

CITY OF SALEM
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (SPRAB)
ON-LINE MEETING AGENDA

Si necesita ayuda para comprender esta información, por favor llame 503-588-6003.

Individuals needing special accommodations such as sign language, foreign language interpreters or equipment for the hearing impaired must request such services at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. To request accommodations or services, please call 503-588-6211 or 503-588-6003 (TTD/TTY 503-588-6439), or by e-mail at: twhitler@cityofsalem.net at least two business days in advance.

This regular meeting of the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will take place online. This page will tell you how to participate in this digital format. The agenda for the meeting is on page two.

DIGITAL MEETING INFORMATION

The City will be using ZOOM software to host this meeting. If you are new to ZOOM, you will be able to access the meeting without downloading the application. If you wish to download the software, that option will be provided when you click on the link to the meeting.

To access the March 11, 2021, 5:30 p.m. Zoom meeting from computer, tablet, or smartphone click on the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/94883284768>

Live Stream You Tube Video:

[Click here to view a live stream of this meeting on YouTube.](#)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Contact Toni Whitler, Parks Planner, at twhitler@cityofsalem.net if you wish to provide public comment on any agenda or non-agenda item.

Email comments: Please provide email comments no later than 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting.

Live, public comment: Please contact Toni Whitler no later than 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting.

Public comments will only be addressed during the public comment period as noted on the agenda (see Agenda on page 2) and will include comment on agenda and non-agenda items. Email comments submitted will be addressed during the comment period.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The City of Salem and the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board thank you for your support by using the digital format. For any questions or concerns about the above information, please contact Toni Whitler, Parks Planner, at twhitler@cityofsalem.net or 503-588-6211.

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Es la política de la Ciudad de Salem asegurar que ninguna persona será discriminada por motivos de raza, religión, color, sexo, estado civil, situación familiar, origen nacional, edad, discapacidad mental o física, orientación sexual, identidad de género, ni fuente de ingresos, de acuerdo con el Salem Revised Code Chapter 97. La Ciudad de Salem también cumple plenamente con el Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, y los estatutos y reglamentos relacionados, en todos los programas y actividades.

CITY OF SALEM
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
DIGITAL AGENDA
March 11, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS, CITY STAFF &
UPCOMING MEETINGS**

BOARD MEMBERS

Dylan McDowell, Chair
Micki Varney, Vice Chair
Alan Alexander
Tony Caito
Woody Dukes
Dave Fridenmaker
Keith Norris
Paul Rice

CITY STAFF

Robert Chandler, Assistant Public
Works Director
Mark Becktel, Operations Division
Manager
Patricia Farrell, Parks and Natural
Resources Planning Manager
Jennifer Kellar, Parks and Recreation
Services Manager
Becky George, Recreation Supervisor
Milan Davis, City Urban Forester
Toni Whitler, Parks Planner & Board
Liaison

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- City Council – March 8 & 22, 6:00 p.m.
- Woodmansee Park Master Plan Update
April 8 SPRAB Meeting 5:30 p.m.

LINKS

BOARD WEB PAGE:

<https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/parks-and-recreation-advisory-board.aspx>

AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** (5:30 p.m.)
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. MINUTES** (5:35 p.m.)
 - a. February 11, 2021
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENT** (*Public Comment for agenda and non-agenda items.* (5:40 – 5:50 p.m.)
- 5. BOARD ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS**
 - a. Geer Park Draft Master Plan – *Rob Romanek, Parks Planner, Ben Johnson, Greenworks* **ACTION** (5:50 – 6:15 p.m.)
- 6. INFORMATION REPORTS – WRITTEN** (6:15 – 6:35 p.m.)
 - a. Mission Street Parks Conservancy Minutes
 - b. Urban Forestry Update
 - c. Parks & Natural Resources Planning Update
 - Introduce Jennifer Mongolo, Natural Resources Planner
 - d. Parks Operations Update
 - e. Recreation Services Update
- 7. NEW BUSINESS** (6:35 – 7:00 p.m.)
- 8. NEXT MEETING**
 - a. April 8, 2021
- 9. ADJOURN**



**SALEM PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING - February 11, 2021
DRAFT MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dylan McDowell, Chair
Micki Varney, Vice Chair
Alan Alexander
Tony Caito
Woody Dukes
Dave Fridenmaker
Keith Norris

MEMBERS ABSENT

Paul Rice

STAFF PRESENT

Mark Becketl
Gretchen Bennett
Josh Eggleston
Becky George
Rose Henlin
Tammi Starrs
Toni Whitler

1. ROLL CALL

Member Rice, absent.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Alexander moved to accept the minutes from the January 11, 2021 meeting.
Vice Chair Varney seconded the motion.
All in favor.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The first public comment was from Carol Snyder. She is currently the President of the Salem Parks Foundation but was not speaking in that capacity this evening. She had concerns about the ongoing Cultural Management Landscape Plan as it pertains to Bush's Pasture Park and Deepwood Gardens.

She recently had a conversation with Patricia Farrell regarding this plan, but she still has concerns in two areas, the timeline and outreach efforts. She questioned the validity of virtual open houses for such a large and important park as Bush's Pasture Park. She would like to move the open house timeline out past where it is affected by the pandemic, but Ms. Farrell told her that moving it to a time later in the year would affect budgeting if it pushed it to the next fiscal year. Ms. Snyder was also concerned about the outreach efforts since most participants seemed to live in the 97302-zip code. She thought that since the park is open to everyone in the city that there should be more of an effort to reach other neighborhood associations to participate in the process and provide feedback about the plan.

Chair McDowell encouraged the Board to invite any neighborhood associations they are involved in to listen to the final presentation. He also mentioned that the last two virtual open houses were well-attended with 259 at the first one and 438 at the second one. Patricia sent out an email inviting other neighborhood associations the opportunity to listen to the presentation.

QUESTIONS:

Member Alexander commented that since Bush's Pasture Park is such a significant park in the City that the neighborhood association for which he is chair, Sunnyslope, would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the final report. The final plan is slated to be presented to SPRAB

in May. We are going to be faced with the current challenges for a while yet.

Member Fridenmaker asked what provisions are being made to include those people in open houses who don't have access to the internet or the skills to use electronic methods.

Ms. Whitler said that efforts were made to reach out to people through the news media i.e. Statesman Journal but it was not very successful; there have also been signs posted in the park and the City has utilized an email network hoping that it will extend out past the recipients of email. There is also a Spanish version on the City's Facebook page.

Public comment from Cory Poole, Chair of the SEMCA Neighborhood Association. He runs a mobile home park on Turner Road SE that borders Cascades Gateway Park. He shared his screen and presented a slideshow of just a few of the camps of unsheltered individuals that have lived in the park for almost a year now. Mr. Poole said no City residents have been using the park since the City allowed camping because no one feels safe going there. He added that the volume of human waste is astounding, hundreds of trees (small and large) have been cut down to be used as firewood or to build structures, and the banks of Mill Creek have been torn apart. He believes it will take a long time to clean out once the camping is no longer allowed, but it will take decades for the natural landscapes in the park to recover.

QUESTIONS:

Chair McDowell thanked Cory for his input and his advocacy for the parks and asked if there were any questions from the Board. No questions were asked.

4. BOARD ITEMS/PRESENTATIONS

a. Work Plan 2021 Adoption

The work plan, a copy of which was included with the minutes, was adopted by the Board with a unanimous roll call vote.

