



**Parks, Recreation and
Open Space Plan**
November 14, 2016



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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Survey Results and Public Comment Summaries available at:

<https://www.cob.org/Documents/parks/development/projects/2014-pro-plan-update-survey.pdf>

<https://www.cob.org/documents/parks/development/projects/pro-plan-update-public-comment-tracker.pdf>

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The City's Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PRO Plan), an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, is the overarching document that guides the expansion of our park and recreation system as the community grows. The PRO plan must be updated every six years in order for the City to remain eligible for grants under the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. As an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, the PRO Plan undergoes a legislative review process, including Planning Commission and City Council approval. Since a full update of the plan occurred in 2014, minor modifications have been made to this 2016 update in order to be consistent with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

1.1 Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) establishes goals for cities and counties to ensure that their quality of life is sustained as their communities grow. One of these goals is to “retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreational facilities” (RCW 36.70A.020(9)).

The parks and recreation element of a comprehensive plan must contain the following features:

- Consistency with the capital facilities element;
- Estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a 10-year period. This plan estimates demand for a 20-year period;
- An evaluation of facilities and service needs; and
- An evaluation of intergovernmental coordination opportunities.

Mission Statement:

*Support a healthy
community by providing
high quality parks and
recreation services.*



The plan includes urban growth areas to ensure that open space and greenbelt corridors are identified within and between urban growth areas, including lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas.

Projects prioritized during the planning process are included in the City's six-year Capital Budget, which is updated at least bi-annually.

1.2 Overall Vision

Mission Statement

The mission of the Bellingham Department of Parks & Recreation is to “Support a healthy community by promoting high quality parks and recreation services.” A high quality park system should serve the needs of the community with a range of services and facilities for all age groups and abilities provided in a safe environment. The PRO Plan outlines the steps to continue to achieve a quality parks system for the future.

Throughout the planning process themes emerged that set the vision for the coming years. These themes centered on:

- Equitable access to park facilities and programs - all neighborhoods should be provided with access to equitable parks and recreation facilities and programs. All residents should live within 1/2 mile walk of a park and trail.
- Water Access - Access to the water, for viewing, boating, fishing and general enjoyment is important and waterfront park development is a priority;
- Environment – A strong recognition of the value of and access to the natural environment as a core component of the Bellingham park system, as well as recognition that access to natural areas may be limited in order to meet the City's environmental goals and regulations (see Environment Chapter);
- Newly Emerging Sports – Recognition that Bellingham residents pride themselves on living outside the “recreation box” with strong interests in newly emerging sports such as mountain bike skills, pickle ball, lacrosse, rugby, paddle sports and others; and
- Variety – The desire for the system to continue to offer the variety of choices, for recreational activities of all types, for all ages and abilities.



1.3 Previous Plans

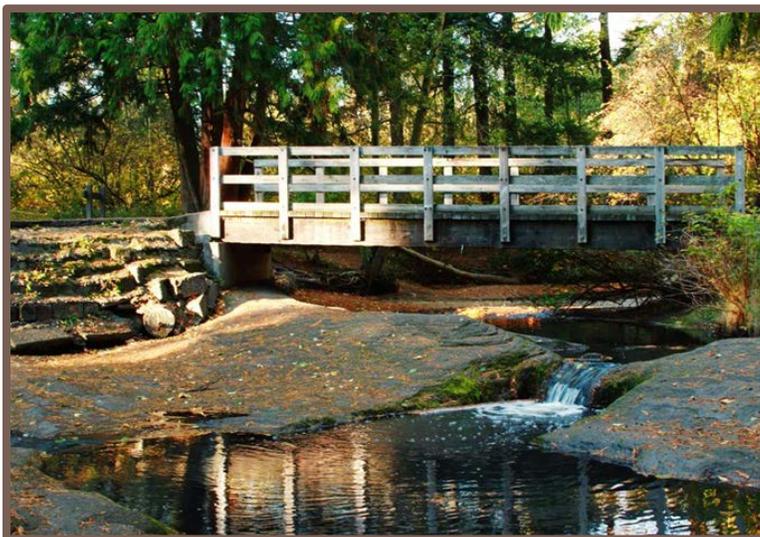
This PRO Plan, prepared in 2013-2014 and updated in 2016, builds on previous comprehensive planning efforts and is an element of the Comprehensive Plan for Bellingham. The PRO Plan considers parks, recreation and open space land, facilities and programs.

Bellingham continues to grow and change as a community. Greater infill development is occurring within the central part of the city, while new development is expected in annex areas. New types of recreation are emerging and activities once considered “extreme” are now “mainstream.” The park system also attracts a greater number of users than ever before and requires more flexibility of park resources to respond to new trends and increased population.

1.4 Objectives & Approach

The specific objectives of this planning effort are to:

- Describe the Community Setting – Establish the framework within which park, recreation, and open space facilities should be provided, including natural features, historical context, land use implications, current recreation trends and demographics.
- Inventory the Existing Park System – This includes lands owned and operated by the city or other public agencies, both within the planning area and beyond. The planning area is defined in section 1.6 of this chapter.
- Analyze Needs & Opportunities – Analyze the needs for future park, recreation, and open space facilities or programs and develop recommendations, including the necessary resources for meeting and maintaining those needs.
- Establish Goals and Objectives – Identify the goals to be met and objectives to carry out those goals as the PRO Plan is implemented
- Adopt a Level-of-Service – Based on the existing park system and the recommendations of the community, establish proposed level of service standards and lay the groundwork for revised standards to help guide development of the park system over the next 10 to 20 years.
- Create an Implementation Plan – Establish the overall estimated cost of achieving the proposed level-of-service, based on the community’s recommendations, prioritize those recommendations, and



Squalicum Creek in Cornwall Park. Photo by Kristen Krussow.

develop a plan to implement the priority recommendations through a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). In addition, develop general strategies to be considered for the projected population growth over the next 20 years.

1.5 Public Involvement

Public input is important to a community-based parks and recreation plan. The citizen members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) served as the Steering Committee to help oversee the process, provide input and evaluate the recommendations. A random sample household phone survey, a web-based survey, a public work shop and a public meeting were also conducted to augment and inform the Committee’s discussions. Public hearings were held with the Planning Commission and City Council prior to final adoption. The public involvement process included the following:

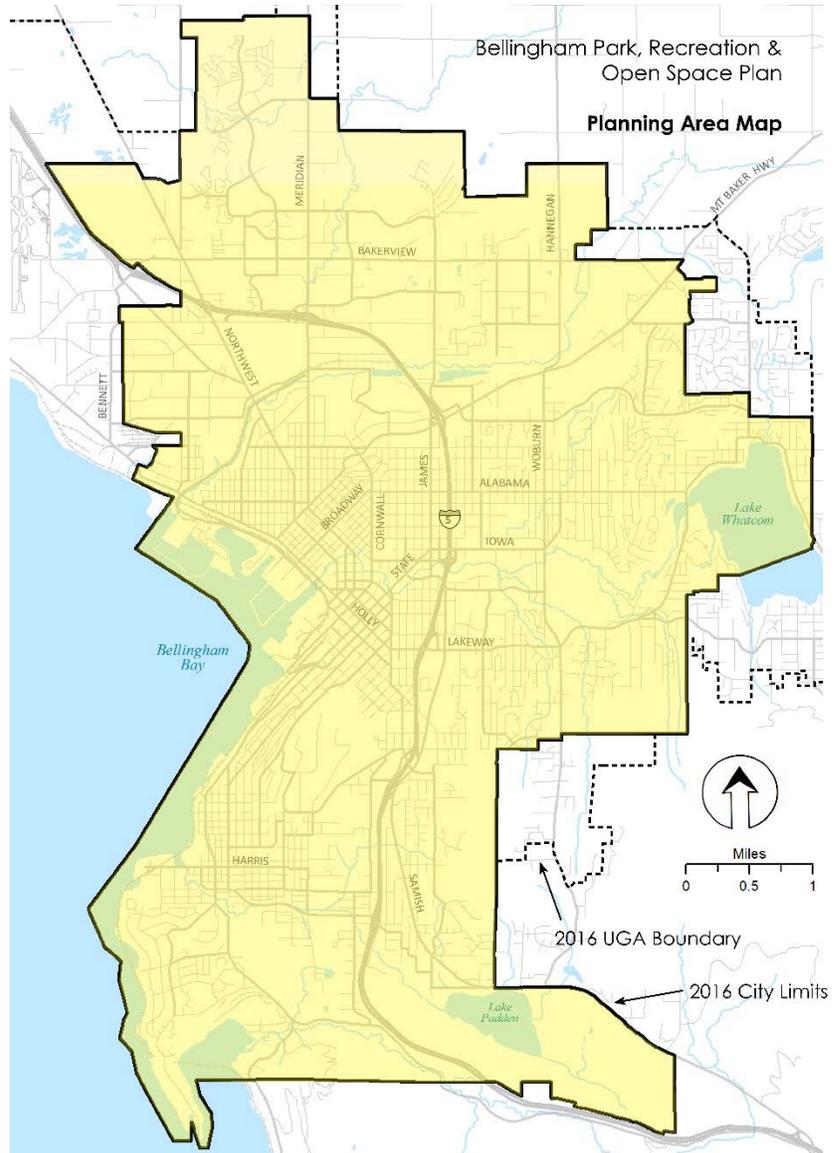
Meeting/Action	Topic	Month
2013		
Steering Committee/PRAB	Introduction, Process and Schedule	February
Steering Committee/PRAB	Population projection and Level of Service	March
City Council Update	Project status report	March
Steering Committee/PRAB	Ch. 5 Goals and Objectives, Facility Recommendations	April
Steering Committee/PRAB	Trail Recommendations	May
Steering Committee/PRAB	Visioning	June
Public Workshop	Visioning	June
Steering Committee/PRAB	Visioning Results and Public Opinion Survey	July
Steering Committee/PRAB	Survey Questions and Ch. 6 Recommendations	August
Telephone and Web Survey	Public Opinion Survey Conducted	August-Sept
Steering Committee/PRAB	Plan Review	September
Steering Committee/PRAB	DRAFT Plan Approval	October
Public Meeting	Plan Recommendations	October
City Council	Update	October
Planning Commission	Public Hearings and Work Sessions	November

Meeting/Action	Topic	Month
2014		
Steering Committee/PRAB	Final Plan Approval	January
City Council	Public Hearing	January
City Council	Preliminary Approval	February
City Council	Comp Plan Amendment	July
2016		
Steering Committee/PRAB	Update overview	January
	Review major changes	February
	Final Recommendation	March
Planning Commission	Public Hearing	March
City Council	Public Hearing	November

1.6 Planning Area Boundary

The planning area for this process includes the Bellingham City Limits and the adopted Urban Growth Area (UGA).

Parks, recreation and open space facilities not owned or managed by the City and located outside of the planning area were inventoried and considered, but are not included in any specific calculations within the PRO Plan (level-of-service, cost estimates, implementation). Whatcom County is responsible for planning the area outside of the UGA; however, the planning efforts of each agency must be coordinated. Any areas added to the UGA in the future, or areas currently within the UGA that may be annexed will need to address parks, recreation and open space needs concurrent with that action. Also, for the purposes of the PRO Plan, it is assumed that residents who currently live within the UGA are served by existing parks, by the end of the 20-year planning period, or 2036, all UGA areas will be incorporated into the City. The proposed facilities, population, level-of-service and any other recommendations projected to the year 2036 include both the existing City and the entire UGA. If all of these areas are not annexed, some of the recommendations would not be implemented.



1.7 Plan Documentation

This plan is organized into seven chapters including:

- Introduction and overview;
- Community setting;
- Inventory of existing facilities;
- Demand for new land and facilities;
- Goals and objectives in fulfilling those demands;
- Recommendations to meet the demand;
- Implementation of the recommendations.

Appendices include:

- Park type classifications;
- Detailed tables of existing and proposed park system facilities;
- North Bellingham Trail Plan;
- Capital Facilities Plan;
- Revenue Source Descriptions; and
- Public opinion survey results.

Chapter 2

COMMUNITY SETTING

Nestled between the mountains and the sea in northwest Washington State, Bellingham is at the center of a uniquely picturesque area offering a rich variety of recreational, cultural, educational and economic activities.

2.1 Location, Topography and Climate

Bellingham is located in northwest Washington on the shore of Bellingham Bay. The inland urban area is framed by the slopes of Stewart, Lookout, and Chuckanut Mountains, at the edge of the Cascade foothills with Mount Baker in the background.

Topography ranges from sea level to about 500 feet on the hilltops around Bellingham. Elevation increases to 3,050 feet at the top of Stewart Mountain, and eventually to 10,785 at the top of Mount Baker. The landform is generally flat to rolling within the urban growth area, though the plateau edge overlooking Bellingham Bay can drop off abruptly in slopes ranging from 40% to 75%.

Bellingham has a mild maritime climate. Mean temperatures vary from a high of 73 degrees in July to a low of 31 degrees Fahrenheit in January. Average annual precipitation is about 35 inches. Approximately 80% of the precipitation occurs from October through March with less than 6% falling during the summer months.

2.2 Natural Features

Bellingham citizens are blessed with living in an area of incredible natural beauty and have a long legacy of placing high value on the environment. The first Greenway Levy passed largely in response to citizen interest in protecting valuable wildlife habitat corridors, shoreline, riparian, wetland and unique upland areas and providing public access to those unique areas.

In 2005, Bellingham strengthened protection of wetland and streams by adopting the Critical Areas Ordinance which also protects steep slopes and frequently flooded areas. The Shoreline Master Program (SMP) was updated in 2013, adding more protection for shorelines and providing habitat restoration guidance while supporting public access.

In 2012, the City Council adopted a new Environment Element (*Chapter 9*) of the Comprehensive Plan to address environmental protection and ensure compliance with the Growth Management Act (GMA).

The City recently developed a Habitat Restoration Technical Assessment and a marine nearshore assessment. The plan uses a science-based prioritization framework to guide the preservation, restoration, and recovery of the City's terrestrial, aquatic and riparian habitats.

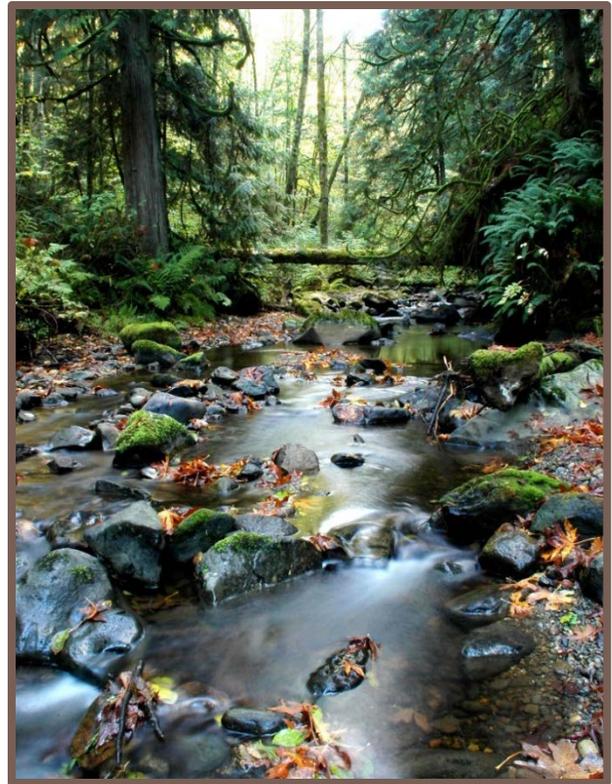
Enhancing and preserving existing habitats supports the City's adopted legacies regarding Clean, Safe Drinking Water and a Healthy Environment.

Following is a list of important environmental features with public recreation elements in and around the Bellingham area.

2.2.1 Creeks

Three major creeks and multiple minor creeks drain the Bellingham area. Squalicum, Whatcom, and Padden Creeks and tributaries are on the Washington State list of impaired water bodies. Preventing further degradation and improving water quality of the City's creeks is important to ensure the resources they provide to the community are protected.

- Squalicum Creek – A major creek that starts at Squalicum Lake and flows southwest to the mouth of Bellingham Bay. The Bay to Baker Trail is planned within the Squalicum Creek Greenway Corridor.
- Whatcom Creek – A major creek that drains from the northwest end of Lake Whatcom west into Bellingham Bay. Whatcom Creek Trail and Greenway generally follows the alignment of Whatcom Creek.
- Padden Creek – A major creek that drains from the Lake Padden west into Bellingham Bay. Upper and lower Padden Creek Greenway Trail follows the corridor.
- Little Squalicum Creek - A perennial stream northwest of Squalicum Creek that flows through Little Squalicum Park and into Bellingham Bay.
- Connelly Creek – A perennial stream that drains south from Sehome Hill into Padden Creek. The 26 acre Connelly Creek Nature Area preserves valuable habitat and provides walking trails.
- Chuckanut Creek – A perennial stream that drains from near Lake Samish west into Chuckanut Bay, through Arroyo Park.



Whatcom Creek in Whatcom Falls Park

2.2.2 Lakes, ponds and estuaries in and near Bellingham

Lakes are defined here as water bodies greater than 20 acres in size or more than 6 feet in depth.

- Lake Whatcom is 10 miles long with a surface area of approximately 5,000 acres. Since 1968, the City has relied on Lake Whatcom for its municipal water supply. The lake is on the Washington State list of impaired water bodies. As of 2012, Lake Whatcom has at least eight aquatic invasive species and one invasive mollusk, the Asian clam. Preventing additional invasive species from entering the lake is important in ensuring that Lake Whatcom and the resources it provides to the community are not degraded. Public swimming and boating access to the lake is provided at Bloedel Donovan Park. Other public access within the UGA is available at the North Shore DNR lease property, Euclid Park, and several unimproved street rights of way.
- Lake Samish located south of the urban growth area, is 3 miles long with a surface area of approximately 809 acres. Most of the lake shoreline has been developed for private residential uses. Whatcom County has developed Lake Samish Park with swimming, fishing, and boat access.
- Lake Padden is one mile long with a surface area of approximately 151 acres. The entire lake is within the boundaries of Lake Padden Park with a perimeter trail, swimming, boating and fishing access.
- Toad Lake is ½ mile long with a surface area of approximately 28 acres. Washington State Fish & Wildlife has developed swimming, fishing and boat access on the south end of the lake. The rest has been developed with primarily residential uses.
- Sunset Pond is a man-made freshwater retention pond at Sunset Pond Park with improved perimeter trails.
- Bug Lake is a man-made freshwater retention pond with informal walking trails.



Lake Padden

- Padden Lagoon is a saltwater estuary at the inlet of Padden Creek into Bellingham Bay. The shoreline has been partially restored and preserved but has no on-water access.

Most of the other small ponds or lakes in the Bellingham urban area have either been developed for private residential use and/or are too small in size to support public access activities.

2.3 Park Development in Sensitive Areas

Intense park activities should be separated from sensitive areas by maintaining and enhancing buffers to protect habitat function. Access to select sensitive areas may be provided through low impact trails, only when public access does not impair ecological function.

Where appropriate and consistent with City goals and policies, the PRO Plan should identify areas to preserve and enhance for open space and other low impact or no impact park uses, in recognition of the fact that open spaces are set aside for preservation of natural buffers (See Section 3.1.4). Mature shoreline trees, snags, and downed logs should be preserved where possible to allow wildlife species to coexist in urban areas.

When preserving or enhancing natural areas, the City should:

- Limit – harmful activities
- Remove – invasive plant species that displace native materials and habitat,
- Plant – native trees and shrubs that support and retain native wildlife species, and
- Cluster – park improvements to preserve natural shorelines and contiguous open spaces for wildlife habitat.



Whatcom Falls. Courtesy of Whatcom Museum archives.

2.4 Historical Development

Lummi, Nooksack, and Samish Indians lived in and around the Nooksack River and Bellingham Bay area. These tribes fished in saltwater and the river. The tribes also exhibited some agricultural and hunting characteristics common to eastern or interior tribes. Village sites were located along Bellingham Bay and the Nooksack River.

In 1792, the first western exploration of Puget Sound was accomplished by British explorer Captain George Vancouver. Vancouver charted Bellingham Bay and named it in honor of Sir William Bellingham, Controller of the British Navy.

In 1852, Henry Roeder and Russell Peabody arrived from California and started the Roeder-Peabody-Page sawmill on Whatcom Creek Waterway to process virgin red cedar and Douglas fir.

By 1854, the towns of Whatcom, Sehome, Bellingham, and Fairhaven were settled around Bellingham Bay; the Washington Territorial Legislature established Whatcom County and the county seat. Whatcom was derived from an Indian term meaning “rough tumbling waters” – a reference to lower Whatcom Falls.

In 1903, the towns of Whatcom, Sehome, Bellingham, and Fairhaven were consolidated into the City of Bellingham. Tideland areas were filled and the Great Northern Railway constructed passenger and freight

depots in the Whatcom "Old Town" business district to service the rapidly expanding city. As Bellingham continued to expand the core business district gradually moved onto the hill overlooking Whatcom Creek and Bellingham Bay.

2.5 Population

2.5.1 Population Trends

The 2015 population for Bellingham was estimated to be 83,580. Bellingham’s official census population for 2000 was estimated to be 67,171 resulting in an average annual increase of 1.47% per year over the 15 year period. The unincorporated Urban Growth Area (UGA) for Bellingham has an estimated 10,360 people for a total UGA population of 93,940 in the year 2015.

2015 City Population	=	83,580
2015 UGA Population	=	10,360
2015 Total Population	=	93,940
2036 Projected Population	=	124,157

2.5.2 Population Projections

According to the 2016 Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan, the City’s population will increase to 124,157 persons by the year 2036 assuming all UGA areas are incorporated, or by another 30,217 people from the 2015 population. This is equal to an annual average increase of 2% per year over the 20 year period.

2.6 Demographics

The following demographic information was taken from the United States Census 2007-2011 and 2010-2014 five-year average American Community Survey Demographic Profiles for Bellingham. Demographics are important to consider in reviewing various opportunities for specific recreation proposals or in evaluating new trends or interests in recreation programming or facilities.

