foot and the pedestrian bridge is a main center of activity in the park
- The tennis courts, basketball courts, and pool area was underutilized during this time



[satellite imagery of Bogert Park taken from Google Maps. All other images were captured by me on May 9, 2022]

## (II.) Methods:

My Bogert Park observation project was divided up into nine, hour-long time slots, done over the course of the semester. I attempted to capture the park at a variety of different days and times with these observations. Two of my observations were in the morning, four were in the afternoon, and three were in the evening and the observations captured the park on all the different days of the week as well. This was done to get a better sense of how the park is used differently at different times of the day or how it is used on the weekends as opposed to during the week. These observations were also done over the course of a few months, to effectively capture how the park is used during the early spring as opposed to later in the spring and in different weather conditions. My first observation took place on February 26 while my ninth and final observation took place on May 2. While this series of observations cannot be conclusive for how the park is used all year round, it can provide a snapshot into how the park is used during the spring months.

I used the same document to take notes on and keep count of people and activity for all nine of my observations. This document kept track of four major categories. I looked at (1) the general ages of the people I saw at the park, (2) the method of transportation that people used to get to the park, (3) whether the park patrons were by themselves or in a group, and (4) the activities that they did while they were at the park. Going into the first observation, I made a fifth category which I had not initially written on the form. This category was (5) a count of how many people stayed at the park as opposed to just walking or biking through. While doing the observations, I kept track of the number of people in each of these categories on the form. A blank version of the form is attached at the end of the document. The data from my observations I then synthesized and put into charts (shown below).

## (III.) Observation Results:

### i. First observation:

- Conducted Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup> from 1:45-2:45pm
- Weather: 28 degrees and sunny with no wind.
- The park was covered in snow, so it was difficult to walk most places off the paths.
- Sat on a bench next to the playground on the parking lot side

Notes: Most of the activity during this hour was concentrated at the skating rink. Many people were skating, playing hockey, or sitting and watching the activity on the ice rink. There was not very much activity going on at the park besides this. As the City of Bozeman only maintains the ice-skating rink through the first week of March, this was the only observation where I was able to see it being used.

### ii. Second observation:

- Conducted Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:40-11:40am
- Weather: 37 degrees and cloudy with no wind. Some snowflakes in the air
- Most of the park was still covered in snow and ice.
- Sat under a tree over by the walking bridge over Bozeman Creek.

Notes: There was not much activity at the park on this cold morning. Most of the activity was from people crossing the bridge on foot and walking through the park or walking down the sidewalk that follows S Church Street. Only a few people lingered at the park including one man who was walking around and just yelling incoherently.

iii. Third observation:

- Conducted Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup> from 12-1pm
- Weather: 45 degrees and mostly cloudy with a slight breeze. Some snowflakes in the air
- The park was still partially covered by snow and ice
- Sat at a broken picnic table just south of the bandshell and over by the pedestrian bridge over Bozeman Creek.

Notes: The park was very empty with most people only staying for a few minutes. It was often hard to define what counted as “staying at the park” as some people stopped in the park very briefly to let their dog run around or something else.

iv. Fourth observation:

- Conducted Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 5-6pm
- Weather: 68 degrees and partly cloudy with a slight breeze
- There was no snow left on the ground in the park
- Sat at the bench by Bozeman Creek that faces the playground

Notes: there was a lot of activity at the park for this first late afternoon/evening observation. Many more people stayed at the park and were doing all kinds of different activities. A much smaller portion of the people were walking through the south side of the park between Peets Hill and the pedestrian bridge.

v. Fifth observation:

- Conducted Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> from 1-2pm
- Weather: 65 degrees and partly cloudy with no wind
- No snow left in the park
- Sat at the bench by Bozeman Creek that faces the playground

Notes: The most popular activity this early afternoon was people using the playground. Most people who stay at the park do not stay in the same place or just do one activity very often. It is common for people to move around the park and do a variety of different activities. The majority of people arrived by car during these observations as well which was not common.

