

SUBMITTED BY TINA LASSEN
10/21/19
TO PLANNING COMMISSION

During public hearings on July 29, August 19 and September 16, 2019, the Planning Commission sought feedback from the public regarding the Westside Area Concept Plan Report's "Park & Open Space Framework." After review and deliberation, the Planning Commission submits the following recommendations to the City Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Park/Trail/Open Space Acquisition–

Three neighborhood parks, one in each new Westside neighborhood as defined in the Westside Concept Plan. Prioritize centrally located neighborhood parks where zoning facilitates greater housing capacity. Precise locations to be determined*.

One larger community park of 20-30 acres. This may or may not replace one of the neighborhood parks above. The specific location would be determined in a future update of the Park and Recreation District's Master Plan.

Trails. Link neighborhoods, parks and open spaces with trails or multi-use paths for transportation and recreation. Top priorities for trails are:

•**Henderson Creek Trail:** Develop an off-street path and riparian corridor adjacent to Henderson Creek from West Cascade Avenue to Belmont Avenue. Preliminary recommendation is a 25-foot-wide corridor on both sides of the creek, measured from the centerline, with a surface appropriate for bicycles and pedestrians. This trail would link to/incorporate the existing Westside Community Trail.

•**Ridgeline Corridor Trail:** Develop an east-west off-street path from Frankton Road to Rand Road. Because of steep terrain, this trail will be most appropriate for pedestrian use. (*More here on trail surface, width, etc.*)

Additional Open Space.

•Coordinate with the Hood River County School District to establish guidelines for public use of ballfields and other recreation facilities.

•*Require (?)* open space tracts and community gathering spaces as part of Planned Unit Developments, and higher-density and mixed-use projects.

Criteria for Park/Trail/Open Space Acquisition–

Establish a park acquisition formula. Develop specific criteria to guide land purchases. Planning Commission suggests a strategy that includes proximity to existing and future residents, acreage per capita, and minimum standards for park amenities.

Establish a land acquisition plan. In order to ensure land for parks is secured before it is committed to other uses, create a specific plan for when land should be purchased. Planning Commission recommends acquiring park land for a neighborhood park by the time 50 percent of residential units have been built in that neighborhood. (*What about trails?*)

Funding–

System Development Charges. *(Recommendations to put more teeth in how SDCs are allocated?)*

Public donations. Establish a fund for public donations to support the purchase of park land open space and related improvements.

Environmental Considerations–

Retention of tree groves. *(Can we enforce this with a code change? Involve Tree Committee.)*

Limited development of terraced areas. Recommendations limit development of terraced areas that are 25% slope and greater, except where needed for street connections and pedestrian connections, resulting in a network of public and private open spaces that can benefit birds and wildlife.

Stormwater management. *(Include? Discuss.)*

Implementation–

Adopt a Parks Master Plan in coordination with the Parks District and other affected local agencies.

Adopt a parkland and open space dedication ordinance to help implement the plan.

Coordination with other City plans and frameworks. The Park & Open Space Framework should complement the Bicycle & Pedestrian Framework as well as the Streets & Transit Framework. The Henderson Creek and Westside trails should be included in the Transportation System Plan.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The Park and Open Space Framework is intended to be flexibly applied, and to help inform future efforts by the Hood River Valley Park and Recreation District to develop an updated Parks Master Plan.

*The neighborhood park target areas are preferred locations; they are not intended to be mandatory locations. Planning Commission recognizes that flexibility will be needed to acquire land for parks through a variety of means including advance acquisition, dedication during the development review process, gifting, etc.