Member Norris didn't see anything in the work plan about the review of the Master Plan for the parks in the timeline, which he had mentioned before. Ms. Whitler said that she had removed it from the work plan because it is more fluid with regard to budget or timelines or consultants. Community parks usually have a year-long timeline; neighborhood parks are a little less. It is probably time to update the schedule and bring it before the Board. The typical process for a master plan effort after public input, is to go to the associated neighborhood association, then to SPRAB for a recommendation to Council and then to City Council for formal adoption.

b. Capital Improvement Plan – Tammi Starrs, Public Works

Ms. Starrs, Program Manager in Public Works Engineering presented the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The 5-year CIP plan (2022-2026) is currently being evaluated/scored and it includes projects for Parks Planning, Parks Operations, Utilities and Transportation. Parks has six to eight individuals in different groups to score the plan as it pertains to Parks. There should be a draft available in March.

There will be a public hearing on the 5-year CIP plan in April 2021.

QUESTIONS:

Member Fridenmaker asked about how citizens without internet or electronic access make project requests. Ms. Starrs replied that they can call her in Public Works, and she can send them a form to fill out. Ms. Starrs will try and come up with a way to let people know if they don't have electronic access.

Member Fridenmaker asked about the equity in underserved areas, how is that weighted in the scoring? Ms. Starrs offered to send objectives and the weighted scores to the Board for their suggestions and ideas.

Chair McDowell asked whether the scope of the plan was exclusively Parks. Ms. Starrs answered that it is Citywide; Public Works takes the lead but there are requests from every department in the City.

Member Norris asked if the budget of Parks was compared with other departments and was put in line with their priorities. Ms. Starrs answered no, each department sets their own priorities and Parks was not evaluated with other departments. There are separate committees, separate priorities with separate funding sources. They don't cross lines – you can't use transportation SDCs to pay for park planning or improvements.

Member Norris asked whether the funding in the CIP process was just for the plan development or included implementation as well. If it is just for planning, does the implementation part of the process automatically roll over into the next year's budget?

Master planning pays for the consultant, staff time, and public outreach. Sometimes in the CIP a master plan may be included along with initial improvements.

Member Alexander asked about the minimum cost threshold to be considered for the CIP budget. Ms. Starrs answered that it is \$50,000. Projects over that amount have to be included in the CIP.

Vice Chair Varney asked about Title VI requirements. Ms. Starrs invited Gretchen Bennett to help answer the question. Ms. Bennett said that it is a Federal requirement for inclusion in planning and service with disproportionate impact to different groups of people. It is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

c. Introduction of Bond Measures – Josh Eggleston, Finance

Josh Eggleston provided an introductory presentation on General Obligation (GO) bond measures.

QUESTIONS:

Chair McDowell asked about the timelines of submitting ideas for bond measures.

Mr. Eggleston said that there is a finance committee of the City Council working on long-term bonding strategy. Sometimes bond measures are planned and sometimes issues rise to the surface while doing business. It usually takes a couple of years to get a bond measure on the ballot. The planning usually includes an information campaign to assess the impact of the bond

measure. He added that there is a big difference in bonds and levies. GO bonds cannot be used for maintenance or operations. A local option levy is typically used as a vehicle for maintenance funds for the capital improvements made through GO bonds. Attempts to obtain funds for Parks by bond measure have not been successful since 1980. Bonds get into the system the same way as CIP; there are a lot of competing demands for capital dollars.

Jennifer Kellar mentioned that there was no current data on needs assessment for Parks and there is a needs assessment in the works with Engineering.

Mr. Becktel added that in 2006 or 2007 the Parks bond and levy both failed. There were several different bonds on that ballot and people were hesitant to commit to all of them, so they chose other bonds instead of the Parks bond. May have to look at repairing or rehabbing existing features than building something new and not have the money to maintain.

Member Alexander commented that the economy was pretty bad in 2006-2007; home values were diving, and people were reluctant to approve more taxes.

Member Fridenmaker asked if the bond needs to be park-specific or can it be combined with other areas of the City. Mr. Eggleston said that it is very important for the measure language to be clear; it doesn't have to be park-specific.

d. Coordination regarding unsheltered individuals in Parks - Gretchen Bennett, City Manager's Office

Ms. Bennett gave a presentation on finding workable solutions for the unhoused individuals in the City. She spoke to the difficulty of finding solutions and the deadline of June 1 of removing the allowance of camping in Cascades Gateway and Wallace Marine Parks but the deadline is not hard, there needs to be active alternatives in place. Following her presentation, Ms. Bennett asked how SPRAB would like to be kept apprised of the situation.

QUESTIONS:

Vice Chair Varney thanked Ms. Bennett for the update and said that it was helpful to have this information.

Chair McDowell asked that any decisions or plans being developed be forwarded to the Board as they come up.

Ms. Bennett said she would keep SPRAB in the loop of any decisions that are made. She would like to make a system of checks and balances, so everyone is in the loop.

Chair McDowell suggested a quarterly update in-person if time allows, especially in the next couple of quarters as the camping in the Parks is reduced, providing opportunity for questions to be asked. Ms. Bennett invited solutions and welcomes the Board's input. She said she is working on a policy document and would welcome SPRAB's input to the City's policy on Parks.

Member Fridenmaker asked how basic human needs are being met for the individuals camping in the Parks.

Ms. Bennett said that there are no open flames allowed in City parks but people can have contained propane heaters for heat and cooking but she also said that there is a broader strategy of having services and supplies available elsewhere in the City which could also give a point of referral for case management instead of just bringing the supplies directly to them and removing that point of contact.

Mr. Becketl added that potable water has been made available and there are several chemical toilets that are serviced every other day in both Wallace Marine and Cascades Gateway. There is increased garbage pickup, but the system is overwhelmed with the amount of trash generated. Food garbage is not the issue; it is dumping of household items such as used clothing or even furniture that has been donated or scavenged. Cleanup is an issue because the union contract states that AFSCME employees can assist with picking up trash, but not directly clean up human waste. Inmate work crews are not available because of the pandemic and the closing of the Mill Creek Correctional Facility. *ServiceMaster* is all that is left and that leaves only one big cleanup per month.

Member Norris mentioned that there was obviously a lot of thought going into the situation and is concerned about Parks Operations staff's safety in this situation when they are just doing their job. Ms. Bennett said that Police presence is limited because their staffing ratios dictate that police have higher priority like protests or violent crimes, which take precedence. This is another facet of the problem since we can't control the complete pipeline of enforcement. Judges and courts don't want to see police issuing citations to unsheltered individuals since that is a waste of City resources as well; they don't have the resources to pay. Since the City has no jail facility, no arrests can be made because there is no jail space. There are limits to our efficacy in enforcement. The parks staff are not the only places where confrontations have happened. People at Civic have had to deal with it as well as employees that park in parking structures. She added that the whole experience of dealing with this issue is a maze: just when you find a different corridor to go down in the hopes of finding a solution, you hit a wall. She has been working diligently on researching what other cities are doing, reading everything she finds on the subject. She stated that finding a solution is not for lack of trying – it is for the lack of finding something that works.

Chair McDowell thanked Ms. Bennett and Mr. Becketl for their insight and input into this difficult situation.

5. INFORMATION REPORTS

a. Mission Streets Parks Conservancy Minutes

There were no comments or questions from the Board.

b. Urban Forestry Update

Milan Davis was not in attendance; Jennifer Kellar said that he is dealing with an emergent

situation because of the incoming bad weather.

Chair McDowell said that he was impressed by the amount of information on the tree report and everything that was going on, seeing all the trees planted and all the partnerships.

Member Alexander asked what was meant by “the 75th percentile methodology” in the tree canopy report. Jennifer Kellar said that Patricia Farrell, who was absent, would be able to answer that question.