vi. Sixth observation:

- Conducted Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-6:30pm
- Weather: 62 degrees and partly cloudy with some breeze
- Started drizzling at 6pm for a little while
- Sat at the bench by Bozeman Creek that faces the playground

Notes: When I arrived at the park, there were two different childrens’ soccer camps going on which had about 16 kids total along with coaches and a few parents. I did not count these people in my activity counts. Many of the soccer camp families arrived by car, and parked either in the parking lot or along Bogert Pl. Many parents

with small children were at the park this evening. Many people stayed at the park rather than simply passing through as well.

vii. Seventh observation:

- Conducted Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup> from 3:35-4:35pm
- Weather: 45 degrees and cloudy with no wind
- Despite the temperature, it felt very cold. Started raining at 4:05pm
- Sat at a picnic table next to the parking lot and just north of the playground.

Notes: Quiet day at the park. Most people that came were walking dogs by themselves or simply walking through the park.

viii. Eighth observation:

- Conducted Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:15-7:15pm
- Weather: 45 degrees and partly cloudy with some wind
- Sat at a picnic table next to the parking lot and just north of the playground.

Notes: Generally, very little going on in the park. Though the sun was out, it was still cold. Though the late afternoons and evenings were usually the busiest times at the park, I was the only person at the park for much of this observation.

ix. Ninth observation:

- Conducted Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:45-10:45am
- Weather 48 degrees and sunny with no wind
- Sat at a picnic table next to the parking lot and just north of the playground.

Notes: Beautiful morning at the park. Quiet at the park with most of the activity being people at the playground. Parents or grandparents with small children constituted most of the people at the park this morning.

(IV.) Tables and Graphs with Observation Data

- Data from these tables is discussed in more detail in sections V-IX

Table 1: The number of park visitors that stayed at the park as a percentage of the total park visitors

<u>Observation date</u>	<u># of people that stayed</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
2/26 (afternoon) ☀️ 28°	27	35	77%
3/16 (morning) ☁️❄️ 37°	7	17	41%
3/18 (afternoon) ☁️❄️ 45°	6	11	55%
3/28 (evening) ☁️ 68°	27	52	52%
4/8 (afternoon) ☁️ 65°	21	46	46%
4/26 (evening) ☁️ 62°	37	55	67%
4/28 (afternoon) ☁️ 45°	11	23	48%
5/1 (evening) ☁️ 45°	10	29	34%
5/2 (morning) ☀️ 48°	14	24	58%
<b>totals</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>55%</b>

Table 2: Age demographics of park visitors

<u>Observation#</u>	<u>Child (under 18)</u>	<u>Young Adult</u>	<u>Middle Aged Adult</u>	<u>Senior Adult</u>
2/26 (afternoon) ☀️ 28°	4	18	10	3
3/16 (morning) ☁️❄️ 37°	2	8	5	2
3/18 (afternoon) ☁️❄️ 45°	2	4	3	2
3/28 (evening) ☁️ 68°	18	13	17	4
4/8 (afternoon) ☁️ 65°	20	15	10	1
4/26 (evening) ☁️ 62°	16	19	14	5
4/28 (afternoon) ☁️ 45°	6	6	10	1
5/1 (evening) ☁️ 45°	8	8	12	1
5/2 (morning) ☀️ 48°	6	6	5	7
<b>totals</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>% of total</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>9%</b>

Table 3: Modes of transportation and how visitors got to the park

<u>Observation#</u>	<u>Arrived on foot</u>	<u>Arrived in a car</u>	<u>Arrived by bike</u>	<u>Arrived by scooter</u>
2/26 (afternoon) ☀️ 28°	6	18	0	0
3/16 (morning) ☁️❄️ 37°	11	3	2	0
3/18 (afternoon) ☁️❄️ 45°	7	1	1	0
3/28 (evening) ☁️ 68°	20	16	9	0
4/8 (afternoon) ☁️ 65°	7	21	9	0
4/26 (evening) ☁️ 62°	18	15	6	0
4/28 (afternoon) ☁️ 45°	13	8	2	0
5/1 (evening) ☁️ 45°	18	0	4	3
5/2 (morning) ☀️ 48°	15	7	2	0
<b>totals</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>% of total</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>1%</b>

Table 4: Were park visitors by themselves or with others?