TABLE 2.6.1

Economic Characteristics		
Census Year	2007-2011 ACS	2010-2014 ACS
Mean travel time to work in minutes	17.7	17.6
Median household income*	\$ 39,299	\$42,440
Median family income*	\$ 61,051	\$63,355
Per capita income*	\$ 24,396	\$24,864
Families below poverty level	10.7%	14.0%
* all income listed is in inflation-adjusted dollars		

TABLE 2.6.2

Housing Characteristics		
Census Year	2007-2011 ACS	2010-2014 ACS
Occupied Housing Units	93%	93.4%
Vacant Housing Units	7%	6.6%
Owner-occupied Housing Units	45.8%	45.7%
Renter-occupied Housing Units	54.2%	54.3%

TABLE 2.6.3

Age Characteristics		
Census Year	2007-2011 ACS	2010-2014 ACS
Median Age	30.6	31.0
Under 5 years	4.8%	5.0%
5 to 19 Years	17.1%	17.0%
20 to 34 Years	33.5%	33.1%
35 to 64 Years	32.2%	31.6%
65 Years and Over	12.4%	13.2%

TABLE 2.6.4

Ethnic Characteristics		
Census Year	2007-2011 ACS	2010-2014 ACS
White	86.6%	84.8%
Hispanic or Latino	7.3%	8.3%
Black or African American	1.4%	1.1%
Asian	4.8%	5.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.7%	1.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%
Two or More Races	3.3%	4.7%
Other	2.1%	2.2%
Language other than English at home	11.9%	12.8%

TABLE 2.6.5

Physically Impaired Population		
Census Year	2007-2011 ACS	2010-2014 ACS
Disability Status	3.0%	5.1%
Ambulatory Difficulty	2.0%	3.8%
Vision Difficulty	2.2%	3.9%

2.7 Recreation Trends

Similar to the rest of Washington State, Bellingham has seen a steady increase in organized sports. In Bellingham, that increase has also included new types of activities, such as pickle ball, rugby, lacrosse, ultimate Frisbee and disc golf. There is also an increased interest in emerging sports, such as mountain bike skills, paddle boarding and rock climbing.

A changing demographic and an increase in cultural diversity in the Bellingham area have brought new types of interests in recreational activities and programs. It has also brought a greater need for more general recreational activities and financial assistance to residents where needed for recreational program or facility fees.

Similar to trends across the nation, Bellingham residents continue to demand more off road walking and bicycling trails. As trails increase in popularity and the community grows, there are conflicts among trail users, with a high increase of dogs off leash in undesignated areas.

The census data also shows that, much like the rest of the nation, Bellingham's population is aging with the percent of the population over 65 years of age increasing from 12.4% in 2011 to 13.2% in 2014. Ensuring that parks facilities are accessible for those with limited mobility will be key in ensuring our goals of access for all groups in our community.

Nationally, there has been recognition of the importance of recreation and park systems to overall quality of life, health and well-being especially as related to the growing obesity rate across the nation. Research shows that well-designed and accessible parks and open spaces are correlated with better physical health, through increased rates of physical activity, and with many mental health benefits, such as lower rates of depression and stress. Establishing a level of service for parks and trails that ensures equal equitable access and proximity for all populations within the community is an important step towards addressing health disparities and promoting good health for all. Using a community and network based approach to park planning more clearly indicates gaps in services and facilities. The community-based approach is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 of the PRO Plan.



Disc Golf at Cornwall Park. Photo by Colin Morris.

Chapter 3

EXISTING FACILITIES

An extensive network of park, recreation and open space facilities is provided by the City and other agencies including County, School District, Port and State and is available to Bellingham citizens. The inventory of existing facilities is organized into all those that are owned or managed by the City along with other agency facilities available to the general public within the City/UGA planning area. These are included in the City's level-of-service metrics. Non-City facilities that are located outside of the planning area but enhance the local recreation experience are inventoried to demonstrate the availability of additional recreational amenities in the area, but they are not included in the level of service. Level-of-service (LOS) is further defined in *Chapter 4* of the PRO Plan. School facilities provide an additional public benefit but are not included in the level-of-service as they are not available to the general public on a regular basis.

3.1 Facility Inventory Classifications

The inventory of existing facilities is divided into the following park classifications:

- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Use Sites
- Open Space
- Trails

Each classification is described below, along with a map locating and identifying each facility. A detailed inventory of recreation activities within each facility, organized by ownership and classification, is also included in *Appendix B* of the PRO Plan. A more detailed description of each park classification type, including approximate size, service area, development, and acquisition guidelines is included in *Appendix A* of the PRO Plan.

3.1.1 Neighborhood Park (NP)

Neighborhood parks are the basic recreational focus and center of neighborhoods. They should be developed with both active and passive recreation activities and serve those living within a half mile

*"The nation behaves well
if it treats its natural
resources as assets which
it must turn over to the
next generation
increased, and not
impaired, in value."
- Theodore Roosevelt*

walk along a designated pedestrian route, sidewalk or trail. Neighborhood parks should accommodate a wide variety of age and user groups, including youth, adults, seniors and special needs populations. Creating a sense of place by bringing together the unique character of the site with that of the neighborhood is vital to a successful neighborhood park.

3.1.2 Community Park (CP)



Boulevard Park. Photo by Kristen Krussow.

Community parks are generally larger than neighborhood parks and are intended to serve a broader range of activities and users. Their focus is on meeting the recreation needs of the larger community with more specialized activities, as well as preserving unique landscapes, open spaces or environmental features. They allow for group activities and offer other recreation opportunities, such as lighted programmed sports facilities not generally found at the neighborhood level. Due to their larger size, they are often designed to serve both as a neighborhood park function as well as having expanded and unique activities. Community parks should be distributed throughout the City with approximately one park for every four square miles, and served by designated pedestrian routes, sidewalks or trails.

3.1.3 Special Use Site (SU)

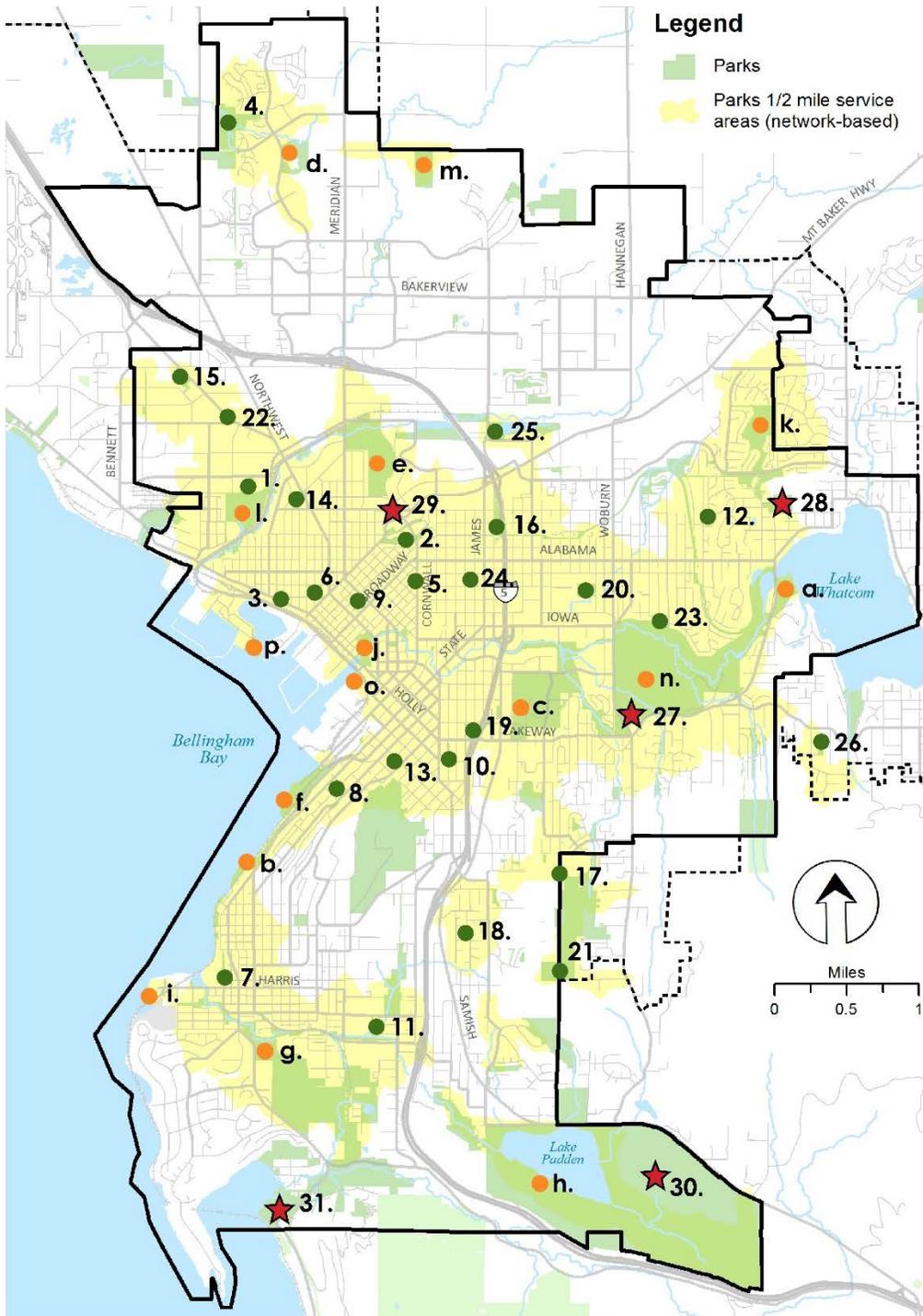
The special use classification covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward a single-purpose use. They often fall into three general categories:

- **Cultural Facilities** – unique resources offering historical, educational, visual/performance art or other similar experiences. These include gardens, art displays, and historic sites.
- **Indoor Facilities** – focused toward indoor uses, such as gymnasiums, community centers, teen/senior centers, aquatic centers, ice arenas, etc.
- **Unique Sites** – generally a single use, but not necessarily of a significance that draws from a larger region. These may include arboretums, cemeteries, plazas, sports stadiums, golf courses, etc., especially when they are not in conjunction with other typical park amenities.

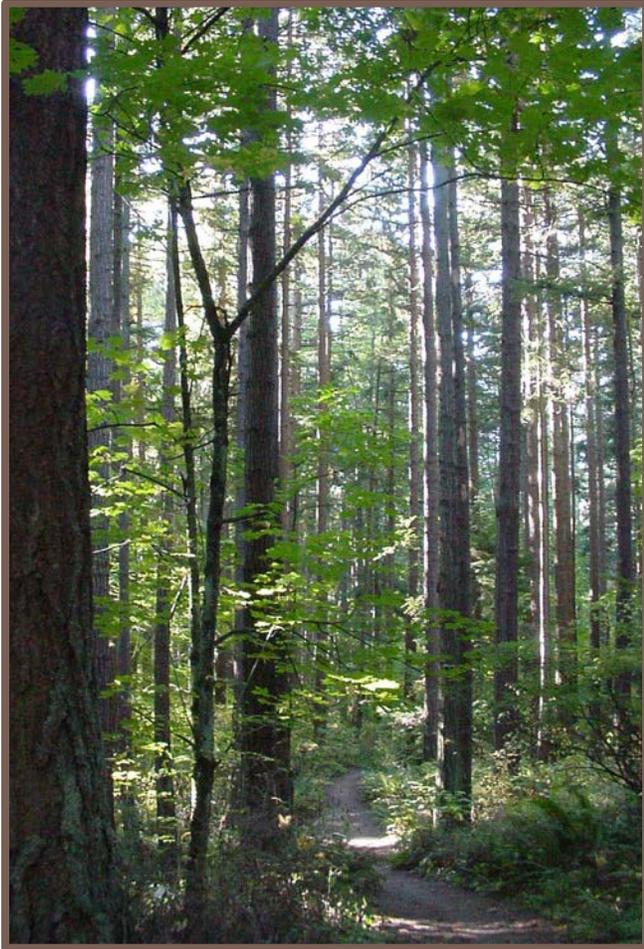


Fairhaven Village Green. Photo by Valerie Polevoi.

EXISTING FACILITIES PLAN • PARKS AND SPECIAL USE SITES



3.1.4 Open Space (OS)

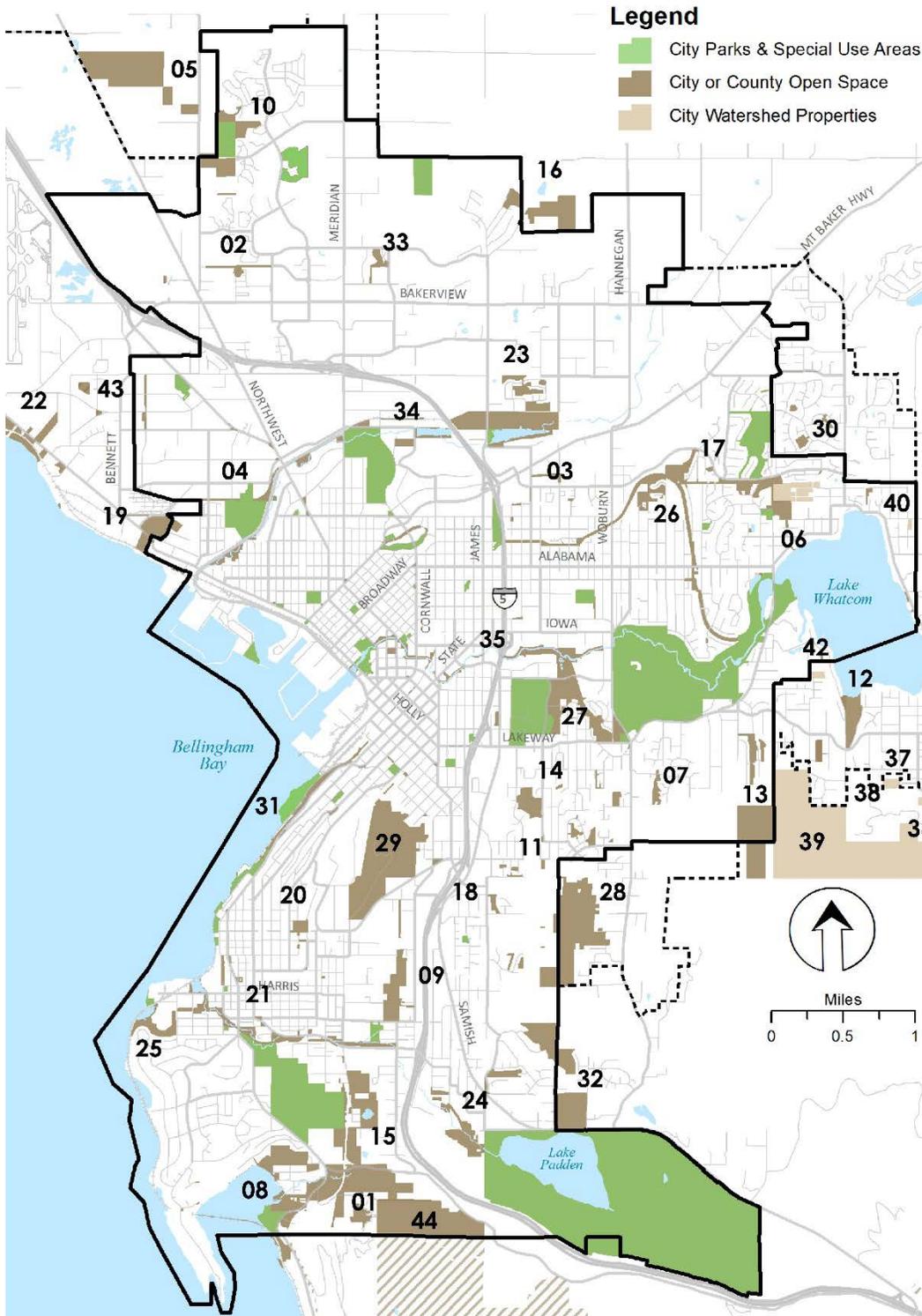


Open space sites are generally lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, unique landscapes, or visually aesthetic or buffer functions. One of the major purposes of open space is to enhance the livability and character of a community by preserving as many of its natural amenities as possible, as well as providing wildlife habitat in urban areas. Examples include sites with steep slopes, old or second growth forests, wetlands, stream corridors, tidelands, meadows, agricultural lands, shorelines (salt or fresh water), storm water features, and/or watershed or aquifer recharge zones.

Open space areas may be developed with trails, educational exhibits, picnic facilities or other similar activities with community benefit where public access is not incompatible with preservation goals.

In accordance with the Growth Management Act (GMA), Bellingham adopted a critical areas ordinance in 2005 to preserve and protect significant natural areas from development. The Bellingham Municipal Code defines the parameters within which a site with critical areas may be developed. These sites are often encumbered with an easement or covenant to ensure their protection. Preserved critical areas may be either public or private.

EXISTING FACILITIES PLAN • OPEN SPACE



Legend

- City Parks & Special Use Areas
- City or County Open Space
- City Watershed Properties

Open Space

1. Arroyo Nature Area
2. Bakerview Open Space
3. Barkley Greenway & Trail
4. Bay to Baker Greenway
5. Bear Creek Greenway
6. Big Rock Open Space
7. Cemetery Creek Greenway
8. Chuckanut Bay Open Space & Tidelands
9. Connelly Creek Nature Area
10. Cordata Open Space
11. East Meadow
12. Euclid Park (City & County)
13. Galbraith Open Space (City & County)
14. Hawley Open Space
15. Interurban Greenway & Trail
16. King & Queen Mountain Open Space
17. Klipsun Greenway & Trail
18. Lazy E Ranch Open Space
19. Little Squalicum Park
20. Lowell Park Open Space
21. Lower Padden Creek Open Space & Trails
22. North Bay Open Space (City & Port)
23. Orchard Estates Wetlands
24. Padden Gorge
25. Post Point Treatment Plant Open Space (Public Works)
26. Railroad Greenway & Trail
27. Salmon Woods Open Space
28. Samish Crest Open Space
29. Sehome Hill Arboretum
30. Silver Creek Open Space
31. South Bay Greenway & Trail
32. South Samish Crest Open Space
33. Spring Creek Nature Area
34. Squalicum Creek Greenway
35. Whatcom Creek Greenway & Trail
36. Lake Geneva (watershed)
37. Laplante (watershed)
38. Macate & Wells (watershed)
39. Oriental Creek (watershed)
40. Silver Beach (watershed)
41. Strode (watershed)
42. Zarnowitz (watershed)
43. Alderwood Open Space (County)
44. Chuckanut Mountains (County)

3.1.5 Trails (TR)

While trails may be categorized into many different types, for the purpose of the PRO Plan, trails are generally limited to non-motorized off-road trails. Trails are intended to form a network of connections and linkages in and around the planning area, between neighborhoods, parks, schools, open spaces, civic facilities and commercial centers.

On-road systems (sidewalks and bike-lanes) are included in the transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan. The City recently developed a pedestrian plan and a bike plan. Pedestrian and bike facility improvements can increase safe access to existing parks and trails. The community has expressed the desire for all non-motorized elements to be coordinated with an integrated system of directional signage and overlay maps. Therefore, the trail system should be coordinated and connected to the street system.

Trails should be developed for a variety of uses including walking, biking, running, and horseback riding. Trail widths and surfacing varies depending on the type of use and location. While multi-use trails are generally desirable, not all trails are appropriate for all uses. Narrower trails or trails in sensitive areas may be suitable for pedestrians only. Trails in Bellingham are often located within greenway corridors that preserve and enhance native vegetation and wildlife habitat.

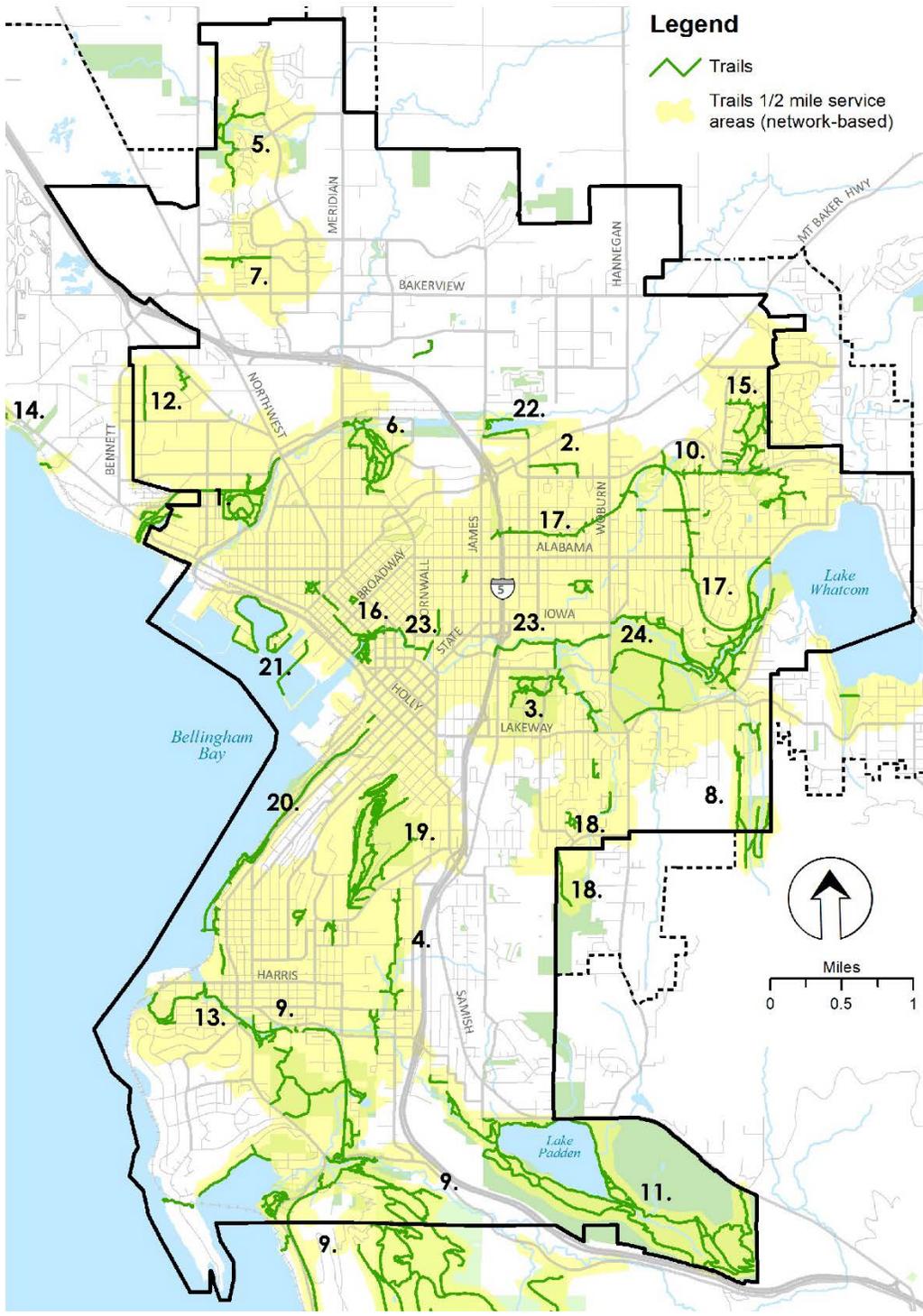


Old Village Trail



Trails that parallel established vehicular corridors or other transportation systems should be separated from them with a physical and/or visual barrier (vegetation, low walls, etc.). Trail corridors may include picnic areas, educational features or trailhead development located independently or shared with other types of park facilities.