Member Dukes found an explanation of the 75th percentile mentioned in the Parks Planning update. It has to do with the Community Forestry Strategic Plan which was based on a plan used in Vancouver, WA. There are 19 neighborhood associations and they are ranked by how much tree canopy they have greatest to least. 75 percent of 19 is 14 so the 14th neighborhood association is used as an example to set the goal for tree canopy.

Toni Whitler will send the Board a link to the web site.

c. Parks Planning Update / Climate Action Task Force Update

Since Patricia Farrell was not in attendance to talk about Parks Planning, Chair McDowell gave an update on the Task Force he is involved in (43 members). There was a meeting in January and another one this month; he will give a report in March. He said that it is in the planning stage, so they have been coming up with a list of strategies and there have been a lot of great ideas put forth. Now it is a matter of whittling them down to a manageable level to be put into the report. He said that the one issue that everyone seems to agree on is transportation emission reductions.

Member Norris talked about the Parks Planning report and that he appreciated that links were included for anyone that wanted more information. He also appreciated the birding update from Mike Zieker, the City’s Park Ranger. Chair McDowell asked if there was a possibility to go on a birding tour of the different parks.

Chair McDowell asked who on the board would be interested in this outing and everyone raised their hand. Jennifer Kellar asked that Toni Whitler coordinate dates and times as well as social distancing protocol to allow this event to happen.

d. Parks Operations Update

Member Norris asked what the plan was for restoration of Parks after the unhoused individuals were removed from the areas. Mr. Bechtel said that once most campers were out of the parks there would be two phases to restoration. The first phase would be cleanup, and he estimated that it would take a minimum of 2 weeks and would probably cost about \$100,000, which would be over and above staff time to do the work. The next phase would be assessment of mitigation – grading stream banks, damage to facilities, re-vegetate the areas and re-plant and make sure that plants get re-established. It will be a multi-year effort and probably be around \$200,000 total.

Member Norris asked Jennifer Kellar for a status on the relationship with the Salem-Keizer School District. Ms. Kellar said that because the City no longer has an agreement with the school district; there has been communication on re-establishing a maintenance agreement. The City has received the agreement back from the school district and is in the process of reviewing it and assessing what might require additional dialogue.

e. Recreation Services Update

Member Norris asked about online registration and whether efforts are made to address people's ability to register if they don't have access to a computer or the internet. Becky George answered that the City is new to online registration. It has only been happening for the last two years. One thing that has changed because of the pandemic is on-site registration for events is no longer allowed. This could cause too many people to be registered for the event and staff would be unable to follow state protocol for gatherings. On-site registration was only about 5-8% of the attendance totals. And, of course, business is still done over the phone and by mail.

Member Caito asked if summer events have been rescheduled to fall because of the pandemic. Ms. George said that a lot of the events have decided to cancel in the last week or so: Art Fair, World Beat Festival, and FishFest.

Co-chair Varney asked if there are issues with the unhoused population at Wallace Marine Park when using the softball complex for upcoming events. Ms. George stated that there will be no spectators for the events again this year, but they will be allowed to be outside the complex. There were no problems last year, but it remains to be seen how to keep everyone safe. The recreation staff will work with other City departments and there may even be a need to hire additional security for events. Jennifer Kellar added that DPI is still patrolling Wallace Marine Park on a regular basis.

6. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

Ms. Whitler also mentioned that the Boards and Commissions committee is coming up so the vacancy on SPRAB will be filled.

7. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, March 12, 2021

8. Adjournment at 7:35 p.m.

Minutes: Rose Henlin/Toni Whitler

Written Public Comment

Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

March 11, 2021

1. Jon Christenson

RE: Bush's Pasture Park and Deepwood Museum and Gardens Cultural Landscape Management Plan

2. Laura Buhl

RE: Geer Park Master Plan

Toni Whitley

From: ed scan <edscannewsletter@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 5, 2021 9:30 AM
To: Toni Whitley
Cc: Robert Chandler; Patricia Farrell; Jennifer Kellar; Brian Smith; Paul Agrimis
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT March 11, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENT TO OUR CITY SPRAB

March 11, 2021

Allow me please to commend the Staff and the consultant for their extraordinary work on the Bush's Pasture Park/Deepwood Estates Cultural & Landscape Management Plan. Participation has increased. Details and inputs and needs are being carefully evaluated.

What is most striking about the work is the high quality level of expertise participating, in formulating a program for the resources in place and uses. The recent ice storm has demonstrated what is, will not always be there without careful management and comprehension of the systems that are at the foundation of this marvelous City park. I serve as chair of the SCAN Historic Preservation, Parks & Gardens Committee, and I encounter, individuals who use the park daily, and have for decade and decade. That understand the vibrance, the magic, the day to day, important uses and observations, season following season, and the fragility, of the space.

I have met individuals from the proximity who volunteer, hundreds and hundreds of hours over years, who have contributed to build and rebuild of the Crooked House Playground, equipment for the horticulture, study of the significant White Oaks, research and preservation of the cultural aspects. Deepwood was a major restoration effort of neighborhood leadership. I remember the work of SCAN Board member Roz Shirack to secure lighting along the path. And Cesie Scheurmann, whose house looks watchfully into the park, raising tens of thousands of dollars to rebuild the playground and to bring the Cow sculpture for children and visitors to the Barn and Bush House; and the very talented Nadine Heusser, a resident on High Street, who serve as an outstanding president of the Bush House Auxiliary.

The park is an integral part to so many lives and the City's cultural history, acknowledged nationally in the Secretary of U. S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, as a key component of the National Historic District: the designated Gaiety Hill/Bush's Pasture Park NHD in the National Register of Historic Places.

A careful, scientific, cultural plan has been the aspiration for many years.

I would like to thank you for these endeavors. I very much respect all of the City Staff for their hard work, diligence to actualize a true, careful management plan.

Jon Christenson MURP

PO Box 534

Salem, Oregon 97308

March 8, 2021

Dear members of the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board,

The Geer Park Master Plan before you today is a good effort to make park improvements, but fails in several ways. I urge you to reserve your support for the plan until some changes are made. The plan as proposed includes too much automobile parking and no consideration for helping people safely and comfortably access the park by walking and bicycling.

According to the City of Salem's 2013 *Comprehensive Park System Master Plan Update*, Geer Park is a community park. Community parks are defined as both serving surrounding neighborhoods and a slightly geographic wider area. They "generally attract a large number of people from a wide geographic area, [so] support facilities are required, such as off-street parking and restrooms . . . Community parks typically serve the neighborhood park needs for residents within walking and biking distance of the park." The plan goes on to say that "community parks should be easily accessed by all transportation modes, including walking . . ." (p. 23). With 221 existing automobile parking spaces at Geer Park, the City has already generously taken care of car access to the park, however, support for other modes, such as walking and biking, is deficient.

The proposal to add 94 automobile parking spaces to the already existing 221 spaces is detrimental to Geer Park and the wider city in a number of ways. Impervious surfaces increase stormwater runoff, including contaminated runoff, which pollutes our waterways and strains city budgets. Dark, hard surfaces increase the urban heat island effect, threatening human, animal, and plant health through higher temperatures and air pollution (e.g., ground-level ozone¹).

Perhaps more crucially, adding more automobile parking spaces to Geer Park's already plentiful supply is in direct opposition to the City Council's policy for Salem to lower its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 50% of 2016 levels by 2035. The deadline for this reduction is less than 15 years away. If we are going to achieve this directive, every single development decision matters. Transportation is the sector that contributes the greatest share of GHGs, so it is crucial that the City works to decrease the amount of driving if Salem is to reach its goal. Since parking availability causes driving,² building more parking will move us away from our GHG reduction goal. Instead, the City should work to remedy the deficiencies in walking and biking access to the park.