<u>Observation#</u>	<u>Individuals</u> (Groups of 1)	<u>Groups of 2 or more</u>
2/26 (afternoon) ☀️ 28°	11	5
3/16 (morning) ☁️❄️ 37°	11	3
3/18 (afternoon) ☁️❄️ 45°	6	2
3/28 (evening) ☀️ 68°	20	12
4/8 (afternoon) ☀️ 65°	6	15
4/26 (evening) ☀️ 62°	9	16
4/28 (afternoon) ☁️ 45°	15	4
5/1 (evening) ☁️ 45°	11	6
5/2 (morning) ☀️ 48°	10	6
<b>totals</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>% of total</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>41%</b>

Table 5: Park activities

<u>Observation#</u>	<u>Walking through the park</u>	<u>Walking a dog</u>	<u>Jogging</u>	<u>Playground</u>	<u>Sitting</u>	<u>Skating at rink</u>
2/26 (afternoon) ☀️ 28°	7	11	0	6	4	21
3/16 (morning) ☁️❄️ 37°	8	7	1	2	0	0
3/18 (afternoon) ☁️❄️ 45°	2	4	0	5	0	0
3/28 (evening) ☀️☁️ 68°	10	7	3	14	0	0
4/8 (afternoon) ☀️☁️ 65°	5	2	0	13	0	0
4/26 (evening) ☀️☁️ 62°	2	6	2	18	4	0
4/28 (afternoon) ☁️ 45°	3	9	2	6	0	0
5/1 (evening) ☁️ 45°	11	9	0	0	0	0
5/2 (morning) ☀️ 48°	3	6	1	12	0	0
<b>totals</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>

Table 6: Park activities (cont.)

<u>Observation#</u>	<u>Skating at rink</u>	<u>Basketball</u>	<u>Biking</u>	<u>Picnic</u>	<u>Spikeball</u>	<u>Field Sports</u>	<u>Smoking</u>
2/26 (afternoon) ☀️ 28°	21	0	0	0	0	0	7
3/16 (morning) ☁️❄️ 37°	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3/18 (afternoon) ☁️❄️ 45°	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
3/28 (evening) ☁️🌞 68°	0	3	8	0	0	0	0
4/8 (afternoon) ☁️🌞 65°	0	0	9	0	0	0	0
4/26 (evening) ☁️🌞 62°	0	0	2	4	6	2	0
4/28 (afternoon) ☁️ 45°	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
5/1 (evening) ☁️ 45°	0	0	4	0	0	2	0
5/2 (morning) ☀️ 48°	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>totals</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>

\* The data from all of these was taken from my observations of the park. The most accurate information for the total number of park users is under the “total” column in Table 1. Tables 5 and 6 may not reflect the same number totals as some people did more than one activity while they were at the park and may show up under multiple categories. Table 4 data reflects the numbers of groups rather than the number of people in the group.

(V.) Most important features of the park:



- The playground

On most days, the center of activity at the park was the playground. Families would drive, walk, and ride bikes to the playground and people who went to the park to use the playground generally stayed longer than people doing other activities.

- The walking paths

The footpaths through the park were very popular (refer to section VII for map of walking paths). The dirt path that runs diagonally through the middle of the park, connecting the pedestrian bridge with the parking lot was a popular place to walk. Many people that were walking between the pedestrian bridge and the Peets Hill parking lot would cut the corner through the grass to get to the sidewalk that runs along the south side of the park. This created a makeshift dirt path that many people use. The sidewalks along S Church Street often had a steady stream of foot and bike traffic, though these people were not counted in my park inventories.