EXISTING FACILITIES PLAN • TRAILS



Trails

1. Bay to Baker Trail
2. Barkley Trail
3. Civic Athletic Complex & Salmon Woods Open Space Trails
4. Connelly Creek Nature Area Trails
5. Cordata Park Trails
6. Cornwall Park Trails
7. Division Street Trail
8. Galbraith Mountain Trails
9. Interurban & Chuckanut Mt. Trails (City & County)
10. Klipsun Trail
11. Lake Padden & Padden Gorge Trails
12. Laurelwood Trail
13. Lower Padden Trails
14. Marine Drive Trail (Port)
15. Northridge Park Trails
16. Old Village Trail
17. Railroad Trail
18. Samish Crest Trails
19. Sehome Arboretum Trails
20. South Bay Trail
21. Squalicum Harbor Trail (Port)
22. Sunset Pond Trail
23. Whatcom Creek Trail
24. Whatcom Falls Park

3.2 Outside the Planning Area

An inventory of existing facilities owned or managed by other agencies outside the planning area is listed in *Appendix B* of the PRO Plan. These facilities are not included in the level-of-service metrics or cost estimates associated with the PRO Plan. They are listed for reference only. They were considered during the planning process as facilities that provide additional service to area residents in the overall evaluation of opportunities available in the area. Ownership of these facilities includes:

- Washington State (WS)
 - Parks Department
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Whatcom County (WC)

Also included in this category are existing school-owned facilities. Since these facilities are available on a limited basis during non-school hours, they are not included in the City's overall level-of-service metrics, but are considered when evaluating neighborhood amenities. s. The schools include:

- Bellingham School District (BSD)
- Whatcom Community College (WCC)
- Bellingham Technical College (BTC)
- Western Washington University (WWU)

Chapter 4

LAND AND FACILITY DEMAND

A community-based level-of-service is used in this process to more accurately depict local values, interests and populations.

Level-of-service (LOS) standards for park, recreation, and open space land and facilities can help a community plan and budget for the demands of a growing and changing population. This plan used a community-based approach to develop specific land and facility demands through the 20 year planning period, or 2036. Utilizing this approach allowed the citizens of Bellingham to influence the process through public meetings and surveys in which they were asked to evaluate the existing system and express demand for additional facilities. Level-of-service is expressed several ways in this plan: the proximity of facilities to the population (service area), as a ratio of land to the population (acres per 1,000 people), and an overall system dollar value per capita. The process considered the community-expressed interests and needs for a park system and the plan recommendations were based on these preferences.

A community-based approach is recommended to respond to the needs, values and goals specific to Bellingham.

4.1 Service Area LOS

Parks levels of service may be measured in a multitude of ways, including quantity of acres per person, walking distance proximity to parks and trails, public satisfaction with facilities, participation in parks programs, costs to maintain the park system, and facility service areas.

The City is developing additional tools to better understand level of service. These tools will help assess existing access in all neighborhoods, and provide data to prioritize where additional resources are needed, including programming, development of new facilities, maintenance of existing facilities and land acquisition. These new tools are:

- 1) A complete assessment and inventory that evaluates the facilities and amenities in each of the City's parks, and
- 2) Data and analysis to evaluate equity and distribution of park facilities using income, population density, and other demographic characteristics.

Chapter 4

Citizens desire easy access to park and recreation facilities with equitable distribution across the community. The City has adopted a goal that every resident live within a one half mile walk for both a park and a trail. The recommendations in this plan were developed with this level-of-service goal in mind.

The Port of Bellingham and Whatcom County provide additional land for park, recreation and open space within the UGA planning area that is included in the service area LOS. School facilities are not included in the service area LOS as they are not always available, but are considered when determining the facilities available to a neighborhood.

Non City owned facilities outside the urban growth area (and therefore not part of the City's purview,) are not included in the area LOS but are inventoried in Appendix B. Other major recreational areas, such as the Mount Baker National Recreation Area, North Cascades National Park, and Mount Baker National Forest, also provide a variety of recreational opportunities at a more regional level.



Community input meeting at Bloedel Donovan Park

4.2 Population Ratio LOS

The demand for park, recreation and open space is often estimated using a ratio of a facility to a unit of population, such as 19 acres of community parks per 1,000 residents. The ratio method is relatively simple to compute and can be compared with national or local park, recreation and open space measurements.

-The National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) recognizes the limitations of the population ratio methodology first developed in 1930 and since 1996 has recommended a community-based ratio be developed to reflect the specific conditions and unique nature of each community

The existing ratio of land to population level-of-service standard uses existing population estimates from the average American Community Survey Demographic Profiles. The ratio is calculated by dividing the total City or UGA acres of land in each park classification by the respective population. The same calculation is used for existing or proposed (existing acres divided by existing population and proposed acres divided by proposed population) as expressed per 1,000 people. UGA population includes both the City and UGA 2015 estimated populations. The plan recognizes residents of the unincorporated UGA are already using existing parks and are therefore included in calculating the existing land ratio of acres/1,000. This is detailed in Table 4.5.1.

4.3 System Value LOS

Table 4.5.1 shows the existing park acres per 1,000 and system cost per capita and the 2036 proposed acres per 1,000 and cost per capita within the Bellingham planning area.

The per capita value of the existing park system of \$5243/person was derived by adding total land facility improvements for the existing park system and dividing by the 2015 City population. This is done for City-owned facilities only, since that is the basis of the Park Impact Fee. Cost data used to develop these estimates are defined by each activity type (i.e. cost per acre of land, ball field or playground) in the **Existing Facilities Table** in *Appendix B*.

Proposed land and facility quantities were derived by applying average park sizes and facility improvements to the parks, open space, and trails identified through the community process. Specific recommendations such as the location of each proposed park or trail are described in greater detail in *Chapter 6* and specific detail in *Appendix C*. The values are based on current dollar cost data developed from land sales information, land value data, bid documentation, and other local cost data. Raw land cost and facility improvement or construction costs are included.



St. Clair Park playground

The total value of the proposed recommendations is divided by the projected 2036 population to determine the proposed value per capita LOS standard. A more detailed description of how these figures relate to the Park Impact Fee calculation can be found in the Bellingham Municipal Code, Chapter 19.04.

4.4 Future Growth Implications

The forecast population for Bellingham and the Urban Growth Area (UGA) projects an increase from 93,940 people in 2015 to an estimated 124,157 people by the year 2036, an increase of 30,217 people for the 20 year planning period. This number assumes all current UGA areas will be incorporated into the City within the planning period. This forecasted population will require all types of park, recreation and open space lands and facilities within the planning area.

2015 Value City Only = \$5,243/Capita

2036 Value All UGA = \$6065/Capita

4.5 Conclusions

Over the 20 year planning period, residents should not experience a noticeable reduction in the level of service for parks. The proposed recommendations, if implemented, require the addition of approximately 203 acres of land for neighborhood and community parks, special use sites, trails and open space. Although the overall land acreage ratio is expected to decrease, more of the population will live within a one-half mile walk of a park and a trail. The recommendations, if implemented will provide a balance of passive and active recreational opportunities that are well distributed throughout the community. Special use sites and open space often reflect unique opportunities and environments and may not be equally distributed by neighborhood throughout the community.

Since the PRO Plan is updated every six years, the growth, cost and budget implications can be monitored and adjusted based on revised community preferences and population projections with the 2020 plan update. The City can use community input provided during the regular six-year PRO Plan updates in combination with new LOS tools and population forecasts to adequately plan for future growth. If the proposed recommendations are not implemented the City may experience a loss of public accessibility and lack of preservation of more sensitive and appealing environmental sites, particularly within the developing urban growth areas and could preclude the purchase and development of, suitable lands for active recreation, such as playgrounds, picnic shelters, athletic fields and courts, and other land-intensive recreational facilities. This may result in crowding of existing recreational facilities, and reduce the availability of organized programs requiring travel to other jurisdictions outside the planning area to meet the demand. The following Table 4.5.1 shows a comparison between the existing and 2036 proposed population and acres per 1,000 population if the recommendations are implemented.

TABLE 4.5.1

2015 CITY Estimated Population	83,580
2015 UGA Estimated Population	93,940
2036 UGA Projected Population	124,157

Ownership	Total Land (acres)	Neighborhood Park (acres)	Community Park (acres)	Special Use Park (acres)	Open Space / Trail (acres)	Total Park System Value/Capita*
EXISTING PARK SYSTEM ACRES - CITY & UGA						
City of Bellingham	3400.8	78.6	1582.9	305.6	1433.7	\$5,243
City Watershed	241.7				241.7	
Port of Bellingham (UGA)	37.2		7.9	4.3	25	n/a
Whatcom County (UGA)	131.1	6.7		1.5	122.9	n/a
TOTAL EXISTING UGA	3810.8	85.3	1590.8	311.4	1823.3	n/a

PROPOSED PARK SYSTEM ADDITION ACRES - CITY & UGA*						
City of Bellingham (UGA)	203.2	36	5	1.5	160.7	\$822
City Watershed (UGA)						n/a
Port of Bellingham (UGA)						n/a
Whatcom County (UGA)						n/a
TOTAL PROPOSED CITY & UGA ACRES BY YEAR 2036	4,014	121.3	1,595.8	312.9	1984	

PARK SYSTEM STANDARD - CITY & UGA						
2015 CITY Existing / 1000	45.6	1.02	19.03	3.7	21.8	\$5,243
2015 City + UGA Standard / 1000	40.6	0.9	16.9	3.3	19.4	n/a
2036 City + UGA Standard / 1000	32.3	.97	12.9	2.5	15.98	\$6,065
NRPA LOS Standard / 1000	34.5	2.0	8.0	n/a	6.0	

* Park system values includes land and facility value. See Appendix B of the PRO Plan for facility cost details

Chapter 5

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Bellingham Department of Parks & Recreation is to “Support a healthy community by providing high quality parks and recreation services.”

The following goals and objectives of the Parks and Recreation Department have been organized under the Bellingham City Council Legacies and Strategic Commitments which were adopted in 2009 to ensure that future generations will benefit from the work being done today.

Goals are broad statements of intent that describe a desired outcome. Objectives, on the other hand, are both measurable and specific. Objectives help define when a goal has been met.

5.1 Council Legacy: Sense of Place

Council Strategic Commitments

- Support sense of place in neighborhoods
- Encourage development within existing infrastructure
- Preserve historic & cultural resources
- Protect natural green settings & access to open space
- Support people-to-people connections

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.1.1 GOAL

Provide a high quality, parks, recreation and open space system for a diversity of age and interest groups.

5.1.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Provide Neighborhood and Community Parks.
 - a. Provide a system of neighborhood and community parks so that all residents live within one half mile safe walking distance of a developed park.
 - b. Emphasize acquisition and development of parks in underserved areas.
 - c. Provide equitable access to parks with activities for all age groups and abilities, distributed throughout the community.

Bellingham City Council

Legacies and Strategic

Commitments:

"We are working today so future generations will benefit from:

- *Clean, Safe Drinking Water*
 - *Healthy Environment*
 - *Vibrant Sustainable Economy*
 - *Sense of Place*
 - *Safe & Prepared Community*
 - *Mobility & Connectivity Options*
 - *Access to Quality of Life Amenities*
 - *Quality, Responsive City Services*
 - *Equity & Social Justice"*
-

- d. Add capacity to existing parks by expanding facilities or adding land to accommodate increased population.
- e. Identify potential park opportunities in redeveloping areas, including depressed commercial or economic centers.
- f. Coordinate with other City departments, public and private agencies and private landowners to set aside land and resources on the most suitable sites.
- g. Acquire additional shoreline access where appropriate for waterside trails, waterfront fishing, wading, swimming, boating and other water related recreational activities.
- h. Develop athletic facilities that meet the playing standards and requirements for all age groups, skill levels, and recreational interests.
- i. Provide a mix of court and field activities like skateboard, basketball, tennis, volleyball, soccer, baseball, and softball that provide for a variety of user groups placed equitably throughout the City and near transit corridors for ease of access.
- j. In conjunction with the Bellingham School District, Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College and other public and private agencies, develop a select number of facilities that provide the highest competitive playing standard.
- k. Develop new or improved multi-use facilities to increase flexibility of use for new activities such as pickle ball, disc golf, lacrosse, cricket, rugby, parkour or other new recreation trends as demonstrated by community need.
- l. Where appropriate and as funding is available, incorporate art into park facilities such as railings, benches, buildings and other park amenities.
- m. Provide adequate funding and staff for operation and maintenance to ensure safe, serviceable, and functional parks and facilities.

B. Provide Special Use Sites.

- a. Where appropriate and economically feasible, coordinate with other agencies to develop and operate specialized and special interest recreational facilities like boat launches, aquatic centers, ice arenas, mountain biking and golf courses.
- b. Develop indoor community spaces for activities such as arts and crafts, music, video, classroom instruction, and meetings serving all age groups on a year-around basis.
- c. Maintain and expand multiple use indoor recreational facilities that provide aquatic, gymnasium, physical conditioning, recreational courts, and other athletic spaces for all age groups, skill levels and community interests on a year-around basis.
- d. Support development by the Bellingham School District, Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, Western Washington University and other organizations of special meeting, assembly, and other community facilities that serve school age populations and the community-at-large at schools and campuses within the Bellingham urban growth area.



Arne Hanna Aquatic Center dive tank

- e. Develop and operate special indoor and outdoor facilities and programs that enhance and expand music, dance, drama, and other opportunities for the community-at-large.
- f. Develop a mixture of watercraft access opportunities including canoe, kayak, and other non-power boating activities on Lake Padden, Bellingham Bay and Lake Whatcom when not in conflict with drinking water protection mandates.
- g. Provide adequate funding and staff for operation and maintenance of existing and new special use sites.

5.2 Council Legacy: Mobility & Connectivity Options

Council Strategic Commitments

- Provide safe, well-connected mobility options for all users
- Maintain & improve streets, trails & other infrastructure
- Limit sprawl
- Increase infrastructure for bicycles, pedestrians & non-single-occupancy vehicle modes of transportation
- Reduce dependence on single-occupancy vehicles

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.2.1 GOAL

Provide an interconnected system of accessible multi-use trails and greenway corridors that offer diverse, healthy outdoor experiences within a rich variety of landscapes and habitats, with connections to public facilities, neighborhoods and business districts.

5.2.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Connect and unify the community with trail and greenway corridors.
 - a. Provide an interconnected system of trails so that all residents are within a one half mile safe walk of a trail.
 - b. Provide a comprehensive system of multipurpose off-road trails through public landholdings and cooperating private properties
 - c. Provide a system of trails that link residential areas to community facilities including parks, special use sites, the waterfront, downtown and other unique or frequented destinations.
 - d. Expand existing trail systems into new and growing neighborhoods.
 - e. Promote trail links to neighboring communities.
 - f. Work with other landowners including Whatcom County, WA Department of Natural Resources, private landowners and other appropriate parties to link and extend trails around Bellingham and with King, Stewart, Galbraith, and Chuckanut Mountains.
 - g. Provide adequate funding to maintain existing and new trails.



Cornwall Park trail. Photo by Sandi Heinrich.

- h. Coordinate with other City departments to identify opportunities for trail linkages through large development projects.
 - i. Expand transportation options by connecting trails with transit stops, bike routes, and sidewalks to create a comprehensive network of non-motorized transportation throughout Bellingham.
- B. Provide opportunities for outdoor and local history education within trail corridors.
- a. Collaborate with local education providers to create outdoor classroom opportunities for learning opportunities and programs.
 - b. Utilize interpretive materials to highlight features such as native flora and historic points of interest.
- C. Encourage outdoor recreation for a diversity of ages and ability levels.
- a. Provide multi-use trails that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - b. Offer easy access to trails.
 - c. Provide a variety of trail experiences and trails that serve multiple uses.
- D. Promote healthy physical and mental well-being.
- a. Where appropriate, encourage multiple uses of trails: walking, running, bicycling, and horseback riding.
 - b. Provide ample opportunity for rest and contemplation.
 - c. Site trails to take advantage of unique scenic lake, bay, mountain and regional views.
 - d. Offer recreational programs that utilize trails, including fun runs, bike rides and nature walks.
- E. Develop standards for trail amenities.
- a. Develop trail improvements to a design standard that facilitates maintenance, security, and accommodates necessary personnel, equipment, and vehicles.
 - b. Furnish trail systems with appropriate interpretive, directory and mileage signage as well as rules and regulations for trail use.
 - c. Provide site furnishings such as benches, bike racks, dog waste stations, trash containers.
 - d. Locate trailheads in conjunction with parks, schools, and other community facilities to increase local area access to the trail system and to take advantage of access to restrooms and drinking water.
 - e. Use appropriate native vegetation where feasible.
 - f. Develop and implement a Low Impact Development trail standard.
 - g. Develop and implement a dog waste management plan for existing and new trails.



South Bay Trail at Taylor Dock

- F. Advance City-wide priorities to protect, rehabilitate and maintain functioning habitats and corridors in collaboration with other City departments.
 - a. Develop trails and greenway corridors that protect, rehabilitate and maintain natural resources, including plant and animal habitats.
 - b. Complete trail connections, in a manner that is appropriate, along greenways corridors like Squaticum, Whatcom, and Padden Creeks to provide a high quality, diverse sampling of area environmental resources.
- G. Provide a safe trail environment.
 - a. Utilize Crime Prevention through Environmental Design concepts.
 - b. Provide lighting in high-use areas and where appropriate.
 - c. Provide safe parking areas.
 - d. Avoid blind corners on trails.
 - e. Where appropriate, provide for surveillance of trails from adjacent property.
 - f. Provide safety education for trail users.
 - g. Provide safe crossings of roads, including grade separated crossings of major corridors such as I-5 and Guide Meridian Street.
 - h. Clearly mark dog off leash areas along trails and enforce on leash rules where they apply.
- H. Encourage community involvement and stewardship of trails.
 - a. Continue and expand the Parks Volunteer Program.
 - b. Continue and expand the Adopt-a-Trail program.
 - c. Develop inter-local trail management agreements.
 - d. Encourage participation in community trail events.
 - e. Expand on existing relationships with schools, business and non-profit organizations to promote and provide trails throughout the community.

5.3 Council Legacy: Access to Quality of Life Amenities

Council Strategic Commitments

- Maintain & enhance publicly owned assets
- Foster arts, culture & lifelong learning
- Provide recreation & enrichment opportunities for all ages & abilities
- Ensure convenient access to & availability of parks & trails City-wide

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.3.1 GOAL

Provide high quality recreational programs and services throughout the community that provide fun, educational, accessible and safe environments for people of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities.



Summer day camp at Bloedel Donovan Park

5.3.1.1 OBJECTIVES

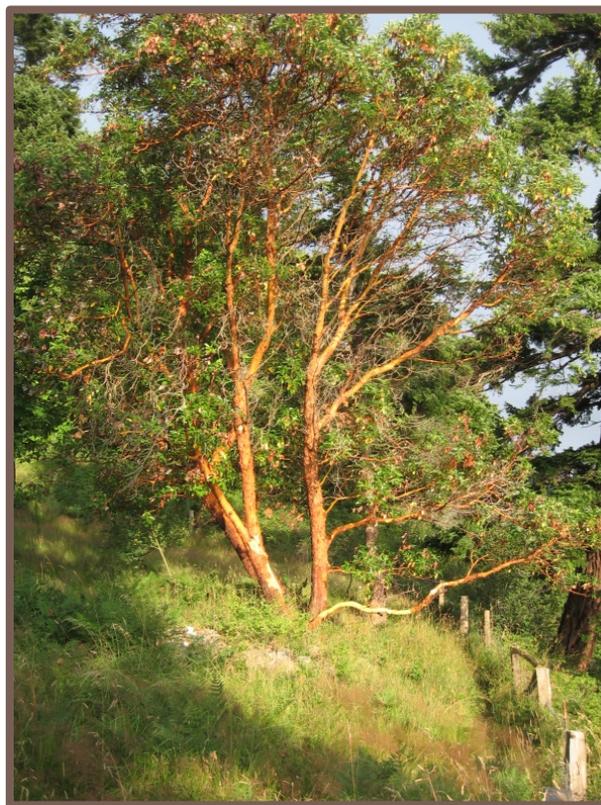
- A. Support arts and crafts, classroom instruction in music and dance, physical conditioning and health care.
- B. Provide meeting facilities, preschool, after school, and other program activities for all cultural, age, physical and mental capability, and income groups in the community.
- C. Support basketball, volleyball, tennis, soccer, baseball, softball, and other team sports, including instruction and programs for all age, skill level, and income groups in the community.
- D. Assist with programs and exhibits that document and develop awareness of Bellingham's heritage.

5.3.2 GOAL

Design and develop facilities that are sustainable, accessible, safe, and easy to maintain, with a consideration of City-wide long-term costs and benefits. Ensure that development is compatible with habitat protection and restoration goals and policies.

5.3.2.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Design outdoor picnic areas, trails, playgrounds, courts, fields, parking lots, restrooms, and other facilities to be accessible to individuals and organized groups of all physical capabilities, skill levels, age groups, income, ethnicity and activity interests.
- B. Design indoor facility spaces, activity rooms, restrooms, parking lots, and other improvements to be accessible to individuals and organized groups of all physical capabilities, skill levels, age groups, income, ethnicity and activity interests.
- C. Design and develop facilities that reduce overall facility maintenance, operation requirements and costs.
- D. Where appropriate, to the greatest extent possible, use low maintenance materials, or other value engineering considerations that reduce maintenance and security requirements, and retain natural conditions and experiences.
- E. Develop a maintenance management system to estimate and plan for life cycle maintenance and replacement costs.
- F. Implement the provisions and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other design and development standards that improve park facility safety and security features for park users, department personnel, and the public-at-large.
- G. Develop and implement safety standards, procedures, and programs that will provide proper training and awareness for department personnel.



Madrona tree at Inspiration Point

- H. Define and enforce rules and regulations concerning park activities and operations that will protect user groups, department personnel, and the general public-at-large.
- I. Where appropriate, use Adopt-a-Park programs, neighborhood park watches, park police patrols, and other programs to increase safety and security awareness and visibility.
- J. Develop and utilize standardized identification, enforcement and wayfinding signage.
- K. Work with the Whatcom County Health Department to complete an inventory of Park amenities and develop a "Parks Prescription" website for use by health care providers to direct patients to specific parks for rehabilitation and exercise.