I have proposed the following changes to the Geer Park Master Plan:

1. Remove the new 94-stall parking lot.

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/ground-level-ozone-pollution/ground-level-ozone-basics>

² <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-01-12/study-the-strongest-evidence-yet-that-abundant-parking-causes-more-driving>

2. Add a small covered bicycle parking area at the north end of where the proposed new parking lot is. (The plan currently shows no new bicycle parking!)
3. Add a sidewalk or bark path along the entire west edge of the park (along Park Ave.), just inside the park boundary. The path or sidewalk should be on the park side of the street trees that are planted along Park Ave., to allow the trees to buffer people from the speeding automobile traffic on Park Ave.. This will give safe, comfortable access to people who access the park from the residential neighborhoods to the north.
4. If more parking must be added, there is an alternative to paving over more natural space. The City should work with the State of Oregon to establish on-street parking along the Geer Park side of Park Ave. Park Ave. is wide enough to accommodate parking on one side³ and having on-street parking can provide the ancillary benefit of slowing the passing traffic, which frequently speeds on that wide, empty street. In suggesting this idea more than once during the planning process, I have not been told that the City has ever made any attempt to develop an agreement with the State.

I hope that you will understand the importance of the cumulative effect of development decisions. I am a land use and transportation planner who works with communities all over the state. I often hear the argument that we must continue to build and develop for automobiles because that's how everyone gets around. Everyone gets around in automobiles because we have built our cities almost exclusively for them. Our transportation system will never change and we will never meet our GHG emission reduction goals if we don't transform the way we develop our land.

The Geer Park planning page has an FAQ, perhaps created in response to comments like mine, that says "Salem is committed to providing a park system that can be accessed by a variety of transportation modes. As part of this commitment, the Geer Park master plan update will recommend a trail study as a follow-up action." In response, I would like to say, please don't put automobiles first yet again with this car-centric plan. I have suggested some concrete ways to start to give non-polluting transportation modes the attention they need and deserve.

Sincerely,

Laura Buhl

³ https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/Publications/NeighborhoodStreetDesign_2000.pdf (See p. 18)

FOR BOARD MEETING OF: March 11, 2021
AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5.a

TO: SALEM PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

THROUGH: ROBERT D. CHANDLER, PhD, PE 
ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

FROM: ROB ROMANEK
PARKS PLANNER

SUBJECT: GEER PARK 2021 MASTER PLAN UPDATE

ISSUE:

Should the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (SPRAB) endorse the Geer Park 2021 Master Plan Update and forward to City Council a recommendation for master plan adoption?

RECOMMENDATION:

Endorse the Geer Park 2021 Master Plan Update and forward to City Council a recommendation for master plan adoption.

BACKGROUND:

Geer Park, which was originally named State Lands Community Park, is a 44-acre park property that is classified in the *Comprehensive Park System Master Plan* as a Community Park, meaning it is a larger-scale park that provides a variety of recreational opportunities and allows for group activities. The park is located on Geer Drive NE between Park Avenue NE and Hawthorne Avenue NE (Attachment 1).

A master plan for Geer Park was developed in 2003. Development of the park was divided into two phases as shown in Attachment 2. Phase One was completed in 2005 and included two soccer and two baseball fields, three two-unit restrooms, and two parking lots (approximately 220 stalls). Phase Two *would* have added a driveway, more parking, a picnic shelter, a playground, two softball fields, a soccer field, and a roller hockey facility. However, because of funding limitations, Phase Two was never implemented.

In July 2016, the Geer Park master plan was amended to incorporate bicycle pump tracks and associated bike park features within the undeveloped Phase Two area. The location of the bike park is generally where the playground and picnic shelter would have been located had Phase Two been completed (Attachment 3). Beginning in 2016, the Salem Area Trail Alliance worked with the City of Salem to develop three pump tracks, each designed for different ages and abilities. The bike park also includes a bicycle trail. Approximately 20 acres of the 44.3-acre park remain undeveloped.

Since the original park master plan in 2003, recreational interests have shifted. In order to understand public desires and preferences for the park, the City began the process of updating the Geer Park Master Plan in 2019. This was the first step toward developing the remaining areas of the park. The process of updating the park master plan included opportunities for community members to engage and share their priorities and preferences for park development. The following objectives guided the preparation of the Geer Park 2021 Master Plan Update.

- Assess the addition of a skate park
- Add standard Community Park facilities missing from Geer Park, including a playground
- Assess whether to add optional Community Park facilities
- Evaluate the location and layout of additional sports fields and parking
- Improve park path connections
- Integrate existing bike park features
- Provide activities for all age groups
- Identify phasing priorities for implementing the updated master plan

To assist the City, a landscape architecture firm, Greenworks, was hired. The planning project included a significant community outreach and engagement process supported by Greenworks and implemented by City staff. The community engagement process included three virtual open houses, two online surveys, as well as website, email, and direct mail outreach. The City website was updated throughout the process and people were provided the opportunity to sign up for email updates that included virtual open houses and survey notifications. The community was notified about open houses and input opportunities through a variety of means including the aforementioned email list for Geer Park Master Plan Update, the City's website and Facebook accounts, signs posted in Geer Park, the "Salem Connection" email newsletter, and presentations to North East Salem Community Association (NESCA) and ENLACE Cross-cultural Friday and Community Connection Nights. In addition, Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (Board) assigned now-former Board member Diana Dickey as the Board's liaison to the master planning effort, and the Board was updated throughout the planning process.

Public Engagement Process – Virtual Open Houses and Online Surveys

Three "micro" websites were used as virtual open houses to share project information with community members and to solicit their feedback and questions. Each open house was held open for approximately two weeks. Dates and usage information are provided as follows.

- Open House One: June 8 to June 21, 2020, with 3,987 visits
- Open House Two: September 19 to October 3, 2020, with 4,641 visits
- Open House Three: December 11 to December 24, 2020, with 2,876 visits

Archives of the materials presented at the open houses are available at the following web links.

- Open House One: <https://geer-voh1-salem.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Open House Two: <https://geer-voh2-salem.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Open House Three: <https://geer-salem.hub.arcgis.com>

Surveys were made available as part of the first and second open houses. The third open house asked a single question about priorities for park development. All three open houses included a digital comment and question form. Over 300 people responded to each of the surveys. Approximately 250 people responded to the question about park development priorities included in the third open house. The digital comment and question form received 180 comments and questions from the three open houses.

The first open house provided an overview of the existing conditions of the park and presented three initial park layouts. Participants were asked to share their recreational desires and feedback on the layout concepts. The information received during the first open house and from the associated first survey was analyzed, which resulted in three park design options.

The three park designs presented a range of approaches on how the park space could be used. The options included a plan focused on additional sports fields; a plan focused on flexible open space; and a blended version of the two that included one additional multi-use sports field area with flexible open space. All three options included opportunities for organized recreation, places for children to play, a skate park, enhancements to the bike park, an off-leash dog park, expanded trail systems, as well as parking, picnic shelters, and restrooms. Some elements, such as a splash pad, fitness and bike challenge stations, and a community garden, were not included in all three options. The three design options were presented at the second virtual open house along with a second online survey to garner feedback. Participants were asked to indicate their preferred option and provide input on what was desirable about each plan.

Based on the feedback from the second online survey, the majority of participants preferred some level of flexible open space while improving bike amenities and enhancing the bike park. There was also a clear preference for trails, a splash pad, a skate park, and a dog park. The third virtual open house presented a preferred design alternative based on the combination of desired amenities and programmed uses as indicated by the participants.