- The pedestrian bridge

A large portion of the foot traffic that arrived at Bogert Park came from people crossing the pedestrian bridge into the park. Dog walkers especially came to the park from the neighborhood to the west, across Bozeman Creek. The bridge does a good job of connecting the park with the surrounding neighborhood.

- The field

The field was also another important feature. People would sit in the field, play sports, or let their dogs run around in the grass field on the south side of Bogert Park. Even when it was snowy, people would still walk through the field.

- The bandshell

Even though the bandshell did not have any concerts or events going on at it during the winter and spring months, it was still used a surprising amount during my observations. People would climb on it, sit on it, or just hang out around it.



- Bozeman Creek

The stream that runs on the west side of the park is an important feature. During my observations, I saw it being used for fishing, people letting their dogs splash around in, or kids wading in. Some people would also sit next to the stream and talk with each other or smoke.

(VI.) Least important features of the park:



- The tennis courts

The six tennis courts at the northeast corner of the park were not used once during my observations. It appeared that the nets had been taken down possibly for the winter, but even on nice days there was never any activity in this corner of the park.

- The basketball court

Although some people used the basketball court during my observations, the use was minimal. This whole northeast side of the park was very quiet.

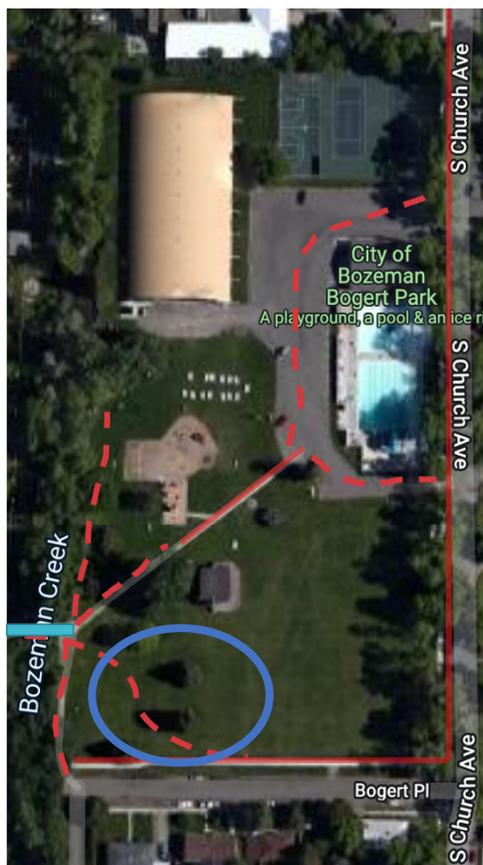
- The Anderson Pavilion

Except for my February observation when the ice rink was open, very little happened in the pavilion during my observations. Even after the ice rink walls were torn down sometime during March, people would only walk through the pavilion and never spent more than a minute or two in it.

- The pool

Why the pool was not an important park feature during my observations is obvious: the pool does not open until the summer. During the winter, however, this whole side of the park is very quiet, and the space cannot be utilized for anything else.

## (VII.) Transportation:



- Arrived on foot (48%)  
A plurality of park users arrived on foot, indicating that the park is important to many people in the surrounding neighborhood. The diagram (left) shows a map of the park and its paths. The paved paths and sidewalks are indicated by solid red lines and other popular, unpaved walking routes are indicated through the dashed red lines. The blue line indicates the pedestrian bridge. Although most people walking around in the park stuck to the established paths, many people would cut the corner through the field to get to the sidewalk along Bogert Pl. (indicated by the blue circle).
- Arrived by car (37%)  
Despite the large amount of pedestrian traffic, a good number of park users are coming from elsewhere. Of those who drove to the park, most appeared to use the parking lot in the park. Other people utilized the on-street parking along both sides of Bogert Pl. to the south of the park. Very few people, though, utilized the parking along the east side of S Church Ave.