5.4 Council Legacy: Healthy Environment

Council Strategic Commitments

- Protect & improve the health of lakes, streams & bay
- Protect & restore ecological functions & habitat
- Reduce contributions to climate change
- Conserve natural & consumable resources

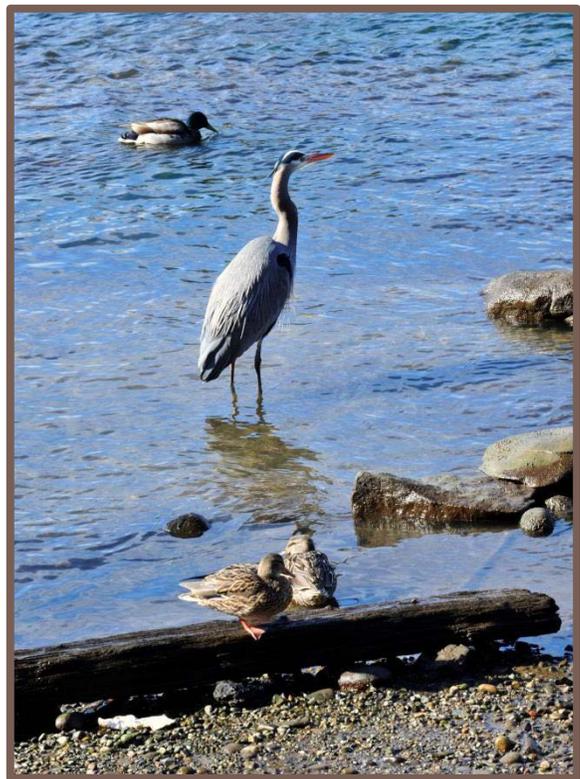
Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.4.1 GOAL

Contribute to a healthy environment in the selection of new properties, and the development and maintenance of park facilities.

5.4.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Utilize efficient, ecological techniques to mitigate stormwater at developed park and trail facilities such as infiltration and natural dispersion, where feasible.
- B. Utilize Low Impact Development practices in the development and renovation of park facilities.
- C. Train staff on the best management practices to be incorporated in new development projects and in ongoing maintenance.
- D. Conserve natural and consumable resources by using environmentally friendly products and practices.
- E. Ensure that development is compatible with habitat protection and restoration goals and polices.
- F. Provide recycling opportunities and facilities at public parks and points along trails.



Marine wildlife at Maritime Heritage Park

5.4.2 GOAL

Provide a high quality, diversified open space system that protects and enhances significant and diverse environmental resources and features, including wildlife habitat, migration corridors, agricultural lands, natural meadows, urban forests, and water resources. Work with other City departments to achieve the following objectives:

5.4.2.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Define, maintain, and protect a system of open space corridors and buffers to provide separation between natural areas and urban land uses within the Bellingham developing area.
- B. Maintain, conserve and restore natural area linkages for trails.
- C. Maintain land for the re-establishment, protection and enhancement of ecological functions and habitat.
- D. Protect significant environmental features including wetlands, woodlands, prairies, meadows, shorelines, waterfronts, functioning urban forests, and hillsides that reflect Bellingham's natural character.
- E. Balance the demand for public access and interpretive education with protection of environmentally sensitive areas and sites that are especially unique to the Bellingham area.
- F. Identify and conserve wildlife habitat including nesting sites, foraging areas, and migration corridors within or adjacent to natural areas, open spaces, and the developed urban area.
- G. Restore, protect and improve habitat sites, including creeks and streams that support threatened species and urban wildlife.
- H. Maintain and restore unique environmental features or areas in future land developments and increase public use and access. Cooperate with other public and private agencies and with private landowners to set aside unique features or areas as publicly accessible resources.
- I. Provide operation and maintenance resources for forestry management, habitat protection and code enforcement in existing and new open space areas.
- J. When necessary for mitigation, develop, maintain and monitor wetland enhancement sites for successful establishment.
- K. Involve the community in on-going habitat restoration and maintenance activities through the Parks Volunteer Program.
- L. Limit access by people and pets at high priority habitat protection, restoration and enhancement sites.
- M. Cooperate with ongoing City-wide habitat restoration efforts.



Deer at Woodstock Farm

5.5 Council Legacy: Vibrant Sustainable Economy

Council Strategic Commitments

- Support a thriving local economy across all sectors
- Promote inter-dependence of environmental, economic & social interests
- Create conditions that encourage public & private investment
- Foster vibrant downtown & other commercial centers
- Preserve farmland & the agricultural economy

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.5.1 GOAL

Meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations. Make decisions today that sustain our activities and the natural environment for the future.

5.5.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Promote sustainable landscapes to protect, maintain and restore ecological functions of natural areas. Protect park and open space lands by reducing adverse impacts to the environment during development and long term use.
- B. Reduce emissions, pollution, and toxic materials to protect water and other natural resources. Mitigate the use of fossil fuels by reducing energy and vehicle use. Promote multi-modal transportation by developing trails and locating parks on bus routes or within walking distance of residents.
- C. Foster environmental stewardship through education programs and activities.
- D. Provide safe and convenient access to public lands, conservation areas, and water that does not damage critical areas.
- E. Instill a love of nature and a commitment for caring for our resources through the Park Volunteer program.
- F. Choose durable products to promote human health in a safe environment and consider life-cycle analysis of material options. Incorporate green building technology including nontoxic materials and sustainable development practices. Select local products where feasible. Consider environmental as well as economic impacts.
- G. Provide scholarships for low income families to participate in recreation activities.
- H. Maintain a world class park system that attracts tourism and benefits the local economy.



"Dirty Dan Harris" at Fairhaven Village Green. Photo by Kenni Merritt.

- I. Foster volunteer groups that support special use facilities such as the Woodstock Farm Conservancy and Friends of Big Rock Garden.
- J. Provide spaces for community events equitably throughout the City such the Farmer's Market and the outdoor cinema at Fairhaven Village Green.

5.6 Council Legacy: Quality, Responsive City Services

Council Strategic Commitments

- Deliver efficient, effective & accountable municipal services
- Use transparent processes & involve stakeholders in decisions
- Provide access to accurate information
- Recruit, retain & support quality employees

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.6.1 GOAL

Create effective and efficient methods of acquiring, developing, operating and maintaining facilities and programs that accurately distribute costs and benefits to public and private interests.

5.6.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Investigate innovative means to finance maintenance and operating needs in order to reduce costs, retain financial flexibility, match user benefits and interests, and increase facility services.
- B. Consider joint ventures with other public and private agencies such as the Bellingham School District, Whatcom County, Port of Bellingham, Whatcom Community College, regional, state, federal, and other public and private agencies including for-profit concessionaires, where feasible and desirable.
- C. To best serve and provide for area residents' interests, create a comprehensive and balanced park, recreation, and open space system that integrates Bellingham facilities and services with resources available from the Bellingham School District, Whatcom County, Port of Bellingham, Whatcom Community College and other state, federal, and private park and recreational lands and facilities.
- D. Coordinate with the Bellingham School District, Whatcom County, Port of Bellingham, Whatcom Community College and other public and private agencies to avoid duplication, improve facility quality and availability, and reduce costs through joint planning and development efforts.
- E. Create effective and efficient methods of acquiring, developing, operating, and maintaining park and recreational facilities that accurately distributes costs and benefits to public and private user interests - including the application of impact fees where new developments impact level-of-service standards.
- F. Develop and operate lifetime recreational programs that serve the broadest needs of the population, while recovering program and operating costs with a combination of registration fees, user fees, grants, sponsorships, donations, scholarships, volunteer efforts, and the use of general funding.



Elizabeth Park tennis court maintenance

- G. Where appropriate, provide recreational programs, like golf and boating facilities, for user groups willing to finance the cost through donations, registration fees, volunteer efforts or other means and methods.
- H. Investigate and pursue innovative means of incorporating social media and other technologies to efficiently provide information to and engage the public.

5.6.2 GOAL

Develop, staff, train, and support a professional Parks and Recreation Department that effectively serves the community.

5.6.2.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Employ a diverse, well-trained work force that is knowledgeable, productive, courteous, responsive and motivated to achieve department and City-wide goals.
- B. Encourage teamwork through communication-, creativity, positive image, risk taking, sharing of resources, and cooperation toward common goals.
- C. Provide staff with education, training, equipment and supplies to increase personal productivity, efficiency, and pride.
- D. Monitor work load and staffing needs to maintain an adequate, efficient work force.
- E. Provide sensitivity training for proper awareness of protected classes.

5.7 Council Legacy: Clean, Safe Drinking Water

Council Strategic Commitments

- Protect & improve drinking water sources
- Limit development in Lake Whatcom watershed
- Use efficient, ecological treatment techniques
- Maintain reliable distribution system
- Promote water conservation

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.7.1 GOAL

Protect our drinking water source by appropriately protecting, restoring and managing park lands in the Lake Whatcom Watershed.

5.7.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Mitigate public demand for recreation in the watershed with appropriate protection measures through design and maintenance. Limit access where impacts to water quality may occur.
- B. Manage dog off-leash areas to reduce impacts.



Bloedel Donovan Park on Lake Whatcom.

- C. Implement on-site stormwater infiltration to reduce runoff.
- D. Maintain and enhance the forested condition of park properties in the watershed.
- E. Work with private organizations to promote non-motorized boating on Lake Whatcom.
- F. Cooperate with boater education, safety and inspection programs.

5.7.2 GOAL

Promote water conservation at all park facilities.

5.7.2.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Utilize drought tolerant plants where appropriate.
- B. Reduce irrigation of established lawns.
- C. Incorporate programmable irrigation systems which are operated by a central computer system at ball fields and at Lake Padden Golf Course.
- D. Provide non-irrigated landscape demonstration sites.

5.8 Council Legacy: Safe and Prepared Community

Council Strategic Commitments

- Prevent and respond to emergencies
- Prevent and respond to crime
- Ensure safe infrastructure
- Increase community readiness and resilience

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.8.1 GOAL

Contribute to making Bellingham a safe and prepared community.

5.8.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Assess and manage risks associated with trees and vegetation on City property.
- B. Incorporate crime prevention through environmental design and maintenance.
- C. Consider emergency access in trail and open space design and maintenance.
- D. Promote safe and fun recreational opportunities that are deterrence to crime.
- E. Provide lifeguard and water safety programs at Arne Hanna Aquatic Center.
- F. Provide First Aid/CPR/AED certification classes and training through Arne Hanna Aquatic Center.
- G. Cooperate with agencies in providing park property for emergency response training.



- H. Hire and retain professionally certified, trained staff to design, inspect and maintain park infrastructure.

5.9 Council Legacy: Equity and Social Justice

Council Strategic Commitments

- Provide access to problem-solving resources
- Support safe, affordable housing
- Increase living wage employment
- Support services for lower-income residents
- Cultivate respect & appreciation for diversity

Parks and Recreation Related Goals and Objectives

5.9.1 GOAL

Provide equitable access to park and recreation facilities and services to all residents of our community.

5.9.1.1 OBJECTIVES

- A. Provide parks that create places for people to elevate their mental, physical and spiritual health.
- B. Provide a variety of programs that foster social problem-solving, teamwork, cooperation, volunteerism, respect and stewardship.
- C. Support social service providers with outlets to distribute information to the community.
- D. Utilize Community Development Block Grant funds and other resources to provide parks in low income neighborhoods.
- E. Provide scholarships for low income families and individuals.
- F. Offer and support integrated recreation programs for people of all abilities and resources.
- G. Provide public gathering areas where people can assemble for social interaction and to exercise freedom of speech.
- H. Provide culturally appropriate programming and services.



Park Volunteer Program work party

Chapter 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall Vision

- *More Trail and Trail Connections*
- *Equal Access to Park Facilities and Programs*
- *Water Access*
- *Environment*
- *Variety*

The following recommendations for park, recreation and open space facilities in Bellingham are based on the results of existing inventories, needs analysis (trends, population, level-of-service), public input, workshop, and surveys. The recommendations outline the vision developed for the park system within the Bellingham urban growth area through the year 2036, although the PRO Plan is scheduled to be updated again in 2020 for state funding purposes. A detailed list of each proposed facility is included in Appendix C of the PRO Plan.

The recommendations, proposals and projects outlined in the PRO Plan are conceptual and subject to further study, feasibility and funding. It is specifically NOT the intention of this plan that any recommendation included here limit the City's ability to act on an opportunity that may arise provided the opportunity supports the overall vision, goals or objectives of the Parks and Recreation Department in Bellingham as discussed in the PRO Plan.

Coordination with other public or private entities that may be affected by or interested in the final outcome of any particular project, such as adjacent residents or funding partners, may influence the final outcome of a particular recommendation. As a result, all recommendations presented here are done with the understanding that they will only be implemented as opportunity, funding, and feasibility allow. All land acquisitions and capital projects are subject to further approval by the City Council.



6.1 Overall Vision

Throughout the process to develop the PRO Plan, several themes emerged reflecting the high value Bellingham residents place on the park system and how they see themselves using parks, recreation and open space facilities in the years ahead. These include:

- More Trail and Trail Connections - More people use trails in Bellingham than any other recreation facility and trails are mentioned more frequently than other facilities when asked what we need more of.
- Equitable Access to Park Facilities and Programs - All neighborhoods should be provided a minimum level-of-service access to park and recreation facilities and programs. All residents should live within a safe ½ mile walk of a park and a trail. Priority should be given to projects in underserved areas within the City boundary;
- Water Access - Access to the water, for viewing, boating, fishing and general enjoyment is important. Waterfront park development is a priority;
- Environment – A strong recognition of the value of the natural environment as a core component of the Bellingham park system;
- Variety – The desire for the system to continue to offer equitable distribution of a variety of choices, for recreational activities of all types, for all ages and abilities. Some specific ideas suggested during the planning process included prioritizing more programs for youth, seniors and people with disabilities and more recreation opportunities including kayaking, pickle ball, mountain bike skills, lacrosse, rugby, skateparks and others located on transit lines for ease of access.

6.2 Neighborhood Parks (NP)

Neighborhood parks should be developed to provide both active and passive recreation for neighborhood residents, children and families. Neighborhood parks should be located within a safe ½ mile walking distance of residential development. Neighborhood parks may include playgrounds, picnic facilities, trail systems, natural areas, and other amenities as outlined in *Appendix A* of the PRO Plan, to create an accessible neighborhood service system in the Bellingham urban area.

Neighborhood parks may be independent properties or combined with other sites including greenway trail corridors, community parks, special use sites or other public facilities.



Birchwood Park

Specific Recommendations

As a result of the public process and needs analysis, specific recommendations for neighborhood parks in Bellingham include:

- Acquire and develop new neighborhood parks in the City limits and as areas annex to be located in the general vicinity shown on the following map including in the, Bakerview, Barkley, Yew Street and the NW Bellingham areas;
- Develop master plans and/or subsequent improvements at existing undeveloped parks including Cordata Neighborhood Park, Maplewood McLeod Park, Sunset Pond Park and North Samish Hill Park;
- Improve or add restrooms at neighborhood parks where feasible and provide a guide to restrooms that are available during winter months;
- Actively pursue the creation of a centrally-located town square in downtown Bellingham; and
- Provide more small gathering spaces, especially in the urban area as infill occurs, potentially accomplished through development regulations and guidelines.
- Improve safe access to existing neighborhood parks by implementing the trail projects recommended in this plan.
- Renovate and upgrade Shuksan Meadows Park.

6.3 Community Parks (CP)

Community parks provide a wide variety of active and passive recreational opportunities. In general, community parks are larger in size and serve an area of at least a one mile radius. Community parks may also provide programmed indoor facilities and lighted competitive athletic courts and fields including tennis, soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse, softball, and baseball. Adequate off street parking is usually needed to accommodate larger events that occur at community parks. Other community park amenities are outlined in *Appendix A* of the PRO Plan. A community park will often serve a neighborhood park function as well, increasing the use of the park and the overall efficiency of the system.



Lake Padden Park

Specific Recommendations

As a result of the public process and the needs analysis, specific recommendations for community parks in Bellingham include:

- Master plan and develop Cordata Community Park and Van Wyck Park;
- Develop waterfront parks including Whatcom Waterway and Cornwall Beach Parks
- Complete all master planned improvements at Squalicum Creek Park;
- Complete identified shoreline improvements at Boulevard Park
- Replace natural field surfaces with synthetic surfaces to maximize use, where feasible at, Geri Fields, Squalicum Creek Park and other sites;
- Improve drainage conditions at Lake Padden Park;
- Improve restrooms and allow winter access at selected park sites with a guide to those restrooms available in winter months;
- Improve and add off-leash dog areas in existing and new parks to provide a variety of dog areas (fenced, open, water) with pet waste stations and appropriate regulatory signage;
- Implement recommendations for improving Maritime Heritage Park;
- Provide larger event spaces such as enclosed meeting rooms and outdoor shelters suitable for family gatherings, weddings, festivals, charity and corporate events;
- Provide some covered activity areas, such as benches, playgrounds or courts for more year-around use;
- Develop parking and transportation alternatives, such as shuttle routes, safer and more visible bike or trail routes and more convenient public transportation service— especially during group events, festivals or other special activities; and
- Develop improvement plans to enhance and add capacity at existing community parks, such as expanding play areas; and
- Complete a master plan for the Chuckanut Ridge property (a.k.a. Fairhaven Highlands).



Lake Padden Park

Special use sites may be independent properties or portions of other sites that include trail corridors, neighborhood parks, community parks, open spaces or regional facilities.

6.4 Special Use Sites (SU)

Special use sites may be acquired or developed to provide activities for a variety of ages or interests. Special use facilities may include historic or natural interpretive centers, marina and boating activities, golf courses, or similar facilities. Special use sites also include maintenance yards, plant nurseries, and administrative offices necessary to support park and recreation programs and facilities.

A community or recreation center is another type of special use site, as are many other types of indoor recreation facilities. Community centers may be

developed to provide indoor activities for day and evening use on a year-around basis. They may utilize the existing municipal, county, and school facilities by providing space for gymnasiums, physical conditioning, arts and crafts, class and instruction rooms, meeting facilities, teen and senior centers and other resource activities for special populations. Community centers may also incorporate visual or performing arts, historic and interpretive exhibits, and other specialized activities and be developed as stand-alone facilities or jointly with administrative or maintenance activities.

Specific Recommendations

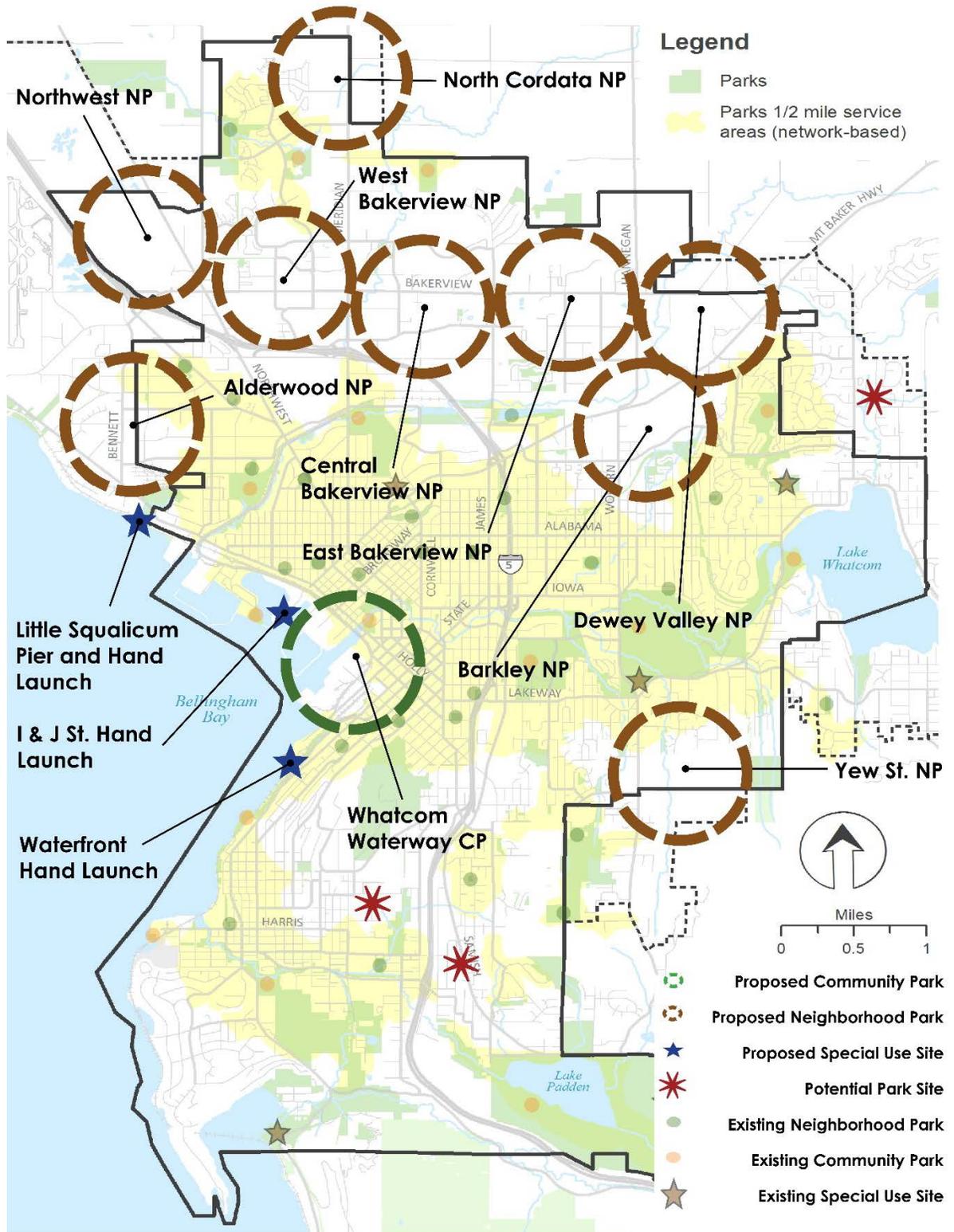
As a result of the public process and the needs analysis, specific recommendations for special use sites in the Bellingham park system include:

- Implement improvements at Woodstock Farm to include parking and a trail access plan and other improvements as feasible. Develop a long range maintenance plan for the site;
- Implement improvements at Big Rock Garden;
- Provide environmental education opportunities such as interpretive signage and/or other educational and stewardship related activities or programs to promote the value of the natural environment throughout the park system;
- Acquire or develop new or improved town square or plaza space downtown and in urban villages such as Old Town, Samish and at Fountain Plaza;
- Acquire and develop new hand-carry boat launch or landing facilities in conjunction with park development in the Waterfront District and at other locations shown on the map on page 48; and
- Acquire and renovate the pier for public access at Little Squalicum Park.
- Access appropriate location for a north end skate park.



Woodstock Farm

RECOMMENDED FACILITIES PLAN • PARKS AND SPECIAL USE SITES



6.5 Open Space (OS)

Open space is generally acquired to protect, restore and provide access where appropriate to wetlands, woodlands, meadows, agricultural lands, foraging and nesting areas and other sensitive or unique ecological features. New open space areas should link to existing open spaces to create a network of wildlife migration corridors and greenway trail corridors. These linked areas visually define and separate developed areas in accordance with the objectives of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The linked areas should lead to open space anchors: larger open space sites that help visually break up development patterns and preserve large tracts of ecologically important areas.

Open space may include trails and interpretive facilities that increase public awareness and appreciation of significant and visually interesting ecological features. Depending on site specific conditions and feasibility, supporting services such as wildlife viewing areas, trailheads, parking lots and restrooms may also be developed.

Open space may be located on independent properties or include portions of other sites provided for parks, recreation, trail corridors or other public facilities. Open space may also be preserved on privately-owned land, subject to public use agreements or easements, or on land acquired for public purposes such as stormwater management, watershed protection, and wastewater treatment sites.