Public Engagement Process – Neighborhood Associations

Geer Park is located in the North East Salem Community Association (NESCA) neighborhood. Staff met three times with NESCA throughout the planning process. On December 15, 2020, staff presented the preferred design option to NESCA and requested a written recommendation or comments to forward to SPRAB and City Council. No recommendations or comments have been received by staff as of the writing of this report.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The proposed master plan update (Attachment 4) includes the following amenities and features for the undeveloped areas of the park.

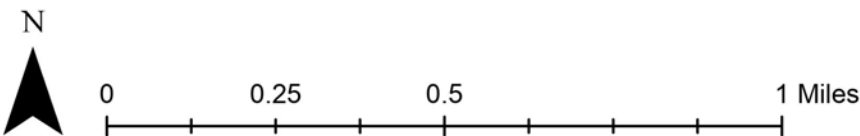
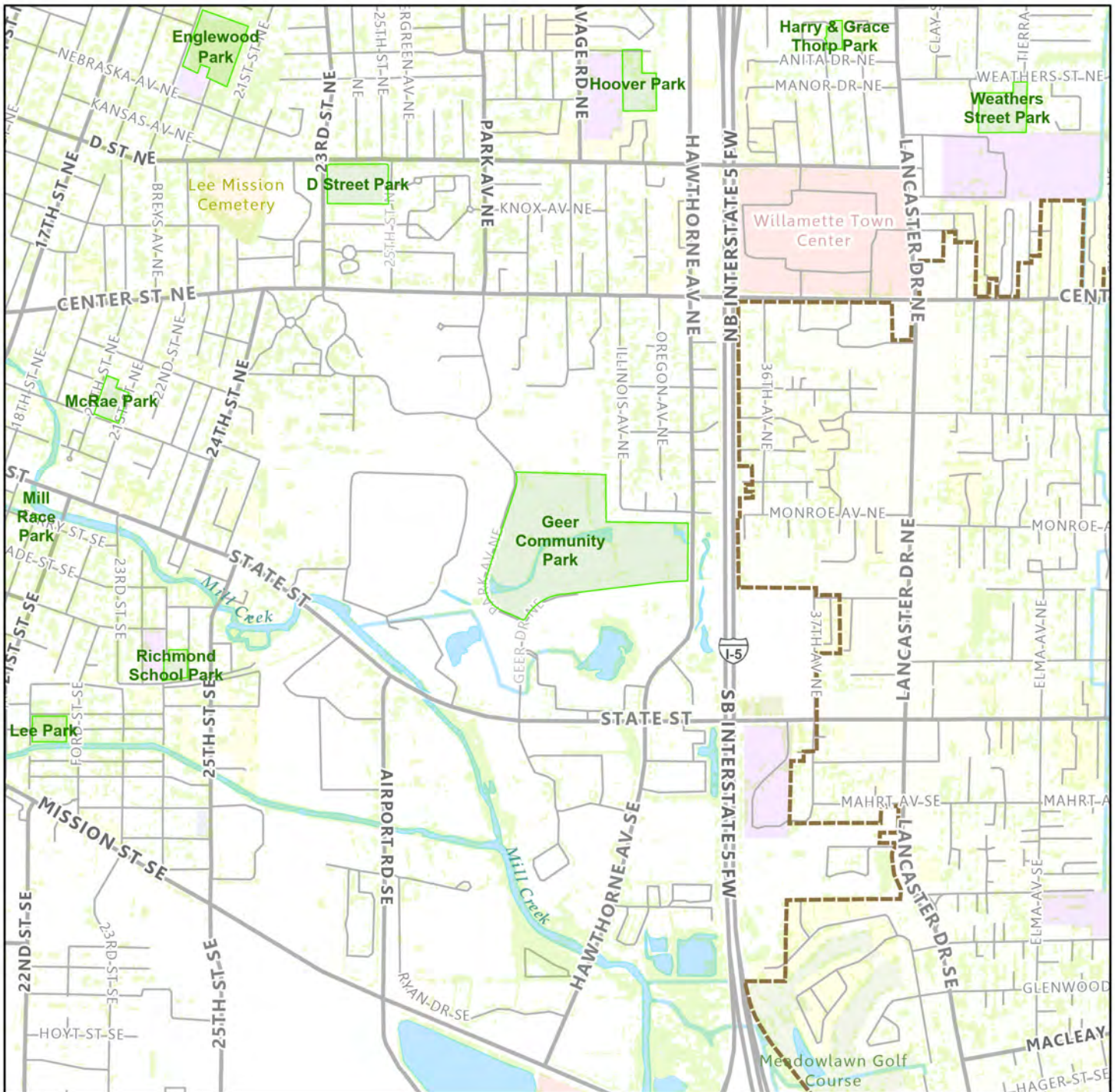
- Additional baseball/softball field with a soccer field in the outfield
- Open field providing flexible space for a variety of activities
- Enhancements to the existing bike park and a new single-track bike trail located near the existing bike park
- Soft and paved paths
- 94-stall parking lot
- 10,000-square-foot playground and 1,800-square-foot splash pad, proposed to be inclusive for children of all ages and abilities
- 20,000-square-foot skate park
- One-acre dog park, with separate areas for large and small dogs
- Two additional restrooms
- Four picnic shelters
- Potential public art and interpretive signage locations

The proposed master plan update reflects the desires of the community to provide active and passive park facilities that can be used by a variety of individuals, families, and age ranges. The updated master plan will guide the park management and park development for the next 20 years. Implementation of the master plan will occur in phases over that timeframe and is dependent on available funding and logical sequencing of construction.

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Geer Park Phase Plan, October 2003
3. Geer Park Master Plan, July 2016
4. Draft Geer Park 2021 Master Plan Update

Vicinity Map





PHASE TWO PHASE ONE

- PHASE ONE**
- TWO SYNTHETIC TURF SOCCER FIELDS
 - TWO 90' BASEBALL FIELDS
 - STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES
 - MAINTENANCE BUILDING
 - LOOP ROAD - PARTIAL
 - WETLAND MITIGATION
 - RESTROOMS
 - PLANTINGS
 - PARKING
 - UTILITIES