- Arrived by bike (14%)

Another surprising find from the observations was how few people biked to the park. This could be due, in part, to the time of year that the observations were conducted in. Many bikers either simply went through the park or used the concrete pad in the Anderson Pavilion to bike around in

- Other

A fourth method of transportation that I had not considered before the observations was scooters. Though only a few people arrived at the park on these electric, rental scooters while I was doing my observations, I did see a few of these scooters lying on the ground in the park during a few of my later observations.

## (VIII.) Park Visitors:

As shown in Table 4, most park patrons came to the park on their own. Many of those were walking through the park often with a dog. Individuals tended to stay at the park for less time than did groups and were less likely to have driven to the park. As shown in Table 2, the age distribution was fairly even of park patrons. Young adults were the largest group, but this was not by a large margin. Children, the third largest category, were virtually always accompanied by parents or grandparents and usually

went to the playground. Some kids came to the park on bikes by themselves, but this was not common. It was also surprising that the smallest groups of people who attended the park were senior adults. Unless these senior adults were taking grandkids to the playground, most simply walked through the park to get somewhere else.

#### (IX.) Park Activity:



- The diagram (left) roughly shows the busiest parts of the park. The bright red shows the busiest quadrant of the park (where the playground and pedestrian bridge are), the more transparent red shows moderate amounts of activity (the field and the pavilion), and the blue shows the least amount of activity (tennis courts, basketball courts, pool, and parking lot).
- Much of the park activity occurred during the late afternoon and evening over the course of my observations.
- The mornings and early afternoons, especially on weekdays, was generally very slow. During these slow times, more people seemed to be walking through the park alone or with dogs and some parents were at the playground with their small children.
- The number of people that stayed at the park certainly would decrease when the weather was not good.
- In the late afternoon and early evening, more people stayed at the park. They would spend time in the field (once the snow had all melted) or at the playground or simply walking around the park.
- Most people would not stay in one place in the park but would instead move from place to place during their visit.