Specific Recommendations

As a result of the public process and the needs analysis, specific recommendations for open space in Bellingham include:

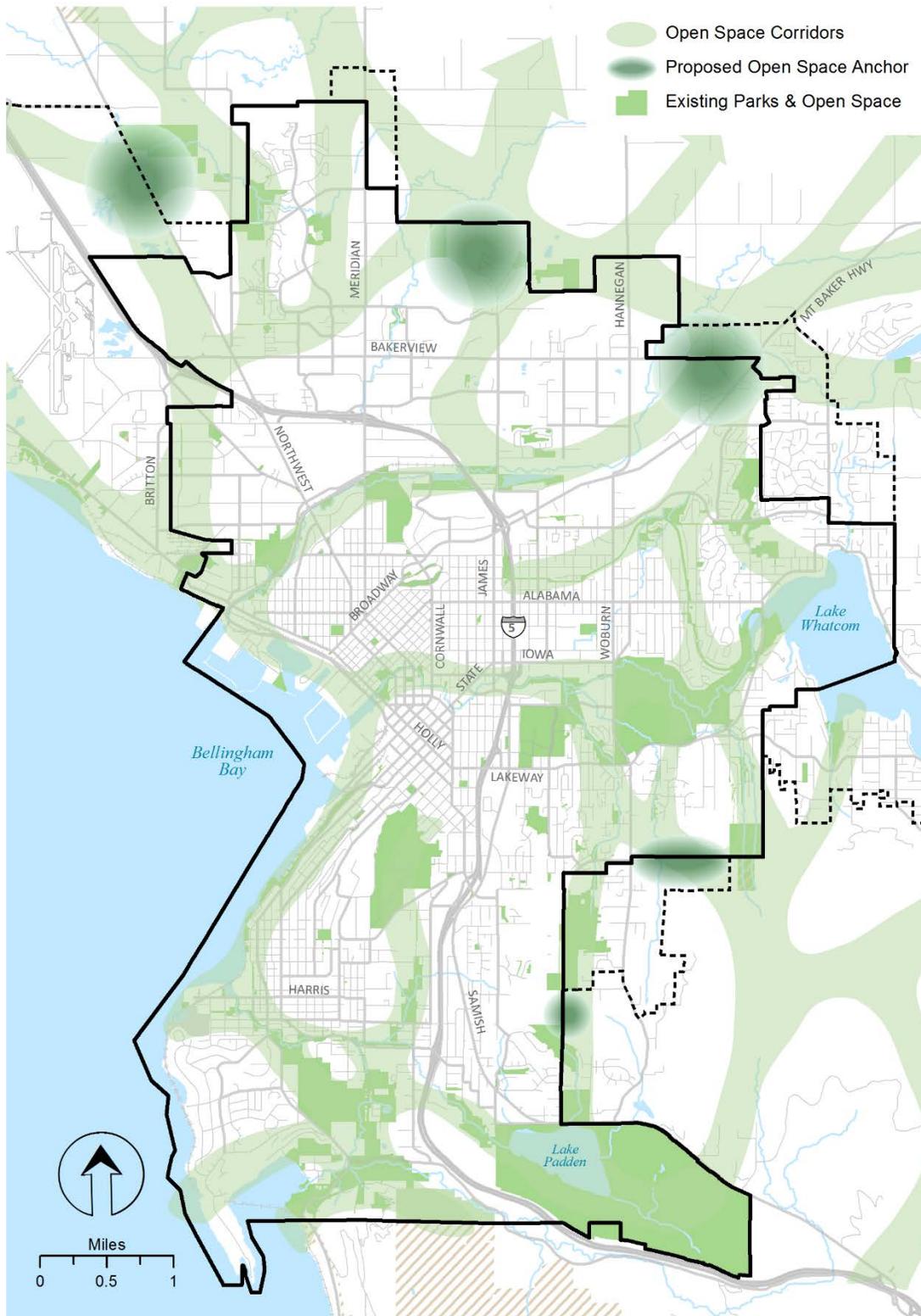
- Acquire additional greenway corridors as identified on the map following this section;
- Acquire additional open space anchors in the general vicinity of the areas identified on the following map;
- Provide environmental education opportunities such as interpretive signage and/or other educational and stewardship related activities or programs to promote the value of the natural environment throughout the park system;
- Acquire additional salt waterfront land and tidelands to expand the network of open space and public access along Bellingham Bay; and

Acquire additional lakefront and creek side land whenever possible to provide increased protection and appropriate access to Bellingham water resources.

General Open Space Guidelines:

- *Protection may occur through acquisition or easements, development rights and other similar non-fee simple arrangements;*
- *Provisions for public access and interpretive use should be included where appropriate;*
- *Conservation of wildlife migration corridors and critical habitats should be considered; and*
- *Tax incentives, density bonuses, transfer rights and other methods should be encouraged.*

RECOMMENDED FACILITIES PLAN • OPEN SPACE



6.6 Trails (TR)

While trails may be categorized into many different types, for the purpose of the PRO Plan, trails are generally limited to off-road trails. Trails should be developed for a variety of uses including walking, biking, and horseback riding. Trails may be developed to link park and recreational facilities, open spaces, community centers, neighborhoods, commercial and office centers, schools, and other major destinations in the Bellingham area. Trail widths and surfacing may vary depending on the type of use and location. While not all trails are appropriate for all uses, multipurpose trails are generally preferred and should be developed to provide for one or more modes of non-motorized travel.

Trails should be developed within corridors separated from vehicles or other motorized forms of

transportation. Trails may be located in separate easements or within parks and open spaces. In some instances when other alternatives are not available, trails may be developed within the right-of-way of vehicular or other transportation corridors, but should be separated by vegetation or other features.

General Trail Guidelines:

- *Conserve natural features;*
- *Define urban identities;*
- *Link community facilities;*
- *Ensure safety/security along trail corridors;*
- *Provide identification, way-finding and directional signage along routes;*
- *Serve people with varied abilities;*
- *Promote commuter and other non-motorized transportation.*

Multipurpose trails should generally be developed to Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO) trail standards. Trails may be concrete, asphalt or a fine crushed rock base, provided the material meets the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and is usable by all age and skill groups. Select trail corridors, including those within the Waterfront District, should be concrete or asphalt to allow for a greater flexibility of use and accessibility.

Off-leash dog use should not be allowed on multi-purpose trails but designated only on trails specifically developed for that use. This may be accomplished through physical designations (i.e., only certain trail corridors) or through time limitations (i.e., late evenings or other non-peak times).

Trail corridors may be improved with trailhead services including benches, parking lots, restrooms, drinking water or other facilities. Where the trail is located in association with another park and recreation improvement or public facility, the trailhead may be improved with picnic, playgrounds and informal lawn areas.

Shoreline trails may be unimproved and may cross over tidelands. Trails may also include boardwalks developed over wetlands, other water bodies or on top of jetty breakwaters to provide access to waterfront activities and viewpoints along lakes, natural areas, or Bellingham and Chuckanut Bays.

Multipurpose trail corridors may be independent properties or include portions of other sites provided for parks, open space or other public facilities. Linked with open space areas and greenways, multipurpose trails create a system of corridors to integrate and define the developed portions of the urban area from each other in accordance with the Growth Management Act's (GMA) provisions for urban separators.



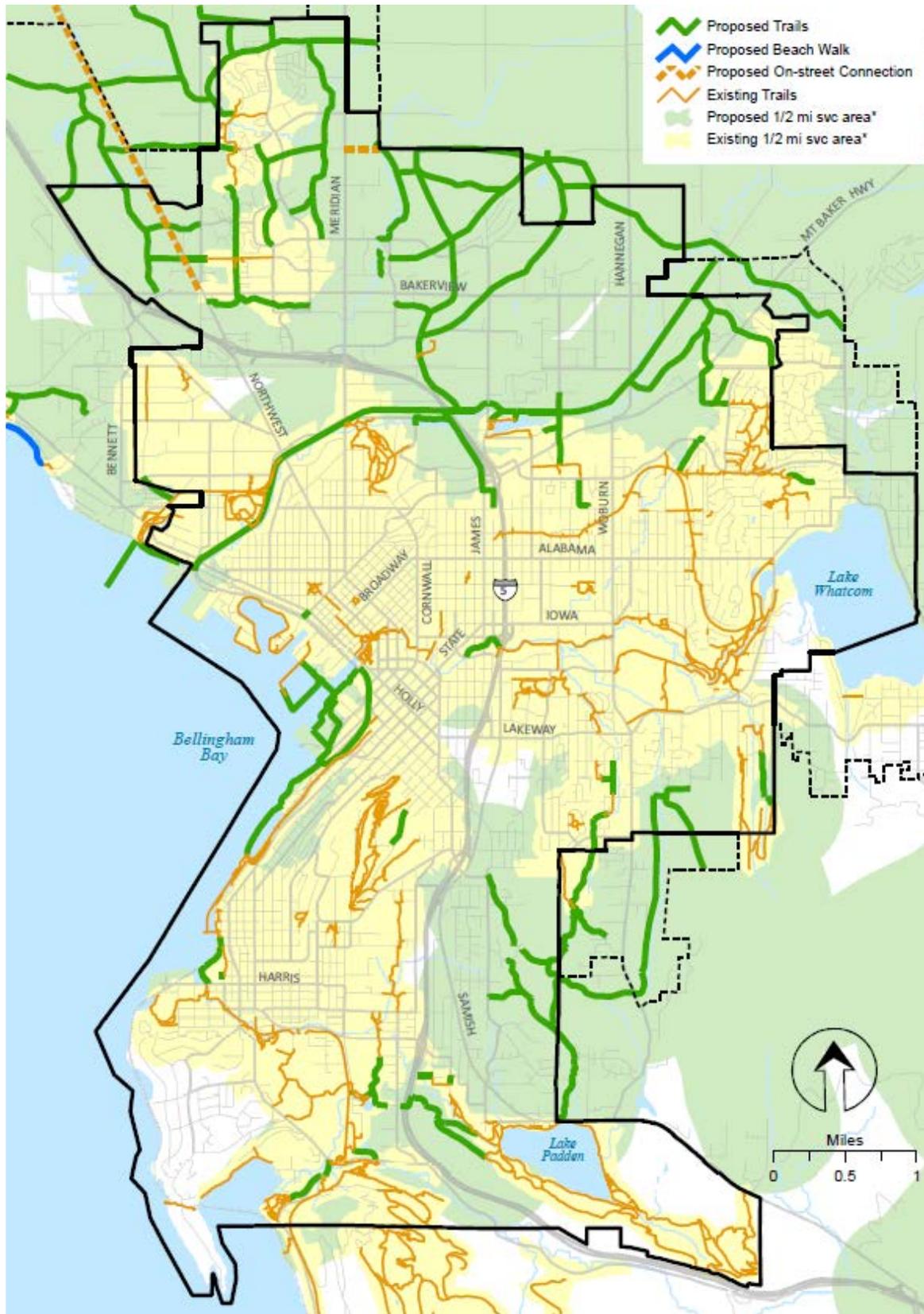
Northridge Park Trail

Specific Recommendations

As a result of the public process and the needs analysis, specific recommendations for multi-purpose trails in Bellingham include:

- Acquire and/or develop new trail connections as shown on the following map in order to provide an off-street trail within a half mile of every resident in Bellingham;
- Coordinate with Public Works to identify opportunities for better trail, sidewalk and bike route connectivity;
- Continue to explore new trail surface alternatives that balance the natural character of Bellingham's trail system with accessibility requirements, long-term maintenance, sustainable development practices and availability of local materials;
- Institute a maintenance replacement program to monitor, maintain, improve and/or replace trail features, including bridges, boardwalks and stairs;
- Acquire and/or develop trailheads (parking, signage, restrooms, picnic areas, etc.) at Whatcom Falls Park, Galbraith Mountain area, Woodstock Farm, Fairhaven Park Forest and North Chuckanut Trailhead;
- Acquire and develop safe multimodal crossings of Guide Meridian Street and Interstate 5 in key locations both generally located on the following map or as new opportunities and needs arise.
- Coordinate with the Port of Bellingham to identify a trail corridor around the airport.
- As areas annex or rezone, consider the need and opportunity for trail connectivity.

RECOMMENDED FACILITIES PLAN • TRAILS



Chapter 7

IMPLEMENTATION

The financial strategy for Bellingham Parks and Recreation for the next six to 20-year period should generate sufficient revenue to maintain existing facilities, provide recreational program services, renovate facilities, and implement priority projects from the proposed recommendations.

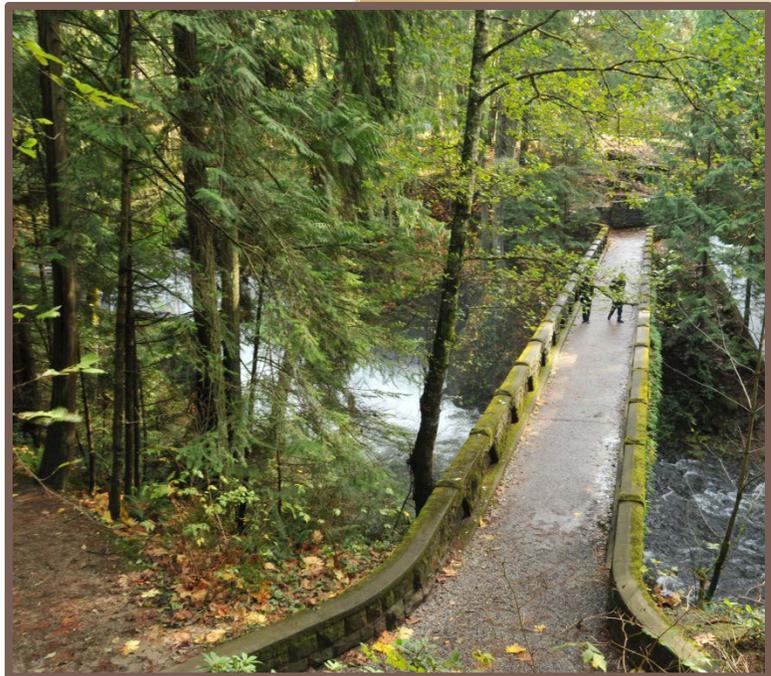
The following forecasts are based on average trends in capital facility fund expenditures by the City during recent years. However, it should be noted that priorities shift over time, responding to new interests, opportunities, and community decision making processes. The City's six-year Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) is updated at least bi-annually in part to reflect these changes.

Recommendations outlined in *Chapter 6* of the PRO Plan total approximately \$104 million in today's dollars. This includes improvements to existing facilities, as well as additional land and facilities to serve new growth. Projected revenue sources for park system improvements through the year 2036 could provide enough funding for the priority projects with traditional funding sources as estimated with the assumptions shown in the following table. Detailed costs for proposed recommendations are included in *Appendix C* of the PRO Plan. The 2015 and 2016 approved six-year Capital Facilities Plans are included in *Appendix E* of the PRO Plan.

7.1 Revenue and Expenditures

Table 7.1 outlines options for capital revenue sources and projected expenditures through the year 2036, and corresponds with the adopted level-of-service discussed in *Chapter 4* and the recommendations included in *Chapter 6* of the PRO Plan. A detailed description of the projects and costs is in *Appendix C* of the PRO Plan. A description of the funding sources and assumptions made for each item in the tables is listed on the following pages.

Priorities and proposed recommendations implemented may change over time based on new interests, feasibility and/or opportunities that may arise.



Whatcom Falls Park

TABLE 7.1 PRO Plan Projected Funding and Expenditures

Revenue	Funding Estimates for 2016-2036				Notes
REET				\$5,000,000	Estimated REET funding for park projects
LIFT				\$5,000,000	Estimated Park Project share of Waterfront Area LIFT funding
Greenway III Levy				\$6,000,000	Existing balance allocated for recommended projects
4th Greenway Levy				\$30,000,000	Assumes a fourth greenway levy for 2017-2027
Grants				\$5,000,000	Estimate based on 5 year history
Park Impact Fees				\$5,000,000	Existing balance allocated for recommended projects
Total Revenue				\$56,000,000	
Needed Park Impact Fees	35%	\$1835	30,217	\$ 55,448,195	Assumes continued 35% fee with added population of 30,217
				\$111,448,195	
	31%	\$1625.33	30,217	\$49,112,596	Assumes reduced fee to 31% with added population of 30,217
				\$105,112,596	

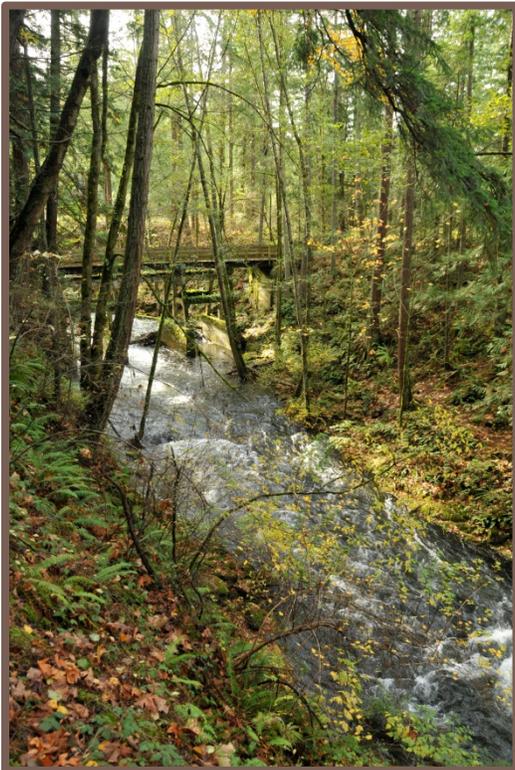
Expenditures	Acres	Cost in Millions (rounded)		
		Land	Facilities	Total
Neighborhood Park	36	\$ 3,420,000	\$ 13,320,000	\$ 16,740,000
Community Park	5	\$ 475,000	\$ 27,345,000	\$ 27,820,000
Special Use Site	1.5	\$ 142,500	\$ 1,295,00	\$ 1,437,500
Open Space & Trails	160.7	\$ 15,262,182	\$ 40,200,000	\$ 55,462,182
Total	203.2	\$ 19,299,682	\$ 84,510,000	\$ 103,809,682
Existing Acres/1000 City	45.6			
Existing Acres/1000 UGA	40.6			
Proposed Acres/1000 UGA	32.3			

As this is a long range strategic plan and not a financing plan, both revenues and expenditures are in estimated 2015 dollars and do not include inflation, assuming that both expenditures and revenues will increase over time and that projects will be implemented as funding becomes available rather than through any specific financing system. As each project is scheduled for implementation, costs and revenues will be updated. Project improvements (acquisition or facilities) will be adjusted as needed to match available revenue sources concurrent with the annual Capital Facilities Plan budget process. The PRO Plan is updated every six years with an updated forecast of revenues and expenditures.

Any potential difference between the total revenue and the actual cost of improvements could be made up through a variety of means including an increase in the park impact fee, bonding for specific project improvements, decreasing the level-of-service, or through the use of development agreements requiring land dedications or improvements as a condition of annexation or rezones.

7.2 Maintenance and Operation Needs

The additional park acres and improvements associated with the recommendations will also require additional maintenance and operations costs. The existing 3,400 acres of City managed parks, open space and trails is maintained by full time and part time or seasonal staff with a full time equivalence (FTE) 48.5. Using the 2015 total maintenance budget of \$ 4,864,581, the cost to maintain parkland is \$ 1,335.32 per acre per year and the estimated additional annual overall cost for maintenance and operations by the year 2036, if all recommendations are implemented, is estimated to be \$ 270,002(203.2 acres x \$1335.32), expressed in 2015 dollars.



Whatcom Creek

An additional 3 FTE staff members would be needed to maintain maintenance service levels for the recommended additional parks and facilities. The estimates are based on a general analysis of the 2015 budget. An increase or decrease in the intensity of maintenance needed based on the type of park or facility would affect the actual costs.

One way to help fund maintenance needs is to increase the amount available in the Greenway Maintenance Endowment and allow for earnings to be used for all types of park maintenance. As the amount needed from a new levy for land acquisition and develop decreases, the amount dedicated for maintenance of facilities can increase.

7.2.1 REET Real Estate Excise Tax

REET revenue has been down in the last few years and has been used to pay off the Civic Field Bond and set aside to fund future waterfront development projects, including parks and roads. As the economy picks up, and bonds are paid off, more REET revenue may be available for capital projects, including development of waterfront parks. A recent change in State law allows more flexibility for using REET funds for maintenance.

7.2.2 Greenway Levies

Bellingham citizens have approved three levies at a rate of \$0.57 per 1,000 property valuation. Included in the table are existing levy balances as well as future revenues, with no growth in valuation assumed. A voter approved fourth levy in 2017 would be needed to achieve funding to complete the plan recommendations. In the household phone survey undertaken for this plan, 78% of respondents indicated a willingness to approve another levy. A larger percentage of the levy collection could be set aside in a maintenance endowment fund to ensure the City's ability to take care of our valuable park resources.

7.2.3 Grants

The City has received an average of \$1 million annually over the last five years from various sources, including Washington Recreation and Conservation Office grant programs, federal Transportation Enhancement grants and Department of Ecology grants. This plan estimates a total of \$10 million in grant funding over a 15 year period.



Maritime Heritage Park Amphitheatre

7.2.4 CAO/SEPA/Mitigation

Land or improvements as a result of the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO), State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) and associated mitigation are used by the City to help offset park system improvements. Based on past trends, the City has projected the estimated value of land or improvements as required through development process for protection of wetlands, SEPA or impact mitigation based on historical trends to be approximately \$1 million by the year 2036. Because of the uncertainty, this value was not included in the revenue forecast.

7.2.5 Donations

Donations include park system land and improvements received by the City from private individuals as well as other agencies or organizations. While donations have been on the decline in recent years, special interest groups are still willing to assist with projects that they feel are important. Based on recent trends, the City estimates the total value of future donations to be approximately \$1 million over the next 20 years. Because of uncertainty regarding the ability of the community to make park system donations, this amount was not included in the revenue forecast.

7.2.6 Park Impact Fee

In 2006, the City began assessing a Park Impact Fee on new residential units. Future funding from Park Impact Fees is estimated based on future City population projections. The City expects an additional

30,217 new residents by the year 2036, the difference between the current and projected urban growth area/City population. This calculation assumes that all urban growth areas will incorporate into the City during that time frame. The existing park system value is \$ 5,243 per person. Maintaining the current park impact fee assessment of 35% will result in projected revenues of approximately \$ 55.5 million by the year 2036. If all other estimated projected revenue sources are achieved, the park impact fee rate could be reduced. See Table 7.1

7.2.7 LIFT - Local Infrastructure Financing Tool

Bellingham waterfront capital improvement projects, including parks and roads, are eligible to receive up to \$1 million per year for 25 years. Receipt of State funds is subject to the amount of additional tax received by the State and matching local government contributions.