OREGON STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



PHASE TWO

MONROE AVENUE

STORMWATER MGM'T

WETLAND MITIGATION SITE

BASEBALL FIELD 2

PHASE ONE

TOURNAMENT BASEBALL FIELD 1

SYNTHETIC TURF SOCCER FIELD 2

SYNTHETIC TURF SOCCER FIELD 1

HAWTHORNE AVENUE

PHASE ONE

PHASE TWO

PHASE TWO

OREGON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PHASE TWO - ROAD

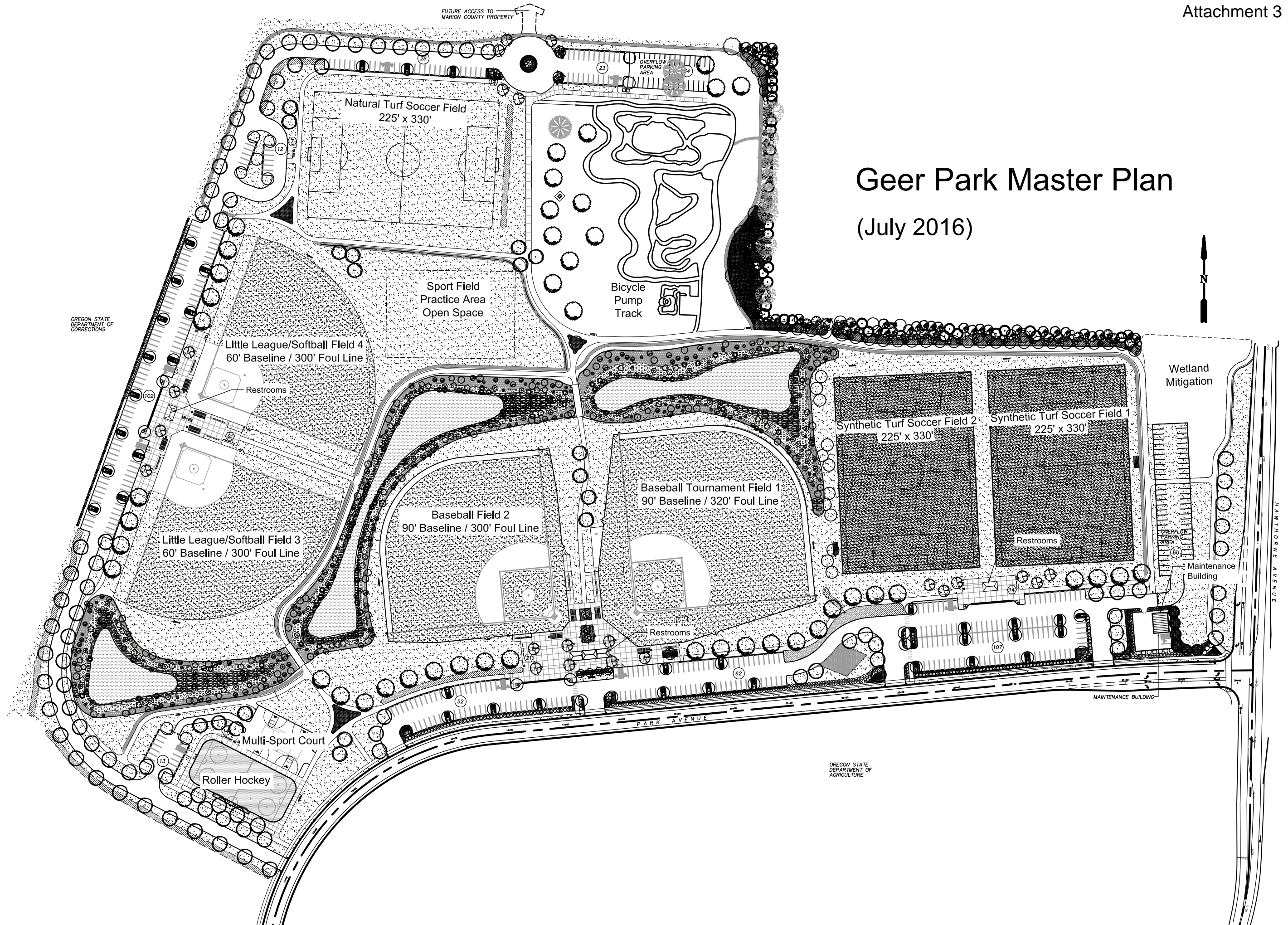
PHASE TWO

STATE LANDS COMMUNITY PARK PHASE PLAN OCT. 3, 2003

OREGON STATE

Geer Park Master Plan

(July 2016)





LEGEND

1 Baseball/Softball Field (300')	10 Small Dog Park (~1/4 acre)
2 Soccer Field (250'x180')	11 Picnic Shelter
3 Skate Park (~20,000 SF)	12 Restroom
4 Playground (~10,000 SF)	13 Parking (94 stalls)
5 Splash Pad (~1,800 SF)	14 Curbside Drop-Off
6 Single Track Bike Trails	15 Viewing Area
7 Flexible Open Space (300' X 180')	A Possible Location for Art - and - Interpretive Signage
8 Soft-Surface Pedestrian Trail (~1/2mi)	
9 Large Dog Park (~3/4 acre)	

DRAFT MASTER PLAN

GEER PARK | MASTER PLAN UPDATE



Information Reports Packet

For SPRAB Meeting March 11, 2021

1. Mission Street Parks Conservancy – Christine Chute, President
 - January 28, 2021 Board Minutes
2. Urban Forestry Report – Milan Davis, Urban Forester
3. Parks and Natural Resources Planning Report - Patricia Farrell, Parks and Natural Resources Planning Manager
4. Parks Operations Report – Jennifer Kellar, Parks Operations and Recreation Services Manager
5. Recreation Service Report– Becky George, Recreation Services Supervisor
6. Park Damage Report - **Forthcoming**



Board Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2021

In Attendance

Gretchen Carnaby
Christine Chute
Bonnie Heitsch
Gary McKuen
Kathy Savicki
Michael Slater

1. **Agenda** Christine called the meeting to order via telephone. The agenda was moved by Michael, seconded by Kathy and approved with additions.

2. **Minutes** Gretchen moved and Bonnie seconded adoption of the minutes of the December meeting as written. The minutes were approved.

3. **Financial** Gary reviewed the end of December financial report. Christine will circulate an amended 2021 budget via email for Board approval. She has resubmitted the 2019 IRS report, after they didn't recognize her on-time paper submission and required that it be completed electronically.

4. **Old Business**

- The fundraising letter has yielded \$22,300 in contributions, at a cost around \$450.
- Four Board members participated in a Zoom meeting with City staff Brian, Amanda and Jennifer to assess our partnering during the last year. Brian has requested help using his time as efficiently as possible as he supports volunteers. Michael and Gretchen will explore this further with him. Jennifer indicated that if we want to add Saturday opportunities to engage new volunteers, that would be scheduled with Tibby as an event which the City would staff. Christine will discuss this with Tibby. Michael suggested that such events include a social component, once we are past Covid restrictions. Jennifer suggested that we continue to meet periodically, with the next one planned for May.
- Jennifer indicated that installing the enclosed garden just north of the parking lot could be formally proposed once the Cultural Landscape Plan is completed and available to guide the City's review. There will be no removal of significant plants in that area, except for two trees which the City arborist has flagged for removal due to structural issues. There was agreement that we should ensure that all pathways in this area are accessible for wheelchairs, strollers, etc.
- Michael proposed we move ahead with a contract for completing improvements to our GIS database and corresponding website. Goals include a custom base map for all webmap/apps, custom symbology for park features, and configuring

webmaps/apps for internal & public visibility/use. Michael agreed to assess opportunities for targeted donations and grants to determine what balance might be needed from operational funds.

5 New Business

- After extensive discussion of options for a virtual spring plant sale, it was decided to drop the idea as not effective enough in meeting our goals: supporting our growers, attracting users to Bush Park, nurturing the gardening community, and raising funds. Gretchen will explore what SAA is thinking about the Art Fair, which will shape our planning about a summer plant sale.
- Christine raised the need to recruit for additional Board members. Skills are needed for a treasurer, for fund raising and for grant work. All Board members are asked to submit suggestions to Christine within the next week.
- The draft scope of work for a part-time Garden Manager was revised, and plans outlined for contracting for the work. Kathy moved and Gretchen seconded authorizing Christine to move ahead with the contracting process. Gretchen and Bonnie will interview candidates and bring finalist selections to the Board.

