

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE ELEMENT



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VISION

A diverse mix of park and recreation amenities, open spaces, and trails are distributed throughout the City and accessible to the majority of the population. Nonmotorized trails and paths connect residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and other attractions. People are visiting Auburn because of the robust inventory and quality of park spaces and associated event programming. Community facilities are accessible and are serving the needs of our seniors, youth, and the rest of the community.

INTRODUCTION

Adequate parks and recreation facilities are an essential amenity to maintain a suitable quality of life in the community. As the population of Auburn grows, the demand for its parks and recreational programs will increase. To maintain Auburn's quality of life, the supply of these parks and programs must keep pace with the demand placed on them by a growing population.

Open space also plays a key role in the quality of life in an area. While many understand the concept of the attraction of the western United States and its "open spaces," the concept of open space becomes less clear when it comes to open space and its appropriateness to a City such as Auburn. The policies below provide a definition of open space as applied to Auburn and its surroundings and provide a framework for the identification and preservation of these areas.

VALUES

Character: Parks, art, and open space are well designed and appropriately integrated into their surrounding community.

Wellness: Recreation programs and park amenities are available and accessible to the entire community.

Service: Awareness of parks, trails, the arts, and park programming are delivered to residents, employees and visitors through a thorough mix of media.

Economy: Our parks, open spaces, and events are a draw to not only those who live and work in Auburn, but those who reside outside of Auburn.

Celebration: Our parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces are used to promote our history, our diversity, and the arts.

Environment: Parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces are designed and operated in a manner that protects and preserves the environment.

Sustainability: Park facilities incorporate low-impact development and sustainable development and operation practices.

PLANNING APPROACH

Objectives and Policies

Objective 1.1. To provide a broad and comprehensive park system that meets the recreational needs of all segments of the community.

Policies

PR-1 The Auburn Park and Recreation Plan, as may be amended or updated in the future is hereby adopted and incorporated as part of the Auburn Comprehensive Plan.

PR-2 New developments shall contribute to the development of new parks at a level commensurate with their share of new facility needs as established by the Park and Recreation Plan. If the City determines

that the development does not contain an acceptable park site, the City shall require the payment of cash in lieu of land. The funds shall be used to acquire land and/or develop recreational facilities at a location deemed appropriate by the City. Criteria for site acceptability and appropriateness shall be environmental limitations, accessibility, maintenance costs, consistency with the Parks and Recreation Plan and the ability to meet more of the Community's recreational needs by the coordinated development of parks located elsewhere.

- PR-3 The City shall explore all means of funding the purchase of park land including, but not limited to, bond issuance, the collection of cash in lieu of land and federal, state, or county grants.
- PR-4 The City shall evaluate the impacts of new development on parks and recreational resources through the SEPA environmental review process, and shall take appropriate steps to mitigate significant adverse impacts.
- PR-5 The City recognizes the important recreational and transportation roles played by local and regional trail systems. The City shall continue to develop a system of separated trail facilities to move residents through our community and to adjoining communities. The local system should be designed to link up with regional trails and designated bicycle routes on roads. Safe routes along existing and proposed roadways should be improved and marked for cyclists. The City should continue to work with King County and other jurisdictions to maintain existing facilities and improve nonmotorized transportation links.
- PR-6 The City shall continue to provide a broad variety of organized recreational and cultural opportunities for all residents. Consideration of the diverse interests and abilities of our residents shall be integral to the development of athletic, cultural, specialized recreation and leisure and

educational programs and facilities offered or maintained by the City.

- PR-7 The City shall establish and implement level-of-service standards for parks, park facilities, open space, and trails.
- PR-8 Park impact fees should be established that help fund the future development of new parks, park facilities, trails, and acquisition of open space that meet the needs of an increasing population.

Objective 1.2. To provide for an adequate and diverse supply of open spaces. Open space is typically defined as land that will remain undeveloped or only lightly developed (a trail, for instance) and will be managed to protect and enhance the natural environment.

Policies

- PR-9 The City shall seek to retain as open space those areas having a unique combination of open space values, including: separation or buffering between incompatible land uses; visual delineation of the City or a distinct area or neighborhood of the City; productive wildlife habitat; wetlands; floodwater or stormwater storage; stormwater purification; recreational value; historic or cultural value; aesthetic value; and educational value.
- PR-10 The City shall seek to retain as open space areas where the soils have been identified as having the potential for severe or very severe erosion, landslide hazard, or seismic hazard.
- PR-11 The City shall seek to retain as open space those areas that provide essential habitat for any rare, threatened, or endangered plant or wildlife species.
- PR-12 The City shall seek to acquire open space lands that provide significant environmental or social value. Such open space shall be managed to conserve and improve the natural, visual, historical, and cultural resources associated with the land.
- PR-13 All areas of regulatory floodway within the City shall be retained as undeveloped

open space. However, this shall not preclude the relocation of the Mill Creek floodway, as long as any such relocation is consistent with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program.

PR-14 Development within areas designated for open space uses shall generally be nonintensive in character. Development shall be designed and sited in a manner that minimizes or mitigates disruption of the most important open space values of the site. Appropriate uses within designated open space areas may include (but are not necessarily limited to): parks and other recreational facilities; agriculture; stormwater storage; and watershed. It is recognized that designating private property for open

space uses does not establish or promote any public access rights to such property.

PR-15 The City shall explore all means of open space acquisition including the outright purchase of land or the purchase of conservation easements.

PR-16 The City shall pursue opportunities to provide active and passive recreational opportunities, and enhance wetland and wildlife habitat, within the Auburn Environmental Park, generally located north of West Main Street, and south of 15th Street NW between SR 167 and the Interurban Trail. Grant funding and cooperative relationships with recreational and wildlife organizations shall be pursued to implement this policy.