7.3 Priorities

The proposed funding strategy is based on a major assumption that current funding sources will continue into the future, at or near their current rate. While this may be a reasonable assumption, there is no guarantee of future funding. As such, the following general priorities for park system improvements in Bellingham are recommended based on community input. In all cases, the highest priority identified was to complete currently funded projects and improvements on the waterfront, as well as continue to acquire land in the north Bellingham area. Beyond that, trail improvements, in general, were identified as a higher priority than parks and recreation or open space elements.

Priorities
Highest priority projects were determined to be those that were currently funded, trails and greenway projects and project centered on the north Bellingham area. Waterfront projects were also a high priority.

7.3.1 Priority Park and Special Use Site Projects



Van Wyck Park

The following priorities have been identified and categorized into relative order from highest (Priority 1) to lowest (Priority 3), though items identified within each category are listed in no particular order.

Priorities Currently Funded

- Develop Cordata Park Phase 1
- Make improvements at Lake Padden Park
- Develop Whatcom Waterway Park Phase One

Priority 1

- Develop Cordata Community Park
- Acquire Central Bakerview Neighborhood Park
- Develop Cornwall Beach Park Phase One
- Make improvements at Woodstock Farm
- Develop and expand Sunset Pond Park

Priority 2

- Acquire and refurbish Little Squalicum Pier
- Provide more hand launch boat sites
- Renovate existing parks as appropriate with priority on areas with high density concentration (e.g Shuksan Meadows Park) to improve capacity and/or generate multi-use functions
- Add urban plazas and gathering spaces in the downtown urban villages, and economically depressed areas, generally in combination with new or redevelopment opportunities
- Develop Van Wyck Park



Future Waterfront Trail

Priority 3

- Acquire East Yew St. Neighborhood Park
- Acquire East Bakerview Neighborhood Park
- Complete a master plan for the Chuckanut Ridge property (a.k.a. Fairhaven Highlands)

7.3.2 Open Space

The following priorities have been identified and categorized into relative order from highest to lowest priority, though items identified within each category are listed in no particular order.

Priorities Currently Funded

- Open space corridors associated with funded trail priorities below

Priority 1

- Open space corridors associated with other trail priorities below
- Open space anchors in King Mountain area

Priority 2

- Open space anchor between Samish Crest Open Space and Lookout Mountain
- Open space anchor in Dewey Valley

7.3.3 Trails

The following priorities have been identified and categorized into relative order from highest to lowest priority, though items identified within each category are listed in no particular order.

Chapter 7

Priorities Currently Funded

- Overwater Walkway
- Bay to Baker Greenway & Trail
- Samish Crest Trail corridor
- Chuckanut to Woodstock Trail corridor
- Whirlwind Beach trailhead and trail improvements

Priority 1

- Cordata School to Division Street Trail corridor
- Cordata to King Mt. Trail corridor
- All Waterfront trails
- Bay to Baker to King Mt. Trail corridor

Priority 2

- Trail connection from Cordata Park north to Bear Creek Area
- King Mountain Trails

Priority 3

- Samish Crest to Lookout Mt. Trail corridor
- Northridge Park to Bay to Baker Trail connection
- Trail connection from Little Squalicum Park northwest to Alderwood/Airport area



Samish Crest Trail Phase I

7.4 Revenue Source Description

A general description of the different types of revenue resources that may be used to fund park, recreation and open space programs or facilities is presented in *Appendix F* of the PRO Plan. Some are restricted to development only while others may be used for operations and maintenance. These are listed in no particular order and with no reference to the feasibility or recommendation of implementing each revenue source. Included are:

General Fund

Special Revenues

Debt Service Funds

- Councilmanic (limited or non-voted) Bonds
- Limited General Obligation Bonds
- Unlimited General Obligation Bonds

Enterprise Funds

Special Legislation

Unlimited General Obligation Bonds

General Levy Rate Referendums

Environmental Impact Mitigation – Subdivision Regulations

Growth Impact Fees

Inter-local Agreements

User Fees and Charges

Special Funding Sources

- REET (Real Estate Excise Tax)
- Greenway Funds
- LIFT (Local Infrastructure Financing Tool)

State Grants

- Washington Wildlife Recreation Program (WWRP)
- Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)
- Salmon Recovery Funding
- Capital Projects Fund for Washington Heritage
- Boating Facilities Program
- Washington State Public Works Commission
- Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF)
- Non-Highway & Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program (NOVA)
- Firearms and Archery Range Recreation Program (FARR)

Federal Grants

- NPS (National Park Service) grants
- Transportation Enhancement Grants
- National Recreational Trails Program (NRTP)
- Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG)

Recreation Service Districts (RCW Chapter 36.69)

Metropolitan Park Districts (SB 2557)

- Chuckanut Community Forest Park District was established in 2013 for the specific purpose of raising funds to pay back the loan used to acquire Fairhaven Highlands.

Special Use Agreements

Public/Private Service Contracts

Public/Private Concessions

Public/Private Joint Development Ventures

Self-help Land Leases

Self-help Contract Agreements

Appendix A

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

The intent of parks and recreation classifications is to aid in making acquisition and design decisions for park sites, facilities and the organization of recreation space which is responsive to public needs, creates quality recreational experiences and facilities that can be effectively maintained.

Park classifications are primarily based on National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) guidelines and consider types of uses, size and relative service area of each park. The classifications used in Bellingham include:

1. Parks & Recreation
 - a. Neighborhood Parks
 - b. Community Parks
 - c. Special Use Sites
2. Open Space
3. Trails

The guidelines below are for general purposes only. Actual acquisition and/or development of a park site will depend on several factors which should be considered in connection with classification guidelines when making planning decisions. These can include goals or needs for a given area, usually defined through a community process, or site-specific information such as topography, critical areas, access, zoning regulations, etc., that may limit the use of a given site.

Park classifications establish several essential elements for park land based generally on the types of recreational uses and services to be provided. The following describes the park classifications for Bellingham, generally modified from the NRPA standards to reflect the Bellingham community preferences. In all cases, the approximate size of each park type shown below is a general parameter only. Actual size should be based on the land area needed to accommodate desired uses. Service areas shown may also vary as physical characteristics, such as topography or major roadways, may reduce the service area if access is limited by these factors. Park lighting and general crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles should also be considered during the design process to promote safety and security within park settings.

Neighborhood Parks

1. **General Description:** A neighborhood park is the basic recreational focus and center of a neighborhood. They should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities geared specifically for those living within the service area. They should also accommodate a wide variety of age and user groups, including children, adults, seniors and special populations. Creating a sense of place by bringing together the unique character of the site with that of the neighborhood is vital to successful neighborhood park design.
2. **Approximate Size:** 2 to 10 acres.
3. **Service Area:** ½ mile radius.
4. **Acquisition Guidelines:** Neighborhood parks should be centrally located within the neighborhood it serves. Vehicular access may be provided through arterial roadways or local neighborhood streets. Citizens should be able to walk to these parks without having to cross a major arterial street. Some portion of the total acreage should be upland "developable" land of a size sufficient to support the desired uses for that neighborhood.
5. **Development Guidelines:** Since each neighborhood is unique, neighborhood input should be used to determine the development program for the park. In general, development should provide a balance between active and passive recreation uses and should represent the characteristics and context of the community in which it is located. Where active recreation is provided, it should be intended for primarily informal, unstructured activities, or smaller programmed activities that will not overburden the supporting infrastructure (parking, restroom, etc.). The following activities are intended to serve as a general guideline only:
 - a. *Parking* - generally limited to around 2-10 stalls. While the intent is for neighborhood parks to be walkable to most residences in the area it serves, parking may still be needed to support those uses that need greater assistance, such as seniors or those with disabilities. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements should be met in all cases. On street parking may be used to meet these criteria.
 - b. *Site Furnishings* - such as bike racks, benches, trash receptacles, park signage, picnic tables and drinking fountains.
 - c. *Restrooms* - may be provided where space and funding allow. This could include permanent, semi-permanent or portable facilities.
 - d. *Play Area* - with climbing structures, swings or other similar elements, designed for a variety of ages and abilities.
 - e. *Picnic* - tables, barbecue and/or small group shelters.

-
- f. *Open grass lawn areas.*
 - g. *Sport facilities* - compatible with neighborhood setting and park site constraints, such as:
 - Basketball: half court or full court
 - Volleyball, tennis, bocce ball, pickleball
 - Softball/baseball field (informal or youth)
 - Soccer field (informal or youth)
 - h. *Other* - features as need or site conditions allow that may help create diversity and a unique character to each individual park. These may include public art, skateboard elements, climbing walls, or other similar elements. Where provided, these should generally be smaller in nature to fit the scale and context of the neighborhood park setting.

Community Parks

1. General Description: Community parks are larger in size and are intended to serve a broader range of activities and users. Their focus is on meeting the recreation needs of several neighborhoods with more specialized activities, as well as preserving unique landscapes, open spaces or environmental features. They allow for group activities and offer other recreation opportunities not generally found at a neighborhood level. Due to their larger size, they are often designed to serve a neighborhood park function as well and generally include all of the same neighborhood park activities as well as additional unique characteristics described above.
2. Approximate size: 20-60 acres.
3. Service Area: 1 mile radius.
4. Acquisition Guidelines: The land available for anticipated uses and the quality of the natural resource base should play a defining role in locating potential community park sites. They should be located adjacent to a major arterial or other collector street to provide easy vehicular as well as pedestrian and other multi-modal access. The proximity of other park types should also be considered as the types of activities found in a community park may overlap with other park functions. Some portion of the total acreage should be "developable" land of a size sufficient to support the desired uses for that park.
5. Development Guidelines: Surrounding neighborhood and larger community or city-wide input should be used to determine the development program for a community park. In general, development should provide a balance between active and passive recreation uses and should represent the characteristics and context of the community in which it is located. Where active recreation is provided, it is generally intended for larger programmed activities such as sports league practices, games and/or tournaments. Active recreation, such as sports fields, in community parks may have additional support facilities not found at a neighborhood level, such as bleachers,

fencing, dugouts, concessions, synthetic turf and/or lighting. The following activities are in addition to neighborhood park guidelines and are intended to serve as a general guideline only:

- a. *Parking* - generally larger in size to support more organized activities and larger group events. May be anywhere from 20-80 or more stalls depending on the intended uses.
- b. *Restrooms* - should generally be provided and should provide permanent facilities where feasible. Additional portable facilities may be needed during peak season or for special organized events.
- c. *Picnic* - larger group shelters that can be programmed and/or rented out for special events.
- d. *Specialized Uses* - that may not be feasible to provide in every neighborhood park. These may include:
 - Spray park
 - Skateboard Park
 - Off leash area
 - Fishing docks or piers
 - Waterfront access
 - Regional trail connections
 - Education/demonstration areas
 - Outdoor stage/amphitheater
- e. *Concessions/Vendors* - for food, beverage, rentals, etc. as feasible and demand allows.

Regional Parks

1. General Description: Regional parks are generally the largest in size and serve the greatest geographical area, often extending beyond the city or urban growth area limits to include county and/or other adjacent jurisdictions. Their focus is on providing specialized activities, as well as preserving unique landscapes, open spaces or environmental features. They allow for group activities and offer other recreation opportunities not generally found at a community or neighborhood park level. They may also be designed to serve a community or neighborhood park function as well, but are often of a more specialized nature. Bellingham currently has not parks with this designation.
2. Approximate Size: 80 acres or more.
3. Service Area: 5 mile radius or more (as needed).

-
4. **Acquisition Guidelines:** Regional park facilities, because they span many jurisdictions, should be acquired jointly with other agency support when feasible, such as county, school district, port authority, preservation groups and/or other adjacent jurisdictions. They should be situated such that sufficient infrastructure could be developed or already exists to support a large number of visitors, including major arterials, buses and other mass transit capabilities. They should also have access to multi-modal connections.
 5. **Development Guidelines:** Regional parks should be developed to maximize their intended uses, whether for sports fields, mountain biking trails, camping, unique natural or environmental features, or extreme sport venues. They may include the same activities as those found in community and neighborhood park guidelines, but are often intended for a more single, specialized use that requires a larger space than can be supported through a typical community or neighborhood park type. Activities provided will depend solely on the type of intended uses for the park and the influence of the community or region as expressed through a public process, so are not listed individually with this section.

Special Use Sites

1. **General Description:** The special use classification covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward a single-purpose use. They often fall into three general categories:
 - *Cultural Facilities* - unique resources offering historical, educational, visual/performance art or other similar experiences. These include museums, theaters, galleries, libraries and other civic sites.
 - *Indoor Facilities* - geared toward indoor uses, such as gymnasiums, community centers, teen/senior centers, aquatic centers, ice arenas, etc.
 - *Unique Sites* - generally a single use, but smaller than a regional park and not necessarily of a significance that might draw from a larger regional base. These may include arboretums, cemeteries, plazas, sports stadiums, farmer's markets, marinas, etc. - especially when they are not in conjunction with other typical park amenities.
2. **Approximate Size:** Varies.
3. **Service Area:** Varies.
4. **Acquisition Guidelines:** As specialized, single use facilities, special use parks should be selected based on the function that they are intended to serve. They should be situated such that sufficient infrastructure could be developed or already exists to support the intended use, including major arterials, buses and other mass transit capabilities as necessary. They should also have access to multi-modal connections.

-
5. Development Guidelines: Special use parks should be developed to maximize their intended uses. They generally do NOT include the same activities as those found in other park types. Activities provided will depend solely on the type of intended uses for the park and the influence of the community or region as expressed through a public process, so are not listed individually with this section.

Open Space

1. General Description: Open space sites are generally lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, landscapes, open space and visual aesthetic or buffering functions. One of the major purposes is to enhance the livability and character of a community by preserving as many of its natural amenities as possible, as well as providing wildlife habitat in urbanized areas. These may include both individual sites that exhibit natural resources, or lands that are unsuitable for development but that offer other natural resource potential. Examples include sites with steep slopes, old or second growth forests, wetlands, stream corridors, tidelands, shorelines (salt or fresh water), storm water features, and/or watershed or aquifer recharge zones.
2. Approximate Size: Varies.
3. Service Area: Varies.
4. Acquisition Guidelines: The quality of the natural resource should play a defining role in locating potential open space sites and may be quite different than other park classifications. For example, they may not necessarily need good access, vehicular or multi-modal, if they are intended for preservation purposes. Limited access in this case may be more desirable. For the same reason, there is not the same need for "developable" land unless the site is intended for regional trailheads, interpretive facilities, environmental learning center, conference/retreats or other similar auxiliary uses. Therefore, acquisition guidelines are much more flexible to respond to opportunities as they may become available.

Sites that connect to other parks, open space or natural features should be considered, as well as those that provide wildlife corridors through urban or urbanizing areas, though no priority is intended in these guidelines, unless stated otherwise in other sections of this plan.

Preservation techniques beyond simple fee acquisition should also be considered, such as preservation easements, dedications, conservation grants or programs, trusts, development regulations and zoning codes. Tax incentives, density bonuses and other "trade-offs" should be considered to help encourage these types of alternative preservation techniques.

5. Development Guidelines: Because open space sites serve primarily a preservation function, development should be limited. Access, where provided, may include trails, minor trailhead and/or educational features. Because of the limited nature of development on these sites, specific activities are not listed individually in this section.

Trails

1. **General Description:** While trails may be categorized into many different types, for the purpose of this plan, trails is limited to generally include off-road multi-use trails only. Trails within parks are shown in individual park development plans and on-street non-motorized facilities (sidewalks and bikeways) are included in the transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan. Trails in this context are intended to form a network of connections in and around the planning area, between neighborhoods and parks, schools, open space, civic facilities and commercial centers.
2. **Approximate Size:** Varies (linear); generally 25'-50' wide.
3. **Service Area:** ½ mile radius.
4. **Acquisition Guidelines:** Trails should be located within open space or greenway corridors whenever possible. They may also be located adjacent to streams, stream corridors or within utility right-of-ways, abandoned railroad corridors or expanded roadway networks where they can be separated from vehicular traffic by landscape or other natural features. Larger areas may be needed at key locations along trail corridors to support trailhead development as outlined below. Trails should be considered an integral part of the transportation network.
5. **Development Guidelines:** In general, trail development should meet local and state departments of transportation of public works standards, as needed. They should also consider AASHTO guidelines and ADA accessibility requirements. Consideration should be given to the trail surfacing and drainage patterns early in the design process. The following activities may be included with supporting trailhead development, as feasible, and is intended to serve as a general guideline only:
 - a. *Parking* - generally limited to around 2-5 stalls unless at a major trailhead location when more parking may be anticipated. On street parking may be used to meet these criteria.
 - b. *Site Furnishings*- such as benches, trash receptacles, wayfinding signage, picnic tables and drinking fountains.
 - c. *Restrooms* - may be provided where space and funding allow. This could include permanent, semi-permanent or portable facilities.
 - d. *Other* - features as needs or site conditions allow.

Appendix B

EXISTING FACILITIES TABLES

See the attached tables of Existing Facilities, both within and outside the planning area as referenced in *Chapter 3* of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan.

Various sources and data are used to calculate existing and proposed land and facility costs including:

- Recent public land acquisition costs
- Real estate digest database of Bellingham area recent vacant land sales
- Professional Real Estate Appraisal services
- Land valuation comparisons - Whatcom County Assessor information
- Public agency bid data including Parks and Recreation, Public Works and Washington State Department of Transportation
- Building Industry Association of Washington construction data
- Means Construction Cost data
- Independent Cost Estimators
- Consultant cost databases
- Contractor information
- Construction trend information

The following abbreviations are used in the tables:

*	Facility not shown on maps in plan
AC	Acre
AQ	Aquatic Land
BSD	Bellingham School District
BTC	Bellingham Technical College
COB	City of Bellingham
CP	Community Park
EA	Each
LF	Linear Foot
NP	Neighborhood Park
N/A	Not Applicable
OS	Open Space
PRI	Private
POB	Port of Bellingham
ROW	Right-of-Way
ROS	Right-of-Way Streetscape
SU	Special Use Site
SF	Square Foot
TR	Trail
X	Facility Exists but is not quantitatively defined
UGA	Urban Growth Area
WCC	Whatcom Community College
WWU	Western Washington University
WA	Washington State

EXISTING FACILITIES
CITY OF BELLINGHAM
 (Within Planning Area)

Name	Land (acres)	Trail (miles)	Picnic Shelters (ea)	Playground (ea)	Restrooms (ea)	Basketball (ea)	Volleyball - sand (ea)	Tennis/Pickleball (ea)	Football/Track/Stadium incl Field & Restrooms (ea)	Multi Use Field (ea)	Baseball/Softball lighted (ea)	Baseball Stadium incl. Field & Restrooms (ea)	Skate Park (ea)	Off-Leash Area (acres), X = designated, n not developed)	Beach (ea) x=unimproved access	Boat Launch (ramp)	Hand Boat Launch
TOTAL EXISTING CITY	3,400.8	70.6	16.0	28.0	25.0	14.0	1.0	12.0	1.0	7.0	10.0	1.0	3.0	3.2	4.0	2.0	4.0
Total Acres in value/capita	3,400.8																
Facility Unit Cost	\$ 90,328	\$ 500,000	\$ 135,000	\$ 175,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 14,000,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 775,000	\$ 6,000,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 75,000
Existing Total Facility Cost	\$ 307,185,656	\$ 35,305,000	\$ 2,160,000	\$ 4,900,000	\$ 6,250,000	\$ 1,050,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 14,000,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 7,750,000	\$ 6,000,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 480,000	\$ 1,600,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 300,000
Existing Total Facility Cost / Capita	\$ 3,675	\$ 422	\$ 26	\$ 59	\$ 75	\$ 13	\$ 0	\$ 18	\$ 168	\$ 41.88	\$ 93	\$ 72	\$ 14	\$ 6	\$ 19	\$ 5	\$ 4
Existing Total Facility Cost / Household (2.08)	\$ 7,645	\$ 921	\$ 56	\$ 128	\$ 163	\$ 27	\$ 1	\$ 39	\$ 365	\$ 91	\$ 202	\$ 156	\$ 31	\$ 13	\$ 42	\$ 10	\$ 8

Appendix C

PROPOSED FACILITIES TABLES

See the attached tables of Proposed Facilities, including recommendations as referenced in *Chapter 7* of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan.