#### (X.) Suggestions for Park Improvement:

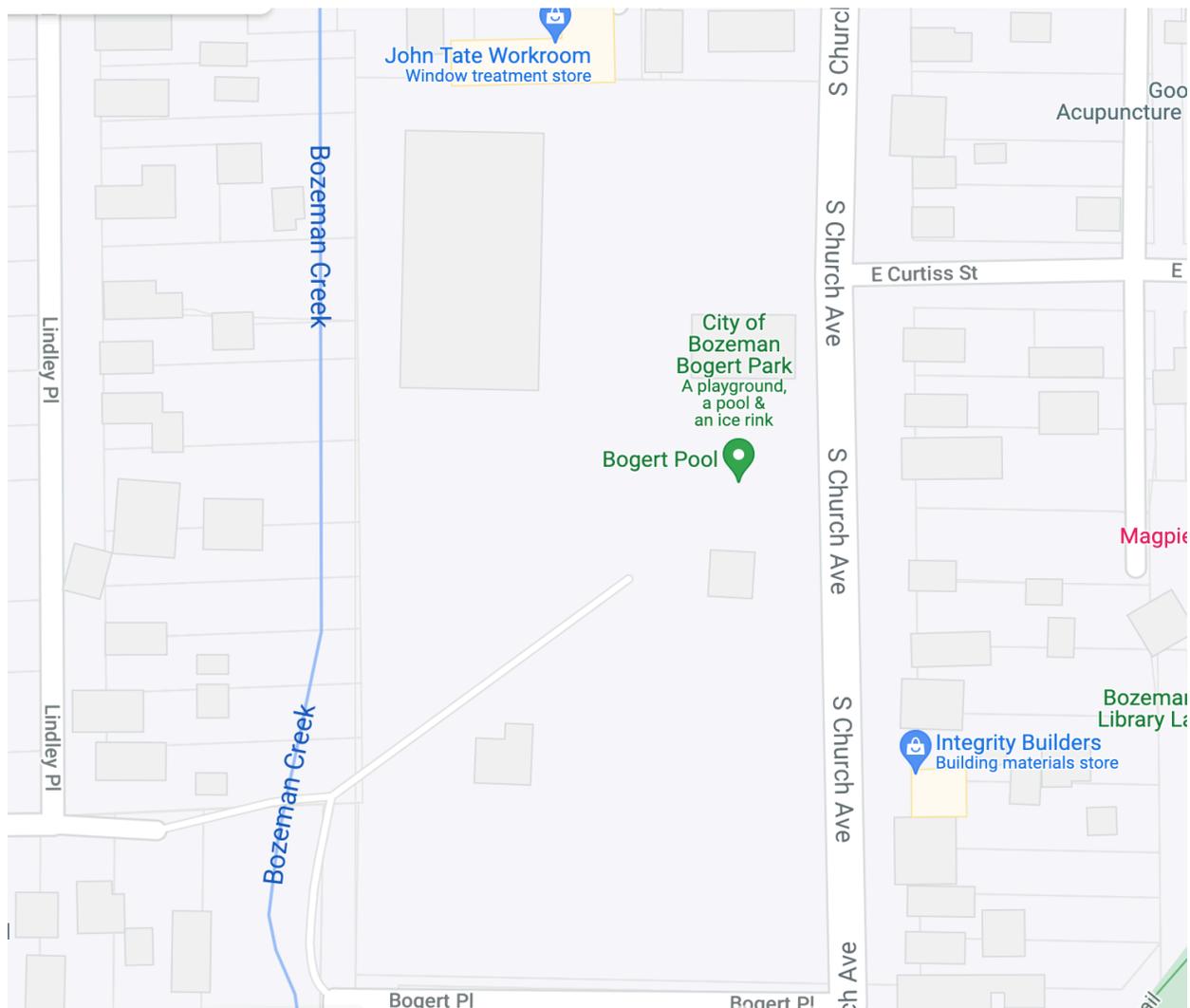
- Install a sign at a park entrance to indicate that it is Bogert Park. The only sign I saw that said the name “Bogert Park” on it was on Main Street a few blocks away. This could encourage more people to stay at the park instead of just passing through
- Find a way to bring more activity to the north side of the park during the spring months whether that be at the pavilion or basketball or tennis courts
- Pave more of the dirt paths in the park so that park visitors do not have to walk through the mud when passing through the park during winter months.

- Preserve the bandshell (or at least some semblance of it) because it is a fixture of the park that is used by park visitors even during the winter and spring months.

(XI.) Conclusion:

Bogert Park is an important part of the neighborhood and an important part of the life of the city of Bozeman. Its proximity to other city parks and trails brings more people through the park. By conducting a series of nine observations on the park, I found that even during the winter and spring, there are still activities in the park. The main attractions were the playground and the field area. People walk and bike through the park on the established trails very often but will also cut through the parking lot or through the field if that is the shortest route to get to where they are going to. Over the course of my observations, the least amount of activity happened on the north side of the park where the tennis courts, basketball court, and pavilion are except for when the ice rink was open in February. The activity was concentrated on the southwest side of the park, near the playground and pedestrian bridge. Although these observations provide insight into how Bogert Park is used daily, all the data comes from observations during the late winter and early spring. As a result, the findings cannot be generalized and applied to the rest of the year as park activity changes a great deal over the course of the year.

Observation Form:



Child (Under 18)	
Young Adult	
Middle Aged Adult	
Senior Adult	

Arrived on foot	
Arrived in a car	
Arrived by bike	

Individual	
Group of 2 or more	

**Activities:**

Walking through park

Walking a dog

Jogging

Playground

Sitting

Skating at rink

Basketball

Tennis

Etc... (write below)