Next Meeting:

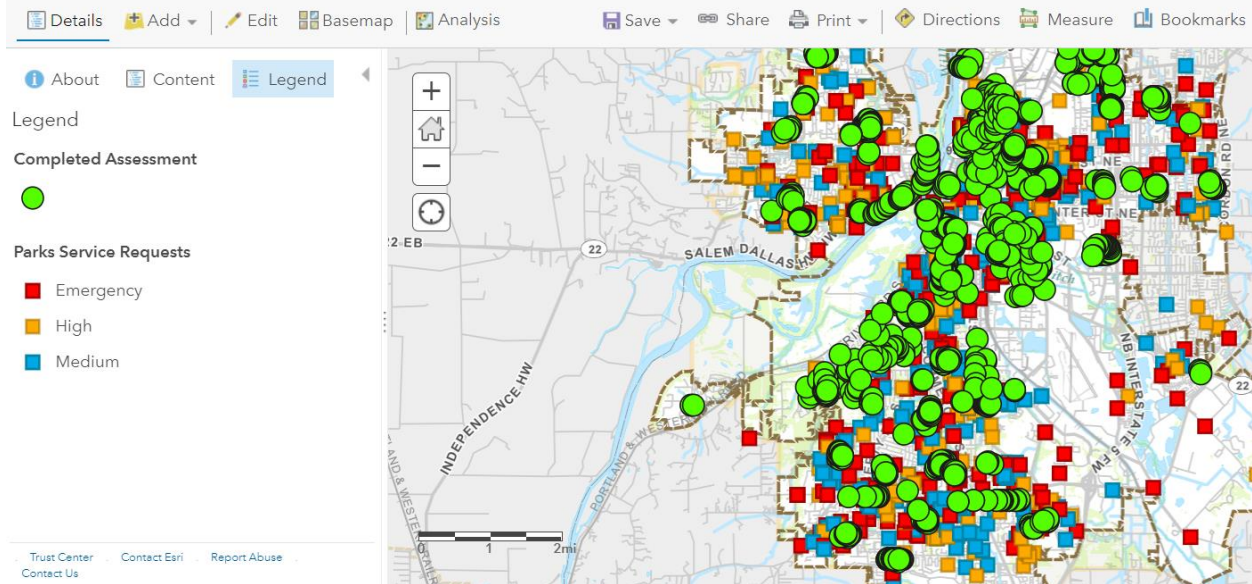
February 25, 4 to 6 pm By Phone

ICE STORM UPDATE- Urban Forestry Division 3/5/21

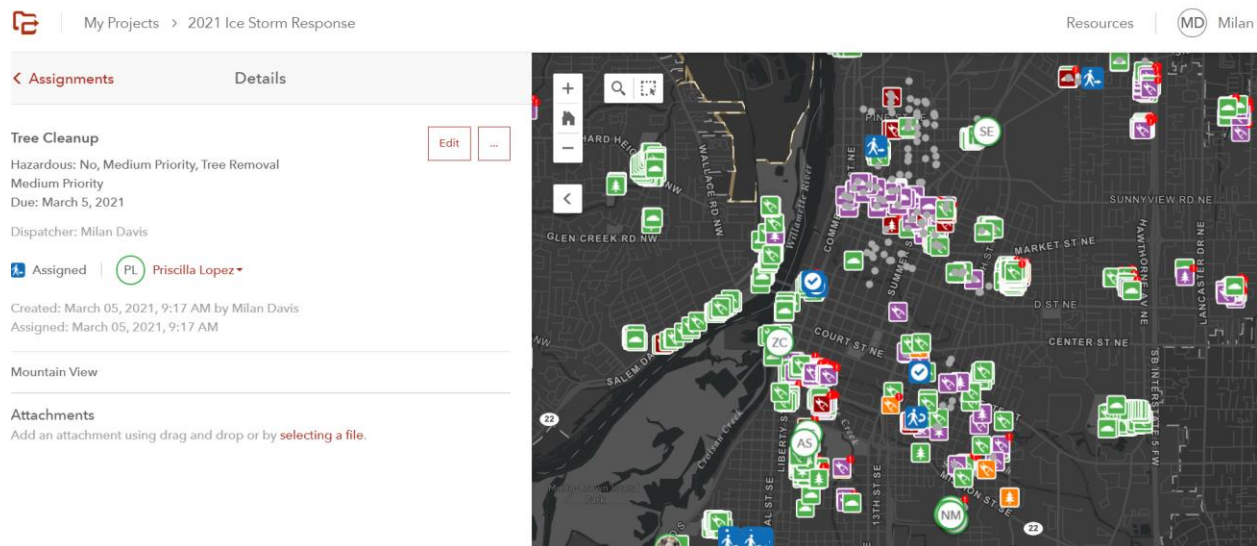
Currently 1920 open service requests from the ice storm event

Over 700 closed SR's closed from 2/12-3/5 from storm related work

Over 2000 Tree assessments made from 3/2-3/5 in the new GIS map



We are using ArcGis to track all the 311 requests, Work orders and assessments. We are able to use smartphone technology to do site assessments, inspect service requests, make work orders and assign locations to staff.



This allows us the ability to track vehicles, equipment and take before and after pictures of the storm event to share with FEMA.

Parks and Natural Resources Planning Update – March 2021

Geer Park Master Plan Update - Draft master plan to SPRAB in March. City Council in April.

Bush Pasture Park and Deepwood - Cultural Landscape Management Plan - Consultant is drafting report. All Neighborhood chairs were contacted for public presentations. NEN and Sunnyslope presentations planned for March and April, respectively. Also SCAN and Historic Landmarks Commission will get presentations, followed by SPRAB, then Council.

Woodmansee Park - Master Plan Update - The draft plan will go to Faye Wright Neighborhood Association in March and then to SPRAB in April. Construction for ASR began in January 2021.

Parks and Recreation Frequently Asked Questions – Work on an on-line platform is being developed and Council asked for a demonstration once it is ready for the public. It will be available to the community and provide park, natural resource, and recreation facts and general information. (Ongoing)

Climate Action Plan - The third Task Force workshop was March 3. The workshop will continue the work on strategies to reduce GHG and build community resilience. [Livestream or a recording of the workshops](#) and discussion groups are available online to the public. A new [“Strategies”](#) page was open on the website until February 28. The public submitted over 140 ideas for ways to reduce GHG emissions and increase climate change resiliency.

Tree Planting Projects. Due to COVID-19 spikes, public participation in the Friends of Trees planting projects continues to be restricted. Planting will continue to be done by FOT staff and FOT Salem Crew Leaders. Additional street tree planting by Treecology has been completed for this season.

2020 Annual Tree Report has been finalized and is provided to SPRAB this month. It will go to Council on March 22. There will also be an Arbor Month Proclamation, as well as a Mayor’s Monarch Pledge proclamation.

Minto Brown Island – Bald Eagles. Our resident pair of bald eagles nest survived the ice storm. The trail closures remain in place and an observation area will be set up in cooperation with Salem Audubon Society.

Minto Island Conservation Area – Phase 3 Restoration. Ash Creek Forestry continues their work in the western forested floodplain area to reduce invasive weeds and prepare for planting in fall. (Ongoing)

Urban Beaver Strategy – we will be hiring a consultant to assist in developing a strategy for managing and living with beavers in our urban streams. The number of dams has increased over the last couple of years and conveyance can be affected. The goal is to develop a decision matrix to address landowner concerns.

Parks Operations Update – March 2021

COVID-19 Pandemic – Phase II

A Cascade Park clean-up was held on 2/24/2021 with a focus on clearing garbage and tree debris, and to temporarily relocate some campers, all in order to allow PGE access to the park to restore downed power lines.

A clean-up is scheduled for Wallace Marine Park on 3/10/2021 utilizing Service Master and Parks staff in the clean-up effort.

Ice Storm Emergency Clean-Up Efforts

Field staff continue to work 10-hour shifts, down from 12-hours shift the first two weeks of the emergency event.

Below is information on Public Works recovery effort to date.

Clean-up of Streets and Street Trees

Operations continues to use 9 contractor tree crews and 2 city tree crews to clear streets. Crews are working in the far northeast neighborhoods and inner north neighborhoods. Tree crews are also working in West Salem and Southeast Salem. Streets and Stormwater crews continue to follow behind the tree crews and remove piles of tree debris remaining in the streets.