Various sources and data are used to calculate existing and proposed land and facility costs including:

- Recent public land acquisition costs
- Real estate digest database of Bellingham area recent vacant land sales
- Professional Real Estate Appraisal services
- Land valuation comparisons - Whatcom County Assessor information
- Public agency bid data including Parks and Recreation, Public Works and Washington State Department of Transportation
- Building Industry Association of Washington construction data
- Means Construction Cost data
- Independent Cost Estimators
- Consultant cost databases
- Contractor information
- Construction trend information

The following abbreviations are used in the tables:

*	Facility not shown on maps in plan
AQ	Aquatic Land
CP	Community Park
NP	Neighborhood Park
OS	Open Space
SU	Special Use Site
TR	Trail

PROPOSED FACILITIES
CITY OF BELLINGHAM
 (Within Planning Area)

(updated 4/29/2016)

Name	Land (acres)	Designation	Trail (miles)	Picnic Shelters (ea)	Playground (ea)	Restrooms (ea)	Basketball (ea)	Volleyball - sand (ea)	Tennis/Pickleball (ea)	Multi Use Field unlighted	Baseball/Softball lighted (ea)	Skate Park (ea)/ Bike Park (ea)	Off-Leash Area (acres, X = designated, not developed)	Beach (ea)	Boat Launch (ramp)	Hand Boat Launch	Paved Plaza (ea)	Community Center / Meeting Room (sf)	Informal Lawn (acres)	Dock/Pier (lf) avg new and renovation	Parking Lot Stalls	Amphitheater (ea, outdoor)	Concessions (sf)	Community Gardens (ea)	Trailhead Parking (ea)	Disc Golf (9 holes ea)	Spray Park (ea)	All Other Misc. \$\$	Notes
BLOEDEL DONOVAN PARK	n/a	CP																										\$ 300,000.00	Replace existing boat launch docks
BOULEVARD PARK	n/a	CP												1															Complete Shoreline Improvements
CIVIC ATHLETIC COMPLEX	n/a	CP																										\$ 400,000.00	Gerri field lighting
CORDATA COMMUNITY PARK	n/a	CP	1	2	2	2	1		1	1		1	1					500	5		100				1	1			
CORNWALL BEACH PARK	n/a	CP	2	3	1	2		2						3		1		1650	2		250	5050				1			Develop per master plan
FAIRHAVEN PARK	n/a	CP	5																					2			\$ 200,000.00	Drainage, entry improvements, trailhead, trails	
LAKE PADDEN PARK	n/a	CP																										\$ 950,000.00	Drainage, field improvements
MARITIME HERITAGE PARK	n/a	CP			1																								Playground restroom / year-around access
NORTHRIDGE PARK	n/a	CP		1	2	1	1					0									20								Develop existing park
SQUALICUM CREEK PARK	n/a	CP				1					1							500			100								Phase 3, per master plan
VAN WYCK PARK	n/a	CP	1	2	1	2	1			1			1					1200	2		60			1					
WHATCOM FALLS PARK	n/a	CP	1			1						1									10				1				
WHATCOM WATERWAY PARK	5.0	CP/TR	0	1											1	3			1	300							1		Phase 1-3, central pier
POTENTIAL NP PARK SITES	6.0	NP			1		1																						To add parkland in underserved areas as indicated in Recommended Facilities Parks Map
ALDERWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD	3.0	NP	0	1	1		1					1							0.5		10								
BARKLEY PARK	3.0	NP	0	1	1	1	1												0.5		10								Expand existing open space
BROADWAY PARK	n/a	NP			1																								Improve restroom/year-round access
CENTRAL BAKERVIEW PARK	5.0	NP	0		1	1	1						0.5						1		10								
COMMERCIAL GREEN PARK	2.0	NP	0		1												1												

PROPOSED FACILITIES
CITY OF BELLINGHAM
 (Within Planning Area)

(updated 4/29/2016)

Name	Land (acres)	Designation	Trail (miles)	Picnic Shelters (ea)	Playground (ea)	Restrooms (ea)	Basketball (ea)	Volleyball - sand (ea)	Tennis/Pickleball (ea)	Multi Use Field unlighted	Baseball/Softball lighted (ea)	Skate Park (ea)/ Bike Park (ea)	Off-Leash Area (acres, X = designated, not developed)	Beach (ea)	Boat Launch (ramp)	Hand Boat Launch	Paved Plaza (ea)	Community Center / Meeting Room (sf)	Informal Lawn (acres)	Dock/Pier (lf) avg new and renovation	Parking Lot Stalls	Amphitheater (ea, outdoor)	Concessions (sf)	Community Gardens (ea)	Trailhead Parking (ea)	Disc Golf (9 holes ea)	Spray Park (ea)	All Other Misc. \$\$	Notes
CORDATA PARK	n/a	NP		1	1	1	1				0						1				20								Develop existing park
DEWEY VALLEY PARK	1.0	NP	0		1		1														5								
DOWNTOWN SQUARE & PLAZAS	1.0	NP															2												To be determined with redevelopment
E. YEW STREET PARK	3.0	NP	1		1	1	1					0	0.5						1		20								
EAST BAKERVIEW PARK	5.0	NP	1	1	1	1	1					0							1										
MAPLEWOOD MCLEOD PARK	N/A	NP	0	1	1		1					1									5								Develop existing park
NW NEIGHBORHOOD	2.0	NP	1	1	1	1	1												1		10								
N SAMISH CREST PARK	n/a	NP	1	1	1	1	1						0.5						2		10								Develop part of existing open space
S SAMISH CREST PARK	n/a	NP	1	1	1	1	1																						
SUNSET POND PARK	n/a	NP	1	1	1	1							0.5		1				0.5	40									Expand existing open space
WEST BAKERVIEW PARK	5.0	NP	1		1		1						0.5						1		10								
ARROYO PARK	n/a	OS																						1		\$ 200,000.00		Improve N. Chuckanut trailhead, bridges	
DEWEY VALLEY	10.0	OS	2																										
LITTLE SQUALICUM PARK	n/a	OS				1										1				1800	20								Expand Parking, renovate pier
NW BELLINGHAM OS	10.0	OS	2																										
GALBRAITH GREENWAY AND WATERFRONT/TID ELANDS	4.0	OS	2			1																		1					Jointly with County
I AND J WATERWAY PARK	6.0	OS/AQ																											Varies
I AND J WATERWAY PARK	1.0	SU													1				0.3										Phase 4
BIG ROCK GARDEN	n/a	SU	0																		10								Improvements per master plan
COURTHOUSE PLAZA	0.3	SU															1												Per Old Town Neighborhood Plan

PROPOSED FACILITIES
CITY OF BELLINGHAM
 (Within Planning Area)

(updated 4/29/2016)

Name	Land (acres)	Designation	Trail (miles)	Picnic Shelters (ea)	Playground (ea)	Restrooms (ea)	Basketball (ea)	Volleyball - sand (ea)	Tennis/Pickleball (ea)	Multi Use Field unlighted	Baseball/Softball lighted (ea)	Skate Park (ea)/ Bike Park (ea)	Off-Leash Area (acres, X = designated, not developed)	Beach (ea)	Boat Launch (ramp)	Hand Boat Launch	Paved Plaza (ea)	Community Center / Meeting Room (sf)	Informal Lawn (acres)	Dock/Pier (lf) avg new and renovation	Parking Lot Stalls	Amphitheater (ea, outdoor)	Concessions (sf)	Community Gardens (ea)	Trailhead Parking (ea)	Disc Golf (9 holes ea)	Spray Park (ea)	All Other Misc. \$\$	Notes	
DEPOT PLAZA	0.3	SU															1												per Old Town Neighborhood Plan	
FOUNTAIN SQUARE PLAZA	n/a	SU															1											\$ 300,000.00	Improvements	
WOODSTOCK FARM	n/a	SU	0		1																10								Improve access, hand boat landing (no launch)	
I-5 TRAIL CROSSINGS *	0.6	TR	0																										Tunnel, bridge, etc. Assumes three: Padden, Squalicum & Bakerview	
BAY TO BAKER GREENWAY &	10.9	TR/OS	3																										Complete trail	
BAY TO BAKER TO KING MTN	4.1	TR/OS	2																											
CHUCKANUT TO WOODSTOCK	1.0	TR/OS	1																					1						
CORDATA TRAILS	5.0	TR/OS	1																											
INTERURBAN GREENWAY &	n/a	TR/OS	2																					1					Chuckanut Community Forest	
KING MTN GREENWAY AND	10.0	TR/OS	2																											
N BELLINGHAM GREENWAY &	75.0	TR/OS	10																					3					All trails per master plan	
NORTH BAY GREENWAY &	6.0	TR/OS	2																										North-South connection, assumes two	
OVER WATER WALKWAY	n/a	TR/OS	1																	2400										
S. BAY GREENWAY & TRAIL*	3.0	TR/OS	1																											
SAMISH CREST GREENWAY &	4.0	TR/OS	3																											Trailheads assumed with Samish Crest Park (north and south)
PADDEN TO I-5 GREENWAY AND	2.4	TR/OS	1																											
SAMISH CREST TO LOOKOUT MT.	2.4	TR/OS	1																											
SEHOME BLUFF TRAIL -	0.2	TR/OS	1																											
WHATCOM CREEK GREENWAY &	1.0	TR/OS	1																											Complete system
YEW GREENWAY & TRAIL*	5.0	TR/OS	1																											

PROPOSED FACILITIES
CITY OF BELLINGHAM
 (Within Planning Area)

(updated 4/29/2016)

Name	Land (acres)	Designation	Trail (miles)	Picnic Shelters (ea)	Playground (ea)	Restrooms (ea)	Basketball (ea)	Volleyball - sand (ea)	Tennis/Pickleball (ea)	Multi Use Field unlighted	Baseball/Softball lighted (ea)	Skate Park (ea)/ Bike Park (ea)	Off-Leash Area (acres, X = designated, not developed)	Beach (ea)	Boat Launch (ramp)	Hand Boat Launch	Paved Plaza (ea)
TOTAL PROPOSED COB	203.2		51.6	18.0	23.0	21.0	9.5	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	3.5	4.5	4.0	0.0	5.0	10.0
Facility Unit Cost	\$ 95,000		\$ 600,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 800,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 200,000
Proposed Total Facility Cost	\$ 19,299,682		\$ 30,960,000	\$ 2,700,000	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 5,250,000	\$ 760,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 800,000	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 675,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ 2,000,000
Proposed Total Facility Cost / Capita	\$ 155.45	\$ -	\$ 249.36	\$ 21.75	\$ 37.05	\$ 42.29	\$ 6.12	\$ 0.40	\$ 1.01	\$ 9.67	\$ 6.44	\$ 11.28	\$ 5.44	\$ 16.11	\$ -	\$ 4.03	\$ 16.11
Proposed Total Facility Cost / Household (2.08)	\$ 323	\$ -	\$ 519	\$ 45	\$ 77	\$ 88	\$ 13	\$ 1	\$ 2	\$ 20	\$ 13	\$ 23	\$ 11	\$ 34	\$ -	\$ 8	\$ 34

*Average household size 2015 = 2.08

* Average 20' width assumed, off-street system only.

AQ = Aquatic Lands

PROPOSED FACILITIES
CITY OF BELLINGHAM
 (Within Planning Area)

(updated 4/29/2016)

Name	Community Center / Meeting Room (sf)	Informal Lawn (acres)	Dock/Pier (lf avg new and renovation)	Parking Lot Stalls	Amphitheater (ea, outdoor)	Concessions (sf)	Community Gardens (ea)	Trailhead Parking (ea)	Disc Golf (9 holes ea)	Spray Park (ea)	All Other Misc. \$\$	Notes
TOTAL PROPOSED COB	3,850.0	18.8	4,540.0	690.0	0.0	5,050.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	2.5	\$ 2,350,000.00	Funded Capital maintenance
Facility Unit Cost	\$ 500	\$ 100,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 500	\$ 200,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 1.00	TOTAL COSTS
Proposed Total Facility Cost	\$ 1,925,000	\$ 1,875,000	\$ 15,890,000	\$ 1,725,000	\$ -	\$ 2,525,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 2,350,000.00	\$ 103,809,682
Proposed Total Facility Cost / Capita	\$ 15.50	\$ 15.10	\$ 127.98	\$ 13.89	\$ -	\$ 20.34	\$ 1.61	\$ 32.22	\$ 2.01	\$ 6.04	\$ 18.93	\$ 817
Proposed Total Facility Cost / Household (2.08)	\$ 32	\$ 31	\$ 266	\$ 29	\$ -	\$ 42	\$ 3	\$ 67	\$ 4	\$ 13	\$ 39.37	\$ 1,700

Facility Minus Land Value \$ 84,510,000.00

*Average household size :

* Average 20' width assum

AQ = Aquatic Lands

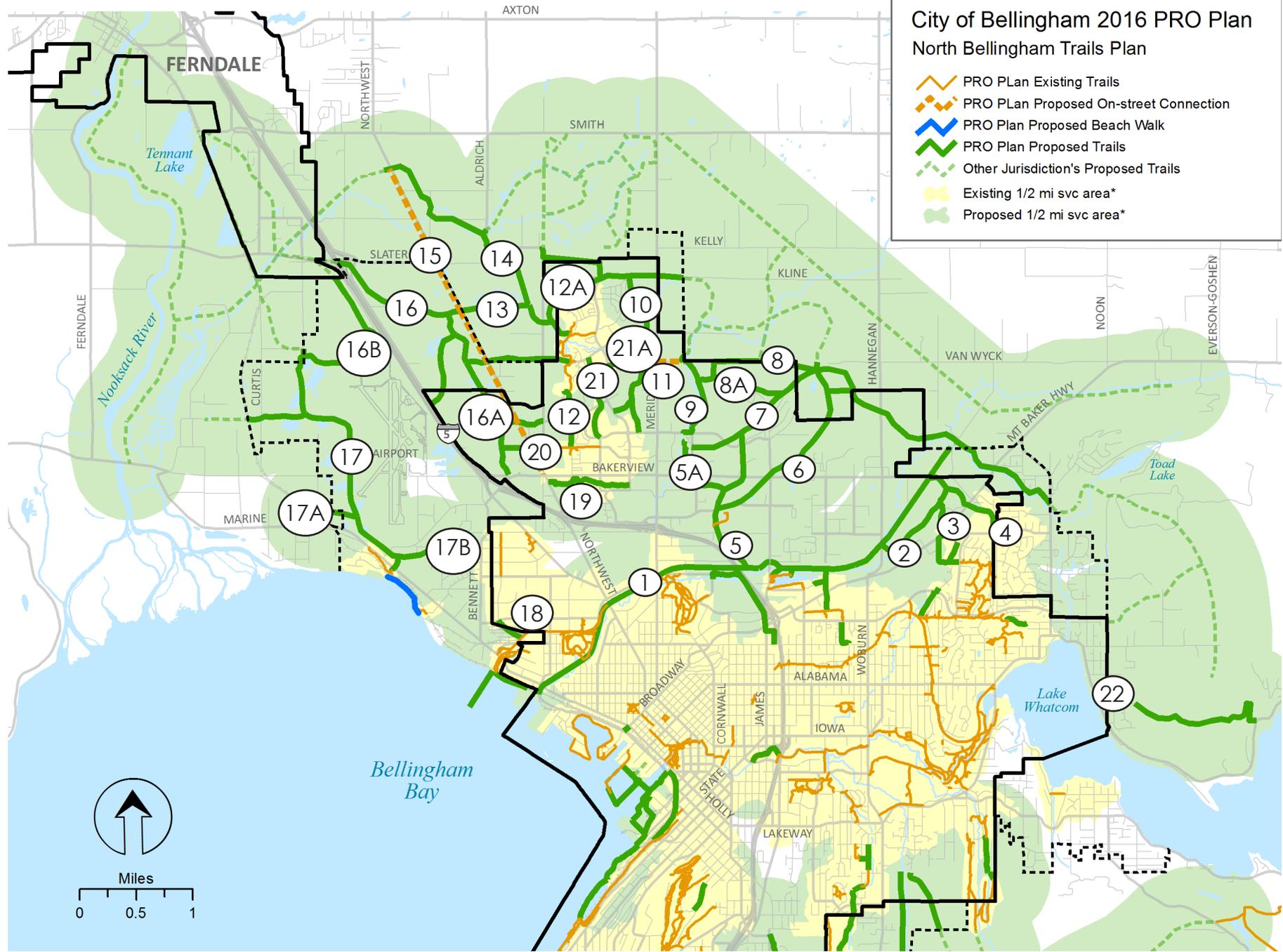
Appendix D

NORTH
BELLINGHAM
TRAIL PLAN

See the attached map and route descriptions.

City of Bellingham 2016 PRO Plan North Bellingham Trails Plan

-  PRO Plan Existing Trails
-  PRO Plan Proposed On-street Connection
-  PRO Plan Proposed Beach Walk
-  PRO Plan Proposed Trails
-  Other Jurisdiction's Proposed Trails
-  Existing 1/2 mi svc area*
-  Proposed 1/2 mi svc area*



North Bellingham Trail Route Descriptions

Map No.	Trail Name	Route Description	Length
1	Bay to Baker Trail	Multi-purpose trail from Roeder Avenue to City Limits on railroad right of way	5.18
2	Dewey Valley Loop	Loop trail off main Bay to Baker Trail through wooded hillside on DNR property	0.87
3	Railroad Trail Connector	Connection from Railroad Trail to Bay to Baker Trail through subdivision open space areas	1.03
4	Bay to Baker - Northridge Link	Multipurpose connector from Bay to Baker Trail (1) to northern Northridge Park	1.44
5	Bay to Baker - King Mountain Link	Connector from bay to Baker Trail north to Kellogg Road and King Mountain	1.42
5A	Deemer Trail	Neighborhood connector to Deemer Road	0.27
6	Queen Mountain Trail	Connector from (Trail 5) to King Mountain Trail Hub	1.77
7	Spring Creek to King Mountain Trail	Connector from Spring Creek Trail (10) to King Mountain Trail Hub	3.01
8	King Mountain East-West Trail	East-West Trail connecting Cordata Trails by way of Guide Meridian Overpass (11), going over King Mountain to Bay to Baker Trail (1), and eastward towards Squalicum Mountain	3.55
8A	King Mountain Trail	Trail from Van Wyck Park to Spring Creek	0.60
9	Spring Creek Trail	From Bakerview north to North Bear Creek Trail (16)	1.35
10	Cordata East Trail	From Kellogg Rd. and WCC north to North Bear Creek Trail (16) at Klein Road	1.71
11	Meridian Overpass	Bike/Ped Overpass from Meridian av Van Wyk/Thomas Roads	0.10
12	West Cordata Trail	From Division Street Trail (27) north to North Bear Creek Trail (16) near Aldrich Road, through proposed Aldrich Elementary School property	1.29
12A	West Cordata Trail Link	From Cordata Park through County property to Cordata Parkway	0.30
13	North Bear Creek Trail	From Bear Creek Trail (16) east to Cordata East Trail (10)	1.00
14	Old Silver Creek Trail	East-west connector from Cordata area west to NW Soccer Fields	2.02
15	Northwest Road Trail	Bike/Ped trail or sidewalks & bike lanes from I-5 north to Old Silver Creek Trail (14) at NW Soccer Fields	3.03
16	Bear Creek Trail	From Bakerview Road north to I-5 at Slater Road	2.75
16A	Cordata to Bear Creek Trail	From West Cordata Trail to Bear Creek Trail	0.50
16B	Bear Creek to Coast Millennium Trail	From Slater Road through north Airport property to Lost Lake area	1.72
17	Coast Millennium Trail	From Marine Drive south of Bellingham Airport north to the Bear Creek Trail (16B)	1.82
17A	West Extension of Coast Millennium Trail	From Coast Millennium Trail (17) west to Wynn Road	0.36
17B	East Extension of Coast Millennium Trail	From Coast Millennium Trail (17) east to Alderwood School	0.61
18	Laurelwood Trail	Extension south to Bay to Baker Trail (1) near Little Squalicum Park	0.26
19	Belleau Woods Trail	From Northwest Road Trail (15) to Cordata Parkway/Bellis Fair Mall	0.74
20	Division Street Trail	From Eliza Street west to Northwest Road Trail (15)	0.59
21	Cordata Pond Trail	From Kellogg Road north to Horton Road	0.77
21A	Cordata to Meridian Trail	Connector trail from Cordata Pond Trail (21) east to Meridian Overpass (11) and on to King Mountain East-West Trail (8)	0.31
22	Bellingham to Mount Baker Trail	From Cornwall Beach Park to the summit of Mt. Baker	n/a
Total Trail Miles Proposed within Bellingham and UGA			40.37

Appendix E

CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN (6 YEAR)

See the City's adopted 2015-2016 Parks and Recreation Department 6 year Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) on the following pages. Expenditures for 2015-2016 were authorized after budget adoption by the City Council. Expenditures identified for years beyond 2016 are included for information and review of potential future needs. Their inclusion is not a request for approval or budget authorization.

PARK DEPARTMENT					-----Estimates Subject to Revision and Council Approval-----				
Funding Sources and Projects/Purchases	Actual Costs, Revenues Through 2013	2014 Revised Budget	2015 Adopted	2016 Adopted	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Through 2020
Capital Projects/Purchases Paid from Multiple Funds:									
Bay to Baker Trail								Project Net Total	2,007,889
General Fund	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
Greenways Fund	56,153	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	56,153
Greenways III Fund	101,656	-	500,000	50,000	200,000	-	-	-	851,656
Parks Impact Fund	-	-	100,000	-	-	-	-	-	100,000
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000
Boulevard Park Shoreline								Project Net Total	1,413,409
Greenways III Fund	604,892	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	604,892
Parks Impact Fund	208,517	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	208,517
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	600,000	-	-	600,000
Boulevard to Waterfront Park Boardwalk								Project Net Total	8,683,446
1st 1/4% Real Estate Excise Tax Fund	182,344	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	182,344
Greenways III Fund	544,224	1,762,390	-	3,900,000	-	-	-	-	6,206,614
Federal Intergovt Revenue	(505,512)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(505,512)
Parks Impact Fund	-	-	-	800,000	-	-	-	-	800,000
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	2,000,000	-	-	2,000,000
Capitalized Labor for Park Projects								Projects Net Total	1,610,173
1st 1/4% Real Estate Excise Tax Fund	-	-	39,456	40,691	42,427	44,397	46,158	48,011	261,140
Greenways III Fund	-	-	112,329	115,889	120,886	126,537	131,621	136,972	744,234
Parks Impact Fund	-	-	91,334	94,214	98,255	102,828	106,926	111,242	604,799
Cordata Neighborhood Park								Project Net Total	3,933,506
Parks Impact Fund	51,858	281,648	50,000	250,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	1,633,506
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	2,300,000	-	-	2,300,000
Cornwall Beach Park								Project Net Total	11,262,994
Parks Impact Fund	62,994	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	262,994
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	-	10,000,000	11,000,000
Samish Crest Trail								Project Net Total	704,631
Beyond Greenways Fund	204,631	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	204,631
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	500,000	-	-	500,000
Squalicum Creek Park								Project Net Total	9,638,265
Squalicum Park/Olympic Fund	66,241	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66,241
Greenways III Fund	42,414	4,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,042,414
Parks Impact Fund	29,610	500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	529,610
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000,000	-	5,000,000

Capital Budget

PARK DEPARTMENT - Continued					-----Estimates Subject to Revision and Council Approval-----				
Funding Sources and Projects/Purchases	Actual Costs, Revenues Through 2013	2014 Revised Budget	2015 Adopted	2016 Adopted	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Through 2020
Capital Projects/Purchases Paid from Multiple Funds (continued):									
Waterfront Commercial Green								Project Net Total	1,463,741
Parks Impact Fund	863,741	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	863,741
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	-	600,000	-	600,000
Whatcom Waterway Park								Project Net Total	1,018,285
1st 1/4% Real Estate Excise Tax Fund	28,205	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,205
Federal Intergovt Revenue	(9,920)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(9,920)
Unfunded	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000
Capital Projects/Purchases Paid from a Single Fund:									
General Fund									
Fleet Add 1/2 Ton Full Size Truck	--	--	-	-	-	22,000	-	-	22,000
Fleet Add 1/2 Ton Mid Size Truck	--	--	-	-	-	19,000	-	-	19,000
Fleet Add Beach Cleaning Machine	--	--	-	-	13,000	-	-	-	13,000
Fleet Add One Ton Truck for Transporting Large Area Mower	--	--	-	-	33,000	-	-	-	33,000
Fleet Add Power Roller	--	--	-	-	38,000	-	-	-	38,000
1st 1/4% Real Estate Excise Tax Fund									
Annual Boundary Surveys	-	-	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	36,000
Annual Park Playground Equipment Parts	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	140,000
Annual Park Sign Replacement	-	-	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	90,000
Sidewalk and Curb Replacement	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	175,000
Trail Surface/Drainage Repairs	-	35,000	34,000	34,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	243,000
2nd 1/4% Real Estate Excise Tax Fund									
Bloedel Dock Repairs	-	-	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	125,000
Cemetery Scatter Garden	-	-	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	25,000
Parks Facility Asphalt Patching and Resurfacing	-	-	15,000	15,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	130,000
Playground Repairs and Improvements	-	-	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000

PARK DEPARTMENT - Continued					-----Estimates Subject to Revision and Council Approval-----				
Funding Sources and Projects/Purchases	Actual Costs, Revenues Through 2013	2014 Revised Budget	2015 Adopted	2016 Adopted	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Through 2020
Capital Projects/Purchases Paid from a Single Fund (Continued):									
Greenways III Fund									
Greenway Land Acquisition	-	3,880,000	3,880,000	-	-	-	-	-	7,760,000
Interurban Trail - Chuckanut	-	120,000	-	-	-	680,000	-	-	800,000
Lake Padden Park Improvements	-	-	-	165,000	700,000	-	-	-	865,000
Whirlwind Beach Parking and Trail Improvements	-	-	330,000	-	-	-	-	-	330,000
Parks Impact Fund									
Cordata Trail to Cordata Elementary School	-	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	200,000
Land Acquisition - Park in Developing Area	-	-	-	500,000	-	-	-	-	500,000
Miscellaneous Community Parks Construction	-	-	-	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	500,000
Neighborhood Park Improvements	-	-	50,000	50,000	-	-	-	-	100,000
Sidewalks, Paths and Trails	-	50,000	100,000	-	-	-	-	-	150,000
Golf Course Fund									
Fleet Purchase of Surplus Tractor	--	--	9,424	-	-	-	-	-	9,424
Trenching Machine	--	--	29,100	-	-	-	-	-	29,100
Capital Plan Total Estimated Expenditures	3,047,560	10,674,038	5,931,643	6,205,794	2,621,568	9,620,762	6,110,705	10,522,225	54,734,295
Less Unfunded Expenditures	-	-	-	-	-	(8,400,000)	(5,600,000)	(10,000,000)	(24,000,000)
Less Anticipated Revenue	(515,432)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(515,432)
Net Outlay Capital Projects/Purchases	2,532,128	10,674,038	5,931,643	6,205,794	2,621,568	1,220,762	510,705	522,225	30,218,863

Appendix F

REVENUE SOURCE DESCRIPTIONS

The following is a general description of the different types of revenue sources that may be used to fund park, recreation and open space programs or facilities. Some are restricted to development only while others may be used for operations and maintenance. These are listed in no particular order and with no reference to the feasibility or recommendation of implementing each revenue source.