Clean-up of Parks

1 contractor crew and Parks Operations staff continue to work in parks. There is a major effort underway to document/survey the downed trees and limbs, both scattered and in piles, in the parks properties prior to undertaking a major removal of the branches and limbs. Once the documentation effort is complete, a portion of the tree crews working on streets will shift to the parks and the parks clean-up will be finished in rapid fashion. In both streets and parks, there will a significant amount of high height work that will be needed to remove hangers and deadwood from the trees.

Community Debris Collection Sites

There is a major drop in load volumes received at the three sites that remain open (Wallace Marine Park, Geer Park and Woodmansee Park). Staff are giving attention to the Wallace Marine Park site to see how volumes are this week, as we may be able to reduce staffing at that site and still keep it open, allowing us to shift staff to Woodmansee and Geer. The heavy excavator is being shifted from Wallace Marine Park to Geer Park so that staff can load a 30-yard end dump trailer there. Using that truck will allow for a more rapid reduction in the stockpile at Geer Park. Monday, 3/1 saw a total of **785 loads** received from all three sites. That brings the total for all four sites from 2/17 to 3/1 to **15,218 loads** or the equivalent of **22,830 cubic yards** of debris collected.

Debris Collection Site Loads

	McKay	Geer	Wallace Marine	Woodmansee	All Sites
2/17/2021	235	279	270	594	1,378
2/18/2021	171	161	516	351	1,199
2/19/2021	197	244	512	472	1,425
2/20/2021	303	457	663	554	1,977
2/21/2021	190	313	365	604	1,472
2/22/2021	0	251	209	409	869
2/23/2021	105	189	196	312	802
2/24/2021	145	227	286	413	1,071
2/25/2021	79	169	162	323	733
2/26/2021	59	211	125	327	722
2/27/2021	236	442	413	405	1,496
2/28/2021	188	374	305	422	1,289
3/01/2021	0	275	155	355	785
Total	1,908	3,592	4,177	5,541	15,218
<i>Average</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>276</i>	<i>321</i>	<i>426</i>	<i>1,171</i>
<i>Max</i>	<i>303</i>	<i>457</i>	<i>663</i>	<i>604</i>	<i>1,977</i>
<i>Min</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>161</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>312</i>	<i>722</i>

FEMA and Insurance Documentation/Preparation

Public Works Technical Services staff are now developing special smart phone applications that will allow for the more rapid documentation and GIS mapping of tree debris both in the streets, parks, and pump station/reservoir sites. This effort will also provide a location to post digital photos matched-up with debris locations. While we are waiting for word from FEMA, PW wants to have our documentation effort as detailed and accurate as possible, so that we can obtain maximum reimbursement from either FEMA disaster assistance funds and/or our insurance coverage.

Adults In Custody Work Crews Two DOC crews from Mill Creek were able to return to work last week and have been assisting Parks staff in the clean-up efforts focused on Minto Brown Island Park.

Salem Park Improvement Fund (SPIF) Update

The SPIF Review Committee met last week, on February 23rd, to review the eight neighborhood application submittals for projects in the 2020-22 cycle. The committee considered the merits of each project and assessed each neighborhood association's application based on the following SPIF program criteria: project feasibility, identifiable need, community support, financial support, and ongoing maintenance required by the proposed project.

The following awards were dispensed:

- 1) CANDO – Minto Brown Island Park
Project: Bike Fix-It-Station
Award Amount: \$3,600
- 2) SUNNYSLOPE – Sunnyslope Park
Project: Volleyball sleeves equipment and installation
Award Amount: \$3,000
- 3) SWAN – Fircrest Park
Project: Fountain replacement
Award Amount: \$4,200
- 4) ELNA – Royal Oaks Park
Project: Bench and concrete pad replacement
Award Amount: \$3,500
- 5) MORNINGSIDE – Fairview Park (Phase I)
Project: Installation of 800 ft. of soft trail identified in the Fairview Park Master Plan (Phase I) and located within the tree groves above Parking Lot D. Installation of trail signage, mutt mitt dispenser and waste receptacle.
Award Amount: \$5,890
- 6) NEN – McRae Park
Project: Basketball court features and court rehabilitation project
Award Amount: \$10,250
- 7) NORTHGATE – Northgate Park
Project: Addition and installation of TOT playground pieces
Award Amount: \$7,640
- 8) SESNA – Aldrich Park
Project: Basketball court features and court rehabilitation project
Award Amount: \$11,700

The SPIF Review Committee was able to award all of the neighborhood association requests for this cycle. Unawarded SPIF dollars will be carried over to a future SPIF award cycle.

SPIF Review Committee consisted of representatives of SPRAB, Dylan and Keith, and Parks Operations staff consisting of myself, Noe Marques, Field Supervisor, and Tibby Larson, Volunteer Coordinator. Alan Alexander was unable to attend the review meeting due to connectivity issues.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

March 2021

Recreation Update

1. Events/Facility Use

- The Public Works Office, Room #325 of City Hall, continues to be closed. Permit Specialist staff in the front office are working remotely, including answering phones (M-F, 8 am to 5 pm) and assisting customers via email and our online payment system.
- Parks and Recreation staff met recently to discuss the State of Oregon COVID-19 guidelines and their impact on facility rentals for special events. The currently policy is to accept permit requests from customers with use dates of May 1 or after, exceptions to this are Cascade Gateway Park reservations will be accepted for use dates July 1 or after, and Pringle Hall will be October 1 or after. Another meeting will be held in the coming weeks to review changes to state mandates and revisit this policy.
- An update to the Parks, Streets and Open Spaces Rules and Regulations continues.
- With the completion of the new Gerry Frank Salem Rotary Amphitheater coming soon, we are updating park maps and permits to reflect the new facility.
- The annual update of the fee schedule is underway. Fees for the new Gerry Frank Salem Rotary Amphitheater will be added.

2. Youth Recreation Programs

- Planning for summer programs is continuing with an anticipated start date in late June after school ends.
- In place of the multipage Recreation Guide that usually goes out around Spring Break, we are developing a one-page front and back tri-fold Recreation flier. This will cut production and mailing costs and encourage citizens to go to the online registration system for current programming opportunities.
- The popular STRIDE run/walk series will start in May and continue once per month, on Saturdays through October. Depending on COVID-19 restrictions, these may begin virtually but will be back to in-person events as soon as State of Oregon guidelines allow.
- With the recent nice weather and COVID-19 risk levels improving, Recreation staff have begun to allocate City park sport facilities for spring and summer use. All groups will be required to follow state protocols and guidelines for COVID-19.

3. Softball and Kickball Leagues/Tournaments

- Registration is now open for Spring softball and kickball leagues. Designated softball leagues are available for men, women, seniors, and coed teams. Kickball leagues are offered for both coed and men's teams. The deadline to register is March 17. We are planning to open the complex in early April with the first league night occurring on April 9.
- Tournament registration is also occurring. City Recreation staff are scheduled to host six youth fastpitch softball tournaments this year. Three of these are Play for a Cure tournaments (Mother's Day, Father's Day and July 4th) and are already close to being full.
- We are scheduled to host the 2021 USA Softball 14A Western National July 27-31. We currently have 21 teams registered for this tournament and anticipate up to 30 more.
- Due to a combination of fastpitch softball, slow pitch softball, and youth baseball tournaments, all weekends at the complex are booked from April through the first weekend of October.
- We have started the recruiting and hiring process for seasonal softball staff and expect to hire 15-20 facility and customer service super stars!
- Recreation staff are currently updating COVID-19 policies and procedures to ensure we operate the softball complex in compliance with all state mandates.