General Fund

The General Fund is derived from property taxes, licenses and permits, intergovernmental revenues including state and federal grants, service charges and fees, fines and forfeitures, and other miscellaneous revenues. General funds are used to finance most government operations including staff, equipment, capital facility and other requirements. Park, recreation and open space programs and operations are funded primarily from general fund accounts.

- Sales Tax - is the City's largest single revenue source and may be used for any legitimate City purpose. The City has no direct control over this source; it is collected and distributed by the State and may fluctuate with general economic and local business conditions.
- Property Tax - under Washington State's constitution, cities may levy a property tax rate not to exceed \$3.60 per \$1,000 of the assessed value of all taxable property within incorporation limits. The total of all property taxes for all taxing authorities, however, cannot exceed 1.0% of assessed valuation, or \$10.00 per \$1,000 of value. If the taxes of all districts exceed the 1.0% of \$10.00 amount, each is proportionately reduced until the total is at or below the 1.0% limit.

In 2001, Washington State law was amended by Proposition 747, a statutory provision limiting the growth of regular property taxes to 1.0% per year, after adjustments for new construction. Any proposed increases over this amount are subject to a referendum vote.

The statute was intended to control local governmental spending by controlling the annual rate of growth of property taxes. In practice, however, the statute can reduce the effective property tax yield to an annual level far below a city's levy authorization, particularly when property values are increasing rapidly.

Special Revenues

Special revenues are derived from state and local option taxes dedicated to specific expenditure purposes, such as the motor vehicle

tax, motor excise tax, real estate excise tax, motel and hotel tax, public art, criminal justice, paths and trails, convention center and the like. Some special revenues may be used to finance limited capital facilities, such as roads or parks, where the local option allows - such as the local real estate excise tax (REET).

Debt Service Funds

Debt service funds are derived from a dedicated portion of the property tax or general fund proceeds to repay the sale of general obligation (voted) and Councilmanic (non-voted) bonds. Both types of bonds may be used to finance park facility improvements - but not maintenance or operational costs.

- Councilmanic (limited or non-voted) bonds - may be issued without voter approval by the Council for any facility development purpose. The total amount of all outstanding non-voted general obligation debt may not exceed 1.5% of the assessed valuation of all city property.

Limited general obligation bonds must be paid from general governmental revenues. Therefore, debt service on these bonds may reduce the amount of revenue available for current operating expenditures and the financial flexibility of the Council may need to fund annual budget priorities. For this reason, Councilmanic bonds are usually only used for the most pressing capital improvement issues. This method was used to fund the 2006 improvements at Civic Athletic Complex.

- Unlimited general obligation bonds - must be approved by at least 60% of resident voters during an election which has a turnout of at least 40% of those who voted in the last state general election. The bond may be repaid from a special levy, which is not governed by the 1.0% statutory limitation on the property tax growth rate. Total indebtedness as a percent of the assessed valuation that may be incurred by limited and unlimited general obligation bonds together, however, may not exceed:
 - 2.5% - provided that indebtedness in excess of 1.5% is for general purposes,
 - 5.0% - provided that indebtedness in excess of 2.5% is for utilities, and
 - 7.5% - provided that indebtedness in excess of 5.0% is for parks and open space development.

Monies authorized by limited and unlimited types of bonds must be spent within 3 years of authorization to avoid arbitrage requirements unless invested at less than bond yield. In addition, bonds may be used to construction but not maintain or operate facilities. Facility maintenance and operation costs must be paid from general governmental revenue or by voter authorization of special annual or biannual operating levies or by user fees or charges.

Enterprise Funds

Enterprise funds are derived from the user fees and charges levied for utility operations including water and sewer, storm drainage, regional water, solid waste and cemetery. The enterprise revenues are used to pay operating costs, retire capital facility debt and plan future replacement and expansion projects. Enterprise funds may be created for a park or recreation activity that has a revenue source sufficient to finance all costs. Enterprise funds have been used on a limited basis for golf courses, marinas and similar self-financing operations.

Special Legislation

Local government representatives can seek state enabling legislation authorizing new or special revenue sources. Senate Bill 5972 (RCW 82.46) is an example of one possible legislative solution. The 1982 bill gave city governments the option of adding an additional 0.0025% increment to the real estate excise tax (REET) for the sole purpose of financing local capital improvement projects including parks, utilities and other infrastructure except governmental buildings.

Like bonds, Senate Bill 5972 funds may not be used to finance operation and maintenance requirements.

Unlimited General Obligation Bonds

Bellingham may come to depend on voter referendums as a means of financing a larger portion of the capital improvement program, since unlimited obligation bonds are not paid from the property tax subject to the 1.0% limitation.

Voter approved capital improvements may be more representative of actual resident priorities than some other methods of validating capital expenditures, and will at the least, ensure referendum submittals provide widespread benefits. However, bond revenue cannot be spent for maintenance and operational issues - and bond referendums must be approved by a margin over 60% of the registered voters who participated in the last election.

General Levy Rate Referendums

Proposition 747, the statutory provision limiting the growth of regular property taxes to 1.0% per year, can be waived by referendum approval of a simple (50%) majority of Bellingham's registered voters. Voters can be asked to approve a resetting of the property tax levy rate that would adjust the amount of revenue the city can generate. The new total revenue that can be generated by a resetting of the rate would be subject to the same 1.0% limitation, however, and the total amount of revenue and the resulting property tax rate would start to decline again in accordance with the Proposition.

However, the adjusted rate and revenue could finance specific capital improvement projects - or programs that involve construction, maintenance and operations aspects that a majority of the voters are willing to pay for under the adjusted rate.

The resetting of the rate can be permanent, subject to the provisions of Proposition 747. Or temporary, where the rate is adjusted until a specific amount of revenue has been generated to finance a project or program - whereupon the rate reverts to the original or a specified amount defined in the referendum.

Bellingham voters have passed three levy rate referendums, to the fund the Greenway Program acquisitions, improvements and maintenance endowment. The current levy will expire in 2016.

Environmental Impact Mitigation - Subdivision Regulations

City subdivision policies require developers of subdivisions within the City, or on lands that may eventually annex to the City, to provide suitably designed and located open spaces, woodland preserves, trail systems, playgrounds and other park or recreational facilities. Such facilities may include major components of the park or recreational system that may be affected by the project's location or development. The City may

also consider requiring developers to provide acceptable long-term methods of managing and financing maintenance requirements. Attractive management systems could include:

- Ownership by a private organization - like a tennis, swimming or golf club, who assumes responsibility for all maintenance responsibilities and costs,
- Ownership by a homeowners or common property owners association - who may contract maintenance responsibilities and assess property owner's annual costs.
- Dedication of property - to an adjacent city or school district who assumes maintenance responsibilities using local city or school funds, or
- Creation of a special recreation service district - where locally elected district representatives manage maintenance requirements and select a local method of financing.

The City should not accept title and maintenance responsibilities unless the land or facility will be a legitimate community park or recreation element that may be supported using public financing. The City may be contracted by any of the other agencies to provide or oversee a maintenance contract on the owner's behalf provided all City costs are reimbursed by an approved method of local financing.

Growth Impact Fees

Bellingham has adopted a growth impact fee provision in accordance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). A park impact fee is applied to all proposed residential developments within the city as a means to maintaining park, recreation and open space levels-of-service. The ordinance makes provisions for setting aside the resources, including lands or monies, necessary to offset the impact new residential development project has on park, recreation and open space facilities.

Land contributions can be accepted in lieu of impact fees if they will be suitable sites for future facilities. Land and fees accumulated under the ordinance must be invested within a reasonable time of impact assessment or be returned to the contributing developer.

Inter-local Agreements

Bellingham could work with Whatcom County to determine an equitable means whereby growth mitigation park impact fees can be collected for residential developments occurring within the urban growth area outside of existing city limits, but within the area the city eventually expects to annex.

A joint growth impact fee should be collected where the county and city maintain the same local and regional or citywide level-of-service (LOS) presently existing within the incorporated (city) and unincorporated (county) sections, and for the urban growth area in total. A common fee could be collected by each agency, then shared on a project by project basis for improvements benefitting local neighborhoods (and potential residents of proposed subdivisions) or residents of the community and urban growth area-at-large.

The City should also work with the Bellingham School District to determine to what extent the City could cooperatively finance shared or common facility improvements. Such improvements could use co-located school and park sites, commonly improved and scheduled fields and facilities, and the sharing of park and school growth impact fees - among other options.

It is to Bellingham's advantage to assist the school district with the development and operation of common facilities since these facilities serve residents of the entire city.

In return, however, the city and school district must determine some equitable means whereby the city and school district perform or reimburse each other for some of the added facility maintenance and operational impacts that users create on each agency's facilities.

User Fees and Charges

The City may increase the number of activities subject to user fees and charges and use the proceeds to purchase land, develop, operate and maintain facilities where all costs are reimbursed by the revenue obtained. Essentially, the City has become a facility developer/operator providing whatever facilities or services the market will support from user revenue.

User fees have been and could be used to provide facilities for park and recreation activities whose profit margins are too low to sustain commercial operations or whose benefiting user group may extend beyond county boundaries. Possible user fee financed facilities include indoor tennis and racquetball facilities, golf courses, horse stables and equestrian centers, boating resorts, recreational vehicle parks and any other facility where demand is sizable enough to warrant a user fee financing approach.

In essence, the market determines which facility's revenues equal costs, and thereby, which programs the City would provide on a direct costs/benefit basis. To date, City user fee revenues provide a significant source of operating funds for recreational programs. While important, this source of finance will likely never pay full costs for all programs, or any operation, maintenance or development costs.

Special Funding Sources

Bellingham has approved or could submit for approval the following special financing options.

- REET (Real Estate Excise Tax) - RCW 82.46 gives city governments the option of adding up to two 0.0025% increments to the real estate excise tax (REET) for the sole purpose of financing local capital improvement projects. REET funds may not be used to finance operation and maintenance requirements.

Bellingham has adopted both REET options.

REET remains a viable financing tool for park, recreation and open space acquisition and development projects. However, REET funds are to be used for all city capital requirements, not just park purposes.

- Greenway Funds - in 1990, 1997 and 2006, Bellingham voters approved property tax levies to fund the acquisition and development of park, recreation and open space projects. The most recent levy, which represented an annual cost of \$57.00 per \$100,000 in property value, will expire in the year 2016. The three levies combined will generate a total of \$71 million in funding.

State Grants

Washington State funds and administers a number of programs for non-motorized transportation and trails purposes using special state revenue programs.

- Washington Wildlife Recreation Program (WWRP) - provides funds for the acquisition and development of conservation and recreation lands. The Habitat Conservation Account of the WWRP program provides funds to acquire critical habitat, natural areas and wildlife categories. The Outdoor Recreation Account of the WWRP program provides funds for local parks, state parks, trails and water access categories.
- Aquatic Lands Enhancement Act (ALEA) - uses revenues obtained by the Washington Department of Natural Resources from the lease of state owned tidal lands. The ALEA program is administered by the IAC for the development of shoreline related trail improvements and may be applied for up to 50% of the proposal.
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) - a Department of Ecology administered water quality program provides grants for up to 75% of the cost of water quality/fish enhancement studies. Referendum 39 monies can be applied to park developments that propose to restore, construct or otherwise enhance fish producing streams, ponds or other water bodies.
- Capital Projects Fund for Washington Heritage - provides funds for the restoration and renovation projects for historical sites and buildings by local governments and nonprofit agencies. The program is administered by the Heritage Resource Center (HRC).
- Boating Facilities Program - approved in 1964 under the state Marine Recreation Land Act, the program earmarks motor vehicle fuel taxes paid by watercraft for boating-related lands and facilities. Program funds may be used for fresh or saltwater launch ramps, transient moorage and upland support facilities.
- Washington State Public Works Commission - initiated a program that may be used for watercraft sanitary pump-out facilities.
- Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) - provides grants to cities, counties and qualified nonprofit organizations for the improvement and maintenance of existing, and the development of new athletic facilities.
- Non-Highway & Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program (NOVA) - provides funding to develop and manage recreation opportunities for users of off-road vehicles and non-highway roads. An allocation (1%) from the state Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax (MVFT) and off-road vehicle (ORV) permit fees fund the program. NOVA funds may be used for the planning, acquisition, development, maintenance and operation of off-road vehicle and non-highway road recreation opportunities.
- Firearms and Archery Range Recreation Program (FARR) - provides funds to acquire, develop and renovate public and private nonprofit firearm and archery training, practice and recreation facilities. The program is funded from a portion of the fees charged for concealed weapons permits.

Federal Grants

Federal monies are available for the construction of outdoor park facilities from the National Park Service (NPS) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) administers the grants.

- *National Park Service (NPS) grants* - usually do not exceed \$150,000 per project and must be matched on an equal basis by the local jurisdiction. The IAC assigns each project application a priority on a competitive statewide basis according to each jurisdiction's need, population benefit, natural resource enhancements and a number of other factors. In the past few years, project awards have been extremely competitive as the federal government significantly reduced the amount of federal monies available to the NPS program. The state increased contributions to the program over the last few years using a variety of special funds, but the overall program could be severely affected by pending federal deficit cutting legislation.

Applicants must submit a detailed comprehensive park, recreation and open space plan to be eligible for NPS funding. The jurisdiction's plan must demonstrate facility need, and prove that the jurisdiction's project proposal will adequately satisfy local park, recreation and open space needs and interests. Due to diminished funding, however, IAC grants have not been a significant source of project monies for city or other local jurisdictions in recent years.

- *Transportation Enhancement Grants* - can be used to finance on and off-road non-motorized trail enhancements along major and minor arterial collector roads or sometimes, within separate trail corridors. The program was adopted in 1993 and is administered by the Regional Transportation Organization on behalf of the US Department of Transportation.

Applicants must demonstrate the proposed trail improvements will increase access to non-motorized recreational and commuter transportation alternatives.

- *National Recreational Trails Program (N RTP)* - is the successor to the National Recreational Trails Act (NRFTA). Funds may be used to rehabilitate and maintain recreational trails that provide a backcountry experience. In some cases, the funds may be used to create new "linking" trails, trail relocations and educational programs.
- *Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG)* - supports development and renovation of areas for non-trailer-able recreational boats over 26 feet and related support elements on US navigable waters. Funds may be used to produce and distribute information and educational materials. The federal program compliments the state-funded Boating Facilities Program (BFP) administered for smaller vessels.

Recreation Service Districts (RCW Chapter 36.69)

State legislation authorizes the establishment of recreation service districts as special units of government that may be wholly independent of any involvement with a county or any other local public agency or jurisdiction. Districts may provide recreational facilities that are specific to the district's boundaries in return for the district residents' agreement to pay the special development, operation and maintenance costs utilizing special financing devices.

Special recreation service districts must be initiated by local jurisdiction resolution or citizen petition following hearings on feasibility and costs studies of the proposed district's facility development or operation costs. The proposal must ultimately be submitted for voter approval including all provisions relating to any special financing agreements. The voters must initially approve the formation of the district and may designate existing elected officials, or a body appointed by existing elected officials, or elect district commissioners or officers solely responsible for park and recreation policy. Separate voter approvals must be sought for 3-year operating levies providing maintenance, repair, operating costs and facility acquisition and development projects.

A recreation service district can be flexible and used to provide local recreational facilities in the same variety of custom service choices with the exception that the governing board may be separately elected. There are no limitations on the number of separate recreation service districts that can be established within a county, provided no district overlaps another.

Metropolitan Park Districts (SB 2557)

In 2002, the state legislature authorized the establishment of metropolitan park districts as special units of government that may be wholly independent of any involvement with a city, county or any other local public agency or jurisdiction. Like recreation service districts, metropolitan park districts may provide recreational facilities that are specific to the district's boundaries in return for the district residents' agreement to pay the special development, operation and maintenance costs utilizing special financing devices.

Metropolitan park districts must be initiated by local government resolution or citizen petition following hearings on feasibility and costs studies of the proposed district's facility development or operation costs. The proposal must ultimately be submitted for voter approval (50%) including all provisions relating to any special financing agreements. The voters must initially approve the formation of the district, and may designate existing elected officials, or a body appointed by existing elected officials or elect district commissioners or officers solely responsible for park and recreation policy.

Unlike recreation service districts, voters must also approve the establishment of a continuous levy as a junior taxing district - compared with 3 year levies under a recreation service district to provide maintenance, repair, operating costs and facility acquisition and development projects.

Like the recreation service district, a metropolitan park district can be flexible and used to provide local recreational facilities in the same variety of custom service choices with the exception that the financing levy may be as a junior taxing district with a continuous levy.

There are no limitations on the number of separate recreation service districts that can be established within a city, county or as a combination of multiple cities and counties provided no district overlaps another.

The Tacoma Metropolitan Park District was established in 1909 and is the largest and oldest recreation park district in the State of Washington. The Chuckanut Community Forest Park District was established in 2013 for the specific purpose of raising funds to pay back the loan used to acquire the Fairhaven Highlands development property.

Special Use Agreements

Special property agreements can often be used instead of property purchases to secure public use rights for land or property at no cost or a nominal fee, particularly where the possible public use is of benefit to the private landowner. Some forms of special use agreements can provide favorable tax benefits if the use agreement can be shown to have an assigned value.

The City could expand the use agreement concept to include complete development, operation or maintenance responsibilities. Package lease agreements will usually provide more effectively maintained facilities than possible where the City must staff specialized, small work crews.

Sometimes package lease agreements covering use and maintenance aspects may be the only way of resolving an equitable agreement with the private ownership. This may include trails on utility corridors where the ownership may prefer to control development and maintenance activities, and the City may prefer to avoid any implied responsibility or liability for the utility worthiness which the City's maintenance of a trail system could imply.

Public/Private Service Contracts

Private market skills and capital may be employed in a variety of ways including the use of public/private services contracts where a private party can be contracted to operate and maintain a facility for a fixed fee cost. Service contracts can be very efficient where the activities are small, scattered in location, seasonal, expert or experimental. Service contracts are also relatively easy to initiate or terminate if area demand fails to provide sufficient use or revenue to justify continued operation.

Service contracts may be very flexible and can include agreements with city, school district or local user groups who can or would be interested in sustaining the activity on a subsidized or sweat-equity basis on exchange for the facility.

Public/Private Concessions

The City could lease a portion of a site or facility to a private party in exchange for a fixed fee or a percentage of gross receipts. The private operator assumes operation and maintenance responsibilities and costs in exchange for a profit. For certain types of facilities, such as enterprise fund account facilities like golf courses, the City's portion of the profits may be used to pay facility development and/or operation and maintenance costs at the same or for similar facility developments.

The City may save considerable monies on concessions where the activities are specialized, seasonal, experimental or unproven. Concessions can be easily initiated, provide direct user benefit/cost reimbursements and relieve the City of a capital risk should market or user interest fail to materialize to at least break-even levels.

Concessionaires could operate a wide variety of park and recreational facilities including horse stables and equestrian centers, boating and bicycle rentals, special group and recreational vehicle compounds, athletic field and court facilities, swimming pools and beaches, shooting ranges and ORV tracks among others.

Public/Private Joint Development Ventures

The City can enter into an agreement with a private or public developer to jointly own or lease land for an extended period of time. The purpose of the venture would be to allow the development, operation and maintenance of a major recreational facility or activity in exchange for a fixed lease cost or a percentage of gross receipts.

The developer assumes development, operation and maintenance responsibilities, costs and all market risks in exchange for a market opportunity providing a profitable return not otherwise available. The City realizes the development of a facility in exchange for a low minimum capital return and no or very little capital risk.

Joint development agreements represent an ultimate benefit/cost resolution that may also provide public revenue that the City could use for other development opportunities. Examples include the possible joint development on City lands of equestrian centers, marinas, hostels, recreational vehicle campgrounds, seminar retreats, special resorts, indoor racquetball courts and athletic clubs, swimming pools and water parks, golf courses, gun and archery ranges and ORV competition tracts, among others.

Self-Help Land Leases

There are instances where an activity is so specialized in appeal or of a service area so broad in scope that it cannot be equitably financed using general public funds. Specialized user groups should be provided options for developing or maintaining facilities in ways that account for equitable public cost reimbursements.

Examples include the use of land leases where the City may lease land at low or no cost where a user group or club assumes responsibility for the development, operation and maintenance of the facility. The club could provide volunteer help or use club finances to develop, operate and maintain the facility as a means of meeting user benefit/cost objectives.

Land lease agreements could accommodate organized athletics like soccer, baseball, football, softball and rugby; or very specialized facilities like shooting ranges, archery fields, ORV trails and ultra-light aircraft parks, among others.

Self-Help Contract Agreements

The City can purchase land, develop, operate and maintain a specialized facility under a negotiated contract agreement where a special interest group agrees to defray all costs in addition to or in lieu of a user fee as a means of meeting user benefit/cost objectives. The agreements can be quite flexible and could contract the City, the user group, another public agency or a private operator to be developer/operator.

Contract agreements could accommodate a range of more expensive special purpose facility developments including high quality athletic competition facilities for league organizations and specialized facility developments like shooting ranges and ORV tracks when and where the user organization can provide financial commitments.